

REPORT  
OF  
THE COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Office of Indian Affairs, November 27, 1850.*

SIR: Before proceeding to submit, for your consideration, a general view of our Indian Affairs and relations during the last twelve months, I would respectfully refer to the accompanying reports of the superintendents, agents, and missionaries, in the Indian country, for more particular information in relation to local operations, and the condition of the various tribes, than can be fitly embodied in a report of this description.

Among the less remote tribes with which we have fixed and defined relations, and which, to a greater or less extent, have felt the controlling and meliorating effects of the policy and measures of the government for preserving peace among them and improving their condition, an unusual degree of order and quietude has prevailed. It is gratifying to know that amongst this class, comprising a large portion of the red race within our widely extended borders, there probably has never, during the same period of time, been so few occurrences of a painful nature. All have been peaceful towards our citizens; while, with the exception of the Sioux and Chippewas, they have preserved a state of peace and harmony among themselves. These two tribes are hereditary enemies, and scarcely a year passes without scenes of bloody strife between them. From their remoteness and scattered condition, it is difficult to exercise any effective restraint over them, while their proximity to each other affords them frequent opportunities for indulging their vengeful and vindictive feelings. Each tribe seems to be constantly on the watch for occasions to attack weaker parties of the other, when an indiscriminate massacre of men, women, and children, is the lamentable result. During the last spring mutual aggressions, of an aggravated character, threatened to involve these tribes in a general war; but the acting superintendent, Governor Ramsey, aided and assisted by the commanding officer at Fort Snelling, promptly interposed, and by timely and judicious efforts prevented such a catastrophe.

Such occurrences are not only revolting to humanity, but they foster that insatiable passion for war, which, in combination with love of the chase, is the prominent characteristic feature of our wilder tribes, and presents a formidable obstacle in the way of their civilization and improvement. We know not yet to what extent these important objects may be accomplished; but the present and improving condition of some of our semi-civilized tribes affords ample encouragement for further and more extended effort. Experience, however, has conclusively shown that there is but one course of policy by which the great work of regenerating the Indian race may be effected.

In the application of this policy to our wilder tribes, it is indispensably

necessary that they be placed in positions where they can be controlled, and finally compelled by stern necessity to resort to agricultural labor or starve. Considering, as the untutored Indian does, that labor is a degradation, and that there is nothing worthy of his ambition but prowess in war, success in the chase, and eloquence in council, it is only under such circumstances that his haughty pride can be subdued, and his wild energies trained to the more ennobling pursuits of civilized life: There should be assigned to each tribe, for a permanent home, a country adapted to agriculture, of limited extent and well-defined boundaries; within which all, with occasional exceptions, should be compelled constantly to remain until such time as their general improvement and good conduct may supersede the necessity of such restrictions. In the mean time the government should cause them to be supplied with stock, agricultural implements, and useful materials for clothing; encourage and assist them in the erection of comfortable dwellings, and secure to them the means and facilities of education, intellectual, moral, and religious. The application of their own funds to such purposes would be far better for them than the present system of paying their annuities in money, which does substantial good to but few, while to the great majority it only furnishes the means and incentive to vicious and depraving indulgence, terminating in destitution and misery, and too frequently in premature death.

The time is at hand for the practical application of the foregoing views to the Sioux and Chippewas, as well as to some of the more northern tribes on the borders of Missouri and Iowa. Congress has made an appropriation for negotiations with the Sioux for a portion of their lands, which should, as far as practicable, be conducted on the principles laid down in the instructions given to the commissioners appointed for that purpose last year, and which were communicated with the annual report of my predecessor. Those instructions contemplated the purchase of a large extent of their territory, and their concentration within narrower limits upon lands remote from the white settlements and the Chippewas; objects of primary importance, in view of the general policy already stated.

