

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

ACCOMPANYING

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

FOR THE YEAR 1858.

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No. 3.

STATE OF MICHIGAN AGENCY.

GROVE HILL, GRAND TRAVERSE, September 22, 1855.

Report of Manual Labor Boarding School at Grove Hill, Grand Traverse Bay, for the Chippewa and Ottawa Indians, under the direction and support of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions.

In presenting the report of this school and mission for the past year, it becomes us to acknowledge with gratitude the care and blessing of a gracious God. We have been enabled to continue our labors under encouraging circumstances. Our school has been prosperous, and the people under our care have been mostly industrious, and conducted well. Our people have been sharers in those divine influences that have, throughout our land, turned the hearts of so many to the remembrance and worship of Jehovah, the Redeemer. Under these influences, some of our scholars and some of the adults around us have been taught to fear and worship God, and hence have been more orderly and industrious. There has been much less intemperance and other irregularities among our people to grieve the hearts of those who labor for their good this season than in former years. The school has been conducted in all respects as in former years. The school and mission are under the superintendence of an ordained missionary, who labors for the spiritual instruction and moral improvement of parents and pupils, and his wife superintends the domestic affairs of the establishment.

The school is carried on in two separate departments, male and female. Each department has had an average of twenty-two scholars, from the age of eight to eighteen. Each department is under the care of a female teacher. The schools are kept in regular operation during the year, with two short vacations, spring and fall. The children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and philosophy.

There are two sessions a day, from 9 o'clock to 12 o'clock, and from half-past 1 to half-past 4.

The board also employ a farmer and assistant to conduct the farm, to take charge of the boys out of school, and instruct them in the various branches of farming. Four females are also employed to attend to the cooking, washing, baking, and making and mending the clothing of the scholars. By a system of rotation, the girls all change work each week, so that all get a practical knowledge of household economy.

As heretofore, the scholars have been furnished with clothing, and are boarded from the funds of the board, to the officers of which vouchers of the expenditures are forwarded from those employed in the institution.

In reviewing the labors of another year in the school and among these people, we feel that with most of the families there is a gradual advancement. Intemperance is still doing its fatal work with some.

We feel an increasing conviction that the manual labor system promises more permanent good to these people than any other. These schools take the children from a bad home influence, and, by a regular system of exercise in labor, their natural indolence is counteracted, habits of labor and regular occupation are formed, and they see the advantages derived therefrom, while they are restrained from forming those irregular and roving habits of life which result from children unrestrained following their own desires. They learn what inspires self respect, while they form habits of order and submission to restraint which are valuable to them in after life.

Our people, aided by the donations of a few friends and the board, have erected a good substantial church, 48 feet by 35.

Most respectfully, yours,

P. DOUGHERTY.

A. M. FITCH, Esq.,
Agent, &c., Detroit, Michigan.

No. 4.

GREEN BAY AGENCY.

INDIAN AGENCY,

Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, September 20, 1855.

SIR: It is a source of regret that in this, my first annual report, I am unable to present to you a flattering account of all the tribes within this agency.

The treaty of February, 1856, which was intended to settle finally the long existing difficulties of the Stockbridge and Munsee tribes, it seems, has not produced that result, at least with the Stockbridge. A considerable number of what is termed the "Indian party" refused at the time to sign the articles, and still remain at the old reservation on lake Winnebago, being without occupation, and are an annoyance to the white settlers, while a large portion of those who have removed to their new homes continue, in opposition to my advice and earnest remonstrance, to lead idle and dissolute lives, setting evil examples to their neighbors, the Menomonees, whose efforts to civilize and improve their condition are worthy of all praise.

All this is owing in a great degree to whiskey, that old and much talked of "bane" of all Indians. The acts of Congress, the stringent prohibitory laws of this State, and the constant vigilance of myself and the employes of the agency, appear to be all in vain to avoid the evil. The shops are kept upon lands adjoining the reserve, and the traffic is carried on with an address and cunning which seem to defy detection.

The Stockbridges represent to me that the system of payment adopted under the terms of the treaty of February, 1856, by a former superintendent, is oppressive; that the money for removal has not been paid in many instances, thereby preventing the coming of many who are anxious to remove to their new homes; and that the

land allotted to them is unsuitable for farming purposes, and by means such as they had a right to expect, both from the terms of the treaty and the promises of superintendent Huebschmann.

