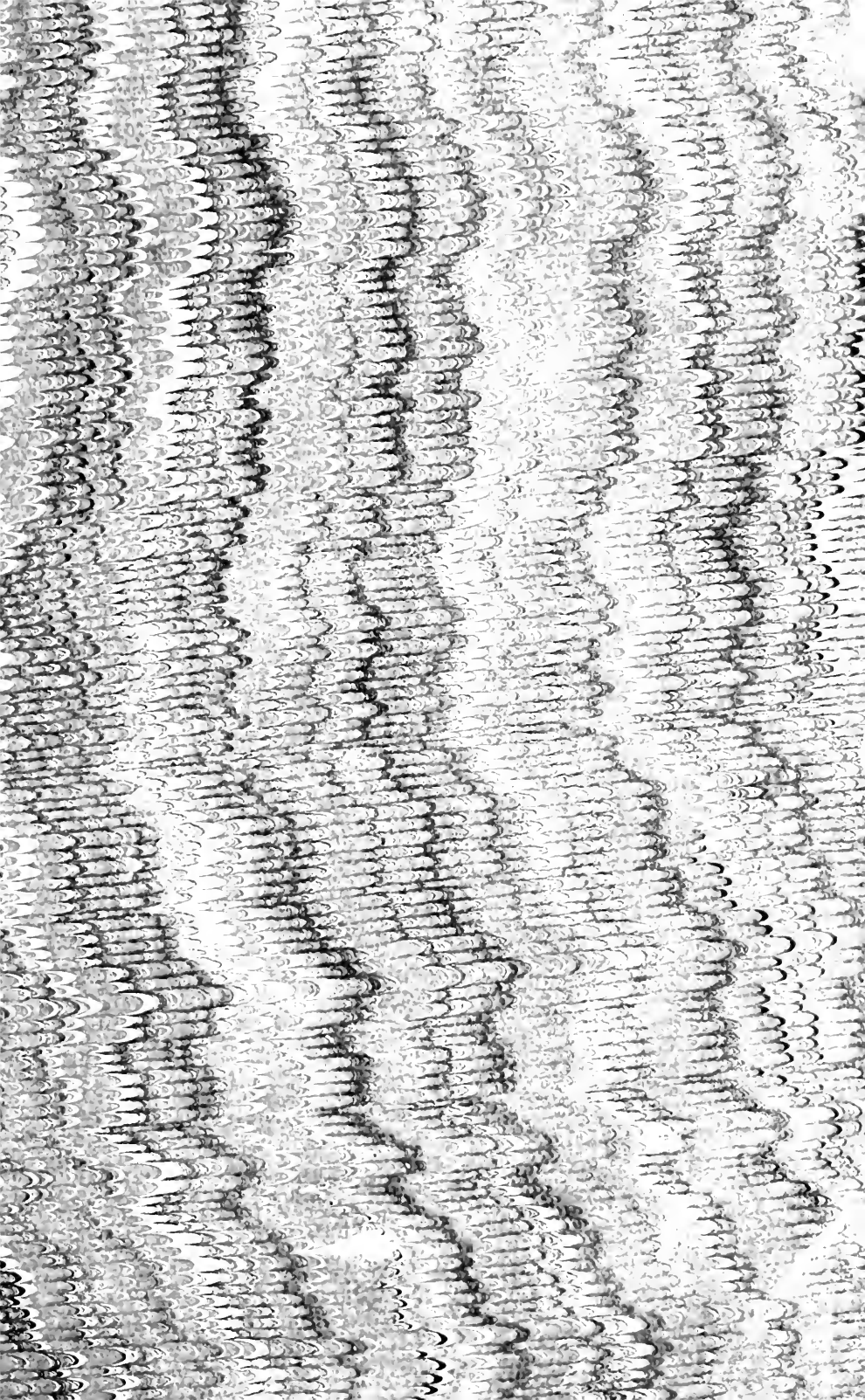


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REPORT

OF THE

SIoux AND PONKA INDIANS

ON

THE MISSOURI RIVER.

BY

WILLIAM WELSH

JULY 1872

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1872

REPORT

OF A VISIT TO

SIoux AND PONKA INDIANS

ON

THE MISSOURI RIVER,

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BY
WILLIAM WELSH

TO

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

JULY, 1872.

WASHINGTON,
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE,
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 19th, 1872.

DEAR SIR :

I have received, and read with great satisfaction, your valuable and interesting Report of the 8th instant, in regard to the Indian Agencies that have been assigned to the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church. I have not time to refer to it in detail, but I wish to say that the facts which you have presented, and the suggestions made, are of great value to our Indian Service, and I trust the Report will have a wide circulation.

I feel sure that this report will strengthen the faith of all right minded persons, and create new zeal in the breasts of those who believe that truth, justice and humanity, are sure to be rewarded by Omnipotence.

I am, very truly, yours,

C. DELANO,

Secretary.

HON. WILLIAM WEESIE,

Philadelphia, Pa.

The following letter from the bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the diocese of Nebraska, and in the Territory of Dakota, fully indorses the annexed report.

OMAHA, July 18, 1872.

MY DEAR MR. WELSH: I have only time, on a hasty visit home in the midst of a visitation, to tell you how rejoiced I have been on reading your most admirable letter to the Secretary of the Interior on our Indian missions, &c.

It is the most complete, the most satisfactory, and the most encouraging document of the kind ever put before our people. I sincerely hope it will be published *entire* in the "Spirit of Missions," and in other more permanent forms. It is just such an array of facts, and of wise, humane, and forcible pleas, that will arouse the church and the nation to their duty to the Indian. I am delighted to see in print over your name such a vindication of the policy of the Government. May the Lord bless and reward you for your noble words and nobler works in behalf of this poor race!

Ever your attached friend,

ROBERT H. CLARKSON.



PHILADELPHIA, July 8th, 1872.

TO THE HON. COLUMBUS DELANO,

Secretary of the Interior,

Washington:

MY DEAR SIR :

I returned to this city on the 4th inst., after spending more than six weeks in an official visitation to most of the Indian Agencies, that were, about eighteen months since, placed by the United States Government, under the control of the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Although my visitation was made at the request of that Missionary Board, yet as the Church is merely the representative of the Government in nominating and supervising Indian Agents, there is an obvious propriety in making a semi-official report to you, especially as governmental action is asked for.

I was accompanied by Mr. E. C. Kemble, the Secretary of our Missionary Indian Commission and by the Rev. S. D. Hinman, our experienced and successful Missionary to the Sioux Indians. He speaks their language fluently, and has the affection and confidence of a large proportion of the Sioux nation. I was much favored, throughout the entire visitation, by the presence of a lady of great intelligence and experience, who sympathises deeply with Indians. As a woman she was able to investigate thoroughly the moral and industrial condition of Indian girls and women, with the view of intelligently directing appropriate means for benefiting them, and stirring up her sisters in the Church by pen and voice, to the now hopeful work of bringing Gospel light and love to our home heathen, who have too long been sitting in darkness and timorous superstition. The Rev. J. A. Paddock, of Brooklyn, New York, a member of the Executive Committee of our Indian Missionary Commission, joined us in time to visit the Ponkas, the Yanktons and the Mission of the Episcopal Church on the Santee Sioux Reservation.

Near the close of my trip I met, at Council Bluffs and at Omaha, Gen. Cowan, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, and also Mr. John Delano, your son and Secretary, and Mr. Turney, a member of the Governmental Commission.

As I was fresh from conferences with Indians, and they were just start-

ing to meet the wild Sioux or *Tetons*, as they are termed, our conferences were free and mutually profitable.

To give definiteness to my report, I must state the names and locations of the Indian tribes, that, less than two years since, *the then* Secretary of the Interior, acting for the President of the United States, pressed upon the Missionary bodies of the Protestant Episcopal Church, claiming their control and supervision of certain tribes, although unsolicited and undesired.

1. PONKA INDIANS.

This tribe, about 700 in number, is located on the west bank of the Missouri River, in Dakota Territory, at the southeastern extremity of the great Sioux Reservation.

It is separated from the State of Nebraska by the Niobrara River, which can be forded in all seasons. The Ponkas are affiliated with the Omahas, and speak the same unwritten language.

2. YANKTON INDIANS.

This is one of the fourteen tribes of Sioux or Dakota Indians that are in Dakota, Montana and Wyoming Territories. This tribe numbers 2,000, and is located on the east bank of the Missouri River, about sixty miles above the town of Yankton. Their Reservation begins at Choteau Creek, and continues along the river Missouri, about thirty-five miles, up to the Fort Randall Military Reservation, extending many miles back from the river over high prairie land only suited to grazing.

3. YANKTONNAIS SIOUX INDIANS.

This tribe, about 1,000 in number, is located on the east bank of the Missouri River, about one hundred miles above the Yankton Agency. The official designation is, "The Agency of the Upper Missouri," but it is usually called Crow Creek, and was formerly known as Fort Thompson.

4. LOWER BRULE SIOUX INDIANS.

These Indians, estimated at 2,500, are under the control of the Agent of the Yanktonnais, and are located on the west bank of the Missouri, extending from the mouth of the White Earth River, up to a point opposite to Crow Creek Agency. The *sub*-agency buildings are about nine miles from the Agency, and on the opposite bank of the Missouri. A company of United States soldiers is there, principally needed to hold the lawless *whites* in check.

5. MINICONJOU, SANS ARC, TWO KETTLE, AND OTHER SIOUX.

The Agency for these Indians, varying in number from 2,000 to 5,000,

is on the west bank of the Missouri River, below the mouth of the Cheyenne River, from which the Agency takes its name. It is about nine miles above Fort Sully, and one hundred miles from Crow Creek.

