

U.S. - Indian Affairs, Commission
REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

TO THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

FOR

THE YEAR 1871. 1870/71

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scope only a few months, and therefore but partly developed, is anything but assuring to the welfare of the poor Indian; nor will it be very pleasant for his real friends to contemplate, as the following exhibit of it will most abundantly show:

At the request of those Indians I made them an official visit in July last, and while there I ascertained from a personal examination of the files and records kept in the office of the register of the county of Osage, in this State, and in which their reserve is partly situated, as well as from other reliable sources of information, that the keen-scented and grasping white man, with his artificial cunning, had already been there, and that by deed and other expedients he had actually possessed himself of more than 6,000 acres of the land so patented to them as their future homes. I consider that reserve in a fair way to be broken up, and that at no distant day; for I understand that the work of dispossessing these Indians of the title of these lands is still going on without let or hindrance.

And what is and will be true of this reserve will, in all probability, sooner or later be true of the other reserves of the agency, provided the like patents shall be issued to the Indians located thereon. And most assuredly this will be the case if the greed of gain, whisky, the general extortion of the Indians, and other pernicious influences, can accomplish it. In my opinion, the general result of all this will be an unnecessary amount of poverty and wretchedness to the Indian and the hastening him to utter extinction as a race, and to the State of Michigan an increased amount of pauperism and crime within its borders.

I have just returned from another official visit made to the Chippewas of Saginaw, Swan Creek, and Black River, and a small portion of the Ottawas and Chippewas, who are located in Isabella County, in this State, and during which, under the instructions of the Department, I was required to witness the delivery, by its special agent, to them at Isabella, and at other points in its vicinity, about 1,000 similar patents for their lands.

And while the selections of lands made for those Indians, the issuing of patents for the same, as well as their delivery, are to be made the subject of a special report at the proper time, it is deemed not inappropriate for me to state in this report that, from what transpired during the visit, it would seem that the affairs of those Indians, so far as their timber and land matters were concerned, have, for the last two or three years, been administered by their white neighbors more than by the regularly appointed governmental agents; and administered, too, in a manner not uncharitable to suppose, largely in the interests of these self-constituted, superserviceable agents and their abettors.

I think I am safe in saying that, during the last few years not more than five hundred contracts, large and small, written and otherwise, have been made with those Indians, chiefly for their pine timber, but in a few cases for the land also, and this before any patents had been issued for their lands, save one.

It has been estimated that, under cover of these contracts, from fifty to one hundred millions of feet of their pine timber has already been cut and removed from the Isabella reserve alone. And furthermore, information has reached this office, which is regarded as reliable, that it is in contemplation by the parties in interest in those contracts to cut and remove millions upon millions of feet more of the timber now standing upon that reserve the coming winter, and for years to come. Referring you to the case of the United States against Holliday, who

went up to the Supreme Court of the United States from this judicial district for his action, as reported in the 3d of Wallace's Reports, page 107, and to the case of the Kansas Indians, as reported in volume 5, page 77, of the same reports, you will permit me respectfully to say, that nearly all of the above contracts, and the transactions under them, have been in fraud of the treaty and other rights of those Indians.

If this is the case, then the state of things which has heretofore existed, and which now exists on that reserve, imperatively demands, and should not fail to require, the prompt and energetic action of the Department of one of its principal values, greatly to the damage and discom-
 power to protect themselves.

In conclusion, let me further say that at this presentment of the affairs of the agency in this form is made from a sense of duty, and chiefly in the hope a real benefit to them remains to be seen.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

RICHARD M. SMITH,

United States Indian Agent.

H. R. CLUM, Esq.,
 Acting Commissioner Indian Affairs,
 Washington City, District of Columbia.

No. 84.

UNITED STATES INDIAN DEPARTMENT.

Green Bay, Wisconsin, September 14, 1871.

Sir: I have the honor, in accordance with instructions from your office, to submit the following report, showing the general condition of the Indian tribes in charge of this agency, since the 15th of November, 1870, at which time I entered upon the duties of this office.

I am under special obligations to Lieutenant W. R. Bourne, of the United States Army, who preceded me at this agency, for his kind and zealous efforts to aid me in gaining an understanding of the duties and Onidas comprise the tribes in care of this agency. The former, for several years, has roamed over the hills and valleys of this portion of Wisconsin, although their domain no longer embraces millions of acres as formerly, but is now reduced to some 230,000, still they feel strongly attached to their native lands.

The Wolf River, with some of its many tributaries, flows through this reservation from north to south, affording extensive water-power and abundant facilities for removing timber to market. Only a small portion of the land embraced in this reserve can be called good for farming purposes. It was very unfortunate for this tribe that the agent who located them at their present reserve should select the poorest portion for their homes, and that they should find little to encourage them in their efforts to cultivate the soil around them; on this account they have made much less progress in their agricultural pursuits, and have been more inclined to renew their former habits of hunting and fishing. But of late they seem inclined to move from these worthless lands to those of better soil, and thereby timbered.

