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SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL ART OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

Broad and Pine Streets

Art Department
Howard Fremont Stratton, Director.

Philadelphia, Aug. 9, 1910.



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Cardinal 810*

Dear Mr. Valentine:

Read by R. G. V

The first thought I receive from Mr. Moorehead's plan (the full statement of which you have kindly sent me) is that it is for a temporary condition only - the passing phase given by the old order changing, and is devised as a means to relieve the distress of those who stand at the edge of a new world and cannot enter it (a very touching spectacle it is too) and who can do only what they have always done or seen done. The second thought is that by means of his suggestion the number of examples of old types of work will be increased for purely museum and collectors' purposes, serving no actual need of practical life.

FILED BY C. P. F.

Now, personally this does not appeal to me except as philanthropy and relic making. If such members of the tribes as Mr. Moorhead describes still exist, I think they should be in every way encouraged and helped to continue the ancient patterns in their work, because it is direct descent, and entirely appropriate to their condition and powers, but this will be, as I said, only a single and very brief period of production-- a kind of afterglow, very beautiful and touching. It hardly seems to me government work, except so far as not putting any obstacles in its way, but the legitimate effort of some individual, versed in Indian character, and full of sympathetic

File

feeling for the tragic but necessary outgrowing of the original conditions. No consideration would seem to me too great to give these venerable people and their last hold upon the art of the past life of their race.

" The thing to recognize is that the particular form of their art is past. It would be an affectation to revive it, and would only result in false effects, as the younger generation can have no genuine impulse to do just as their fathers did. "

I am as much opposed to trying to make "white men" out of the red men, as Mr. Moorhead can be. My thought is that he should retain all his individuality possible, but in relation to the present time. There is evolution of the Indian as well as of the Saxon, and it does not have to bear the same stamp. What he can retain and utilize are his skill in using his hands, and his imaginative faculty. These can be quite as properly exerted in relation to designing and executing a stained glass window, or a book cover, or a fountain, as if he still produced only the bead, stone, clay or wool work of old. Among the Indian pupils here, the results showed the sense of ornament to be just as strong when put to use on objects entirely new to their method of furnishing or living, as on any regulation blanket or moccasin. In the case of metal door knockers, for instance (certainly not an Indian traditional necessity) there was no lack of invention, and no lack of appreciation

of the utility when the problem was given. The most interesting results, however, were the interpretation of natural objects, such as birds, butterflies, plants, etc., for decorative purposes, through which the native imagination found its way to expression. There has been, I regret to say, a considerable lapse in this faculty among our white pupils, due, I feel sure, to the invention of the mechanical toys for children, which do away with all "make-believe" or "pretend" play; and the general knowingness and sophistication of the very young to-day. Through the Indian mind seems still to run this strain of the times when man had to make his own guesses at what things might have in them, and endow them with what qualities he would. Now the children only wind up the springs which they know are inside, or press the button which they know connects with a battery, in other words, deal only with familiar powers.

As I wrote you, the "art" work at Carlisle is far from what it ought to be, because it is made to supply a cheap demand (quite in keeping with the white man's practice, I sorrowfully admit), but one of the worst of the white man's practices, and one I wish his red brother did not have to follow. If a standard of design and excellence in execution could be established at the school, independent of the sales, it would help tremendously to teach the boys the value of good work. Lone Star has had to hustle the silversmiths to make bracelets to meet the department store requirements, and the result is a poor class of product. He calls these Hopi Indians "Jews,"

because they have the trading instinct to the smothering of the artistic conscience. But I believe they could be shown "a more excellent way."

I shall keep the correspondence of Mr. Woodward intact, until we meet and can go over the whole matter. I had hoped to go to New England soon, and examine the collection which Mr. Peabody made of Indian products, and of which Mr. Moorhead is custodian. If I do I shall not intrude the discussion of "Indian Art."

Hoping you are having a pleasant outing somewhere, and to see you in the fall, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Howard Fremont Stratton.



September 10, 1910.