Since the treaties of 1837 and 1842, with the Chippewas, a considerable portion of those Indians have continued, by sufferance, to reside on the ceded lands east of the Mississippi river, in Wisconsin and Minnesota, where they have for some years been brought into injurious contact with our rapidly advancing and increasing population in that quarter. Having ample facilities for procuring ardent spirits, they have become much injured and corrupted by unrestrained indulgence in the use of that accursed element of evil. To remedy this unfortunate state of things, it was determined, at an early period of the present year, to have these Indians removed northward to the country belonging to their tribe. Measures for this purpose were accordingly adopted; but, in consequence of the very late period at which the appropriation requisite to meet the necessary expenses was made, only a small number have, as yet, been removed. Their entire removal, however, will not sufficiently relieve our citizens from annoyance by them, as they will for some time have the disposition, and be near enough, to return with facility to their old haunts and hunting grounds. Nor will the situation of the Chippewas, generally, then be such as their well-being requires. They own a vast extent of territory on each side of the Mississippi, over which they will be scattered, following the chase and indulging in their vagrant habits, until the wild products of the country, on which they depend for a subsistence, are exhausted,

and they are brought to a state of destitution and want. Efforts should therefore be made, at as early a period as practicable, to concentrate them within proper limits, where, with some additional means beyond those already provided, effective arrangements could be made to introduce among them a system of education, and the practice of agriculture and the simpler mechanic arts. The best portion of their country for this purpose is west of the Mississippi river; but it is not owned by the whole tribe in common—a considerable part of it being the exclusive property of particular bands, who are not parties to any of our treaties, and receive no annuities or other material aid from the United States. This circumstance not only excites dissatisfaction with the government, but produces much jealousy and bad feeling towards the rest of the tribe, which may hereafter lead to serious difficulty, and, as the game on which they mainly depend for the means of living must soon fail them, the government will be under the necessity of interposing to save them from starvation. A wise forecast and the dictates of a benevolent policy alike suggest that timely measures be taken to avert so disastrous a result. This may easily be done, and at a moderate expense compared with the importance of the objects to be accomplished.

In order to enable the department to carry out these views in reference to the whole Chippewa tribe, I respectfully recommend that Congress be asked for an appropriation at the ensuing session to defray the expense of negotiating a joint treaty with the different bands, for the purpose of acquiring so much of their country on the east side of the Mississippi as we may require for a long time to come; to provide that the whole of their remaining lands, together with their present and future means, shall be the common property of the whole tribe, so that all will be placed upon an equal footing; and that as large a proportion of their funds as practicable shall be set apart and applied in such a manner as will secure their comfort, and most rapidly advance them in civilization and prosperity. With such arrangements for this tribe, and the adoption of a like policy towards the Winnebagoes, now located in their vicinity on the west side of the Mississippi, and the Menomnies, soon to be removed there, the whole face of our Indian relations in that quarter would in a few years present an entire and gratifying change. We should soon witness in this, our northern colony of Indians, those evidences of general improvement now becoming clearly manifest among a number of our colonized tribes in the southwest, and which present to the mind of the philanthropist and the Christian encouraging assurance of the practicability of regenerating the red race of our country, and elevating them to a position, moral and social, similar if not equal to our own. There are two evils in the section of country referred to, operating injuriously upon the welfare and interests of the Indians in that quarter, and our citizens engaged in trade among them, which require prompt attention, and which must be suppressed before our Indian relations there can be placed upon a safe and satisfactory footing. These are, first, the immense annual destruction of the buffalo and other game by the half-breeds from the British side of the line, generally in the employment of the Hudson Bay Company; and, secondly, the introduction of ardent spirits among our Indians by the traders of that company. The embarrassment and injury to our Indians resulting from the devastation of game by these foreign depredators have justly occasioned much dissatisfaction among them, and, if not soon checked, serious difficulties may well be apprehended. The introduction of ardent spirits among the

Indians by the persons referred to is not only an aggravated evil, but is derogatory to the authority and dignity of this government.