Without any disposition to censure the action of that officer, I consider it my duty to say that some portion of their complaints is founded in truth.

The country given to them is cold, by no means well fitted for farming purposes, and altogether inferior to the land conveyed by the Indians to the United States.

It is my belief that in many instances the removal fund was neither offered nor paid to them; and I am informed, and believe, that in every instance of payment *per capita* a portion of the sum to which the individual was entitled was retained.

The crops of the Stockbridges having unfortunately been nearly destroyed by the frost of the 24th of August, I am fearful, unless relieved, there will be much misery and suffering during the ensuing winter.

Those of the Munsee tribe on the reserve, as to their crops, &c. are pretty much in the same situation as the Stockbridges; although they have always evinced a strong desire to me to improve and cultivate their lands, and I think their efforts are commendable.

Since my appointment to this office I have found it impossible to visit but once the Oneidas at Duck creek, near Green Bay. They have recently expressed a strong desire for me to visit them in general council, which I intend doing at the earliest possible date. In my letter to you of the eighth of February last, I adverted to the difficulties existing between the chiefs and their people. From letters and other sources of information, I believe that these difficulties are not now less serious.

The Oneidas are surrounded by white settlements, and the contact, as usual, has been highly injurious to them. There seems to be little or no parental or preventive authority in the chiefs. They have lost their influences of domestic government, and are reduced to the level of the common Indian; cattle are stolen, driven off, and sold to the whites; and crimes of various kinds, and even murders, are committed.

All this, in my judgment, is not owing to bad conduct in the chiefs themselves; they are respectable men; but to the fact that, like the Stockbridges, the Oneidas have for many years been restless and removing from border to border of civilization, until vice and demoralization have done their work.

In a letter recently addressed to me by most of the principal chiefs, representing two hundred and eighty-nine warriors, who are a majority of the whole, after referring to their many troubles, they express themselves to the following effect:

"1. We want our land divided, and each person or head of a family have his or her share under their exclusive control.

"2. We want some change by which the United States may secure to us the benefits of a criminal code of laws, to be adjudged and executed, if possible, by the white tribunals.

"3. We desire to sell to the United States all our lands except about fifty acres per head."

There are many reasons why the department should, at an early date, seriously consider their request, the greatest of which is, that their present lawless condition can only effectually be corrected, in my judgment, by the stipulations of a treaty.

It gives me great pleasure to say that the Menomonees are doing well, and evince a strong prevailing desire to improve their condition, and I can assure you I shall extend to them all the kindness and care within my power, and which their general good character richly entitles them to.

You will, however, learn with regret that their labor for this season has been almost entirely unproductive. The wheat crop was destroyed by the smut and rust, so prevalent in all this part of the State; and the frost of the 24th of August was equally fatal to their corn, potatoes, &c.

The completion of their grist-mill, which is a very good one, induced them to sow a large breadth of land in wheat, nearly all of which is lost. It will be absolutely necessary to supply them with provisions for the coming winter, without which they will be obliged to return to the chase for subsistence. I earnestly invite your attention to this subject.

Their saw-mill was thoroughly repaired early last spring, and has been doing very well. There was a large lot of pine logs got out the last winter for their mill, and the lumber has been used by them for building houses, fences, &c., nearly as fast as the mill could saw it.

I have changed the system of management of the so-called central farm, believing that there was neither economy nor good policy in carrying it on as heretofore, by hiring laborers by the day. The ploughed land was, therefore, by my directions, subdivided into five acre lots, and distributed to those who had no ground under cultivation. This arrangement will relieve the tribe of a large expenditure, and enable the Menomonee farmer, Mr. Haas, to pursue his rounds of instructions and advice to all. I have also distributed the cattle that were on the reserve, together with those that were purchased for them the past summer, among the chiefs of the various bands on the reservation, to be kept and used exclusively for the purposes respectively of each band; and I am pleased to say that while the tribe is relieved thereby of the large expense heretofore incurred in keeping them, the time of the farmer is more profitably employed, and the different bands, by their care and management, have justified my confidence in them.

