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THE MISSIONARY WORK OF THE REFORMED (DUTCH) CHURCH IN
AMERICA, IN OKLAHOMA

By Richard H. Harper

PART II
COMANCHES AND APACHES

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From the north the Comanches came, supposedly "a comparatively recent offshoot from the Shoshoni of Wyoming."¹ In the same vicinity in southern Wyoming the two tribes lived, until driven out by stronger Indian groups. The Comanches came southward. In the early part of the eighteenth century they were living in what is now western Kansas. They continued southward into Texas, where they had some good farms and homes, and desirable hunting lands.

After the United States purchased Texas from Mexico the rights of the Indians were disregarded and their lands were taken from them by the whites. The tribe was still smarting under these losses, and feeling keenly the injustice done them, when they were placed in Indian territory and were given Agency headquarters near Fort Sill. In their new home they sank to lower depths of living than ever before. Soon they began to kidnap adults and children of the "pale-faces." The Government became greatly perturbed over these outrages. To save the captives from suffering or possible death, ransoms were offered and paid by Washington for the return in safety of the persons stolen. This had two effects: the captives were brought in by the Indians, who received their pay. But, unexpectedly to the whites, a new thought seized the Indian mind,—that kidnaping could be made a profitable business, and this kind of stealing was carried on, not for revenge, but as a source of income.

For some time this continued, until the commandant at Fort Sill and the Friends' Agent of the Indians decided on a united move for the safety of the white inhabitants of that part of the southwest which was traversed by the wily Comanches. The Indian leaders were brought in, were ordered to return all the captives then held by them, and were told that no more ransom money would be paid. This proved a death blow to the kidnaping.

¹F. W. Hodge, ed., *Handbook of American Indians* (Washington, 1910), II, 327.



REVEREND FRANK HALL WRIGHT

The Comanches had proved themselves skilful warriors, wanting neither in courage nor strategy. The writer believes that they were not as cruel as some other tribes.

In the year 1895 the Women's Executive Committee of the Reformed Church in America (now the Women's Board of Domestic Missions of this denomination) sent into the field the Reverend Frank Hall Wright, a member of the Choctaw tribe, whose name has already been mentioned in the first article of this series. It was thought that there were both a need and an opportunity for more Christian work among the Comanche people.

With all his heart and soul Dr. Wright entered this field. A mile north of the townsite of Lawton, Oklahoma, a piece of land containing one hundred and twenty acres was obtained from the Government, by Act of Congress, for missionary uses. Here a church and parsonage were erected later.

A few miles north from this mission site is Fort Sill, an old and well known United States army post.² On this large military reservation, at this time, was an interesting group of Indian prisoners of war, the Chiricahua Apaches, who, with their leader Geronimo, had surrendered to General Nelson A. Miles, in 1886; and who, after being sent as prisoners to Florida and Alabama, had, in 1894, been brought to Fort Sill, Oklahoma Territory. No Christian work was being done for them. The heart of Dr. Wright burned with zeal to reach these discouraged people with the hope-filled message of the Gospel of Christ. But his way was blocked by the military authorities who, for some time, refused the missionary entrance to the prisoners of war. A man not easily discouraged, he tried again and again to accomplish his purpose. In the providence of God his efforts were rewarded. The army officers then in charge of the prisoners of war encouraged the work, and did much to cheer the missionary in his undertaking. So Frank Hall Wright, with his genial personality, his gift of song, his winsome smile, his earnest preaching, was faced with two great opportunities,—one with the Comanches, the other with the Apaches.

²See W. S. Nye, *Carbine and Lance: the Story of Old Fort Sill* (Norman, 1937).

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Soon the work took on an air of increased activity, with the coming of additional workers to the field.

In 1906 the Reverend Leonard L. Legters, assistant to Dr. Walter C. Roe, at Colony, Oklahoma, was transferred to the Comanche Mission, near Lawton, as its first pastor. He was given charge also of the Fort Sill Apache group.

The Comanche church building was erected in 1905 and dedicated May 6, 1906. The parsonage was completed in the autumn of 1906. The Comanche Church was organized May 1, 1907, in the morning. The Committee appointed by the Classis of New York (of which body the Reformed Church Indian missionaries then were members, regardless of

the location of their mission stations) for the organization was composed of Dr. Walter C. Roe, and Reverend R. H. Harper. Dr. Frank Hall Wright, Reverend Edgar Tilton, Jr., D. D., a New York City pastor, and the missionary Reverend L. L. Legters were also present. There were sixty-three charter members. In the afternoon of the same day the Fort Sill Apache Church was organized by the same persons, with fifty-five charter members.

At the Fort Sill Mission, buildings had been erected by the Reformed Church,—an orphanage, a school, a teachers' home. Miss Maud Adkisson was the first superintendent of the Apache school and orphanage. She had come before the buildings were there, and lived with, the Indians, in an Indian home. By training and experience she was admirably fitted for her task, and achieved notable success in the performance of it.