My dear Mr. Stratton:

I am afraid, in the very great ^{ess} ~~stress~~ of personal and official business, ^{to which I have been unusually subjected lately} your letter of August 9 has gone unacknowledged. I am not trying to acknowledge it adequately this morning, as I am hurrying off on a Western trip and I shall look forward to getting properly caught up, both as to acknowledgments and ideas when I see you this fall.

Sincerely yours,

(s) Robert G. Valentine

Howard Fremont Stratton, Esq.,
 School of Industrial Arts of the
 Pennsylvania Museum,
 Philadelphia, Pa.

FILED BY G. P. F.

RES

SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL ART OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

BROAD AND PINE STREETS

ART DEPARTMENT
HOWARD FREMONT STRATTON, DirectorPHILADELPHIA, Aug. 9th 1910.

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FILED BY G. P. F.

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& their art hold upon the art of the past life of their race.

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ART DEPARTMENT

HOWARD FREMONT STRATTON, Director

PHILADELPHIA,

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Hoping you are having a pleasant outing some
where, & to see you in the Fall,

I am very sincerely yours,

Howard Mumford Shannon



June 18, 1910.

FILED BY G. P. F.

Read by R. G. V

My dear Mr. Stratton:

I have your letter of June 15. I shall try to look you up in Philadelphia. As I don't want to bother you to answer this letter I shall take it for granted that should I write or wire you that I am passing through Philadelphia, you will frankly return me an answer: "Not convenient this time", if that is the case. Next fall I shall look forward to seeing you in Washington and hope you will bring your boy in to see this shop.

I shall be very glad indeed to help you out in any way I can by talking or otherwise, in connection with your exhibit.

With thanks for your kind letter, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert G. Valentine

Howard Fremont Stratton, Esq.,

Director School of Industrial Art
of the Pennsylvania Museum,

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

RES

SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL ART OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

BROAD AND PINE STREETS

ART DEPARTMENT

HOWARD FREMONT STRATTON, Director

PHILADELPHIA,

June 15th 1910

Read by H. G. V

FILED BY G. P. F.

Dear Mr. Valentine:

Your kind note of the 13th inst. is just received.

I appreciate your being interested in the little I have said on the subject of the Indian's education in art, & it would give me the greatest pleasure to talk with you about the matter.

As I am now tied here there is no chance of my getting to Washington this month, & I doubt if August will be any better. The affairs of this big place will keep me manacled. But if you are passing through I will be happy to arrange to see you at any time I get word of your coming. I shall be away on business for about three (3) days during June, otherwise so far as August, I shall be either right in this building, or very near the borders of the city. I only enter into these details because I would be sorely disappointed to fail in meeting you.

I have given my boy, who has never seen the Capital of his country, a partial promise to take him to Washington, in the early fall; when I hope you

will be there.

For a good while I have hoped to interest ^{some} people in Philadelphia in the art work of the Indians at Carlisle, & that end the Alumni Association of this school wishes to arrange an exhibit of what the Carlisle students are doing in industrial art; & to have an address from you at the time of the opening of it, (which would be a private affair with invited guests - selected for their real value to the cause - many of them being our own Trustees.) & I hope you would be willing to consider this as a possibility next Fall or Winter.

I find the metal work (silver) at Carlisle, is done more for sale than merit or the development of good art; so that I am not sure it would illustrate the points I would most care to have shown, but I am sure Mr. Star & his wife may be able to forge ahead on this before the time.

With very vivid recollections of your address at the meeting of the Indian Rights Association this season, & your splendid tribute to Mr. Leupp; & hoping to see you during the summer,

I am sincerely yours,

Howard Mumford Sheldon.

Comm.



June 13, 1910.

My dear Mr. Stratton:

Yesterday I was, for the first time, able to read carefully your article in "The Red Man" for March. It only confirms me in my original want---to have a talk with you here in Washington where various data in our Bureau ^{are} available, and see whether we cannot get started on better effort along the lines you suggest. If you cannot be in Washington at any time in either this month or ~~in~~ August, may I try to see you in Philadelphia on one of my trips north or south?

Sincerely yours,

(s) Robert Valentine

Howard Fremont Stratton, Esq.,

Director Art Department,

Philadelphia School of Industrial Art
of the Pennsylvania Museum,

Philadelphia, Pa.