The Sioux Reservation above this, is at Grand River, under the charge of the Roman Catholic Church. If the Agent had been on the Reservation, I would have gone there, not as an *official* visitor, but from *personal* interest in him and his work.

The Sioux Indians, at *Grand River*, and at the Cheyenne Agency, are of the same general character, and many of them move from place to place.

These upper Agencies are just now points of the greatest interest and difficulty, as the roving hostile Indians come there to trade, and to procure food when suffering from hunger. Some few of these Indians that have recently come in, are discourteous to their agents with the view of keeping up their standing with the wild roving Sioux; whilst others, who were, until recently, leaders in the hostile camps, are already well advanced in agriculture and other civilizing occupations.

The other three Agencies, under the care of the same Missionary Board, cannot be reached from the Missouri River.

These are the Eastern Shoshones and Bannocks, in Wyoming Territory, and the agencies for the Ogallalla Sioux, under Red Cloud and other chiefs, and the upper Brulé Sioux, under Spotted Tail and others.

These agencies will, perhaps the coming autumn or sooner, if it appears necessary, be visited from the Union Pacific Railroad.

We called at the old Whetstone Agency, on the west bank of the Missouri, above Fort Randall. It was the location of the Upper Brulé but is now a depot for supplies, guarded by a small squad of soldiers. The Agency buildings and barracks appeared to be in good order, and there is a prevailing belief that the Upper Brulé Indians must again be brought there to prevent discord between them and the Ogallallas, under Red Cloud. Their young men can then be restrained from going on war parties against Indians—the Pawnees, the Ponkas and the Arickarees—located peacefully on their respective Reservations.

Col. Stanley, the Commander at Fort Sully, one of the best friends the Indian has in all that region, accompanied us in our six days' journey from Sioux City to Sully. We were glad to learn from him and other officers of high standing, that army officers generally, not only feel officially bound to sustain President Grant's policy with the Indians, but that it

meets with their cordial approval, as the best and indeed the only solution of the difficult problem of Indian civilization.

Col. Stanley, although strict in the performance of his duties, has the respect of *all* the Indians in that region and the affection of many of them.

He has confidence in them and trusts them, and they have not forfeited his confidence. He was present at our public conference with the Indians near Fort Sully.

CHEYENNE AGENCY.

The badly located buildings at this Agency are inadequate, disgraceful, and injurious to much of the provisions sent there. *Rats* and other vermin have very appropriately claimed the buildings as their own; and fortunately the Missouri is washing away that bank of the river, compelling the Agent and the army officers, from time to time, to move their quarters farther inland.

The weekly issue of provisions occurred the day after our arrival, and this enabled us to see nearly all the Indians in their *holiday costume*. They were very quiet and well behaved, and enjoyed various kinds of sports; one game was a foot race by old women, a *pony* being the prize. Whether engaged in their sports or in subdividing the allotment of provisions, there did not seem to be any unkind acts, or even harsh *words*. I was very glad at the public council, held that morning, to hear complaints that the rats had fouled their flour, and that the meat was soiled by being dragged through the dust, as it seemed like the dawning of civilization on a debased people.

Elsewhere I had seen dogs feeding for hours upon the carcasses of the *becces*, before distribution was made to the Indians. This is an old habit, but it must be changed, as the Indians are offended by it when they begin to show the humanizing influences of civilization.

Eighteen months since, when I held a conference with this barbarous people, their council-chamber was ornamented with human scalps, extended on small hoops, and elevated on poles, such as we use in displaying our banners.

On this occasion there were no such evidences of barbarism. We were, however, notified that the council would be disturbed by an impudent Indian, who desired thus to gain the favor of the hostile party and of certain low whites.

It was stated that he acted under the promptings of men, whose interests had been interfered with by the uprightness of Agent Kowes.

After my opening remarks, Burnt Face, a leading chief, replied. It was touching to hear his apologetic opening, confessing that he and his brother had quarrelled, and although the fault was almost entirely with the brother, Burnt Face merely confessed his own sins, without referring to his brother's still greater iniquities.

He and others asked why telegraph poles, the usual precursors of railroads, had been placed on Indian reservations without the consent of the Indians having been first obtained; and also, why *white* men persisted in building a railroad through the hunting grounds of the Indians, without first agreeing upon a compensation for thus destroying or driving away their subsistence. When Burnt Face had finished an eloquent speech, Bull Eagle, the impudent young Indian already referred to, arose without waiting for speeches by chiefs and other superiors, as is usual. He marched forward, and snatched the notes of Burnt Face's speech from Mr. E. C. Kemble, who was acting as Secretary, tearing them in pieces, and saying that all *white men* are liars, and ought to leave the Indian's country and never come to it again.

This trifling incident is only noteworthy, because it revealed the fact that Bull Eagle stood alone, all others being courteous to me, and well-disposed towards the whites.

It seems that Indians are just as desirous of having their speeches reported as any youthful member of Congress, when making his *oratorical* speech.

An Indian, known as John Sams Are, put an extinguisher on Bull Eagle, by proclaiming that he was as fond of eating white man's food, and of begging for more, as any other Indian.

The other speakers referred feelingly to the proposed Black Hill's expedition, and also said that the Government was not fulfilling its pledge to furnish them with work-oxen and cattle for breeding. They said, truly, that there were many Indians quite able and willing to take care of them.

In this plea these Indians are right, and it is specially important to them, for in the dry region extending from below Crow Creek to the Grand River Agency, agriculture is rarely productive, whilst herding cattle and raising stock would be very profitable.

Intelligent Texan herders testify to the nutritious quality of the hardy grass of that region, in winter as well as in summer. Little snow falls there, but lower down the Missouri, where there is more rain, the snow storms are frequent and severe. Last winter over 1200 oxen perished from one

herd, that the beef contractor attempted to winter on a farm above Yankton.

It was very interesting to listen to the number of apologies that were made for the rudeness of Bull Eagle, who told Col. Stanley the next day that he did not mean to be disrespectful. In the evening of the same day we rode on horseback, wholly unarmed, up the Missouri River, towards Little Swan's Camp, at the mouth of Cheyenne River, returning long after dark, without even the thought of danger. At night three prominent chiefs sought a private interview, which continued until the small hours of the morning. They asked me to blot from my memory the folly of that young man. Little Swan, from whose camp two bullets were fired into a steamboat, formerly a hostile chief, but now a cultivator of the soil, said that Bull Eagle's conduct caused a painful recollection of the time when he also was insulting to white people.

That long, frank interview with three intelligent and earnest Indians deeply impressed me with the fair-mindedness of these men, when honorably treated, even before the civilizing influences of Christianity had reached their minds and hearts.

Every point they made was just and tenable. If such men could be selected from the Reservations nearest to hostile camps, to act as negotiators, I feel sure that most of our difficulties with the Indians could be adjusted, provided there is for a few years as much liberality by Congress as is desired by all the officers of the army with whom I conversed. Most of the difficulty with hostiles arises from our lack of liberality to those who are living peaceably on Reservations.

On the following day we drove down to the portion of the Cheyenne Reservation opposite Fort Sully, and there we were glad to see, not only fields well cultivated by Indians, but also comfortable log-houses built by them.

These Indians made a strong plea for a school, and arrangements have been made to provide a missionary and teachers for this Reservation.

You have no doubt ere this received the resignation of Agent Kowes, and the nomination of Mr. Henry W. Bingham, of Faribault, Minnesota, who is strongly recommended by Bishop Whipple, and by business men to whom he is favorably known.

Mr. Bingham is the brother-in-law of the Rev. S. D. Himman, our Missionary to the Santee Sioux, Nebraska. His wife accompanies him, and she seems to be equally well adapted to the difficult and important work of civilizing the Indians, who are in constant intercourse with the roving

Teton Sioux. Mr. Kowes did not take his family, not intending to remain permanently on an Indian Reservation.

The day we left Cheyenne a hostile Sioux wounded an unarmed soldier with an arrow and then escaped to the camp of the roving Indians. There is a natural enmity against soldiers, therefore it is unwise for them to wander away from the camp alone and unarmed. Little Swan was much grieved that guns were fired from his camp, although by strangers, who escaped immediately. This lawless act was owing to a paroxysm of grief and rage occasioned by tidings of the killing of relatives on the Platte River. Wild Indians are unreasoning when they first hear that a relative has been killed, and here lies the chief danger of travelling near to them.

YANKTONAIS INDIANS.

Some of this band of Sioux, numbering about one thousand, spend the winter at Crow Creek Reservation, and go out in the spring to plant on the James River, where there is abundant rain. These Indians are all thoroughly peaceable, but have settled down into a lethargic condition, leaving most of the field-work to their wives, and manifesting less ambition than at my last visit, to have their children taught. They evinced much interest in us, and did me especial honor by cooking a dog for me, inviting all of my party to the feast. They actually complained that their Agent was building some houses for them, viewing it as an innovation upon the habits of their forefathers.

I will not here dwell further upon details, intending to suggest stringent remedial measures at the close of this report. The Yanktonais complain bitterly of the builders of the telegraph line to Fort Sully, because they defrauded them of a part of the sum they agreed to pay for poles cut on their land.

If the entire sum has not yet been paid by the War Department, can you not delay payment until these wards of the nation are settled with by the contractors, and one just cause of irritation thus removed?

The army officers and all others in that vicinity speak in the highest terms of the Agent, Dr. Livingston, who has had hard work in purifying the reservation from squaw-men and the neighborhood from whiskey ranches. This was not effected without risk of life and frequent manifestations of personal bravery.

This agent has kindly agreed to make provision for the Missionary whom we intend soon to send to Crow Creek, and for a *lady* of experi-

ence, who probably ere this has gone from the Santee Mission to show kindness to the Yanktonnais, and draw their children into school.

