

La Pointe], chairman of the board of county commissioners, besides numberless other things too small to mention perhaps, but which nevertheless break in upon his time and divert his mind from his more appropriate work. To human appearance our people were never in a better condition to profit by the preaching of the gospel. We think there is hardly a possibility of removing them. They are fully determined not to go. They have lived two years without their payments, and find they do not starve or freeze. Indeed I doubt very much whether there is a band of Chippeways beyond the Mississippi, with all their annuities, that are as well fed and clothed as ours are."

To no other period of Mr. Wheeler's life did the following words from Dr. Ellis better apply, than to this time: "When unscrupulous and grasping men were ready to rob and wrong the red men, his watchful eye and sound judgment saw the danger, and, like the old cavalier, without fear and without reproach, he raised his voice and used his pen for their defense. His intercession in their behalf was usually productive of essential good, for those that knew him knew that truth and justice were at his back, and that it was not safe to take up the gauntlet against so unselfish a champion. It was not for himself that he pleaded, but for those who could not defend themselves."

His pleadings were not in vain. There came a change for the better. The payments to the Indians were resumed at La Pointe, and Mr. Wheeler's ideas of justice toward the Ojibway Indians were substantially embodied in a treaty made with them, the thirtieth of September, 1854, by which three reservations were provided for,— at Odanah, where he had made a settlement so many years before, at Lac Court Oreilles, and at Lac du Flambeau. To have the government give the head of each Indian family eighty acres of land, and to induce the Indians to settle upon farms and improve them, were favorite projects with Mr. Wheeler. In short, he anticipated what enlightened public sentiment now demands as the only just and sensible method of dealing with the Indians.