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OFFICE OF
Indian Affairs
Rec'd JAN 28

1893

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Hon
Thos Roosevelt
Civil Service Com
Dec 3/92

Inc letter from
Adela Rankin rel.
to certain abuses at
Carlisle School

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COMMISSIONERS:
CHARLES LYMAN, President,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
GEORGE D. JOHNSTON.

WM. H. WEBSTER, Chief Examiner.
JOHN T. DOYLE, Secretary.

Address: "CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION,
WASHINGTON, D. C."

United States
Civil Service Commission,
Washington, D. C.

December 3, 1892.

The Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

The inclosed letter complaining of alleged abuses at the
Carlisle School, with which this Commission of course has nothing to
do whatever, I have the honor to turn over to you.

Yours truly,

Theodore Roosevelt

longer - I am
desire my
aid.
of the
Indian Industrial School,
Carlisle, Pa. - Dec. 2, 1892.

Mr. Roosevelt, 3365

INDIAN OFFICE,

Inclos. No. 1

1893

Dear Sir: I am writing hastily, but I
feel you are the person who should know
what I can tell from personal observation.

I am a specialist in physical and vocal
training, from New York, also a professional
reader, and lecturer on elocution.

I was introduced to you when you were here.

For eighteen years I have studied and
taught Elocution and Oratory, and nothing
else. Last year I was here for one month
for special work, in my department, among
the Indians. I learned to love them, because
I found them anxious to learn, willing to
try, obedient, respectful and earnest.

My work among them was such a proof of
what I could do for them, that Captain
Pratt wrote several letters to me, which

I have now in my possession, asking me to return, and remain here this season for three months. My time will not expire, according to all law and justice, until the 19th of December, yet, because I have succeeded in ferreting out the great system of sham, here, and know the petty tyranny, and meanness, injustice and wrong, and the consequences which follow from the punishment of keeping the children on a diet of bread and water for one or two weeks, and flinging them into cold cells from two weeks to a month, and dungeons, until they are chilled to the heart, so that many cases of death have resulted from pneumonia, catarrh, and consumption, all in the beautiful cause of breaking their wills, humbling their pride, and crushing out all manhood and womanhood, and the barbarity of stringing boys up by their thumbs, until the nervous system received a shock from which they never have recovered, to the full use of their faculties.

When I was fully convinced of all these statements, which I can verify.

I tried hard to obtain justice here on the grounds, for the Indians who are being civilized and Christianized, in this enlightened manner, but I have worked as unsuccessfully as Nicholas Pickleby did at Dotheboys Hall. Then I tried his plan of dealing blows, figuratively speaking. I began talking freely in all the school-rooms, to the children, before each teacher, because I knew I must cultivate their self-respect, and try to cast out all fear from their hearts, teaching them to obey through a sense of right and justice, and not through slavish fear. After that I struggled to make them think for I knew there must be three great principles made plain to them. First, freedom of thought, second, freedom of ~~action~~, speech, third freedom of action.

I have succeeded in my attempts, but have been reported, and have battled with the principal Miss Fisher, and had a big fight with Captain Pratt. I have asked him for a public examination. He was determined I should retract, deny every word I had uttered about discipline. This I refused to do, because I told him that I believed God had led

me here for a great purpose, and I was acting under a strong sense of right and justice, and I was willing to bear a public examination, in the Chapel, if he made it an open meeting, and would let every person on this place, speak out his or her thoughts freely. I said I would answer every question put to me, for I knew God would not let me be untrue to my utterances nor commitments. He refused everything I asked, forbade my entering the school-rooms again, and ordered me to leave, and yet refused to pay me for the full time for which I was engaged. I am breaking no part of my agreement, and I now appeal to you for help and justice.

Please come on yourself, or send quickly, and I will put you in the way to make a thorough investigation on many subjects - education, especially.

I have been told that Inspectors had been sent here before, but they had always been baffled. I can verify all my statements. Only I want to do it here, not after I have been driven away. I shall remain until Monday. Send me a telegram to remain

Indian Industrial School
Carlisle, Pa. Dec. 2, 1892

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Respectfully yours,
Adela Rankin