In this move for a new home they are now manifesting much zeal, as those who have made the trial now find much better returns for their labor than on the lands they have been trying to cultivate for the past fifteen years. I think it of great importance just now that these Indians should be encouraged in their farming inclinations and efforts by being better supplied with teams and farming implements to aid them in clearing and cultivating their new farms.

It was in order to provide for these pressing wants in part that application was recently made by the agent to the Indian Department in behalf of this tribe, asking permission to cut and remove a portion of the pine timber now standing on this reserve to the lumber market, the Indians being employed to perform most of the labor. I am confident this lumbering plan, wisely managed, will prove of vast good to this tribe. It will not only furnish many of them work during the winter season, but the timber thus converted into money will furnish funds to be used under the approval of the Department for an increase of their agricultural and educational facilities.

The tribe are heartily in favor of thus cutting and disposing of their pine timber, as they will be sure of getting the full value thereof, as the logs will be sold to the highest bidder, while at the same time they will receive the labor benefit of cutting and removing their timber to market. I trust the result of this lumbering enterprise will be such as to satisfy the Indian Department and all concerned that this is the best policy to be pursued with this tribe in reference to their pine timber.

The past year has been one of general prosperity with this tribe, if they have not been able to cultivate as many acres as formerly, I believe the aggregate value of the crops raised will exceed that of last year. The sugar season of last spring was one of the best they have ever enjoyed, the value of this crop being \$15,000. This crop brings these quick returns for their labor, and is the most remunerative branch of business in which they now engage, and they prize it so well that nearly every family moves into the sugar-bush as the season for making commences around.

I am much encouraged by the disposition shown by many of the Indians to work, and I am confident if they can have the help they ought in the shape of teams, farming tools, and seeds, they will soon be able to provide for themselves the necessities of life.

I think there is much more harmony of feeling and action among the tribe than for some time past. I have made special efforts for this object, both by legal and moral suasion; the former with whiskey-sellers and other outside troublemakers, and the latter with the Indians themselves. In both cases I have been permitted to see good results.

SCHOOLS.

This portion of my work is far from being satisfactory in result; one reason is doubtless to be found in the unsettled condition of many families of late, owing mainly to the moving process going on; others have moved so far away from the place of school, to their new homes, that their children cannot now attend. This change of location on the part of so many families seems to demand the building of one or more school-houses, for the use of the tribe, at once. Allow me to refer you to my letter of May 3, 1871, as I there give the Commissioner my views, plan, and estimates for one of the school-buildings, such as I deem needful for the best management of the school-work with these Indians. I do most respectfully urge the consideration of this matter, as it is

as possible to carry forward the school-work with any degree of success under the present condition of things. The children who attend school with a fair show of punctuality are making commendable improvement. I have visited both the schools on this reserve, and believe the teachers are trying to fulfill their respective duties. The other employees at this reserve are faithful, earnest men, and, as a general thing, are doing well for the tribe. I learned soon after payment, in May last, that a number of families belonging to this tribe had for some time been firing away from the reservation among the whites, or on land they claimed under the "pre-emption" or "homestead act." After consulting with the chiefs in reference to the 50 persons, I gave notice that such families would be stricken from the pay-roll if they did not pay for several of the wanderers back to their tribal home. The teacher in charge of the school on this reserve, I am happy to state, is a Christian man of strict integrity. As the sure result of fair and reasonable dealing, he seems to enjoy the full confidence of the whole tribe, and is really doing much good by the moral influence he is exerting over these Indians, and I regard him as a true helper in my efforts for the elevation of this people.

STOCKBREEDERS AND HUNTERS.

I do not wish to review the troubles and divisions existing among the Indians for many years. It is to be hoped the late act of Congress passed for their relief will result in securing the desired end. The reservation embraces 46,000 acres, and joins that of the Menominee on the poorest portion of their land, thinking, doubtless, more of the spring they would make in clearing the same, than of the quality of the land they would have for cultivation. They soon found the snags raised on the prairies were easily gathered and soon consumed. The supply they have produced the past season is very meager, and the prospect before them for the coming winter must be ominous of future want.

How Indians have long enjoyed good advantages for improvement, and need, in my judgment, be better on the whole, were they to relinquish all dependence on the Government and assert the full rights of citizenship. I believe this step would do more to elevate them than anything else. As they have long been talking and planning for moving to the West, they have more than ever been thinking the past season that the time was near at hand. This move to the West will do well be best for those of them who prefer to retain their tribal connection. Nearly all the members of this tribe can read and write the English language, and some of the younger persons and children have the knowledge of the common English branches. I have visited the school in charge of the Rev. Jeremiah Shingler, and was much pleased with the good order and deportment of the pupils, and also with their neat and prompt recitations.

There is much feeling on the part of the "citizen party," as they are called, on account of being cut off by the recent act of Congress. They are highly and justly indignant at this, and believe that they have made on the land they have cultivated for the past fifty years, when they were acknowledged as a part of the tribe under the treaty of 1836.

ONEDIAS.