The Menomonees have recently met with a severe loss in the death of Oshkosh, their principal chief. The particulars of his death, occurring on the 31st of August, I communicated to you in my letter of the 10th of September.

The 31st day of August was a day the like of which will never be seen again by the Menomonee nation—a day on which not only the red man but the white man mourned the loss of a brave and noble hearted man, whose place will never be filled with another as much respected and honored; as an orator his equal has never been known in the Menomonee nation, and he would rank with many of his white brethren.

I regret to say that he is another sad victim of Indian intemperance which, however, has not been habitual with him for some years.

I respectfully refer you to the reports of the farmer and other employes of this agency, herewith transmitted for more detailed information in regard to their respective duties.

In obedience to your instructions of April 30, 1858, I have occupied some weeks in the investigation of claims of white settlers on the Stockbridge reserve, lately ceded to the United States; I find that duty requires much patience and care; I shall report finally at the earliest practicable period.

I cannot close this communication without referring in terms of approval to the zeal and ability of the interpreter, Captain William Powel. He has afforded me much valuable assistance and information. I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. D. BONESTEEL,
United States Indian Agent.
Hon. CHARLES E. MIX, Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

No. 5.

KESHENA, September 9, 1858

SIR: I take pleasure in complying with your request, and present to you my annual report of the school in my care. The object of the industrial school is to teach its scholars to cut and learn to make clothing, and to impress upon their minds a love for industry, which is so essential to happiness, and to comfort indispensable. I have spared no pains to advance these views, and to direct the minds of the Menomonee women to this important branch.

Sir, I am happy to say that its beneficial tendency is well understood and highly appreciated.

The catalogue of articles made in school will acquaint you with the industry of its scholars, both old and young.

Articles of clothing for men, one hundred and thirty-eight; for boys, two hundred and seventy-four; for women, one hundred and forty-four; for girls, three hundred and sixty-two; socks knit, thirty pair; stockings, thirteen pair; mittens, two pair.

Respectfully,

JANE DOUSMAN.
Mr. A. D. BONESTEEL, United States Indian Agent.

No. 6.

KESHENA, September 9, 1858.

SIR: I respectfully present the following as my annual report of the school under my charge. And I would thankfully acknowledge that, through the protection of a kind Providence, we have passed through another year of general prosperity.

The school has been continued through the whole year, except in the sugar making season, when the children were necessitated to follow their parents.

The number of scholars registered monthly is from fifty-five to eighty-one; of this number twenty-four are pagan children. The progress and deportment of the pupils have generally been commendable. With good success they have given attention to the following studies: reading, thirty-seven; spelling, forty-six; arithmetic, four; geography, five; grammar, two.

On Fridays a portion of the larger girls attended the sewing school under the direction of Miss Jane Dousman. I hope that the fruit of the labor thus bestowed will be seen in after years.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

ROSALIE DOUSMAN, Teacher.

A. D. BONESTEEL,
United States Indian Agent.

No. 7.

KESHENA, MENOMONEE PAY GROUND,
September 9, 1858.

SIR: Herewith I very respectfully submit to you my third annual report.

I am very sorry to inform you that all wheat sowed on the Indian reserve, which, according to my last letter, looked so rich and prosperous, has since been pretty nearly destroyed by the black rust.

The corn, potatoes, and all the vegetables were very much injured if not entirely destroyed, by a heavy frost on the 24th of August last, so much so as that it will make the Menomonee Indians destitute of all means of subsistence, and if they should get no assistance from government they will either starve, or fall back to wild life and follow the chase.

The Menomonee Indians put up an abundance of hay, so as to winter their cattle well.

The threshing machine you bought was received and put up, and I have been threshing, for the last few days, wheat for the Indians; but, as I have stated before, the most of it is hardly worth threshing.

The wheat and oats sowed on the central farm are in the same state as the rest, and is stacked in the government barn, so is the rye, but the rye yielded pretty well, and I shall encourage the Indians all to sow as much rye as they possibly can, because it will do well where other grain will not.

Very respectfully submitted by your very obedient
FREDERICK HAAS,
Menomonee farmer.

AUGUSTUS D. BONESTEEL,
Indian Agent.

No. 8.

ONEIDA WEST MISSION,
September 9, 1858.

DEAR SIR: According to your request, I forward you my annual report, from the 1st of July, 1857, to 30th of June, 1858.

