

1854/1855

No. 8.

NORTHERN SUPERINTENDENCY,
Milwaukie, October 1, 1855.

SIR: In obedience to the regulations of the Indian Department I submit my annual report.

Of the Indian tribes under the superintendency of this office the Oneidas, Stockbridges, and Brothertons are commonly classed among the civilized Indians, while the Menomonees have, so far, been classed and considered as uncivilized or wild Indians. However, this tribe of Indians have lately, and particularly within the last year, improved much and made considerable progress towards civilization.

In accordance with the stipulations of the treaty of May 12, 1855, the means were furnished to begin a systematic effort to improve and civilize them, and though I had hoped that more progress would be made this season, the results obtained are such that perhaps the history of the civilization of Indian tribes will not show an instance where more has been accomplished in so short a time. The leading idea expressed in my report of October 27, 1854, that, "as much as practicable, all the work to be done for the Menomonees is to be done by them, and whites are to be employed only to superintend the work and to teach them how to work," has been adhered to; and when funds for improvements to be made were placed in my hands, (February 1, 1855,) many of the Indians were persuaded to go to work at getting out fence rails, fence posts, timber, clearing, grubbing, and some at making shingles, &c. A part of this work was done by different individuals, while other parts were performed by the young men of one or more bands, forming themselves, under their own foremen, into gangs of hands. A carpenter shop was at once put into operation, and the public buildings being erected at the pay-ground are offering a fine opportunity for a number of the young men to be instructed in the carpenter trade. A dwelling house for one of the teachers, and the agency and interpreter's house, have already been built by Indian hands; and a number of young men have made such progress that, in building houses for themselves, they need no instruction from the carpenter who is superintending the work at the public buildings. Many young men show, comparatively, far more inclination for, and dexterity and perseverance in, mechanical labor than farm labor; and, to some extent, the old prejudice of looking upon farm labor as properly to be left to the women is clinging to them. However, since the new agent, authorized by Congress to be appointed in lieu of the Green Bay sub-agent, has taken charge of their improvements (in May last) they have made considerable progress in farming.

In addition to the remaining working cattle—of the few yoke furnished them annually under stipulations of the treaty of 1836—ten yoke were delivered to them in May last, and these cattle are now well provided for; and under the instruction of a competent farmer, a number of the Indians are learning well to attend to and drive cattle. It is to be expected that enough land will be ploughed to enable the

tribe to plant next spring sufficient for their sustenance, in case the season should prove favorable to their crops.

A majority of the tribe have adopted our mode of dressing, and are wearing coats and pantaloons, made up by the women, (under the instruction of the teacher of the sewing school,) of stuff furnished; and with shoes and hats, lately provided for them, a perfect change in their appearance is completed.

At the purchase of the saw-mill, which had been erected before the Menomonees were removed to their present reservation, a large quantity of pine lumber and logs came into our possession. It is much to be deprecated that a settlement for this lumber has not yet been completed with the individual who manufactured it; and I was reluctant to authorize the use of any of this lumber for the erection, by the Indians, of houses for their own use. But their applications have been so pressing, and it has been so apparent that they needed houses, and were capable of constructing them, that I felt constrained to authorize the furnishing of a limited quantity of lumber to such Indians as are erecting houses, and gave instructions that an account be kept of their names and of the quantities furnished.

These evidences of civilization among these Indians furnish a great contrast to their behavior when, under the treaty of 1831, houses were built for them, and they preferred to live in their lodges and put their horses into the houses, or let their traders occupy them.

In our efforts to civilize these Indians very little assistance can be obtained from those who have been residing in the vicinity of these Indians, and making their living out of them, and who had succeeded at every treaty made with them by the government, except at the one of 12th of May last year, to get large claims allowed. On the contrary, many of them have been doing everything in their power to sow distrust among the Indians towards their officers and the policy of the government, and to keep them from working as advised by the agent and the farmer and carpenter. Since the Indians are becoming more capable of doing business, and disinclined to be used as tools to the iniquitous schemes of these traders and half-breeds, they look upon them with disgust and hatred, and injure them where they can; and I have often wished that provisions were made by law clearly applicable to this locality and to these cases, which would enable me to have the agent to effectually stop these machinations.

The Menomonees have been advised by me not to leave their reservation to rove through the country for the purpose of fishing, hunting, and gathering rice, because it brings them in contact with whiskey and other deteriorating influences, and most of them bring very little or game home; and because they, while lying around the shops of those trading with them, are a great nuisance to the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Some few, who have not yet learned to understand the importance of availing themselves of the facilities offered them to improve, are in the habit of returning, from time to time, to the lower Wolf river, where complaints are often made by the inhabitants, to whom their presence is highly objectionable. I presume it would be proper for the State of Wisconsin to adopt laws more strictly prohibiting the sale of spiritous liquors to the Indians, and restrain-

ing these strolling Menomonees, as well as the Pottowatomies and Chippewas, who returned from their new home west of the Mississippi, and are now roving about through the State.

In relation to the condition of the *Oneida Indians*, I had the honor to report to you on the 14th of August last, giving a description of the pernicious influences of their lumbering operations on many of this tribe, and of the neglected condition of many of their extensive farms. I trust that the disposition of that report made by your office will cause proper measures to be instituted to put a stop to the trade carried on by the people of Green Bay for the pine logs, lumber, and shingles, cut and manufactured by these Indians. I have taken every proper opportunity to impress upon the minds of their chiefs the importance of dissuading their people from continuing occupations so illy calculated for their welfare and improvement, and they being men of good judgment, admitted the correctness of my views; but it seems that their tribal government is too weak, and their discipline too loose, to give the chiefs sufficient influence to prevent their young men from continuing to cut pine and to manufacture shingles. The price of pine is so high, and the market is so near, that the temptation is too strong; and though I will repeat these efforts to dissuade the Indians from continuing occupations ruinous to them, and from neglecting farming, I cannot expect to succeed fully, unless at the same time the purchase from the Indians of pine and shingles is discouraged. Unless such measures will soon be taken, ruin will be brought by this trade upon a tribe which had advanced far in civilization.

