

having the remainder of the tribe brought to the Territory, that they may be together. An arrangement could probably be made to start these Western Modocs next spring, and with the expenditure of about five thousand dollars they could be brought to the Indian Territory and located with the remainder of the tribe to mutual advantage.

THE PONCAS.

At the time of the presentation of the last annual report of this office, the Ponca Indians were on the northern portion of the Quappaw Reservation, within three miles of Baxter Springs. They were not satisfied with the location, which, in several respects, was an unsuitable one for Indians beginning civilization. Many persons in the adjacent town did not scruple to sell them whisky, and although the Indians would return reeling into the camps it was impossible to ascertain who furnished the liquor.

The chiefs at once expressed the desire to find a more congenial location, in another part of the Territory, and, accompanied by an Indian inspector, made a careful examination of two locations and selected a tract on the west bank of the Arkansas River, which covers both banks of the Salt Fork at its junction with the Arkansas. The land is admirable in quality, well wooded and watered, and the location of the agency is the finest site for the purpose that could be chosen, on high table land, surrounded on three sides by water, and fringed by fine forest trees. A warehouse has been completed and agency buildings and a school-house are in course of erection, and before winter sets in everything will be fairly advanced toward settlement. A steam saw-mill is in running order, which will furnish the Indians with lumber for their own building purposes.

The Poncas are becoming more reconciled to their new home, and now ask that they be compensated for the 96,000 acres they relinquished in Dakota, and that the title to their new homes be confirmed to them by the United States. A bill to effect this will be prepared for presentation to Congress at its next session, which should receive immediate action.

It should be remembered that their old reservation in Dakota was confirmed to the Poncas by solemn treaty and at the time of making the treaty they received promises of certain annuities in consideration of the cession to the United States of a large tract of land. That treaty, which is still in force, also recognized certain depredation claims which are still unadjusted. By a blunder in making the Sioux treaty of 1863, the 96,000 acres belonging to the Poncas were ceded to the Sioux. The negotiators had no right whatever to make the cession, and the bad feeling between the Sioux and the Poncas, which had existed for a long time, compelled the removal of the latter to the Indian Territory.

In this removal, I am sorry to be compelled to say, the Poncas were wronged, and restitution should be made as far as it is in the power of the government to do so. For the violation of their treaty no adequate

return has yet been made. They gave up lands, houses, and agricultural implements. The houses and implements will be returned to them; their lands should be immediately paid for, and the title to their present location should be made secure. But the removal inflicted a far greater injury upon the Poncas, for which no reparation can be made—the loss by death of many of their number, caused by change of climate.

UMATILLA RESERVATION.

In addition to my remarks on the general subject of the consolidation of Indian agencies, I wish to invite special attention to the Umatilla Reservation in Northeastern Oregon. This reserve, inclosed by the Umatilla River and the Blue Mountains, contains 268,800 acres, and includes some of the finest grazing and agricultural land in the State. Article 10 of the treaty of 1859 with the Walla Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla Indians provides that roads, highways, and railroads shall have right of way through their reservation whenever, in the opinion of the President, public interest requires the same. The rapid settling up of that portion of the State has surrounded the reservation with a white farming population, who have already run across it a telegraph-line and several roads. The route of the Blue Mountain and Columbia River Railroad line traverses the southern portion, and the junction of this road with a proposed branch line is to fall within reservation boundaries.

This valuable tract is occupied by only 1,000 Indians, who cultivate between two and three thousand acres, and make use of so much of the remainder of their lands as is required to furnish a range for their 22,000 head of stock.

For several years past the citizens of Oregon have made persistent effort to have these lands opened to settlement, and several bills to that effect have been introduced in Congress. This desire, which gains strength yearly, is well known to the Indians, and begets a feeling of restlessness and uncertainty decidedly unfavorable to their progress in civilization.

In view of the pressure on all sides for the removal of these tribes, the increasing travel across the reservation, the expiration of their treaty before they have reached a point where government aid can be dispensed with, the expense of maintaining an agency for so small a number of Indians, and the fact that upon the Yakama Reservation a sufficient quantity of equally valuable land can be allotted them, I deem it expedient that the tribes occupying the Umatilla Reservation be removed to Yakama, and that the lands thus vacated be sold, the proceeds of such sale to be used to defray the expense of the removal, to make full reimbursement for all improvements relinquished, and to provide ample facilities for such civilizing work as will bring them to self-support.

THE INDIAN TERRITORY.

The Indian Territory embraces an area of 68,000 square miles, every foot of which is devoted to Indian settlement, and by virtue of the inter-