When the Reverend L. L. Legters became the pastor of the Comanche and Apache Mission, Miss Adkisson became his wife, and presided over the Comanche manse, as soon as it was built, in the autumn of the same year. The vacancy caused in the superintendency of the Apache Mission School by the marriage of Miss Adkisson was filled by the appointment of Miss Moore to the position. She came Oct. 1, 1906, and left September 1, 1907.

In September 1907, Miss Hendrina Hospers, of Orange City, Iowa, became the superintendent, and continued in this office until the removal of the Chiricahuas to Mescalero, New Mexico, in April, 1913, when she and Miss Martha Prince, another of the mission

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workers, took up their abode with the former prisoners of war in their new mountain home.

The Fort Sill Mission had as its personnel, a superintendent, two school teachers, two matrons, a laundress, a mess cook, and one man-of-all work. The pastor and overseer of all these activities was the missionary stationed at the Comanche Mission, who ministered to both tribes. An active Christian Endeavor Society, organized in 1899, supplemented the work of the Sunday School. The day school included a few Comanches in its enrolment. Some of the children lived at home, and were day pupils, while others lived in the mission orphanage.³

There were about a dozen Apache villages on the Fort Sill reservation, each having four or five two-room houses. In these the prisoners of war lived, and not in actual confinement as the term might be thought to imply. Each village was in charge of one of the army scouts, members of the Apache band. The men were detailed for work, some being allotted to tasks by the week, others by the month. Some looked after the Apache cattle,—a fine herd of well-bred animals, belonging to the group. In the work with the cattle the Apaches were superintended by George Wrattan, a white man, who knew them thoroughly,—one who had lived among them since his boyhood days, who understood

their psychology and spoke their language. His wife was an Apache, and their daughter Amy was one of our dependable interpreters in religious work.

There was, for a time, much liquor drinking and gambling by both men and women. The latter were worse gamblers than their husbands, while the former were more faithful in attendance at religious services. The coming of Major Goode to take charge of the Apaches brought a great change for the better in their behaviour. Discipline became more strict. The Indians were not as free to go to Lawton as before. For a year the prisoners thought their new officer too severe. By the end of the first twelve months of his service for them the more thoughtful among his charges changed their opinion and praised him for his constructive policies.

³The teachers who served during the fourteen years of the Mission's existence were Misses Hattie Hospers, Jennie Pikaart, Mary L. Ewing, and Clover Mahan.

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He remained with them until their liberation, when he accompanied the group who went to Mescalero on their train, and up to the reservation in the mountains after they detrained. He remained with them there a few days and then bade them farewell.

The demoralizing influence of the United States soldiers constituted one of the serious mission problems on the Fort Sill reservation. The behavior of some of them was a dishonor to the uniform which they wore.

The Apaches were always welcomed at the mission, when they came for help or advice. In addition, Miss Mary McMillan in the earlier years, and Miss Hendrina Hospers after her arrival, did invaluable service in visiting the Indian homes, and in listening to the outpouring of women's hearts as they asked for information on child-care, or confessed sins, and in pleas for help in their many difficult and trying experiences. Almost every morning found Miss Hospers on her pony or in her buggy going from one village to another to uplift and to cheer. The Indians were always happy to see her riding over the hill toward their villages, or along the roads which led to their abodes. Miss McMillan was now doing field work among the Comanches.

Be it said to the credit of the Apaches that generally they lived peaceably among themselves, and were friendly with the neighboring Comanches.

Almost the entire band of Chiricahuas became professing Christians, while living on the Fort Sill reservation, under the ceaseless ministrations of Reformed Church missionary workers. There were many discouragements and heart aches during the long, weary years of labor for them. As their capture was a test to army ingenuity and persistence when in their wild days, so now they were difficult for the "soldiers of Christ" to apprehend. But

the task was not impossible and a wonderful change took place in the lives of these Apaches.

In July, 1910, Reverend L. L. Legters left the Comanche Apache field, to take up work with the Indians of California. He was succeeded by Reverend Henry Sluyter, who began his labors at the close of the year 1910 and served the field three years,—leaving at the close of 1913.

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It was difficult for the Comanches to transfer their love and loyalty to the new missionary. For a year they were cool toward him, and refrained from accepting his friendly advances. They were, Reverend Sluyter says, weighing him in the balances. The scales tipped in the right direction, and Howard Whitewolf, the mission interpreter, came to him as a representative of this Comanche group, telling him that he had won their confidence. He assured the missionary that this was the usual method of these Indians with a new worker,—just to watch, and, to wait for their appraisal of him. From this time on the barriers were down, and his parishioners came to him freely with their problems. He had to be arbitrator of differences, to attend innumerable conferences both general and private, to write many kinds of letters for them; and, in it all, to interpret to them what it meant to be a Christian.