The reservation occupied by this tribe lies near Green Bay, and contains 3391 A.

tains some sixty-five thousand acres, quite a portion of which is good farming land. A portion of this tribe are industrious, thriving farmers, as their broad fields of grain very plainly indicate. Some of their farms and stock will compare favorably with their white neighbors' around them. Could they all be induced to engage in cultivating their lands, and cease to live upon and squander the timber belonging to the tribe, they would be far better off.

If the Indian Department cannot restrain this constant cutting and selling of timber on the part of some members of the tribe, not for the sake of clearing the land for cultivation, but because they can get a larger easier than by farming, then it seems very desirable that the bulk of this tribe should be divided, and so allotted that each family can hold and control their rightful share of the property. As the case now stands, some members are consuming every year thousands of dollars of tribal property; thus detracting from the value of their lands, when they should be adding to the same by cultivation.

Intemperance has, for years, been doing its wretched work among a portion of the Indians, and unless the army temptations of this kind can be removed numbers of them will be ruined, and much sorrow and suffering entailed upon their families. Three complaints were made by the agent last May against persons for selling whisky to members of this tribe. These cases were brought to trial at the July term of the United States district court, held in Oshkosh. All three of the offenders were convicted, fined, and imprisoned for thirty days. These convictions so alarmed the liquor-sellers that, for a while, the Indians were not able to get much whisky, and they could come into our town and go home again as sober men. But I learn of late that some of the Indians have found access to the "fire-water" again, and some of them are showing the drunkard's mark. It is only by following up these liquor sellers with prosecutions that this illegal business can be checked. This I am resolved to do, as my time will allow, believing I can in no other way do more for the good of the Indian.

EDUCATIONAL WORK.

This has been carried on the past year much as usual, by the Episcopal and Methodist missionaries. Each reports general prosperity and increasing interest on the part of those attending school. There is, however, in my judgment, the need of more vigorous prosecution of the school work among this tribe. The whole number reported as attending school the past year is 240, with an average of only 100, while the whole number of school age is nearly 400. These figures not only show lack of regular attendance, but they indicate that one-third of the children do not attend school at all.

It is not easy to elevate these children and improve their social condition while they remain in utter ignorance. I am confident the best good of these Indians will be promoted by an increase of school privileges. For a more full expression of my views and plans I would respectfully invite your attention to my letter in reference to this matter of May 9, 1871. For an exhibit of farming products and population of the tribes at this agency I respectfully refer you to the statistical table herewith enclosed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. T. RICHARDSON,
United States Indian Agent.

HON. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.

No. 85.

AGENCY OF SAC AND FOX INDIANS IN IOWA,
Tulata, Iowa, September 1, 1871.

Sir: In compliance with instructions from the Department, I have the honor to submit the following report of this agency for the period ending which I have had charge, together with such information relating to the affairs and condition of the Indians under my charge as appears to me should be embraced in the annual report.

I took charge of the agency October 11, 1870, relieving Lieutenant Frank D. Garrett, United States Army. This tribe or band is a part of the Sac and Fox Indians of the Mississippi, a large part of whom never joined their tribe, either in Kansas or the Indian Territory, but resided in this (Iowa) country prior to its organization, and have persisted in continuing to make this their home.

In the year 1857, by the sale of ponies and furs, they managed to purchase eighty acres of land on the Iowa River, near this place; and since the Government commenced paying them their proportion of annuity with the balance of the tribe, in 1867, they have purchased other lands adjoining with their tribal fund, so that they now have four hundred and thirteen acres, of which about ninety acres are in cultivation.

The farm work is mostly done by the women, in accordance with Indian custom; however, the men are showing more disposition to work than formerly. During the harvest just past the men of the tribe have sited an amount of \$3000. They have been working out in harvest for two or three years past, but have done better this year, that is, they have earned more money, in the aggregate, on smaller wages, than any previous year. The cultivated land is planted in corn, potatoes, and beans, with the usual quantity of pumpkins, squashes, turnips, &c., the principal portion, however, being in corn, of which they have raised about two thousand bushels.

I am not able to report any considerable advancement in civilization, notwithstanding they are surrounded and have the example of an enterprising and friendly population. It is little of the good they are disposed to copy from their white neighbors. Little progress can be looked for until they have a good school established. This is of utmost importance to their well-being and advancement. They are not willing and could not were they so disposed, from their scanty means, to erect school buildings. They are poor, enjoying few of the comforts of their civilized neighbors. I have asked, and would have repeat the recommendation, that Congress make an appropriation sufficient to build a school-house, when this agency could be turned over to a missionary association and a school maintained without further expense to the Government. They unwillingly listen to any proposition for removal to any other home, but unless some advantages for their improvement be made to be provided, it would be far better that they be removed to the new home of the Sac and Fox Indians, in the Indian Territory, where they have a beautiful reservation, a tract of land embracing 150,000 acres, well supplied with living streams of water, rich and productive bottom-lands, prairie and wood lands, diversified, and a climate much more congenial and far better adapted to their exposed habits. The advantage of such removal, could this band be made to see it and induced to avail themselves of its benefits, would be great. This new home possesses superior advantages naturally as to climate, soil, timber, and extent of reservation, which would offer to each member of