These Indians were present, and manifested much interest in our Sunday services, at which a child of a Christian Santee was baptized.

White Ghost, the son and successor of a noble old chief, who died just before my last visit, presented me with the beautiful pipe that was smoked at the council, as an evidence of his good will. We visited the good old man's grave, and also that of his brother, a chief who died since my former visit.

LOWER BRULÉ SIOUX.

Both bands of these Indians were present at our conference at Crow Creek, and we also met them separately at their two camps. That of Iron Nation and White Buffalo Cow is near the sub-agency, where the United States troops are stationed. The officers speak in the highest terms of all the Lower Brulé Indians, who are peaceful and remarkably moral, because they have not had much contact with white people. We arranged for the establishment of a school, and for ministering women to give it efficiency by visitations to sick and sorrowing Indians. We then drove over high prairie bluffs, and through miry rivers, to the camp of Little Pheasant and Medicine Bull, numbering two hundred lodges. It is beautifully located at the confluence of the White Earth and Missouri Rivers. This is a genuine Indian camp, without a white person or a house of any kind.

The chief, Little Pheasant, cordially welcomed us at his "tipi," which our party, comprising two ladies and five gentlemen, occupied by day and by night, with the chief, his wife, and three children, two of them being daughters nearly grown.

A fearful thunder and wind storm occurred at night, testing the firmness of this form of tipi, which is constructed like a Sibley tent. As one pole after another seemed to yield unduly to the power of the blast, the girls stayed them by driving the pointed end of a stick into the ground, and then placed the crotched end against the yielding tent-pole.

Immediately after our arrival in the afternoon, a hereditary chief, the wearer of a medal of President Grant, formally invited us to a *dog*-feast. The fatling had been killed, cakes hastily baked, and coffee made, that we might receive the highest honor shown by Indians.

That evening we conferred privately with some of the chiefs, but they begged that we would not hold council before the next day, that they might confer through the night and bring their wives and children to the

conference. We observed that Little Pheasant did not close his eyes during the night because he was fearful that two or three hostile Indians who were on a visit to the camp, might take a fancy to the team of Government mules that an officer had driven down.

In the morning the Indians made an amphitheatre of poles and tent covers, arranging themselves around it, according to established rules of precedence. They looked very unlike the almost nude beings we had seen the afternoon before, lolling in their tipis, or under some shady adjacent bower, fanning themselves with eagle's wings. Now they were fancifully dressed and painted, and they seemed instinct with life.

Their most urgent pleas, being wellfounded, were readily granted by the Agent who was present. Hitherto, these Indians only remained six months at their planting ground, because the steep bluffs and miry streams that intervened between it and the sub-agency, where supplies are issued, become impassable in inclement weather. It is apparent that Indians so situated can gain but slowly in civilization, and are not likely to acquire property and become thrifty and self-supporting.

The Agent, at our solicitation, agreed to erect a log store-house and furnish their rations at the camp. This made them very happy, but the shrewdness of Indian diplomacy was very manifest, for they all insisted that their Great Father in Washington should fulfill his promises, to furnish them with work-oxen and cattle for breeding, before they send their children to school.

They argued their case very forcibly, by showing that hostile Indians would not leave their wild and lawless life unless they saw that their brethren on the Reservations were trusted, and had something beyond a dole of daily food that necessarily deteriorates the Indian.

They had evidently agreed among themselves to insist persistently that this plea should be granted, and they thought they could gain their point, for they knew how anxious we all were to have their children educated.

I told them that their Great Father in Washington had an Indian heart, and that he was well disposed to do all that the great council of this nation would authorize him to do; but, if I was to tell him that his red children refused to trust him, and that they were unwilling to comply with a condition in the Peace Commissioners' Treaty, under which they obligated themselves to send their children to school, he might feel himself constrained to order the discontinuance of the issue of rations. I said, however, that as they viewed me as their special friend, I would say

nothing to their Great Father about my visit to them, and that they might also forget that we had been there.

Before we left the Reservation that afternoon, the chiefs came and said that they did want a Missionary and school very badly, but that they needed the cattle so much, they thought they could, by bargaining, get both things they wanted.

We agreed to found a Mission establishment, with male and female teachers and visitors, under the supervision of a Missionary who is to be located at Crow Creek.

At the Council the head soldiers and such young men as are too often on the war-path, spoke through the elected head of their band—an association formed to dissuade any of the Lower Brulés from being excited by war narratives, and duped and decoyed to take the war-path. The band also promotes temperance by preventing the wood-choppers and other whites and half-breeds who have settled on the opposite banks of the Missouri, from introducing whiskey into the Reservation.

These Indians manifested entire confidence in us, as they said, because we belonged to the family of the Great Spirit, and desired to do them good, without asking anything in return. They and the other Indians know that we have never taken any of their annuities to support our Missions. Last year one of the sisters trained at the Philadelphia Memorial House visited them, and communed with their wives and daughters.

This season, when the chiefs went to the Yankton Agency, where this sister is performing her labors of love, they begged her to come and teach their women the ways of the whites, and to lead them into the better way of life.

The crops cultivated by this band of Lower Brulés looked well, and the Indians obtained a promise from the Agent that he would break more prairie sod this summer, that they might extend their cultivation the coming season.

YANKTON SIOUX RESERVATION.

As we entered it from the north, the Chief White Swan was at the door of a pretty Chapel, which he had aided in building, and in which he and his people worship. It seemed almost miraculous that a chief, once noted for bravery on the war-path, now clothed with the garments of civilization, and "in his right mind," should welcome us, with evident satisfaction to the House of God, and to the school in which the children of his band are instructed. At a subsequent interview, asked for by Christian Yanktons, White Swan, in an eloquent speech, showed his

simple faith and the strength of his trust. He said all the white men who came before those sent by the Great Spirit made vain and unchanceable promises, whilst those now sent took words from God's Book, which were true and ever-enduring. He gave this illustration: Although great forests are swept away by the tornado, yet when the trunk of a tree without its branches is buried deep in the earth, even the largest steamboat can by its help out-ride the most violent storm; so we Indians have now that to which we can with certainty cling. He asked us to look at the noble band of Christian young men about him, as they had withstood great trials and temptations, their presence spoke louder than any words of his. Soon after we reached the Mission House and principal Chapel, the Indians began to assemble for their weekly practice in sacred music. Voices of young men, that might otherwise have been shrieking the savage war-whoop, were now sweetly singing "Nearer, my God, to Thee," in the liquid language of the Dakotas. The lad who played the organ, with full harmony, is an Indian, the son of a chief. About a year since, after he had been taught at the day-school to pray, he plead earnestly to be received into the Mission House, saying "In my father's house I have no place to pray." The Christian name of William Selwyn was given to him, and he has since then walked worthy of his name and of his Christian profession. Like many other Indians, his musical talent is quite remarkable, for with a little instruction from Daniel Hemans, the Santee Indian Deacon, William performs very creditably the varied music of our Church Service. On Sunday the Church was filled at nine o'clock and at half-past ten with Indians, and I observed that Strike-the-Ree, the principal chief, and Deloria, the chief of the half-breeds, were present at both services, seeming to be reverent worshippers. Children formed part of the early congregation, and some of them were also assembled in the afternoon for catechising. The success of our mission to the Yankton Sioux Indians has exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Most of the chiefs have been baptized or are using their influence in favor of Christianity; one or two of them, however, still favor the heathen party, which is weakening day by day. Young men, belonging to the White Horse Band and the Grass Band, asked for an interview to assure me that the whole power of their organizations would continue to be exerted in favor of Christian practices. Much credit is due to the Rev. S. D. Hinman, who originated and continues to supervise our Mission, and to the Rev. J. W. Cook, who for more than two years has devoted himself to this self-denying work with

primitive zeal and efficiency. Much, very much, can be accomplished among our Indians by introducing the industries of civilized life, by teaching adults and children in schools, and by the faithful illustration and enforcement of revealed truth in the Church, when aided by public worship and the Sacraments of our holy religion. We have, however, been constrained to illustrate Christianity, by embodying it in self-denying and sympathizing acts performed in Christ's name and for His sake. There lies the great secret of our success in dispelling superstition and prejudice, and in reaching minds and hearts which seemed to be unapproachable. The daily and almost hourly acts of kindness to the sick and sorrowing and to the neglected ones, silently but irresistibly dispel the prejudices against Christian men and ministering women, which are naturally stirred up by the conjurors of the tribe. The occupation and support of these heathen medicine-men leave them as Christianity advances ; therefore, where words have not been preceded by Christian acts, these conjurors have stirred up the whole community, and in some instances have driven off both missionaries and teachers. Fortunately there is a power that God has placed in the hands of Christians which is everywhere and under all circumstances irresistible, for the Holy Spirit works *in* it and *through* it. With such holy ministries, not only the warlike Sioux, but even the Apaches and Comanches, can eventually be successfully reached ; but without practical exhibitions of Christianity the unsubdued and untamed red man will continue to cry "blood for blood."