Our laws and regulations prohibit the introduction of spirituous liquor among the Indians, as well as the ingress of foreigners into their country for purposes of trade, or indeed for any purpose, without permission from the proper authorities. A strict compliance with these laws and regulations is required of our traders; while the traders of the Hudson Bay Company, in contemptuous disregard of them, frequently come over on our side of the line, and, through the nefarious means of ardent spirits, carry on a corrupting traffic with the Indians, injurious alike to them and to our licensed and bonded traders. Suitable measures should be promptly adopted to put a stop to these abuses; for which purpose the establishment of a military post and an Indian agency in that quarter will be indispensable; and, in the present state of affairs, this cannot be done at too early a period.

It was expected that the Menomonies, for whom a location has been provided between the Winnebagoes and Chippewas, would be removed this year; but before the exploration of their new country by a party of these Indians had been completed, the season was too far advanced for the tribe to emigrate before the approach of winter. The President, therefore, in a just spirit of humanity, gave them permission to remain in Wisconsin until the first day of June next.

The Stockbridge and Munsee Indians residing in Wisconsin having, in 1848, ceded all their lands to the government, are expected to settle somewhere in the same region of country. The treaty which provides for their removal stipulates that, in the selection of a country for their future residence, they shall be consulted; and they have expressed a preference for a site in the vicinity of the St. Peter's river. As soon as a suitable location can be found for them, and their removal effected, Wisconsin, like most of the other States, will be relieved substantially of the evils of an Indian population.

As usual with the Winnebagoes, in whatever situation placed, a considerable number of them have been restless and discontented in their new location on the upper Mississippi, to which they were removed in the year 1848. This has arisen less from any well-grounded objection to the country than from their own reckless disposition and vagrant habits, together, possibly, with an omission on the part of the government to do all that might have been done for their comfortable settlement in their new home. There was considerable difficulty in effecting their removal; and a portion of them, eluding the agent of the government charged with the superintendence of their emigration, remained behind. These, with others who returned to their old haunts in Iowa and Wisconsin, gave serious annoyance to our citizens by their threatening conduct and actual depredations. The white population became more or less alarmed, and strong representations were made to the government of the necessity for their immediate removal. The urgency appearing to be great, there was but little time to make the necessary arrangements for the purpose. A resort to military force was considered inexpedient, as it might have tended to exasperate their feelings, and lead to actual hostilities; and it was greatly to be desired that they should be taken to their country under circumstances calculated to allay their discontent, and dispose them to remain.

My predecessor, therefore, with the concurrence and approbation of the

head of the department, entered into a contract with a gentleman recommended for his high character and great influence over these Indians, to remove them in a kind and judicious manner, and to make suitable and satisfactory arrangements for their comfortable and permanent settlement. It appears that the measure has thus far been attended with corresponding results, and that the contractor is entitled to credit for his energy and success in the prosecution of his undertaking.

In examining the reports of my predecessors for several years, I find a measure of policy strongly urged with reference to the tribes located on the borders of our western States, in which I fully concur. It is, by a partial change in their relative positions, to throw open a wide extent of country for the spread of our population westward, so as to save them from being swept away by the mighty and advancing current of civilization, which has already engulfed a large portion of this hapless race. To a large majority of those that have been removed there from the States we are under obligations of the highest character, enjoined alike by contract and conscience, to secure to them their present homes and possessions forever; and, ere it be too late, we should make all the arrangements necessary and proper to a faithful discharge of this solemn duty.

Below the most southern of our colonized tribes, we have an ample outlet to the southwest; but another of higher latitude is required, leading more directly towards our remote western possessions. A beginning will be made in carrying this measure of policy and humanity into effect by the purchase, as contemplated, from the Sioux, of a large portion of their country; and it may be fully consummated by the removal of a few tribes between the Sioux territory and the Kansas river, with whom we have no treaty stipulations guarantying in perpetuity their present possessions. Suitable locations may be found for them south of that river, where, secure in comfortable and permanent homes, they would be stimulated by the salutary influence and example of neighboring and more enlightened tribes.

