

## STATEMENT OF MR. FRANK STRANAHAN.

Mr. STRANAHAN. At the present time I am president of the Fort Lauderdale State Bank. I located at Fort Lauderdale here January 27, 1893. At that time the Indian camp was about a mile east of here. My camp was pitched within about 300 feet of it. I might say that they were located in a heavy hammock where there was a large field, and they had plenty of corn, Indian pumpkins, sweet potatoes, and Lima beans. They were living in no want whatever at that time. I was in the mercantile business here for 18 years and had considerable experience trading with the Indians in alligator hides and others, and at one time the plume bird also. That part of it was cut off by the Government along about 1899—the killing of the plume bird. Alligator hides in the last six years have not brought them any revenue, and otters have little in the last three years.

The CHAIRMAN. Why has the otter and alligator hide not been profitable?

Mr. STRANAHAN. I am told on account of there being no duty on the alligator hides from Central America.

The CHAIRMAN. And why has not the otter?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Most of them are imported. There has been no demand for them. An alligator hide this year is worth three to five dollars. At the time I quit business they were worth seven and a half to nine dollars.

The CHAIRMAN. Otters and alligators are still here, then, but you haven't the price for them?

Mr. STRANAHAN. They are not here like they were before the drainage operations. Naturally the drainage is driving them away. They are scattered all over the glades, but as the glades get dryer they become more accessible, and they are being killed out by the white people more than they were years ago.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there anything further that you wish to say?

Mr. STRANAHAN. I do not know that I could add anything to what Mr. Coleman has said. I would be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. HAYDEN. I should like to ask this question: If there were land provided, do you believe that the Indian would farm it, if it were good land, suitably located, where they could grow crops that could be marketed readily?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; I do. At one time Osceola had a camp here. He is dead now. In one season he grew tomatoes and shipped them. He shipped enough to buy a horse and wagon. I helped him out with the fertilizer proposition then. Then he could go out and grow stuff on one piece till the soil gave out, and then move somewhere else. But later, as fast as they clear a piece of hammock and work it two or three years, some white man comes along and takes it. A number of years ago, after leaving there, he stayed at that camp a year or so, and then, when the railroad came he went to Pine Island, about 12 miles away, and stayed out there till about 1898. That was the time of the Duncan survey. As quick as the surveyors went to Pine Island, or Long Key, the Indians left it. That piece of land, as I understand it, was set aside by the Government for a reservation, and I can't see that the Government has ever done anything since that toward trying to locate them on Pine Island.



Mr. HAYDEN. If the Government were to provide some practical farmer who could instruct them in the use of fertilizers and the preparation of lands and growing crops, and help them to market them, do you think they would go on that tract of land and live as agricultural Indians?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAYDEN. That land is how far from here?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Twelve miles.

Mr. HAYDEN. About how many acres in the tract, do you know?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No; I could not say; but there are several hundred acres in it. It is the only high piece of land that is not overflowed near Fort Lauderdale. That is in the heart of the Everglades.

Mr. HAYDEN. Do you think it would be highly desirable that some efforts be made to settle them there and help them to farm?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; I do.

Mr. TILLMAN. There doesn't appear to be much tribal spirit here. This small tribe of 600 people is divided up into these different camps. Why do you understand that condition exists?

Mr. STRANAHAN. At the time I came here there were 150 Indians here, and naturally enough when the railroad came in here the older heads pulled out. The Tony Tommy Camp was "Old John Jumper Camp" at that time. That was east of here, and old Jumper always stayed along the coast. He didn't go inland.

Mr. TILLMAN. There doesn't seem to be much disposition on their part, then, to congregate, but to divide up into small camps.

Mr. STRANAHAN. That is for the reason that each one had their section to hunt in and everything like that.

Mr. NORTON. Are there any male members of this camp—that is, mature men? There seem to be just a few boys here.

Mr. STRANAHAN. Sam Huff is the only one here that has a squaw. This old man, Old Charlie, generally stays south of Miami. Old Charlie had two squaws. One of them is dead, and he stays at the other camp as a general thing.

Mr. NORTON. Are there any men who live here?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes; Charlie Tommy and Sam Huff. They are not here to-day. They are away to-day, but they live here at this camp.

Mr. TILLMAN. These Indians practice polygamy, then?