I have very little to add to the condensed statement of the affairs at Stockbridge contained in my last annual report, and the opinion expressed there in relation to measures to be taken for the benefit of the Stockbridges and Munsees has not been changed. I had the honor to state at length my objections to the treaty with the Stockbridges, concluded on the first of June last, but I am not aware if they had any weight in causing that treaty to be laid aside. I presume that an arrangement on a different basis will soon be authorized, and that after so many unsuccessful attempts to "cure the impracticabilities" of legislation intended for the benefit of the Stockbridge Indians, these difficulties will be settled without violating any legal and equitable rights of the white settlers at Stockbridge; and that a home will be provided for the Stockbridges and Munsees where they will resume with good earnest their agricultural pursuits.

I was sorry to notice that the bitter feeling existing at Stockbridge between the whites and Indians, and caused by those unsettled affairs, extends to the neighboring town of Manchester, the home of the Brothertons. In every other respect the Brothertons seem to live comfortably and to enjoy all the rights and advantages of citizenship.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

FRANCIS HUEBSCHMANN,
Superintendent.

Hon. GEORGE W. MANYPENNY,
Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

1855/1856

No. 5.

MENOMONEE AGENCY,
Keshena, September 30, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to submit my second annual report. I am able to state that the Menomonee Indians have, within the last year, advanced rapidly in the arts of civilization and habits of industry, and have made numerous and valuable improvements for their benefit.

Within the last year more than one hundred dwelling-houses have been erected by them, and their improved lands have been doubled in quantity. The amount of produce raised by the Indians is three times greater than last year. This is owing—first, to the increased quantity of land cultivated; second a more favorable season; and third, a better disposition to labor and more intelligence as to farming operations. Nearly one hundred have been employed to labor to a greater or less extent on the farm or in the mill or shops, and with the most satisfactory results. There are now twenty Menomonees capable of building good dwelling-houses, and about as many more capable of performing common carpenter-work. There are several who are as valuable hands in the saw-mill (under the direction of the miller) as the best white men.

One hundred, who one year ago lived by the chase, and wore their blankets, now dress like the whites, and are clearing and cultivating land and building houses. The saw-mill has been doing a fair business through the season. A flouring-mill is now being constructed.

The carpenter shop has been carried on successfully by Indian help; and at the same time that the public buildings were being erected, a knowledge of the trade has been disseminated among them worth more, I think, to the Menomonees, than the whole cost of the construction of those buildings. The carpenter, and the young men employed under him, have been engaged for the last year in completing the interpreter's house, then partially built, and building two school-houses, a farm-house and barn, a root-house, a male teacher's house, and door-yard fences for the several buildings at the pay ground.

The blacksmiths have had a largely increased amount of labor to perform, owing to the prosecution of the building and farming operations of the Indians, and have well earned the small salary they receive. The schools have been somewhat embarrassed a part of the time for the want of suitable houses, but that difficulty is now obviated, and we hope no interruption will occur for the future. The sewing school, in particular, has proved of great value; as while the Indians have been persuaded to adopt the dress of the white men, the teachers of the sewing school have spared no pains to instruct their wives and daughters in making their necessary wearing apparel; and probably no money expended for the Menomonees will be more usefully applied than that expended for the sewing school.

The farmer, Mr Haas, has been among them but a short time, but

has thus far shown an energy and perseverance, from which good results are hoped.

The improvements on the central farm within the last year are a farm-house, complete except plastering; a farm barn and root-house, and about seventy acres of land cleared and broke, and mostly fenced. A portion of this was cropped this season with corn, potatoes, oats, turnips, and beans; some is designed for fall rye, and some for spring crops next season. The corn is fair for a turf crop, the potatoes good; over one thousand bushels will be realized from the central farm. I have not often seen better turnips than those raised by us, and have never seen beans do better than here. Eighteen acres of spring wheat have been raised this season and about twenty-two of oats. The straw of neither was large, but the grain of both good. Our grain is now in the barn unthreshed.

The experience of the last year has satisfied me that the Indian reservation is far better than generally supposed, and that the Indians are capable, under proper instructions, of obtaining from it a full supply for all their wants, and that there now exists but one serious difficulty in the way of the full civilization of the Menomonees.

Whiskey, the mortal enemy of the red men, is still on their track, and a few drunken Indians are a serious brawback on the whole nation. The hope of getting whiskey induces them to leave their home and wander among the white settlements, to the injury of themselves and the annoyance of the white men. Take from them the hope of getting whiskey, and all the Menomonees will stay at home and cultivate the soil, and the occasional difficulties between them and the citizens would no more be heard of.

I would beg leave to suggest the application of a sufficient amount of their funds to employ a suitable person to prosecute to conviction those persons who sell them whiskey. If this could be done, it would not only work to their advantage, but would be heartily approved by them.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

BENJ. HUNKINS,
Indian Agent.

FRANCIS HUEBSCHMANN, Esq.,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

No. 6.

ONEIDA WEST MISSION ORCHARD PARTY,
July 1, 1856.

SIR: I herewith submit to you my annual report for the past year. In agricultural pursuits there is a decided improvement on the last year in this part of the nation. Crops of all kinds look well, and the natives have exhibited a commendable energy in clearing land and putting in crops. More than enough will be raised in this part of the