That the border tribes in question are in danger of ultimate extinction from the causes indicated must be evident to every well informed and reflecting mind; and it is equally clear that the adoption of the policy recommended is the only practicable means of averting the melancholy fate with which they are threatened. If they remain as they are, many years will not elapse before they will be overrun and exterminated; or, uprooted and broken-spirited, be driven forth towards the setting sun to perish amidst savage enemies on the plains, or the sterile and inhospitable regions of the Rocky mountains. Such a catastrophe would be an abiding reproach to our government and people, especially when it is considered that these Indians, if properly established, protected, and cherished, may at no distant day become intelligent, moral, and Christian communities, fully understanding and appreciating the principles and blessings of our free institutions, and entitled to equal participation in the rights, privileges, and immunities of American citizens.

It is among the tribes of our southern colony that we find the most satisfactory and encouraging evidences of material advancement in civilization; and we need no better vindication of the wisdom and humanity of our Indian policy, thus far, than the gratifying results among a number of these tribes. Surrounded, in the States where they formerly resided, by a white population continually pressing upon them, and without the

natural enterprise and energy or the intellectual culture requisite to enable them to contend with a superior race in any of those employments and pursuits upon which the dignity and happiness of man depend—discouraged and depressed by their inferior and helpless condition—they, with a fatal and ruinous facility, adopted only the vices of the white man, and were fast wasting away. In a few years they would have become extinct, and, like other once numerous and powerful tribes, their names would have been preserved only in the records of history. Removed from this unfortunate, and to them unnatural, position—placed where they have the assurance and guarantee of permanent homes—where they are, in a great measure, free from those influences arising out of a close contact with a white population, so injurious and fatal to them in their untutored state, and where the elements of civilization could be steadily and systematically introduced among them,—they are gradually increasing in numbers and rapidly advancing in prosperity.

Several of these tribes have already abandoned their original and crude forms of government, and adopted others, fashioned more or less after the model of our own, having regularly established constitutions, of republican character, and written laws, adapted to their peculiar state of affairs, with proper and responsible officers to carry them into execution. They are adopting agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and, through the efforts of the government and of various Christian societies, having become impressed with the necessity and advantages of education, they are making highly-commendable exertions to disseminate more generally its blessings among them.

In addition to the means furnished by government and liberally provided by missionary associations, they make large appropriations from their own funds towards the establishment and support of manual-labor schools, which have been found efficient auxiliaries in imparting to them a knowledge of letters, agriculture, and mechanic arts, and of advancing them in civilization and Christianity. During the few years that institutions of this description have been in operation, they have done much towards the accomplishment of these great objects; and, had they effected nothing more than to excite the desire for instruction now existing among a number of the tribes, the expenditures they have occasioned would not have been in vain. Introduced, however, as an experiment, we were liable to errors in regard to them, which experience alone could develop; and, after much reflection, I am satisfied that there are defects in the system, as at present organized, which must be remedied in order to insure its full degree of efficiency and usefulness. In my judgment, confirmed by the experience of others, the great error committed has been in establishing most of the institutions upon too large a scale. In consequence of the heavy expenditures required to establish and maintain them, they are necessarily limited in number, and so wide apart as to be at an inconvenient distance from the great majority of those for whose benefit they are intended. Hence the advantages and benefits of the schools are confined almost entirely to the neighborhoods within which they are respectively located; for the Indians at a distance being naturally averse to having their children taken so far from their homes, it often happens that the full complement of scholars cannot be obtained. Besides, the congregation of large numbers of Indian children, by affording them more unrestricted opportunities of indulging in the use of their own language, seriously interferes with their acquisition of the English tongue,

a knowledge of which is generally a pre-requisite to their civilization. By diminishing the size and expense of these institutions, they could be multiplied and extended; there would be less difficulty in obtaining the desired number of resident pupils; while others in the vicinity could be taught as day scholars, and the benefits of a practical education be thus more widely diffused.