Mr. STRANAHAN. I think Cypress Tiger had two squaws; yes.

Mr. HASTINGS. These Indians are law-abiding, are they?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. HASTINGS. Have you any instance of any of them being tried in the State courts on a criminal charge?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir.

Mr. HASTINGS. Of course, they have no civil suits because they have no ideas of the rights of property?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir.

Mr. HASTINGS. Are they addicted to the use of intoxicants?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir. I will say this one thing: That they are the only people that know how to drink it and enjoy it. They do not abuse it or anything like that.

Mr. SEARS. Isn't it a custom of theirs—it used to be, at least, and isn't it still—that several Indians get drunk, but one of them stays sober to look after the crowd?



Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; and everything is picked up, in the way of axes, knives, and guns, and is taken care of.

Mr. SEARS. There is one Indian who doesn't drink a drop while they are on the spree?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. NORTON. Do they intermarry with negroes?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir.

Mr. TILLMAN. Nor the whites?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Nor the whites.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any mixed-blood Seminoles that you know of at all?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; not in this camp, though.

The CHAIRMAN. I mean any in Florida?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; some have Negro mixed blood in them.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any that have white blood in them?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. NORTON. Are they Christian Indians; do they have any church or religious affiliations?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Not with the whites; no.

The CHAIRMAN. They have their own great spirit and the happy hunting grounds?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Do any of the men do any work outside of fishing and hunting?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Not as a general thing.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Do any of the women do any fancy work; bead work?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. They have a sewing machine in this camp, have they not?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Do you know whether they are able to use it?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; they have used sewing machines over 20 years.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Do they produce some things they sell from which they get provisions?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Not as a general thing.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Do you know where they get provisions from?

Mr. STRANAHAN. They always got them from hunting and fishing.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. And is that sufficient to keep them in the way that they are kept?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Not at the present time.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Don't they depend upon some charity in this community for some provisions?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Only as the white people see fit to give it to them. They don't beg.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. As a matter of fact, white people of Fort Lauderdale give them provisions, don't they?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. You have given them a great deal of provisions, haven't you?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. NORTON. Don't they work in the truck gardens?

Mr. STRANAHAN. The women and children do.



Mr. NORTON. And the men do not?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir; especially after a boy gets to be 18. Before that time they work.

Mr. NORTON. He just either hunts or loafs then?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir; you might say so.

Mr. NORTON. Well, that is a fact, isn't it? If he doesn't find anything to hunt, he loafs around and does no work?

Mr. STRANAHAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. SEARS. Half-breeds are not permitted to marry, as I understand it, with the full-bloods?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you mean by "half-breeds"?

Mr. SEARS. Those with Negro blood in them.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there very many half-breed Negroes?

Mr. STRANAHAN. The way that came about was on account of having slaves years ago.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there very many?

Mr. STRANAHAN. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Is Mrs. Stranahan present?

**STATEMENT OF MRS. FRANK STRANAHAN, OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA.**

Mrs. STRANAHAN. I might say that three years ago the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs took this work up and appointed me as chairman, and during those three years I have been working endeavoring to work with the Government representatives here, assisting them in every way possible.

I have worked to get the other Indians in with Tony and to keep him in school, always holding out the thought that these Indians could not go to school if they hadn't anything to eat and wear and dress like the boys and girls in the school here. And until this year, I have not been very successful, as I don't think they had much to eat last year, as far as going to school is concerned, and of course only one Indian going.

I have helped Mr. Coleman in dressing these Indians when we persuaded this Indian girl—two of them—to go to school. I went with him to the store, as he has stated, and we fitted out these Indians to the amount of \$13 to \$15 apiece for their dress. I took them to my room the first morning and dressed them—helped them dress and fix their hair, and took them to school and introduced them to their teachers. I have kept close watch over them as to their punctuality in their school and the interest that the teachers were taking, which has been very great.

We have furnished them meals often after the other two girls left school, because I understand they were not having as much to eat as they wanted, this 35-cent appropriation not being enough to furnish them meat, and, as you know, Indians must have meat. They get it in their wild state, and these other girls and boys left school, and this one girl has come to my house quite often at noon, being lonesome, to get her noon meal.

It seems to me, though, that the State of Florida, having had these Indians in their possession or on these lands, that have been given them by the United States—if they have not done anything for them