In 1912 the Comanche "lodge," or parish house, was erected, near the church building. The first five hundred dollars toward the building was given by Miss Elizabeth B. Vermilye, a member of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church. The Comanche church building was already named in honor of the Reverend Mr. and Mrs. Vermilye, parents of the giver. Other donations of money were added to the initial gift. Indians helped with labor. Mr. C. P. Barrington was the architect, and Mr. George McDonald was the builder. The new two-story edifice was completed on October the third, 1912, and was dedicated to the use of those for whom built,—the dedication attended by a feast of good things to eat for the crowd of Indians attending.

It would be difficult to overestimate the value of this building to the work of the mission. Equipped with sewing machines for the use of Indian women, with a range, utensils, and dishes; a large room for social gatherings, and presided over by Miss Jennie Lewis, a competent matron and field worker,—all in all the lodge was the most important addition to the material things since the erection of the church building and parsonage.⁴

⁴The Comanche Mission has sometimes been called, locally, "The Helen Gould Mission." Mrs. Finley J. Shepard (nee Helen Gould) was a member of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions for many years, and helped generously in the support of Indian work, but was not such a giver to this particular mission as far as the records show, as to bring her name into prominence thereby. The official name is The Vermilye Memorial Reformed Church.

At the Comanche-Apache Camp Meeting held this year, 1912, at Four Mile Crossing on the Fort Sill Military Reservation, twenty-five Apaches and twelve Comanches were received into the two churches, and twenty-two children were baptized.

On June 23, 1912, the Apaches lost by death their great white friend, George Wrattan, who had grown up with them and had shared their successes and failures, their joys and sorrows and privations.

The year 1912 is notable for the release of the Apache prisoners of war by Act of Congress. Those who decided to remain in Oklahoma were given tracts of farm land near the town of Apache. In April, 1913, that part of the band, numbering 187, who elected to go to Mescalero, New Mexico, were taken by train from Fort Sill to Tularosa, New Mexico. Here they detrained for the Mescalero Indian Reservation, nineteen miles distant. With them for their protection and comfort, came Major Goode, in charge of the train, Dr. Farenbaugh, United States Army Surgeon; Special Federal Officer Tom Brentz; Miss Deering, United States nurse; Reverend Henry Sluyter, missionary, Miss Hendrina Hospers and Miss Martha Prince, mission workers; and three or four soldiers from Fort Sill.

As an indication of the thorough work done with the Apaches by the Reformed Church Missionaries, and of the Indian response, of the one hundred eighty seven (including children and infants) who went to Mescalero, eighty-nine persons united by letter with the Reformed Church there on April 6, 1913, two days after reaching their new home. All of these were Indians, except two,—Misses Hospers and Prince.

About ninety Apaches chose to remain in Oklahoma, preferring to live on farms in this state rather than to go to the mountains and forests of Mescalero.⁵

⁵These Chiricahua (or "Fort Sill") Apaches were prisoners of war for more than twenty-five years, during which time a generation was born and reared who had never taken up arms against the United States. Yet they were born prisoners. Beside those born thus there were many who were but children when the band was captured and who never fought against the United States; but they were held as prisoners, just as though they had been guilty of rebellion.



DR. AND MRS. WALTER C. ROE

The friends of these Indians were distressed that, year after year, the Government continued to hold them in custody. Dr. Walter C. Roe, the superintendent of Indian work being done by the Reformed Church, determined, if possible, to get the group free, regardless of cost to himself. Others were willing to give whatever aid was in their power. Articles were written and published, and public opinion was aroused. Dr. Roe was a man of keen, strong mind, but of weak body. With true Christian heroism he carried on his work, often with great physical pain: Against the advice of his physician he went to Washington and spent the winter, watching, waiting, rendering all aid in his power to see that the bill for the release of the Apache prisoners would be passed by Congress. He and his co-laborers were successful, and the people were freed, but Dr. Roe gave his life as a result of that winter's work.⁶

The Fort Sill Mission for the Chiricahua prisoners of war was begun in 1899 and closed in 1913, after a period of fourteen years of service and a cost to the Reformed Church of seventy-five thousand dollars.

The Women's Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church appointed Reverend G. A. Watermulder, for a long period the missionary at Winnebago, Nebraska, as their Special Representative for Indian work. He has continued to do the work of his own field, and to visit and help to plan the policies of the other Indian missions of the Reformed Church.

After the departure of Reverend Henry Sluyter from the field, Reverend James Dykema took charge of the work until a permanent missionary could be appointed. This earnest and able young minister had served, for a few months at a time, at Winnebago and

Mescalero, and was able to adapt himself to new people and conditions. He served the Comanche Mission during the year

⁶His frail constitution could not resist the severe winter climate of the east, and rapidly he grew weaker. Everything that loving friends could do was done to prolong his life, but his work was done. On March 12, 1913, while the Apache prisoners were preparing for removal to Mescalero,—a journey to be taken within a month,—his spirit took its flight to God from Nassau, Bahama Islands, to which place he had gone in a last attempt to regain health.

