

Office Gakama Ind. Agency WY.

Butt Linnec Aug 16th 1871.

Sir:

I have the honor to Submit the following Report, which, owing to the short time since I resumed my duties as Agent, will not be as full as might be desired.

I entered the Indian Service first as Supt of Teaching in the fall of 1860 - and as Agent in 1864. From the first I have had but one idea in respect to the true import of the Service - I have known the Common Sentiment of the Country regards the Indian race as doomed to Extirpation - that it expects no high results from the appliances of the Indian Bureau, in the way of ameliorating either the moral or material Condition of the race. So deep seated and universal is this feeling that it is useless to try to make any thing of an Indian more than an ignorant Savage, that all direct and positive endeavors to instruct and benefit him is scouted as a vain & foolish attempt, and out of this feeling grows a tacit justification in the minds of Indian Officers, not only, but in the

Mind of the Country generally of that loose and inefficient - not to say dishonest way of Conducting the Indian Service, which has brought it into so great disrepute. The Argument is, if the Indians will be Savages, in Spite of the most faithful and honest appliances of the means appropriated for their benefit, then it were as well to divert those means to the political and personal advantage of those to whom they are intrusted. This Argument has given rise to practices in the administration of the affairs of the Department, that has entitled it too often to the approbrium of a political Machine, and the appropriations by which it is manipulated, to that of a corruption fund.

I have always taken direct and practical issue with this popular heresy. I believe, and always have believed, in the manhood of the Indian, and in the possibility of elevating him to a high State of Civilization. The fact that the government Service has so generally failed in his improvement, is no mystery to me. Looking at the Question from a Christian Standpoint, I cannot see how the result could have been different.

From what we see it. Nor do I find the failure chargeable to any thing inherent in the Indian character. True, he is ignorant, treacherous & cruel by nature. He is destitute of moral character. He is poor in every other respect. He needs every thing that enters into the comfort of civilization - but his first great want is Character. Failing to give him character, all material gifts, but hasten his degradation, and render his future destruction more positive and complete. I repeat the first great want of the Indian is Character. As a Christian teacher I have believed in the possibility of giving him this first indispensable condition of civilization. I have known I could inspire virtue in the Indian only by the plain, open & unequivocal manifestation of virtue on my own part in all my intercourse with him. I entered the Service in the first place as a Christian teacher & have since endeavored to administer the affairs of the agency on Christian principles. I would as soon put Wolves among sheep, or Rattlesnakes among children, as immoral men upon an Indian agency. Reformation of moral character has been the great point at which I have aimed.

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When I contrast the condition of the Indians of this agency with what they were eleven years ago when I first came among them, I find the result of my labors a perfect justification of my theory in respect to the possibility of giving to the Indian race the comforts and respectability of civilized life. From the time I took charge as Agent in 1864, to the day of my suspension and turning over to Supt J. M. Smith Sept 1869 all branches of business on the Reservation was marked with progress - and the work of moral reform, though slow, was gradual and certain. From that time to ~~my~~ resuming my duties Jan 1st 1871, every interest material and moral was waning.

Employees were paid for services long before reaching the reservation, and with the influence they exerted in dancing, swearing, drinking and card playing the interests of the Reservation were rapidly declining.

Cattle

The cattle belonging to the Indians when I left the agency, numbered sixteen hundred - the natural increase would have been about six hundred - When I returned there was not more than three hundred and fifty old & young.

These cattle were worth twenty five dollars per head - add 600 to 1600 and you have 2200 at twenty five dollars per head making \$55.000 - deduct the price of those found ~~\$2~~ Eight thousand Seven hundred and fifty and you have \$46.250 left in Cattle - or say nothing of the increase, and take 1600 head at the price above and you have \$40.000 - deduct the price of those I found when I resumed my duties as agent \$8.750 and it makes the left on Cattle \$31.250. This is a fair index of how other things were managed under the administration of my predecessor for sixteen months.

Had the Indians been protected against dishonest traders from without, and a specie of robbery within, they might to day stand up and compare property with white settlements of the same number and show equal wealth -

Some of the Indians that were doing well when I left the agency - under the military administration left their farms and the Reservation and did not return until last Spring. There was a universal dissatisfaction

with the better class of Indians under the administration of Sicut J. M. Smith.

I am pleased to say that those professing religion numbering at the time I left about 300 maintained their piety amid their persecutions, with but little loss.