The improvement of the Yankton Sioux in temporal things is quite as marked as in spiritual. A few years since the men viewed manual labor of all kinds as degrading, except when on the chase or war-path. Then, they could not be hired to bring water from the Missouri, and the Santee Sioux were performing much of the labor on this Agency, and receiving wages therefor. Now, most of the Yankton Indians are anxious to work for wages, and many of them have built comfortable log-houses with their own hands, on lands which they hope soon to obtain by allotment. From their own savings many have purchased wagons and horses and articles of household comfort. Their Agent is doing all he can to promote industrious habits, and in other ways to aid in civilizing them ; and I was glad to learn that the Indian Department had given him authority to build a slaughter house, and thus to remove one of the brutalizing influences before referred to. The most intelligent and influential of the Yankton Indians expressed in their

speeches a strong desire to aid the Church and the Government in civilizing their roving wild brethren. They said that visits were constantly made by such to the Yankton Reservation, but those who were hostile to the Government, finding the Indians on Reservations poorer and less independent than themselves, see no inducement to abandon their wild life. The Yanktons say, when we get cattle and farms we can convince the wild men and their wives that a settled life is better than a roving one. There is not half as much arable land on the entire Yankton Reservation as each Indian could get by leaving his tribe and becoming a citizen; still, there is an unlimited extent of high prairie well suited to flocks and herds.

Our exit from the Yankton Reservation was as replete with interest as our entrance. Andrew Botin, the first adult baptized by our Yankton Missionary, met us with a deputation of his neighbors, six miles below the central Chapel. They plead successfully for a school-house to be built there, stating that education is the only hope for their children. We promised to collect money immediately, and erect a school-house on the site they had selected.

When we reached the lower end of the Reservation, occupied by Mad Bull's Band, that once impetuous chief was waiting our arrival at the Chapel, which he had aided in building. The bell was rung and all his people were assembled in the Church to meet us. After religious service in their own language, by the Rev. Mr. Hinman, and our addresses through an interpreter, Mad Bull asked his young Christian men to speak for him, which they did humbly but earnestly. They said that all the people attended Church, and that the children went to school except during planting season. They also truly said that this band of Indians is sober, although a whiskey ranche is within fifty yards of their Reservation. Mr. Robinson, their white teacher, who lives in the Mission House adjoining the Chapel, testifies to the sobriety and industry of these Indians. As we left the Yankton Reservation, Mad Bull accompanied me in a walk to all the fields and patches under cultivation, that I might see the work of his people. Their little herd is allowed to increase from year to year, for they do not kill any of them. Mad Bull's son, who had for a little season yielded to temptation, was silent in the Church, but privately handed a letter to the Rev. Mr. Hinman. He said that he had learned by sad experience that there were many sloughs in the Christian's pathway, and that through carelessness he had been mired for a little season in one of them, and meant to be

more watchful in the future. A "sun-dance" had been held on the Yankton Reservation a few days before we reached it, but at the request of the Agent, every barbarous practice had been omitted. If the arrangements had not been fully made before it was known to the Agent, I think out of respect to him it would have been discontinued. Much credit is due to the Rev. John P. Williamson, Jr., a model Missionary of the Presbyterian Church, who also has wrought a great work at this Agency.

SANTEE SIOUX.

This tribe of Indians, being in the State of Nebraska, is included in the Superintendency which President Grant gave to one of the Societies of Friends. They nominate and supervise the Superintendent and the Agents, for the Santee Sioux, Omaha, Winnebago, Pawnee, Otoe, and other Indians.

The Episcopal Church and the American Board of Commissioners had Missionaries with these Santee Sioux, in Minnesota, before they were in a measure drawn into the massacre of 1862. The chiefs who had been influenced by Christianity, performed important services by delivering up hundreds of white prisoners taken by the hostile Indians. This tribe, after having been protected at Fort Snelling, was taken to Crow Creek, and starved there, as is alleged and believed, by the frauds and neglect of those to whose care they were entrusted by the Government. They were at length located on their present Reservation, and after unjustifiable delays, are now being settled on farms of 80 acres, allotted to each family. Those who knew these Indians when in Minnesota, and have recently visited them, are amazed at what God hath wrought. Then blood-thirsty and vindictive, and abounding in superstitious rites; now thoroughly peaceful, industrious and thrifty; each family owning a log house built wholly or in part with their own hands. They are clothed like other civilized people; nearly all of them read and write in their own language and many speak English. A very few Indian policemen, mainly used in protecting their Reservation from bad whites, preserve perfect order in this community. Houses are unlocked, carpenters and other mechanics leave valuable tools out during the night, and, as they testify, without losing one of them. I know of no community of whites, comprising the same number, in any one district, as industrious, as moral, and as religious as the Santee Sioux of Nebraska. The Rev. S. D. Hinman, our Missionary, has the best organized congregation that I have ever known in any community. He is assisted by a most devoted Indian Presbyter, two Indian

Deacons and a large body of earnest catechists, both men and women. We were present at his weekly meeting, composed of catechists and other young men, whom they had drawn there for instruction. The catechist subsequently asked for a separate interview, speaking through Joseph Wabasha, the son and heir of the head chief and a devout and exemplary Christian. He is also a skillful and industrious mechanic and agriculturist. Speaking for his fellow catechists, he manifested deep gratitude for what had been done for his tribe, and promised the assistance of the young men in carrying the blessing of Christianity from house to house and heart to heart. This band of catechists is detailed to watch over the weak, the tempted, the erring and the sick, and they do it systematically and effectually in their various districts.

The older Christians also sought an interview and manifested deep gratitude. At this memorable conference, Wabasha, the head chief, confessed that if the tribe had listened to the good advice given by their Great Father, when it was in Minnesota, instead of persisting, as the Santee then did, in their wicked and foolish ways, they would have been saved from much misery, and would long since have been brought into the happy way in which they are now so peacefully walking. They have been so often driven from their homes by the rapacity of the whites, that although they now have full faith in Christians, there is a little lingering apprehension that the present state of things will not always continue. They said that some of their white neighbors had assured them that the people of Nebraska meant to drive them out of the State as soon as the ground they now occupy was wanted by white settlers. I assured them that the day of such wrong and oppression to the Indian had passed, never to return. That in my opinion any Indian who takes an allotment of land on their own Reservation, builds a house, occupies it, cultivates the soil, will have a title as secure as that of any white man. I said that this kind of title had been confirmed by the Supreme Court and acknowledged by the great Council of our Nation as well as by its Chief Magistrate. I further comforted these Indians with the assurance that in connection with our Church there are eminent lawyers prepared to defend to the uttermost the just title of the Indian to his land. This reassurance was needed, for some of their people had feared to put valuable improvements on their land lest, as hitherto, it might be taken from them.

Mr. Webster, their excellent Agent, begged me to look into the state of their accounts with the Government, and, if possible, to procure for them the implements and cattle they now need to make them independ-

dent and productive citizens. A Church, a Mission-house and a commodious Hospital were utterly destroyed by a fearful whirlwind two years since. All but the hospital have been rebuilt of more durable materials, and are still larger and more beautiful than the first.

These Indians realize that Christianity has lifted them from degradation, and therefore venerate their Churches much as the Jews did their Temple at Jerusalem. Nowhere else have I ever seen as reverent worship. On Sunday the children and adults filled the Church at 9 o'clock, and at 10½ o'clock it was again full for the regular morning service, the congregation uniting in the responses, and in chanting and singing. The choristers, comprising young men as well as boys, meet weekly for practice, and on Sunday occupy the choir adjoining the chancel. There was no levity among them; indeed, they seemed to sing with the "spirit as well as the understanding." The musical portion of these services seems especially attractive, serving to attune these Indians for spiritual worship. There sat Paul Mazakute, the Indian Presbyter, who, though failing in health, tells incessantly at a mission station, by deeds and words, of Jesus and His salvation. Those who understand the Dakota language say there are few better preachers, and none who manifest more beautifully the spirit of their Lord. Near him was the Deacon, Christian Taopi, so far wasted by a pulmonary affection as to look like one on the very borders of what he calls "my other home." One of his eyes is disfigured by a wound received on the war-path when a mere stripling, hence his name *Tuopi*, "wounded man." His minister and co-workers testify that they never saw a more holy, zealous and uniformly consistent Christian. You may well suppose that every nerve within us thrilled as we partook of the Lord's Supper, kneeling side by side with Indians who were once the fiercest warriors, or the most superstitious medicine men, now humble, consistent and devoted Christians, with the respect and confidence of all the whites and Indians who know them. In this Church there are nearly three hundred communicants, although the tribe numbers but nine hundred of all ages, and there is another Mission connected with the American Board. To give completeness to their organization, the catechists and the Christian chiefs modestly, but earnestly, asked that another Hospital might be built, in which their sick and injured could be properly cared for, and freed from quackery and the superstitious rites still secretly practiced by one or two old medicine men. We will try to comply with their request this season, and also to found a Boarding-school for girls, that we may have native

women teachers and suitable wives for the young men of the various Sioux tribes who are being thoroughly educated. Girls, more timid than boys, and having fewer opportunities of being with English-speaking people, seldom acquire our language. Experience has demonstrated that it is better to have a boarding-school for girls in the Indian country, than to send them where they are likely to acquire tastes and habits which will unfit them for living with their families. Mrs. Hinman and the other zealous teachers and ministering women connected with this Mission, deserve high commendation for their intelligent and sympathizing labors.

THE PONKA INDIANS.

When I first visited the Ponkas, nearly two years since, they interested me deeply, being well nigh in a starving condition, because they were too peaceable to awaken the fears of the nation, and the Government had not then adopted this principle of equity which is now very generally received: "When a civilized people deprive the uncivilized possessors of the soil, of their food and clothing, bountifully provided for them by their Creator, the civilized people are bound to subsist and clothe the uncivilized until they can be made self-supporting." The hunting-grounds of the Ponkas had been circumscribed, and their game destroyed or driven beyond their reach; whilst raising Indian corn in a rude way was the only means of subsistence known to them, and on this article of diet alone no human being can healthfully subsist.