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1914, and faced bravely and helpfully the problems of the group. The Comanches of today are fond of him.⁷

The Reverend Richard H. Harper, missionary at Mescalero, New Mexico, was now transferred to the Comanche-Apache work, and arrived on the field January 15, 1915. The Reverend James Dykema had been asked to go to Mescalero, until a permanent missionary could be obtained.

The new minister at the Comanche Mission was not a stranger, having visited the churches and Indians there on previous occasions. He found, as had the Reverend James Dykema, that there was need of enforcement of earnest measures for the moral safety of the Indian families who camped at the mission as they had need. On one side was Lawton, a mile away; on the other Fort Sill, with its soldiers. The camp lay between, and was a prey to unscrupulous Indians, soldiers, whites, negroes, and Mexicans. Only unceasing vigilance could keep the mission camp free from intruders by day and by night. A set of rules was printed, and each Indian who was allotted a camping place was compelled to sign or thumb-mark his name to the rules. These provided for good behavior, for abstinence from the use of liquor and peyote, for cooperation in keeping the Indian part of the mission compound clean,—in short, for doing the things which every good Indian should desire to do. When some of the Indian men objected to the rules the missionary replied that he intended to have the camp a safe place for their wives and daughters, and that he was sure it would then be a safe place for the men.

Early in his ministry here, the missionary contacted county and city police officers, in Lawton, and asked for their cooperation in protecting the Indians from lawless people of all the races. This was gladly given; and the writer wishes to praise highly the sheriff and deputies, and the Lawton chief of police and his patrolmen. When a drunk Indian appeared at the mission, either day or night, the missionary called the sheriff's office by telephone, and in a

⁷During his ministry the Women's Board attempted to have the Apaches absorbed by the Cache Creek Mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, situated a few miles north of Fort Sill. The plan failed, largely because this mission used a different musical program in its religious services, and the Apaches could not adapt themselves to the change.

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few minutes an officer was on the ground and the offender was taken to the county jail in Lawton. In most such cases we did not lodge a formal complaint against the trouble maker; but the officers would try to discover where the liquor was obtained, that the bootlegger might be arrested and punished.

The plan of our Indian missionary work was to help make of the Indians intelligent, able-bodied, self-supporting, patriotic, christian citizens of the United States. This included work of schools, health, industry, citizenship, and religion. We believe this to be a program which would prove helpful with Indians everywhere. To carry it out means cooperation with government plans and activities as far as possible, with the educational forces, the physicians and hospitals, the field workers, and with law enforcement officers,—federal, state, county, and city.

The work of the mission was many fold,—preaching, Sunday School, lodge, government boarding school, hospital, camp, and camp meetings. Though the last-named could be included in either preaching or camp work, the camp meetings are important enough to be mentioned in a special class. Beside all these there were annual visits to the American Indian Institute at Wichita, Kansas, to Chilocco Government Indian School in Oklahoma, and to Haskell Indian Institute, in Lawrence, Kansas. In all these schools the mission had either Apache or Comanche students.

An outstation was established at Fletcher, some thirty miles northeast of the Comanche Mission; another preaching point in the Little Washita district, east of Fletcher; and a third point on Beaver Creek, about twenty-five miles southeast of the central mission.

Since the plan to have the Apaches who chose to remain in Oklahoma, after obtaining their freedom, attend the Reformed Presbyterian Mission services, failed, it was decided that regular Sunday gatherings for them should be held in or near Apache. The First Presbyterian Church of Apache kindly gave the use of their house of worship on certain Sunday afternoons for this purpose. After a time the Apaches desired a chapel of their own, and this was built. The business men of the town of Apache gave money for a lot, about a fourth of a mile south of the town; and

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the Women's Board of Domestic Missions together with the Indians provided the money for a building. In this was an auditorium and a small room,—the latter for the use of the missionary when compelled to spend the night in that part of his large field.

A Sunday School was organized, which the Apaches manned. The Church organization was a continuation of that which had existed at Fort Sill. In this and the Comanche Church the elders and deacons were Indians, who accepted their offices and carried their responsibilities with seriousness and dignity.

With both the Comanche and Apache churches to care for; with superintending the Sunday School and preaching, at the Government Indian school, and at the mission; with Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. work; with outside Comanche preaching points; with never-ending pastoral calling, both the missionary and his wife, and Miss Lewis, the lodge and field matron, were kept very busy. During our first years on this field the mission owned two teams of horses, a hack, and a buggy; and even thus the workers were taxed to the utmost to keep up with the needs. Later a Ford automobile was provided, which made possible the doing of more work, over more miles, and with less time and energy. In some of the mission activities that part of the family of the missionary, still living at home, two grown daughters and two sons,—rendered valuable help.