Schools

When I left the Reservation I turned over to my successor \$1200 School fund - the annual appropriation was \$3200 making \$4400. On resuming my duties I found no School only on paper - the Boarding house that had been used for the convenience of the School was changed so as to make it impossible to gather the Children - The funds appropriated for Schools had been used in other ways - there was no lumber to fit up any other Boarding house, and no food to subsist the Children, or funds to clothe them. I was obliged to defer the opening of the School until we could cut and haul logs, and make lumber, sow & reap - Our School Room and boarding house are being put in order, and in a few weeks we expect to open a School upon an enlarged plan.

On entering upon my duties as agent
I found a destitution of wood for the
Station, but little stock of any kind
for the Shops, and business of all kinds
near a stand still. As soon as I became
acquainted with the Employees, and the
general condition of things on the reserve,
I determined to make changes, and in
less than a week I relieved six of the
Employees I found when I came.
We were destitute of seed to sow, and
the Indians were destitute of seed and
food.

Money - With money furnished by the Supt.,
Furnished we purchased seed for the Indians
and for the agency farm. thereby
inducing many of the Indians to return
that came away, and are now industrious,
and have reaped a harvest sufficient
to meet their coming wants.

Breaking We have broken about 100 acres of new land
Seed for the Indians this season - worth \$300.

School During the summer we have put the School
Farm farm in good condition - dug a drain
of more than half a mile & grubbed out
about fifteen acres of very excellent
land at a cost of two hundred & fifty
dollars.

Wheat

Raised

At the Department farm we raised
800 Bushels of Wheat, worth \$1.25 per
Bushel - \$1,000

Oats

We harvested and thrashed 500 Bushels
of Oats worth \$375.

Corn

100 Bushels of Corn worth \$1.00 \$100.

Hay Cut

Hauled

70 Tons of Hay worth \$700.

Straw

Stacked 60 Tons of Straw has been stacked
worth three dollars per Ton \$180.

Coal

Burned

&
Hauled.

We have burned since Jan 1871 1200
Bushels of Char coal worth 25^{cts} \$300

Potatoes

&
Vegetables

These are not harvested but we have
raised enough for the use of the Agency.

Improvement

of Agency
Building

During the Season we have improved
the dwelling houses of the employees
the School & Boarding house at an expense
at least \$500. We have built one house
for an Indian - labor worth \$100.

Mills

The Reservoir Mills are in good running
order - I have given them this Season a
general overhauling - put in a new wheel
at the Saw Mill and made other
repairs at a Cost of about \$250 dollars -

Harness

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Shop-

Some of the Boys that have been in School in years past have been instructed in harness making, so that now they are capable of cutting and making team harness for the Agency teams, and for the Indians. During the first Quarter, three Indian boys made twenty eight sets of team harness, which have been issued to the Indians - all the repairs of harness for the Agency teams, and the Indians is done by our Indian boys.

Wagons

I have been obliged to purchase three new lumber Wagons as our old ones were not sufficient to do the work of the Agency - the destitution of timber to build Wagons, and the great amount of repairing there is to do on the Indian Wagons, makes it inexpedient to put up new work here as the wagon timber would have to be transported one hundred and fifty five miles

Catholic
Mission

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There has been within a few years a Catholic Mission established a little over the line of the Reservation - They succeed in drawing off a few of the Indians and instructing them that marriages solemnized, baptisms administered and religious instruction given by the Agent, is invalid, and should not be regarded. It seems to be the object of those in charge of said Mission, to keep the Indians so far as they can, in a fever, dissatisfied State - this teaching is doing the Indians an injury; and tends directly to keep them from settling upon the Reservation, to make, and keep up a difficulty between the Indians and the white settlers around the Reservation. Petitions numerously signed by the settlers around said Mission, have been sent to me complaining of the Indians, and urging me to put a stop to their congregating at that place. I think there is not more than one in ten belonging to this Reservation that sympathize with them, though Col. Rep in his ^{known} report of last year, said three fourths of all the Indians were Catholics!! There is more danger of difficulty, between the whites and Indians from this quarter, than all others put together -

It will be seen by our monthly reports that very much of the work of the agency is done by the Indians. My object is to work as many of them in to the service as we need to accomplish the business of the agency, with as few white men to instruct and assist in the work, as is allowable - this gives them the knowledge they need, makes them industrious, and furnishes means for their subsistence and general improvement.

In Conclusion I have to say, give the Indians the amount of means appropriated by the Government from year to year, give them agents & employees whose examples are worthy of imitation - instruct them that it is honorable ^{to} work and to pray, and you start them upon an upward grade to civilization, and to become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty living without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. All of which is respectfully Submitted
Gen G. J. McKim
Supt Ind Affairs Wt.
James A. Walker
U.S. Ind Agent Wt.

Gallatin Agency

Annual Report
of

James H. Miller
U.S. Indian Agent.

1891