At my first visit their crops had failed from excessive drought, and they were tantalized by seeing great herds of cattle, intended to feed the wild hostile Sioux, pass through their Reservation, even eating their grass. Steamboat loads of pork and flour, coffee, sugar and tobacco, with an abundance of clothing, passed by them up the Missouri for the same destination. The Sioux thus fed and clothed were in the constant habit of making raids on the Ponkas, stealing their horses, destroying their crops, and killing their people when found away from their village. When I asked if they would like to take the first and most important step toward civilization, by having their land surveyed and allotted to them in separate farms, they said: "This is impossible until we can be protected in accordance with a stipulation in our treaty." That stipulation is to this day virtually a dead letter, for the murder of peaceful Indians on such Reservations is not dealt with as it would be if the same Indians attacked a settlement of whites. It is high time that this treaty stipula-

tion should be observed, and I feel confident that you will give your powerful aid in bringing this about.

All the experienced army officers with whom I have conversed think the civilization of the Indian is impossible, unless, when he puts himself under the care of the Government and stays on the Reservation, he is well fed, and as fully protected as his white neighbor. These raids on the Ponkas continue to this time. Two months since a raiding party from one of the wild camps connected with the Upper Brulé Sioux came through Nebraska, and made a descent on the Ponkas. They killed and scalped, and otherwise mutilated one of the Ponkas, who had ventured a mile or two from the village in search of his horse. The whole tribe then rallied and pursued them, but they could not bring them within range of their bows and arrows, and other imperfect implements of defence. In their grief, some of them sent an appeal to be allowed to join the Omahas, of Nebraska, as they speak the same language and have a common descent. All, however, united in an urgent request that Mrs. Stanforth, the mother of our Missionary, and, as the Indians say, their mother, would in person take to me their appeal for arms, to enable them the more effectually to resist these attacks. They sent by her not only the scalping-knife with which their brother was mutilated, but also one of the balls and a copper cartridge-shell, to show that the attacking party had breech-loading guns, of long range and accurate aim. During your absence, I visited Washington, and after conference with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, I obtained an order for arms from the Secretary of War, at the request of the acting Secretary of the Interior. Through the courtesy of Lieut.-Col. Otis, of Fort Randall, the Ponkas have about half the requisite number of guns. On the 14th of June, before the arms had been received, another war party of the Sioux made a descent upon the Reservation. This party had been seen by Major Sweitzer, of Nebraska, and full particulars given to Gen. Ord, at Omaha, the Commander of the Division of the Platte. He reported sixty-seven Ogallalla and Upper Brulé warriors, well mounted, and many of them armed with breech-loading guns. Both of these expeditions foraged upon and were fed by the people of Nebraska, who were told that it was only an expedition against Indians, and not whites. This second attack was made just as the steamboat Peninah made a landing, and drew the attention of the people to the river front. Fortunately the Sioux were discovered just as they slid from their horses to crawl through the long grass. The alarm was given, and Lieut. Smith, with his party of twenty-four unmounted soldiers, did what he could for the defence of the Reservation.

The war spirit of the Ponkas was instantly roused, and their charge was so impetuous, that even with miserable weapons they drove the well armed Sioux and Ogallalla at all points, pursuing them for more than twenty miles, until they took cover in a dense wood. The Ponkas wounded some two or three of the Sioux, as they were afterwards seen on travoys (horse litters). Under such circumstances, you can well understand how cordially we were welcomed by this starving and persecuted people, some 75 of whom, out of a population of 733, are suffering from scrofulous diseases resulting mainly, as the physicians testify, from insufficient and improper diet. The announcement that under the appropriation bill which took effect on the first of the month, you had it in your power to feed them, was cheering indeed, for they believe me implicitly. Yet, like Jacob of old, their spirits will not fully revive until they see the wagons laden with good things. The Ponkas have improved more than could have been expected under the circumstances. They cultivate the soil and even use the largest plows, breaking the prairie sod as accurately as any white farmer I have ever seen. I agreed with them and their Agent, to dispense with the services of the white farmer, and to divide his salary among three young Indian men who will be apprenticed to the blacksmith, the carpenter, and the mechanic who acts as engineer, and runs the grist and saw mill. The Ponkas have not yet had the opportunity of learning these trades, for they have been too poor to pay apprentices, as is found necessary elsewhere to insure regularity, industry and perseverance. Where this system of paying apprentices has been fully tried, it has resulted in producing good Indian mechanics.

In the Council the Ponkas spoke most highly of our Missionary and of his mother, whom they call their mother, and to whom they look as to a ministering angel. They touchingly alluded to her tears at the death of their comrade, and when trying to relieve their sick and suffering. I did not wonder at this, when I saw a lady of refinement cleansing and anointing a most loathsome scrofulous patient, and then providing nourishing food for her and for others, who needed sustenance more than medical care. Our Missionary is trying to reduce their barbarous language to writing, having already formed more than 5,000 words, 3,000 of them being verbs; many, however, have but a single tense. The schools composed of adults and children are prosperous, and as the Christian religion came to this people in its most lovely garb, their superstitious prejudices are gradually melting away. We were not at the Ponka Reservation on Sunday, but we witnessed a service of deep interest. A beautiful Church

is in process of construction, and we appropriately inaugurated its services by a baptism solemnized on a temporary floor laid over the joist. Ten men, three women, and fifteen children were baptized, and two women who had been privately baptized in infancy, made a public acknowledgment of their Church membership. One of these men was so strongly prejudiced against Christians, that at first he would neither speak to nor look at the Missionary. Loving acts, insensibly to himself, were impressing his mind and heart, until he was constrained openly to confess Christ. He now seems firm in his purpose, and from his intelligence and earnestness he will, beyond doubt, strongly influence his fellows for good.

Although the Ponkas were glad to hear that a sympathizing Secretary of the Interior and Commissioner of Indian Affairs are now authorized to feed them just as they had long fed their murderous enemies, and although they were greatly relieved when guns were loaned to them for defence, and were much pleased at the target-practice necessary to familiarize them with the moveable sight graduated for long ranges, yet there seemed to be hanging over them an unaccountable sadness which we could not understand.

Before leaving the Reservation we visited the village of the full-blooded Indians on the banks of the Niobrara. These Indians begged for a separate Council at which they portrayed piteously their inability to improve in the ways of the white man, when in hourly dread lest the Sioux should suddenly spring up and murder them, their wives and children. They said: "How can we go to God's House with guns in our hands? We love our Missionary and his mother, and want them to be our teachers and guides wherever we are." They then said that the Omahas, their brethren after the flesh, had offered to receive them and incorporate them into their tribe and to exchange part of their Reservation for an equal quantity of land belonging to the Ponkas. As the idea of thus getting a peaceful home had taken complete possession of this half-starved and long neglected people, it was in vain that we pictured to them their beautiful land and the graves of their loved ones.

My companions having other engagements, went to Minnesota and to Wisconsin to visit our Indian Missions there. In fulfillment of a promise to meet a delegation of Ponkas at the Omaha Reservation, I started for Omaha City with the lady before referred to, and succeeded in inducing Gen. Ord, Commander of the Platte Division, and Mr. Barclay White, the Superintendent of Indian Agencies in Nebraska, to accompany me and

be present at the conference between the Ponkas and the Omahas. The Omaha chiefs said that they felt deep sympathy with their suffering brethren, and that they would cordially welcome them on the land conditionally sold to and occupied by the Winnebagoes, if that tribe could be removed from it. The clause to which they referred is Art. 5, in the Treaty of March 6th, 1865, reading thus: "Should their location there prove detrimental to the peace, quiet and harmony of the whites, as well as of the two tribes of Indians, then the Omahas shall have the privilege of repurchasing the land herein ceded, upon the same terms they now sell." The tract measures about 97,000 acres, and \$50,000 was the price paid. The ground upon which the Omahas based their right to repurchase is, that the Winnebagoes are in the habit of stealing their horses, although not of molesting or injuring the persons, or any other property of the Omahas. It seems desirable that the Ponkas should be freed from disheartening strife, and live peaceably with their brethren where civilizing influences can be favorably exerted. Another reason that induced me to give the subject a thorough investigation, was that by the Treaty of 1868, known as the "Peace Commissioners Treaty," the Government of the United States solemnly conveyed to the Sioux Nation, the Reservation which belonged to and was in possession of the Ponka Indians at the time the Treaty was made. As this may some time occasion a difficulty, it appeared to me wise to seek for a remedy.

We were much pleased with the Omahas and their worthy Agent, Dr. E. Painter, who has been long and favorably known to me. Their Reservation is the most desirable and fertile I have ever seen. The Indians are making steady progress in education and in industrial pursuits. The white carpenter, shoemaker, and other mechanics, speak well of their Indian apprentices and assistants, who receive liberal wages.

Gen. Ord and Superintendent White then accompanied me to the Winnebago Reservation, contiguous to that of the Omahas, and twenty-four miles below Sioux City, on the west bank of the Missouri River. We were all much pleased with the Agent, a son of Superintendent White, and with the teachers, employees and Indians under his charge. The Winnebagoes are certainly more attractive in their appearance and manners than any large body of Indians I have ever seen. Both here and on the Omaha Reservation, the Indians are steadily increasing in industry and in the intelligent cultivation of the soil. They are thoroughly peaceable, are not complained of by their white neighbors and when they can get a supply of cattle and agricultural appliances, they will soon become

productive citizens. This time will soon arrive with the Omahas ; as to enable them to stock their farms, &c., they have have just been authorized to sell to white settlers 50,000 acres of their land under restrictions that will insure a fair sale. On minute inquiry, we found that the Omahas had no sufficient cause of complaint against the Winnebagoes, to warrant the contemplated purchase. The Winnebagoes have occupied the land for seven years and improved it, and the United States has erected mills and other buildings at large cost; therefore a repurchase is not likely to be allowed unless for flagrant and continued wrong doing.