Each summer the Women's Board sent us a theological student from one of the Reformed Church seminaries, to help in the work. These young men were of great value to the fields, and the experiences which they had were very helpful to them.

One thing showing the earnestness of the Indians in Christian affairs is that some of them drove many miles to the mission by team—as far as twenty-five. One reason for this was the Government School near by, where were some of their children.

Two rooms were added to the lodge, and an office provided for the missionary, close to the parsonage, where he could receive and consult with the Indians. Many of them still came to the manse, to visit, and to talk with Mrs. Harper.

Indians are nothing, if not social. This side of their nature sometimes makes them a prey to designing evil people. To meet

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this need a social was held in the lodge every Friday evening in the year, unless prevented by inclement weather, illness, or some other important hindrance. Through the snow of a winter night a grandmother would trudge with a large grandson or granddaughter on her back. Fathers, mothers, youths, children, even babies came, and all spent a happy evening. Simple games were provided. The older people delighted to play crokinole, and apparently never tired of the game. One or more of the missionary workers always attended the socials, and the gatherings always closed with singing of a gospel hymn and prayer.

The Sunday morning and afternoon services were held in the church, the evening gatherings in the lodge. Elders and deacons rotated in leading the afternoon meetings,—first an elder, then a deacon, one at a time. This was *their* service, and it would have been considered an intrusion had the missionary tried to conduct it. Beside, there was no good

reason for his so doing, for the Indians were competent leaders. On many of the Sunday afternoons the pastor was preaching elsewhere. Sometimes this was true on Sunday morning. In such a case Mrs. Harper brought the morning message, and the Indians enjoyed greatly to hear her preach. She was, of course, not ordained, since the Reformed Church does not believe in the ordination of women. When the pastor was absent, on certain Sunday nights, for preaching at the Indian School, then also elders and deacons conducted the service.

In the second year of their ministry here the Board sent the missionary and his wife to Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan, to speak in the Reformed churches, to ask for money for the Comanche Mission Extension,—a reaching out to other parts of the field with an enlarged program. Their trip resulted in obtaining enough gifts to erect an outstation in the town of Fletcher. A home for Miss Lewis, with one room large enough for gatherings, was provided, and she was transferred to the Fletcher field. Her place at the central mission was taken later by Miss Jennie Dubbink, who had served at Mescalero, New Mexico. An additional worker was called to help,—Miss Nella Rylaarsdam of Grand Rapids, Michigan. These two at the central mission did very fine work, ministering to needs of both souls and bodies.

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Most of the Sunday services were held in the Indian homes near Fletcher, since this cottage-meeting plan was best for the field under conditions then existing.⁸

In the first article of this series a description of a camp meeting was given. This need not be repeated here. The camp meetings held among the Comanches and Apaches were of the same general tenor as those among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. A few statements, though, need to be added. As long as the Apaches were living on the Fort Sill Military Reservation many of the Reformed Church camp meetings for the two tribes were held there, where room for tents and grass for ponies was abundant. The army officers gave all needed cooperation to maintain order. Especially on the last night of the meetings hundreds of white visitors came from Lawton and other places. The climax was reached on the Sunday night, and Monday saw the dispersion of the Indians to their homes.

Since the release of the Apaches the camp meetings have often been held on the land of the central mission, a mile north of Lawton.

The Comanches were more willing to help get ready for the great meetings than were some other Indians. Nine committees were appointed each time, some of men, others of women. The men had learned how to put up the large tent, a task demanding both strength and skill. Other men attended to the purchase and issue of beef, which took place once, sometimes twice during the meetings. Indian women took great interest in arranging chairs in the tent after each service, and in smoothing out the white tent cloths which were used to cover the grass. Formerly, all in the congregation sat on the grass. Later, the Indians asked that chairs be provided; and this was done.

One of the committees of men was to watch the camp and to help preserve order. This committee alone was not enough for the purpose. Two federal special liquor officers were allowed us for

⁸Miss Lewis' health failed, after almost twenty years of faithful sacrificial service with Comanches, and she was compelled to retire from the field. Misses Dubbink and Rylaarsdam succeeded her at Fletcher, where they did heroic work until the closing of this outstation and the sale of the property, in 1923. In June of this year they returned to the central mission.

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the camp meeting period, and one or two sheriff's deputies assisted. The camp was policed by day and on into the night. These stringent measures were necessary for the protection of the Indians and their interests in these large camps during many of those years.

The Comanches and Apaches were under the jurisdiction of the Government Indian Agency at Anadarko, about forty miles north of Lawton. The Superintendent and his assistants gave untiring support to the missionary in many ways. Superintendent C. V. Stinchecum of Anadarko and the district farmers at Lawton, Apache, and Walters rendered great assistance in matters within their province. In turn, the missionary was able to give some help in government matters.