The whole number of names on the register during that time is sixty-three. The highest number any day during the year was thirty-five all day, and one half a day. The lowest was two all day, and one half a day.

Each of the following branches have been taught in the school during the year, viz: reading, spelling, writing, geography, mental and written arithmetic.

Some make very good proficiency, others are rather dull. In the winter the school is generally well attended; in the summer but few are present.

The greatest difficulty is the want of parental government, and an interest in sending the children to school steadily. Many are strongly prejudiced against learning any way, claiming that it only makes people worse; others don't care, while some think it will do well enough to educate the boys, but that it is labor lost to educate the girls.

Then if there is any corn to hoe, a berry to pick, or a baby, and they are plenty, about house, the larger ones have to stay at home, and the younger ones do not like to go alone. But little government is exercised by the parents at home, and when the children come to school some of them are as ugly as Lucifer is reported to be.

Be not alarmed if you hear of cross teachers, and receive complaints against them, at Oneida West Mission, for if you have not, I presume you will; all I ask is to hear both sides of the question, and then remove me from the charge of the school, if you think best.

Yours, very respectfully,

DAVID LEWIS, Teacher,

Oneida West Mission, Oneida Reservation, Wisconsin.
A. D. BONESTEEL, Esq.,
United States Indian Agent.

No. 9.

NORTHERN SUPERINTENDENCY.

OFFICE OF NORTHERN SUPERINTENDENCY OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
St. Paul, September 28, 1858.

SIR: In compliance with the requirement of the department, I have the honor to hereby submit a report of the general condition of the various Indian tribes under this superintendency during the past year. Under the instructions of May 9, 1857, I have made payments in per-

son to the Winnebagoes, Sioux of the Mississippi, and Chippewas of the Mississippi, all matters of treaty stipulations. This has necessarily involved frequent visits to each tribe, and afforded favorable opportunities to observe the practical operations of the present system and policy in realizing the beneficiary results that are intended to be conferred by the various treaties that have been made between the Indians and the government. The object of the government, as understood, is to maintain a strict and exact fulfillment of its stipulated faith, and at the same time to observe a parental care in promoting the permanent good and welfare of the Indians, and to bring to them, as rapidly as possible, the benefits of a civilization that will eventually entitle them to the rights and privileges of a condition of actual citizenship. To accomplish this end, there has been inserted in many of the late treaties that have been made with the northern tribes a provision vesting in the President discretionary power to change and modify the application of the annuity and other funds, in such manner as he may deem for the best interest of the Indians.

It is to be regretted that a provision of this character is not inserted in all of our treaties with Indian tribes, as it would thereby permit the adoption of a common system of improvement and agricultural advancement. In closely observing the effect of the payment of large amount of money as annuities to Indians, the invariable conclusion will be attained that payments in that form are not productive of a rapid advancement in civilization. The Indians, not understanding or appreciating any of the common principles of thrift or economy, scarcely ever look to the payment of their annuities for the purpose of receiving money for their support and maintenance; though avariciously eager to receive their per capita allowance, yet it is but a brief period of time before it has passed away; it is either consumed by the "past credits" of the trader, or, should they refuse to pay their debts, their cupidity for baubles and useless articles is tempted, or else they squander the amount received in gambling, and not unfrequently in clandestinely procuring liquor, and before a week has elapsed the stipend given them for their improvement and support has vanished, while to the Indian no practical benefit has resulted, no additional comfort secured. Again, the tendency of the Indians to commit depredations and thefts upon the white settlers seems to be upon the increase. Recognizing no right of property as binding, and roaming continually from their reserves in small bands, they meet with the isolated habitation of the pioneer, take or destroy his property, and give no other satisfaction than by saying he can obtain remuneration at the next payment; during the past season this class of claims, particularly against the Sioux and Chippewas, have been very numerous. The utter indifference manifested by the Indians in regard to the payment of these matters of depredation, and the consequent demands made upon the annuities for redress, are another source of depletion of the amounts paid them, and also of dissatisfaction on the part of the Indians, for the whole tribe suffers, in many cases, on account of the acts of the few, the identification of the party depredating not being at all times practicable; were there therefore less money provided for annuities, less importance attached to the gathering for payment, the Indians would not be