As far as we could learn, the horse-stealing is mainly, and perhaps solely chargeable to the Winnebagoes of Wisconsin, who use up their ponies in visiting their relatives in Nebraska and then replenish their stock from an adjoining tribe. Indians of the same tribe rarely steal from each other. The difficulty complained of by the Omahas has no doubt been amicably adjusted at a Council which was to be held two days after I left there, at which Superintendent White, the two Agents, and selected men from the Omahas and Winnebagoes were to meet for the purpose of making some equitable arrangement.

It appeared that the offer made to the Ponkas for an exchange of land with the Omahas was wholly without warrant, therefore the Ponkas are likely to remain on their Reservation, and should be defended from all attacking parties in accordance with a stipulation in their Treaty. At a conference with Lieut.-Gen. Sheridan, at Chicago, on the 2d inst., he expressed deep sympathy with the Ponkas and with all other peaceable Indians who are on their Reservations. As the usual route of the Ogallala and Upper Brulé Sioux, when on the war-path, is through Nebraska, Gen. Ord will watch for them in that direction, and Lieut.-Gen. Sheridan promised to direct Gen. Hancock, who is charged with the defence of Dakota to coöperate with him, that the Ponkas may be thoroughly protected on both sides of their Reservation and all attacking war parties punished.

In dictating this detailed sketch of my visitation, without notes or memoranda of any kind, I have presumed on your philanthropic disposition towards the Indians, and the great gravity of the subject which at this time is being dragged into the arena of politics. The merciful policy towards the Indians, inaugurated and persistently followed up by President Grant, meets with the universal favor of all right-minded people with whom I have been brought into contact. It is not to be forgotten, however, that many persons are still skeptical of "Indian Civilization and Christianization," owing to strong prejudices against the red man, or

because they have only seen Indians corrupted by contact with bad whites. So far as I may be viewed as a credible eye-witness, these details must remove some prejudice and inspire hopefulness, and thus readily accounts for the character of this report. Another reason for entering this report is, that an organized opposition to the present Administration is being formed in our frontier States and Territories, because the President has placed the large appropriations for Indians beyond the reach of the dishonest men who claim this patronage as their right. Powerful combinations, formed to dispossess Indians of their lands, having been foiled by President Grant, are using money and influence to create a division in the Republican party. Such men, and the papers under their control, pronounce the President's Indian policy a failure; hence the importance of publishing the testimony of credible eye-witnesses, who neither hold nor desire any office under the Government, and do not receive honor or profit from it. When an Administration is traduced for its noblest and most merciful act, it surely behoves every good citizen to lend his testimony to the truth. The following editorial was written by the man who was prevented by President Grant from leading a land-stealing party into the great Sioux Reservation, with the avowed design of robbing the Indian of rights guaranteed to him by solemn treaty. The editor of the Western paper in which it appeared brought it to the hotel, and had the article marked and sent to my room. If a private citizen, who pays his own expenses and does not disburse a dollar of the public money, is thus vilified, the abuse heaped upon men in office may be imagined:

"William Welsh, a distinguished member of the Indian ring, and a disburser of a large share of the religious stealings and patronage connected with the management of Indian Affairs on the Upper Missouri, is trying to bolster up the interests he represents by writing hypocritical letters in the name of religion, in favor of Indians, to Western newspapers. Whenever you hear a fellow connect the name of either religion, honesty or philanthropy with the Indian government on the Upper Missouri, he can safely be put down as a religiously-washed thief." "The election of Horace Greeley will purge the Indian Department of its putrid ulcers."

I was truly thankful for this editorial, as it enabled me to realize the designs of some of the men who are striving to divide the Republican party. It is due to some of the Western Democratic papers to state that

their justice to the present Administration in its merciful Indian policy is in striking contrast with some of the so-called Republican papers.

It also affords me pleasure to testify to the noble conduct of prominent members of the Democratic party, Senators, Representatives, editors, and other distinguished and merciful men, and to thank them for their official support in the small share that has been allotted to me of the great work of dealing justly with the aborigines of this land. Indians were cheered when I told them that President Grant had been renominated, and a Vice President who also will deal justly and mercifully with Indians under all circumstances.

I cannot close this report without asking that the consideration of the Indian Office and of the Department of the Interior, and so far as it may be necessary, of the President of the United States, be given to the following subjects of practical importance to the Indians and to the various religious bodies called upon to aid in civilizing them:

1. NORTH PACIFIC RAILROAD.

This subject is of such grave moment, requiring such a combination of Governmental power and intelligent philanthropic consideration, that I suggest the appointment of a Commission, comprising Officers of the Army, of the Railroad, and men of intelligence, who have the confidence of Indians and can properly represent their interests.

As I desire to speak without restraint, I will state that no member of my family or of my mercantile firm, has either directly or indirectly any interest in the North Pacific Railroad, or its branches, or lands, or in the country which it is likely to open up. Being somewhat familiar with the subject, I am now free to state that I know of no modern enterprise so important to this country as the North Pacific Railroad. I do not refer to the road as a continuance of the great natural highway through the northern lakes, or of its importance in developing the mineral and agricultural resources of a vast country otherwise valueless, or of its value as a highway to the territories on the northwestern extremity of this country, great as these are. I desire now to consider this railway as a military necessity, enabling the War Department to bring the lawless Indians of the North into subjection, and thus to aid effectively the religious bodies charged with bringing Christian civilization to bear upon the Northern Indians. This gives the road a national importance, and should induce all who will be assisted by it in the great work of civilizing the aborigines, to aid in removing difficulties which may otherwise retard its

progress. To some parts of the land traversed by this road, Indians have natural rights, and to others treaty stipulations, that white men shall not pass through or settle on the land, without the permission of the Indian tribes having been first obtained. It is probable that all believe that this road, with its beneficial and civilizing influences, should not be delayed in its construction because a barbarous people desire to roam undisturbed, or to procure from large tracts of fertile land sustenance and clothing. It is, however, clear that the possessors of the soil have equities which should be intelligently determined and liberally paid for by the Government. If a large military force is placed in that region, and the equities of the Indians are fairly considered, I do not anticipate either trouble or delay in the construction of the road. Hence, in my judgment, the importance of a Commission such as that now suggested, I was appealed to in regard to this road, in councils and in private conferences with Indians, to whom I promised that the subject should receive consideration.

Speaking with Indians as their friend, without being connected with the Government or the road, I assured them that nothing could prevent its completion, unless it was a power that could hinder the sun from shining or the clouds from giving rain. I told them that their Great Father in Washington had not power enough to prevent the railroad from being made, even if he desired it, but that I felt sure he would not allow any rights of the Indians to be trampled upon, as he was their avowed friend. I told them that wise men would this season confer with some of the Indian tribes on the subject, and if they had any just claims, I was confident that such would be properly considered and settled, unless there was an attempt on the part of Indians to resist the Government. The Indians on Reservations can, to a certain extent, influence those who are roving, but the presence of a large military power can alone insure peace.

Although the Indian is trained from his youth to self-sacrifice, and to stoical endurance when in captivity, yet he has quite as much regard for his personal safety as any other man. Bringing Indians to Washington, who are resistant of authority, seems to work a mighty change in them, as they realize the futility of resisting the power of the white man. Dr. Daniels, in a letter to me dated the 1st instant, speaks most encouragingly of the pacific influence and civilizing effect of their visit upon the Indian chiefs whom he lately brought to Washington. If this system is extended, the Government can get allies that will insure a peaceful

continuance of the North Pacific Railroad, especially as the officers of the road have entered into an agreement to befriend Indians by giving them a preference in furnishing supplies, and in the transportation of merchandise.

2. WHISKEY TRAFFIC ON THE MISSOURI.

Allow me to ask, through you, that officers of the army in that region be directed to prevent the landing of whiskey on or near Indian Reservations. The influx of low whites to the line of the railroad is well calculated to aggravate Indians; therefore, at this time it is especially important that the existing trade in whiskey should be stopped. It may become necessary to declare all that region Indian Country, and for a time to allow no traffic of any kind, except through licensed traders, who have too much at stake to violate the severe existing laws. A military commander can suppress this illegal traffic by a very summary process, whilst appeals to territorial courts have thus far presented little obstacle to it. Messrs. Durfee & Peck, the principal steamboat owners on the Missouri River, being urgent for the destruction of the whiskey traffic, write thus to me, under date of the 29th ult. : "The crews and, at times, the officers of our own boats, smuggle whiskey on board to trade to soldiers and Indians. To our own knowledge, whiskey has been sold to Indians on Reservations put up in tin fruit cans, labelled and purporting to be peaches, tomatoes, &c. We have known bottles of whiskey tied to a fishing line and dropped overboard at night to float to a given point below the boat, where the dealer sold the liquor to Indians and soldiers."

If, as I suppose, the treaty made by the Peace Commissioners indicates the eastern bank of the Missouri as the boundary of the Indian Reservation, your control is, I presume, complete.

3. INDIANS ON THE WAR-PATH.

Allow me to suggest that notice be given, through all Indian Agents, that hereafter Indians who go on war parties against other Indians located on Reservations, shall receive the same treatment as if attacking white persons, and that Army Officers be directed to carry this order into effect. This notice should also extend to horse-stealing parties, as that is often the avowed intention of war parties, and the life of Indians is always taken when they attempt to thwart horse thieves. It is vain to try to make industrious, self-supporting citizens of the Pawnees, the Ponkas, the Arickarees, and other peaceable Indians, who are subject to

raids from the Sioux, unless these war parties can be effectually stopped. I have already spoken at length about the effect of war parties on the Ponkas, and Mr. Barclay White, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Nebraska, writes thus to me, under date of the 28th ult.: "Allotments of land in severally have been made to the Skider band of Pawnee Indians, but they are prevented from moving their families on the said allotments for fear of raiding parties from the Brulé and Ogallala bands of Sioux. Two such raids were made during 1871. In the first, three squaws working in a corn-field, were murdered, and the last resulted in the death of two school-boys. If these raids could be stopped, the Pawnees would turn their attention to agriculture, and I believe the raids to be the greatest impediment to their progress in civilization." I trust that this subject will receive your prompt consideration.