Many Comanches were addicted to the use of the cactus fruit peyote. It had come to them in comparatively recent years, from Mexico, where it had been used since prehistoric times. The early Catholic priests in that country were acquainted with its use and evil effects, and called it "Devil's Root."

While this drug addiction is rare among Apaches, yet Comanches, Kiowas, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and many other tribes are greatly addicted to its use. The dark brown, cup-shaped fruit, sometimes called "peyote buttons" and "peyote beans," grows on a cactus plant whose habitat is northern Mexico and southern Texas.⁹

⁹Botanically it is known as "Lophophora williamsii." It contains as shown by analysis, a number of alkaloids, which are poisons. It is habit-forming. It injures throat, heart, stomach, brain; and sometimes produces temporary insanity. It excites physical passions, and drives away sleep for several hours. In some ways its effects are worse than those produced by whiskey. In October 1918, the State of Oklahoma granted a charter for the setting up of "A Native American Church," in which peyote would be used as a sacrament, like the bread and wine in our Lord's Supper. This charter was amended later.

Peyote meetings are held at night; from sunset to sunrise. A ritual service is presided over

by a peyote priest. Songs are sung. Sometimes the Bible is used. The eating of the peyote produces a feeling of ecstasy, in which benevolence toward rather than dislike of one's opponents controls the mind. After the effects of the drug disappear so does the feeling of kindness toward all people, and the former dislikes are again on the mental throne.

While claiming to be Christians the users of peyote are often very bitter against missionaries and other Christians, because these do not, cannot, endorse the teachings and practices of the Peyote cult.

These statements concerning this false religion are being made after nearly twenty years of residence and labor among tribes which are affected by peyote, and with love for peyote-users though with thorough disbelief in and abhorrence of their beliefs and practices.

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The year 1917 saw the United States plunged into the World War. The activities at Fort Sill, Camp Doniphan and Post Field were before the eyes of the Indians. Forty thousand men were stationed, for part of the time, in the Fort Sill area. Some Indians volunteered for service. With them Richard Whitman, elder son of the missionary, joined the army. Others were taken by the draft. Many Indians purchased war bonds with money being held for them in the Kiowa Agency Office at Anadarko. Generally, they entered heartily into every suggested activity, even to the saving of peach stones whose product was valuable in gas masks.

When a group of Comanches were ready to leave for Camp Bowie, a notable farewell service was held for them in the Comanche church. Addresses were delivered by the Honorable Champ Clark, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Honorable Scott Ferris, Congressman from Lawton. Followed by the prayers of parents and friends in both races the Comanche soldiers left, and were a part of the eight thousand red men in the army and navy during the World War. Not one Comanche soldier lost his life in the conflict.

A company of older Christian Indians gathered at the Rock Island railway station in Lawton to see one troop train, bearing Comanches leave. As they stood on the platform with hearts sad, yet rejoicing, as their sons or grandsons or friends started to war, their voices were raised in a Christian hymn, sung in their own smoothly-flowing Comanche tongue.

The Young Men's Christian Association called the Comanche missionary to service for Indians in the army. By permission of the Women's Board he responded to the call. His plan of work was to visit army camps containing Indian soldiers. After each such visit he returned to the Comanche Mission and labored, until time for the next trip. Under this plan he visited Camp Bowie, near Fort Worth, Texas, Camp Travis, at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, and the camp at Houston, Texas. In each camp the Indians

welcomed him, as he sought to put them in touch with the Y. M. C. A. recreation halls and with religious services. For, the very shyness of the Indian nature made it necessary to give more encouragement to them than to the white

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young men, along these lines. By thus going to the army camps, the missionary was able to follow up Indians from his own Oklahoma district as well as to meet many others.

At Camp Doniphan were other Reformed Church people rendering help to the men in uniform. Mr. R. Kincaide, manager of the Mohonk (Indian Arts) Lodge, and superintendent of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Sunday School at Colony, spent many months in Y. M. C. A. work. Reverend Edwin Ralston, pastor of a Reformed Church in New York state, also served under the "Y". Mrs. Ralston, wife of the New York pastor, and a member of our Women's Board of Domestic Missions was hostess in one of the Y. W. C. A. recreation houses.

During the difficult war days, when adjustments as to the kinds of food to be eaten had to be made, and when certain foods were restricted as to amount, Mrs. Harper held cooking classes for the Comanche women, teaching them how to make the necessary adjustments. The Indians were much interested and responded loyally.

The regular work with the Comanches and Apaches had to be kept up, even though the pastor was often absent with the Indian soldiers. Help in these days was given by the presence of Rev. and Mrs. Paul M. Joy (the latter a daughter of the missionary), sent to us by our Women's Board for a year. Their previous experience with Indians here and elsewhere made them valuable helpers at a time when help was greatly needed. They remained with us during the period when the missionary was assisting in army Indian "Y" work.

