

FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MOST SUCCESSFUL IN EVERY WAY

Before every Conference of the Society of American Indians there have been forebodings and fears. This was true this year. It is an exceedingly difficult thing to gather a body of Indians at their own expense of time and money, to consider the solid and serious, but intricate, interests of their people. But, once gathered, their very seriousness presents a new difficulty. They come from many tribes, situations and places. Their ideas frequently do not agree. On various topics they see "rocks ahead." And yet where intensity of interest tends to divide, devotion to race and Society always held them together. Forgetful of minor questions, great principles, or a frequent spirit of harmony have brought the Society at the close of each Conference more confidence in itself and greater strength for the work that lies ahead. Harmony was the product, as well as the keynote, of the Madison Conference.

This fact was illustrated in various ways. The re-election of the old officers was one of the evidences, not only of an appreciation of their services, but of a desire to forget minor differences, to forget errors even if necessary—and all human agents are subject to errors—in order to demonstrate that the Society was harmonious and could maintain a course unchanged by the ripples of personal feeling. Of course there were differences of opinion, but they were plainly thrashed out in executive discussions and public meetings, and out of those frank discussions the integrity of good intentions rose strong and clear above the errors, real or imaginary, of action, and furnished the basis of enduring confidence in each other and of solid harmony in the Society. And harmony based upon integrity and frank discussion is the only harmony worth while.

The second evidence of harmony was the raising of \$1,800 in cash and subscriptions right at the Conference. A deep and united belief in the Society brought that sense of personal responsibility which means effort and sacrifice. And as the members invest their money in the Society they are giving their hearts. Honest hearts can agree even when honest heads cannot.

This consummation of harmony was matched by a forward movement of real significance. It was decided to have assistant Secretaries to represent each considerable tribe in each state. These Assistant Secretaries will serve in a measure as field agents, with the special object of enlisting new members in the Society. The plan means publicity, wide-spread knowledge of the purposes of the Society, a very much larger membership, and therefore larger funds and larger power. The Society is rapidly to become the real spokesman for the wishes and