4. INDIANS ON HUNTING PARTIES.

I ask you to consider the propriety of disallowing, as soon as may be, the customary biennial hunt, now made under authority from your office. Where Indians are supplied with animal food, clothing and shoes, there is no necessity for their hunting, whilst it promotes vagrancy, and tribal animosity, and hinders them from making material progress in agriculture or the mechanic arts. Intelligent Army Officers and Agents are of the opinion that it costs less to the people to feed Indians on their Reservations until they can be incited to self-support, than to allow them to go on hunting parties. The rights of the frontier settler should no longer be invaded and his larder emptied by these wandering Arabs, whose appetite he does not like to refuse to satisfy. The hardy pioneers of civilization complain sadly of these hunting parties, and Army Officers find it very difficult to determine between them and a war party. Last week when I was on the Omaha Reservation, I learned that those Indians had pretty much concluded that they would not make up a hunting party after this summer as their home interests suffer thereby. Agents often prevent Indians from starting on the summer hunt until after the second hoeing of their corn, and even then the crop yields little in very dry weather because the surface of the ground is not regularly stirred.

5. KEEPING INDIANS ON RESERVATIONS.

Please restrain Indian Agents from issuing rations, except under extraordinary circumstances, to Indians who are not recorded as belonging to that Reservation, or to those who leave it without the permission of the Agent. All Indians on Reservations should be notified that after the

issue of this order they can only draw rations on the Reservation where their names are registered, unless they have a written certificate from their Agent stating the time for which he authorizes their absence, the object they have in leaving, and the number of rations he has issued when they started on their journey. If Indians are to become self-supporting, or settled tillers of the soil, their migratory habits must be checked. They now occasionally draw a week's rations at one place and then visit other Agencies and draw in like manner. After the distribution of annuity goods, Indians usually scatter and often barter or sell their clothing through improvidence. It will be well, therefore, that such Indians be notified that clothing is furnished for individual use, and, if sold, the Agent will be restrained from giving them a supply the coming season.

6. RATIONS TO FAMILIES AND NOT TO BANDS.

I ask that an order be issued obliging Indian Agents within sixty days after the receipt of the direction, to issue rations to families and not to bands, as is commonly practiced. Congress has decreed that no more Treaties shall be made with Indians, having in view the importance of dissolving their tribal relation and preparing them for citizenship. Hitherto Superintendents, Agents, and Commissioners appointed to treat with Indians, have found it easier to bribe chiefs than to deal with the great body of the Indians. This practice is so injurious in many ways that it should be stopped. Indians have in most cases lost confidence in their chiefs, and they do not hesitate in their presence to declare that they have accepted bribes to induce them to sign dishonest treaties. The head soldiers, or as in some cases the "soldiers' lodges," hold the power, except where rations are issued to the chief and distributed by him. This feeding power gives the chief undue influence and he often favors certain members of his band and neglects the superannuated, the widow, and the orphan. The distribution of rations to families has been tried on some Reservations, and in spite of the opposition of chiefs, it works admirably and economically, as the number in each family is counted, issue-cards are given, separate days appointed for the different bands and the cards are punched at each issue, therefore, fraud is impossible. On one Reservation of 2,000 Indians, one issue-clerk suffices, as he can weigh and deliver all the rations during the six days of the week. The slight addition of expense is saved by avoiding frauds, and the benefits of the system in other ways are incalculable. It is important that the order should be issued at Washington, for all Agents have not that

peculiar power of controlling savage men, that will warrant their hazarding the enmity of the chiefs.

7. RATIONS DECREASED TO THE IDLE.

Where rations other than beef and flour, the necessaries of life, are issued, it is high time that the Agents be directed to give notice that in six months after the issue of this order, rations of pork, sugar, coffee, tobacco, etc., or indeed any extra rations, shall cease, in the case of each man who does not in person, and in a manner satisfactory to the Agent, cultivate the soil or engage in some other productive industry. As Indians have said that they saw no occasion to work, being satisfactorily fed without it, such an order is necessary, and Agents have not the authority, neither would it be wise for them to issue it. Such a stimulus to industry is found necessary with white people; and it is much more important with Indians who have a hereditary belief that the war-path alone ennobles, and labor degrades. This proposal will not violate any Treaty stipulation, as the articles proposed to be withheld from indolent Indians are gratuities.

8. RATIONS USED TO PROMOTE EDUCATION.

Compulsory education has wrought great benefits in States and in kingdoms even where there is a reasonable ambition for education, and children are subjected to parental control. The native American is still a child of nature, caring little for what we term education, and his children are allowed to develop naturally, being rarely subjected to authority. Under such circumstances Governmental schools have generally failed in their purpose, and although many Mission schools are successful, yet they are too costly, because clothing, food, or other things must often be given to children to induce them to attend with regularity. Fortunately in the great Sioux treaty of 1868, there is an obligation on the part of the Indians to send their children to school. I propose that an order be issued to take effect on the 1st day of July, 1873, that no rations be issued to Indian children between the ages of eight and eighteen, who reside within a reasonable distance of a suitable school, unless they produce a certificate from the teacher that they have attended school not less than six months during the preceding year, and have conducted themselves with propriety.

9. SCRIPTING THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

In many of the Indian tribes, as soon as the death of any member of a family is announced, their neighbors consider it a religious duty to pro-

mote proper sorrow by taking every moveable thing away from the house or tent, leaving the inmates old, tattered garments. At the death of a child parents are subjected by their neighbors to this process, and even the widow and the orphan are completely stripped and left in a most pitiable condition. This custom discourages Indians from accumulating moveable property, therefore I ask that an order be issued to the Indians on Reservations to discontinue the practice, and to the Agents to restore the property so taken to its former owner, with the aid of military force, if necessary. Our Missionaries have, in many cases, induced the afflicted family successfully to resist this encroachment upon their rights, but it subjects the Indian to an opprobrium from which the Government should try to screen him. Indians cannot become traders until this custom is discontinued.

10. TITLE TO FARMS.

Indians on some of the Reservations where their land has been surveyed and farms given to families or individuals, are discouraged from making valuable improvements because of some ambiguity in the form of certificate issued, showing an uncertainty in their title. Superintendents and Indian Agents desire to be able to assure the Indians that they are the bona fide owners of the land allotted to them, therefore allow me to suggest that the law officers of the Government be called on to prepare satisfactory title deeds, or to indicate the form of legislation that may be necessary. At the Cheyenne Agency some of the best Indians, with the view of greater security from the visits of hostiles, have located on the east bank of the Missouri River, near Fort Sully. In fulfillment of a promise made to the Commander of that Fort, I ask that, if possible, a title to farms may be given to such Indians; for white settlers are never likely to need this land, owing to the absence of rain. Indeed it is averred that no white man has been able to support himself in that region, unless he was a thief or kept a whiskey ranche. This sweeping assertion, made by the most intelligent people in that neighborhood, is not applicable to a few wood-choppers located in the timber on the banks of the Missouri.

11. CATTLE FOR BREEDING.

So much has already been said on this subject in my report, that I merely refer to it as one of the subjects which should receive immediate consideration. I am sure that you agree with me in the necessity for such an encouragement to Indians who are prepared for the movement, and

desire to become self-supporting; and if there is any unexpended balance from last year's appropriation, you will no doubt, so far as authorized, contract for the delivery of suitable cattle.

12. TRADERS ON RESERVATIONS.

When the patronage of the Indian Office was allowed to political partisans a competition among traders could not be expected. Now that no person is allowed on the Reservation who is deemed unsuitable by the Agent, that difficulty no longer exists, and it is desirable that the Indian be able to effect his sales and make his purchases on as favorable terms as his white neighbors. The Indians frequently complained to me that the old system had not yet fully passed away. The old habit of paying in trade a high nominal price for peltries, and charging exorbitant prices for merchandise, is dissatisfying and discouraging to the cash purchaser. The trader cannot have two prices without dissatisfying the Indian, who therefore gets so little for his money, that he charges exorbitant prices for his labor. I am disposed as yet to find fault with the system rather than the individuals who practice it, many of them being highly honorable men. In some instances we found the Indians paying from three times to five times the cost of goods in the Eastern States, with freight and expenses added. I feel sure that you will cooperate with us in our efforts to allow a fair competition on Indian Reservations.

13. PURCHASING SUPPLIES NEAR RESERVATIONS.

When possible, this should be done as an act of justice to the neighboring white settlers, and also to make Indian Reservations popular in the States in which they are located, and to procure supplies at the lowest prices. It is but just that the Government should, as far as is practical, encourage pioneer settlers by purchasing the products of their farms. Indian Reservations are less desirable than the same amount of land in the hands of white settlers, and from the improvidence of uncivilized Indians, the neighboring farmers often feel obliged to feed them. Hence, Indian Reservations are likely to be unpopular in neighborhoods, and in States, unless they afford a market for products, which must otherwise be carted a great distance. The very low prices of grain in several of the Indian Reservations, and the rapid increase in the production of pork and beef cattle, will make purchases there an economic measure. In some places wheat can no doubt be had this season at 40 to 50 cts. a bushel, and if ground on the Agency, it will cost little over

a cent a pound for good flour. Corn will, from present prospects, be not more than half that price. I beg leave to call your attention to the subject now, as an amendment to existing laws may be necessary, unless the hostility to Indian Reservations creates an exigency that will authorize purchases in open market, instead of by public bids and contracts.