In 1919 Reverend and Mrs. J. Denton Simms (the latter another daughter of the Harper family), of long experience with the Apaches at Mescalero, New Mexico, and with the Jicarilla Apaches, at Dulce, New Mexico, brought to the mission the help which their years of Indian contact made possible. Both the Joys and the Simms family added important elements by their energy and ability. During four months of 1919 the regular missionaries were given a sabbatical release, during which they visited missions, Indians, and Government non-reservation schools in the states of Washington, Oregon, California, and New Mexico.

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Between 1919 and 1923 the work of the mission was carried on in routine, the last two years being made more difficult by the serious illness of Mrs. Harper. Fine help was given by summer students, whom the Women's Board allowed us for three months each summer, and by Misses Dubbink and Rylaarsdam at the Comanche lodge.¹⁰

The Comanches get great joy in the Watch-Night services, seeing the old year out and the new year in. As usual Indians and missionaries met at the lodge, and spent a social time together. Refreshments were served, the Indian women doing the greater part of the task as to food distribution. After eating, according to the training which they had received, everything must be cleared up, and the dish towels carefully and neatly hung up.

Before the women were quite through with their work the congregation would begin singing. By ten o'clock the service would be going fully. We had hymns, prayers, and a sermon.

The regular plan was for all to be kneeling in prayer when the bell struck twelve o'clock. Then, all would arise, each wishing others "A Happy New Year," and go home.

The missionary was called to the office of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions, New York City, as an assistant, in the autumn of 1923, and the vacancy at **the Comanche-Apache Mission was filled by the transfer of the Rev. and Mrs. J. Leighton Read, from Colony, Oklahoma.**¹¹

During the period from 1923-1931 Reverend and Mrs. Read pressed the work among the Indians of this field with great energy.

¹⁰Two operations in Oklahoma City and two trips to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota failed to stop the malignant tumor which had grown as an enemy comes in the darkness, and the dearly beloved missionary wife and mother went home to God on July 23, 1923. At her request her body was laid away in the Comanche cemetery. She wished to lie by the side of those with whom she had spent the last years of her consecrated missionary life. Deeply they mourned her departure.

¹¹**Reverend Mr. Read is the son of a Presbyterian Indian missionary in Indian Territory. He grew up with Indians, and understood them. In addition to this, he and Mrs. Read had experience at the Colony Mission, sixty miles northwest, from 1917-1923. So they brought with them an accumulation of valuable knowledge of Indians and their way of life, along with deep religious fervor in the Master's service.**

In 1924 Reverend Mr. Read received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, from his alma mater, Austin College in Sherman, Texas.



SATURDAY AFTERNOON STREET MEETING, LAWTON

A part of the time they had as helpers Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Chaat.

A prominent addition to the Christian forces early in this ministry, were Mr. and Mrs. White Parker. Mr. Parker is a son of Chief Quannah Parker of the Comanches. Mrs. Parker is a daughter of Reverend Mr. Clark, a former white missionary to the Comanches, under the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Parker felt called to do missionary service among his own Comanche people; and, with this in mind, studied at the Cook Bible School in Phoenix, Arizona. Returning to the Comanche country for work, because the Reformed Church had no opening for him at that time, he joined the Methodist Conference and occupied mission stations under their supervision.

A very important enterprise undertaken by Dr. Read was the holding of Saturday afternoon street meetings, in a part of Lawton frequented by Indians of several tribes who came to buy at the stores. Many attended the meetings. A baby organ supplied the music. Dr. and Mrs. Read, Miss Dubbink, Mr. Robert Chaat, and Mr. White Parker took part. Other Indians helped.

During all their years at this mission Dr. and Mrs. Read continued the work with the Apaches, at their chapel near the town named after them, and in their homes.¹²

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Chaat succeeded them at the Comanche Mission, and in the work for Apaches.¹³ His installation service, held in the Comanche church, took place on December 2, 1934, in the presence of many happy Comanche and some Apache church members, with Reverend G. A. Watermulder, Mrs. Walter C. Roe, and the writer present.

On a Giving Sunday service (the Sunday nearest Christmas) at the Comanche Mission about twenty-five years before this time, Chahtinneyackque, father of Robert Chaat, had gone to his wife

¹²In 1931 Dr. Read resigned the pastorate of the Comanche-Apache field, and moved to Norman, Oklahoma, for an independent missionary undertaking among Indian and other students of the Oklahoma University.

¹³Mr. Chaat is a graduate of the American Indian Institute, Wichita, Kansas, and of Cook Bible School, Phoenix, Arizona. After being in charge of the mission from 1931-1934 as an unordained missionary, he was given his ordination by the Classis of New York, of the Reformed Church, on November 20, 1934. He is the first Indian ever ordained by this denomination.