The only considerable number of Indians who have retained any portion of their original possessions, and survived the perils of immediate contact with a white population fast thickening around them, are those remaining in the State of New York, comprising a mere remnant of the once numerous and powerful Iroquois, or "Six Nations." After rapidly diminishing for many years, they seem at length to have reached the lowest point in their declining fortunes. Having been placed, by the humane legislation of the State, in a situation similar to that of our colonized tribes, they present the interesting spectacle of a once barbarous people in a state of rapid transition to civilization and prosperity. A striking indication of their progress is the important change they have made in their civil polity. Impressed with the disadvantages of their ancient and irresponsible oligarchical form of government, and its tendency to retard their advancement, a majority succeeded, in 1848, in effecting an entire revolution. Having formally assembled in convention, they adopted a republican constitution, and their government and affairs are now well conducted, on principles similar to those on which ours are administered. There are still, however, individuals among them who, from their connexion with the old system, are opposed to the new order of things; but, as the object of these malcontents is to regain their lost power, rather than to promote the public good, no encouragement has been given to them, either by the State of New York or the general government.

It is much to be regretted that no appropriation was made at the last session of Congress for negotiating treaties with the wild tribes of the great western prairies. These Indians have long held undisputed possession of this extensive region, and, regarding it as their own, they consider themselves entitled to compensation, not only for the right of way through their territory, but for the great and injurious destruction of game, grass, and timber, committed by our troops and emigrants. They have hitherto been kept quiet and peaceable by reiterated promises that the government would act generously towards them, and considerations of economy, justice, and humanity require that these promises should be promptly fulfilled. They would, doubtless, be contented with a very moderate remuneration, which should be made in goods, stock animals, agricultural implements, and other useful articles.

As a further measure for securing the friendship and good conduct of these Indians, it is earnestly recommended that a delegation of their principal and most influential men be brought in, for the purpose of visiting some of our larger cities and more densely populated portions of country. These delegates would thus be impressed with an idea of the great superiority of our strength, which, being imparted to their people, would have a powerful and most salutary influence upon them.

Our information in regard to the Indians in Oregon and California is extremely limited; but the deficiency, it is hoped, will shortly be supplied by the agents and commissioners provided for at the last session of Congress. Copies of the instructions given to these officers are herewith

submitted; together with a report from General Lane, late governor and acting superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, containing the latest official information in possession of the office respecting the Indians in that far-distant region, and received too late to accompany the annual report of last year.

After the three agents authorized by Congress for the Indians in California were appointed, it was found that no appropriation had been made for their salaries, and the necessary expenses of their agencies. Their functions as agents were therefore suspended; but, as there was an appropriation for negotiating treaties with the Indians in that State, they were constituted commissioners for that purpose. They will thus have an opportunity of acquiring information useful to them as agents, and be on the spot to enter upon their duties in that capacity when the requisite appropriations shall have been made.

Commissioners have also been appointed for the highly important purpose of negotiating treaties with the various Indian tribes adjacent to the line between the United States and Mexico. They are expected to accompany the boundary commission, and are charged with the duty of collecting all such statistical and other information concerning those Indians as may aid the department in adopting the proper policy and measures for their government, and to carry out, in good faith, the stipulations of our recent treaty with the Mexican republic.

The ruinous condition of our Indian affairs in New Mexico demands the immediate attention of Congress. In no section of the country are prompt and efficient measures for restraining the Indians more imperiously required than in this Territory, where an extraordinary state of things exists, which, so long as it continues, will be a reproach to the government.