It seems proper that I should notify you of an order issued to all Agents under our control to disallow the too customary temporary marriages between white men and Indian women, and in every such instance to compel such a marriage as is recognized by the laws of the land, making an official record of the same. In the event of a refusal to comply with this order, the Agents are directed to eject the offender from the Reservation, be he high or low, rich or poor. You can easily understand that religious bodies cannot continue the supervision of Indian Reservations upon any other conditions.

And now, Mr. Secretary, before closing this report, I feel constrained by a sense of justice to thank the President of the United States, through you, for his firmness in resisting the powerful political pressure for party patronage, in connection with the Indian Department, urged, as you well know, both plausibly and violently.

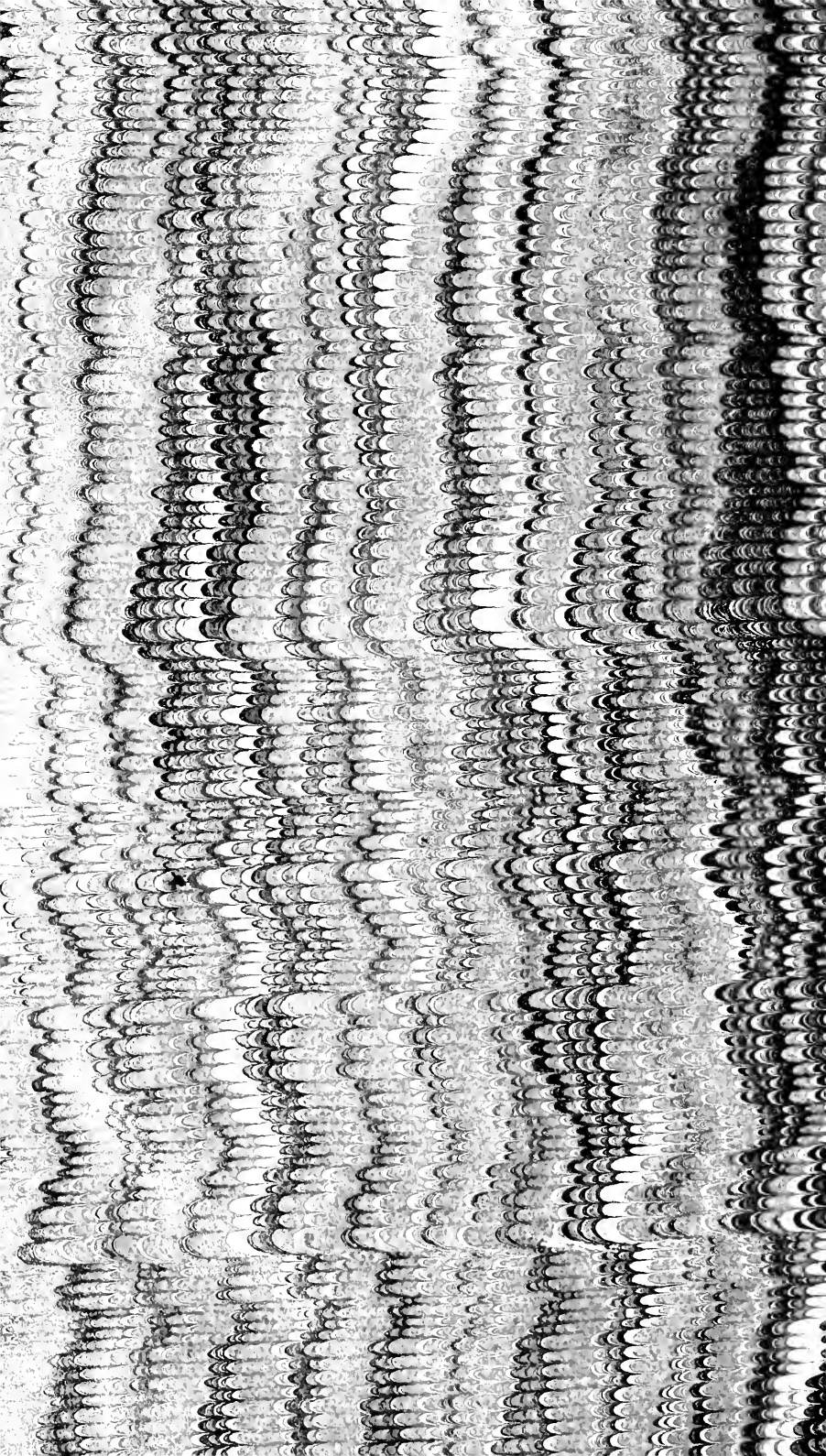
As in a former report to you, I freely censured the wrong, and then earnestly contended for Indians' rights, it would be dishonorable in me to pass over without comment the noble conduct of our President, at a time when political patronage is considered the very life-blood of the party. I have seen United States Senators not only claiming as a right the nomination of Indian Agents, but also pleading for the privilege of appointing a single employé on an Indian Reservation. They were told that the President had withdrawn all that appertains to the civilization and Christianization of Indians from party patronage, and placed it under the control of the various religious bodies of the country. If the rulers of China and Japan should authorize the same religious bodies to nominate the Governors of each Province, and to appoint all minor officers, with the view of promoting the Christianization of the inhabitants, gratitude would be universal; and I think that the religious people of this land have an equal cause for gratitude, and that the greatest national reproach is now being rolled off from this nation.

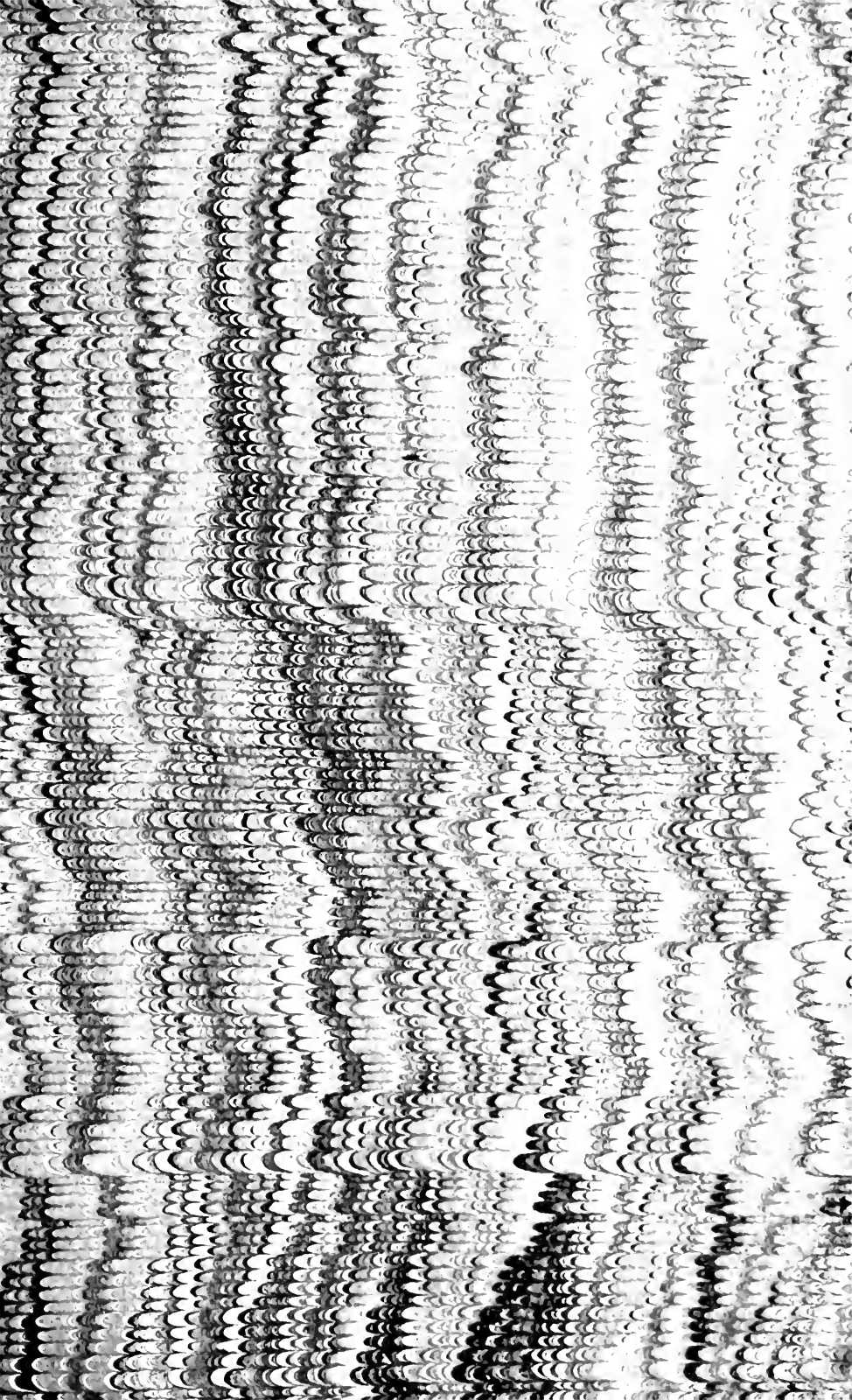
Yours, very truly,

WM. WELSH.

This Report has been approved by the Secretary of the Interior, and is published by his authority; but it is only to be viewed as a record of observations for which the writer is individually responsible. The official report of the Visiting Committee will be made to the Missionary Indian Commission.

W. W.





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