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and had taken from her their children under twelve years of age, and had brought them to Reverend L. L. Legters, then the missionary, saying: "I give these children to God." The two brought were Robert and Sam. Since 1931 Robert has been carrying on, with no white missionary on the field. All the departments of the work have been well manned by the devoted native missionary, his wife, the Church officers, and other volunteer Indian helpers. There have been preaching, Sunday School, work at Indian School and hospital, visitation of homes, work with the Apache Church, daily vacation Bible school, camp meetings, and other activities.¹⁴

The 1939 camp meeting was in charge of Reverends Robert Chaat and James Ottipoby.¹⁵ Reverend James Dykema, the Comanche missionary in 1914, now a pastor in New Jersey, preached by invitation. About four hundred and fifty were in attendance. The camp meeting was preceded by an Indian Youth Conference, held for four days, conducted by the Reverend Dr. Raymond Drukker, head of Youth Work in the Reformed Church.

The faithful Bible teaching of former missionaries is continued by their able native pastor. Reverend Mr. Legters, their first pastor, taught them tithing, and some of them adopted this method of sharing their incomes with their Lord. In 1939 there were six or eight tithers in the Comanche Church.

One of the aims in Indian missionary work is to get the congregations to the place where they have native leaders. When the

¹⁴Reverend Mr. Chaat has been called by the Women's Board of Domestic Missions, on a number of occasions, to the middle west and the east, to address church and other groups

in behalf of his Comanche-Apache field. The white people enjoy his addresses. He is in demand at Indian conferences also.

The Comanche Sunday School, conducted by the pastor, and taught by Indians, has ten classes. Both Reverend Mr. and Mrs. Chaat are musicians, and Indian young people follow their leadership in special singing for the services. He gives great help also in the Sunday School at the Ft. Sill Government School.

The Comanche Church pays one hundred dollars a year toward the pastor's salary. The Women's Board of Domestic Missions supplies the rest. As to incidental expenses, for fuel, lighting, and all other things,—both the Comanche and the Apache churches are self-supporting. The Comanche Church membership, in 1939, was one hundred and thirty-five and the Apache Church thirty-eight.

¹⁵Reverend James Ottipoby is a son of Elder Ottipoby, for many years an efficient officer of the Comanche Church. James was trained in Reformed Church institutions, is a graduate of Hope College, Holland, Michigan, and studied theology in Western Seminary, in the same city. He received ordination from the Classis of New York, in New York City, on November 15, 1938. He also is used by his denomination in service, in the east and middle west.

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writer was the pastor of the Comanche—Apache Mission he used to say to the Indians that a better day would come for them, in their Christian work, when one of their own tribesmen would be their missionary. In Reverend Robert Chaat this has been achieved.

The ordained missionaries who have served the Comanche-Apache Mission are: Frank Hall Wright, founder; Leonard L. Legters, 1906-10; Henry Sluyter, 1910-13; James Dykema, 1914; Richard H. Harper, 1915-23; (Paul M. Joy, as assistant, 1917-18, and again, for six months, in 1920; J. Denton Simms, as assistant, in 1919); J. Leighton Read, 1923-31; Robert P. Chaat, 1934 to the present. In addition to these years of service, Mr. Chaat was an unordained worker, in charge, from 1931-34,—thus making a total of nine years during which he has been at the head of the mission.

One of the very noticeable changes brought about by the ministry of the present pastor is in the large number of Indian Young people who are assisting him. This speaks well for the future of the Comanche Church.

Among the outstanding Comanche Church leaders have been Nahwats, Ottipoby, Chahtinneyackque, Perconnic, Howard Whitewolf, Karty (Buffalo), Chatasy, Tahmaka, Fred and Leslie Ticeahkie. Many women have done outstanding work in the church. As interpreters Walter Komah, Howard Whitewolf, Fred Ticeahkie, and Maude Chaat have been prominent.

In the Apache Church Naiche, Noche, Chatto, Jason Betzinez, Benedict Jozhe, James Kawaykla, Sam Hoazoas, Quineh, Carlos Keanie, and John Loco have been prominent. Much of the interpreting has been done by James Kawaykla and Mrs. Amy Imach (daughter of George Wrattan). Many women could be named as earnest Church workers.

All honor to the Comanches and Apaches in the great progress they have made, in many directions! Few tribes in the United States have gone forward more rapidly than these. And this progress is not alone in material, but also in spiritual matters.¹⁶

¹⁶The writer acknowledges his indebtedness for valuable information and illustrations to Mrs. Walter C. Roe, Mrs. A. R. Page, Miss Muriel H. Wright, Miss Hendrina Hospers, Rev. L. L. Legters (since deceased), Rev. Henry Sluyter, Dr. J. L. Read, Rev. Robert P. Chaat, and Mr. R. Kincaide.