There are over thirty thousand Indians within its limits, the greater portion of which, having never been subjected to any salutary restraint, are extremely wild and intractable. For many years they have been in the constant habit of making extensive forays, not only within the Territory itself, but in the adjoining provinces of Mexico, plundering and murdering the inhabitants, and carrying off large quantities of stock, besides numerous captives, whom they have subjected to slavery, and treated with great barbarity and cruelty. Humanity shudders in view of the horrible fate of such of their female captives as possess qualities to excite their fiendish and brutal passions. Our citizens have suffered severely from their outrages within the last two years, of which their attack last fall upon Mr. White's party, while travelling to Santa Fe, is one of many instances. They murdered the whole party, nine or ten in number, except his wife, child, and servant, whom they carried off. Our only Indian agent in the Territory, who is stationed at Santa Fe, on hearing of the lamentable occurrence, promptly made every effort in his power to rescue the captives and bring the Indians to punishment. The military officers in the Territory also made commendable exertions for the same purpose, but, unfortunately, with no other result than the discovery of the dead body of Mrs. White, which was found by a military party in pursuit of some Indians supposed to have her in their possession. It was evident that she had just been murdered, as the body was still warm. The sad duty of interring the corpse was performed by the military with becoming decency and respect. Proper efforts have been continued to rescue the child and servant, but as yet without success. Renewed in-



structions have recently been given directing a large reward to be offered, which, it is hoped, will lead to a favorable result. But their atrocities and aggressions are committed, not only upon our citizens, but upon the Pueblo Indians, an interesting semi-civilized people, living in towns or villages called *pueblos*, whence they derive their name. Before the country came into our possession, they were in the habit of repairing the injuries they sustained by retaliation and reprisals upon their enemies; but from this they are now required to desist; and thus the duty is more strongly imposed upon us of affording them adequate protection. The interference of the government is required also to secure them against violations of their rights of person and property by unprincipled white men, from whose cupidity and lawlessness they are continually subject to grievous annoyance and oppression.

To prevent serious disputes between these Indians and the white inhabitants, it is essentially necessary that commissioners be appointed to ascertain and define the boundaries of their lands, which they claim to hold under grants from Spain and Mexico, and to negotiate treaties with them for the purpose of establishing proper relations between them and the government and citizens of the United States. It is believed that by pursuing a wise and liberal policy towards them—which their peculiar situation indicates and invites—they will in a few years be fitted to become citizens; and being industrious, moral, and exemplary in their habits, will constitute a valuable portion of the population of the Territory. For a brief period, however, they will require agents to regulate their intercourse and manage their relations with the other Indians and the whites. The same commissioners could be charged with the further duty of entering into the necessary conventional arrangements with the wild tribes of the Territory. To manage these Indians properly, they also must have agents; and, in order to break up their practice of committing depredations and taking captives, they should be placed in situations where a proper vigilance and control can be exercised over them. Their forays into the Mexican territory can only be prevented by locating them at a considerable distance from the boundary line, and the establishing of military posts to prevent them from crossing it. The boundaries of the country allotted to the several tribes, respectively, should be clearly defined, and they should not be allowed to go beyond them without special permission. Thus situated and restrained, a portion of them would need the assistance of the government until brought to apply themselves to husbandry for the means of subsistence, instead of depending on plunder and the chase. The adoption of this, or some other efficient system of measures, would involve an expense far less than the amount for which the government will otherwise become liable on account of the just claims of our citizens and those of Mexico for spoliations committed by these Indians; while it would obviate the serious evils that must result from the settlement and improvement of the country being greatly retarded. An obligation of the highest character rests upon us to redeem the captives among the Indians in New Mexico, represented to be numerous, and liberal appropriations will have to be made for that purpose.

For interesting and more particular information respecting our Indian affairs in this Territory, and especially in relation to the agency and organization required for their proper management, I respectfully refer to the accompanying letter (No. 33) from the Hon. H. N. Smith, and the reports from agent Calhoun.

We know but little of the Indians in Utah beyond the fact that they are generally peaceable in their disposition and easily controlled; but further and full information as to their peculiar condition and wants may soon be expected from the agent recently sent among them. I therefore refrain for the present from making any recommendation in regard to them, except that our trade and intercourse laws be extended over them.

Our Indian relations in Texas remain in the awkward and embarrassing state set forth in the annual reports from this office for the last five years, and particularly in that of my immediate predecessor. The laws providing for the regulation of trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes are not in force in Texas, nor can they, I apprehend, be extended there without the consent of that State. Thus, while an unfortunate state of things exists in Texas similar to that in New Mexico, and requiring, in general, the same remedial measures, we have not the power to put them in full and complete operation. The constitution, it is true, gives to Congress the power to regulate commerce with the Indian tribes, but that it can be rightfully exercised in such manner as to punish the citizens of that State for trespassing on lands occupied by the Indians, or trading with them unless licensed by the government, is a proposition that may well be controverted. What is required in regard to the Indians in Texas, is full and absolute authority to assign to them a suitable country, remote from the white population, for their exclusive occupancy and use, where we can make our own arrangements for regulating trade and intercourse with them, and adopt other measures for their gradual civilization and improvement. With this view, I respectfully suggest that a commissioner or commissioners be appointed to confer with the proper authorities of Texas on this important subject, for the purpose of effecting the conventional arrangements indispensable to a satisfactory adjustment of our Indian affairs in that State.

This measure, I submit, would be fully justified, if recommended alone, by the consideration that it would probably result in curtailing the immense and comparatively useless expense to which the government is now subjected in maintaining the large military force deemed necessary for the protection and defence of the citizens of Texas.

The arrangements adopted last year for the removal of the Seminole Indians in Florida to the country occupied by their brethren west of the Mississippi, failed of entire success; only a portion were removed, and a number still remain within the district temporarily assigned to them, on the gulf side of the peninsula. These continue, as heretofore, in charge of the military, and this department has no control or jurisdiction over them.

Notwithstanding the efforts that have been made, and the heavy expense incurred, during the last six years, to effect the removal of the Choctaws remaining in Mississippi, a considerable number still continue indisposed to migrate to the country provided for the tribe, west of the State of Arkansas. Anxiety is felt that the State of Mississippi shall be speedily relieved of this incumbrance, and the Indians transferred to more comfortable homes among their brethren, where they would be comparatively prosperous and happy. In view of past results, it is evident that more efficient measures are necessary to accomplish their removal. These, it is hoped, may be devised and put into successful operation at an early day.

Conceding the general wisdom and justice of the policy adopted in

1847, of paying the annuities to the Indians on the *per capita* principle, in my judgment there are material objections to the manner in which it has been practically applied. The regulation on this subject provides that a portion of the annuities may be set apart by the Indians for national and charitable purposes. These purposes, however, have never been particularly defined; rules are not prescribed for determining the amounts to be provided for them, nor have measures been taken to encourage the Indians to make so wise and beneficial a disposition of their funds. They naturally desire to receive individually the full amount of their respective shares, and, consequently, their entire annuities have been distributed equally among them. However fair and equitable this mode of payment may appear, it is not altogether just to the chiefs, nor consistent with sound policy. It is through the medium of the chiefs that the government holds intercourse and dealings with the tribes in the transaction of their more important business; and it is not unreasonable that they should expect more from the government than the common Indians receive, in consideration of their station and the services they perform. But, according to the present mode of paying their annuities, the Indians are all and alike placed on a common level; and, as no discrimination is made in favor of the chiefs, their influence is not only diminished, but a feeling of contempt for governmental authority in general is extensively inspired. Evils of no ordinary magnitude are thus produced, which, it is believed, may be remedied by a proper exercise of the discretionary power over this subject vested in the President and the Secretary of the Interior.

The greatest difficulty which the government and individuals have to contend with, in their efforts to ameliorate the condition of our Indians, is their strong and uncontrollable appetite for ardent spirits, and the facility with which they can still be procured, notwithstanding the stringency of our laws, and the strenuous efforts of the agents and military to prevent its introduction among them. It is a deplorable fact, that there are many persons engaged in the villanous business of smuggling liquor into the Indian country, while others, less daring, but equally depraved, are stationed near their borders for the purpose of carrying on an unholy traffic with them. The States within which these miscreants take refuge should be invoked to put an effectual stop to their abominations.

The work of collecting and digesting statistical and other information, illustrative of the history, condition, and future prospects of the Indian tribes, has been unrenittingly prosecuted, and the results, it is believed, will not only be of much general interest, but highly useful to the department in the administration of our Indian affairs. The first part of these investigations is in press, and will be laid before Congress at an early period of the ensuing session.\*

The present force of this office is less than in former years, and inadequate to the prompt discharge of its greatly augmented and increasing duties. An additional number of clerks, and a thorough reorganization of the department, are indispensably necessary. But as a full and satisfactory exposition of the measures required in this connexion would involve elaborate detail, they will form the subject of a special communication.

Respectfully submitted.

L. LEA, *Commissioner.*

HON. A. H. H. STUART,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

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\* For paragraph relative to "estimates," see letter H, at the end of accompanying documents.

*Schedule of papers accompanying annual report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the year 1850.*

1. Report of Superintendent D. D. Mitchell, St. Louis superintendency.
2. Report of Agent Thomas Fitzpatrick, Upper Platte and Arkansas.
3. Report of Agent C. N. Handy, Osage River agency.
4. Report of Teacher David Lykins, Osage River agency.
5. Report of Teacher Jotham Meeker, Osage River agency.
6. Report of Sub-agent W. P. Richardson, Great Nemaha sub-agency.
7. Report of Teacher W. Hamilton, Great Nemaha sub-agency.
8. Report of Sub-agent T. Mosely, jr., Wyandot sub-agency.
9. Report of Sub-agent H. Harvey, Osage sub-agency.
10. Report of Teacher Rev. J. Schoenmakers, Osage sub-agency.
11. Report of Sub-agent J. E. Barrow, Council Bluffs sub-agency.
12. Report of Sub-agent W. S. Hatton, Upper Missouri sub-agency.
13. Report of Superintendent Governor A. Ramsey, Minnesota superintendency.
14. Report of Agent J. E. Fletcher, Winnebago agency.
15. Report of Sub-agent N. McLean, St. Peter's sub-agency.
16. Report of Teacher J. S. Williamson, St. Peter's sub-agency.
17. Report of Teacher S. R. Riggs, St. Peter's sub-agency.
18. Report of Teacher S. M. Cook, St. Peter's sub-agency.
19. Report of Teacher J. W. Hancock, St. Peter's sub-agency.
20. Report of Teacher G. H. Pond, St. Peter's sub-agency.
21. Report of Teacher R. H. Hopkins, St. Peter's sub-agency.
22. Report of Physician T. S. Williamson, St. Peter's sub-agency.
23. Report of superintendent of farms, P. Prescott, St. Peter's sub-agency.
24. Report of Sub-agent J. L. Watrous, Sandy Lake sub-agency.
25. Report of Teacher F. H. Caming, Mackinac agency.
26. Report of Sub-agent A. Johnston, California.
27. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, November 17, 1849, Santa Fe.
28. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, March 29, 1850, Santa Fe.
29. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, March 30, 1850, Santa Fe.
30. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, March 31, 1850, Santa Fe.
31. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, July 15, 1850, Santa Fe.
32. Report of Agent J. S. Calhoun, October 12, 1850, Santa Fe.
33. Report of Hon. H. N. Smith, March 9, 1850, Santa Fe.
34. Extract from report of J. H. Rollins, special agent, Texas.
- A. Letter of instructions to Commissioners Gaines, Skinner, and Allen, Oregon.
- B. Letter of instructions to Superintendent A. G. Dart, Oregon.
- C. Letter of instructions to Commissioners McKee, Barbour, and Wozencraft, California.
- D. Letter of instructions to Todd, Campbell, and Temple, New Mexico.
- E. Report of Joseph Lane, late superintendent of Indian affairs, Oregon Territory.
- F. and G. Statements of funds held in trust for various Indian tribes, and annual income thereon.