

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

35662

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

ON THE

OPERATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT

FOR THE

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1877.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1877.

To fulfill the law requiring able-bodied male Indians to labor, I told them they must fence their breaking before the money or goods would be distributed, and they have now been at it about a month. They labor under many disadvantages, and it goes rather slow, but I think they will get it done in time. One band is now half done what they are to do.

The two day-schools were well attended, but probably not over one-third of the children of proper age have been in school. I am informed a contract for a manual-labor school building, to accommodate eighty children, has recently been let by Superintendent Nicholson, and hope one may be opened as soon as possible, for more school accommodations are badly needed.

A Sabbath-school is maintained, which is attended by most of the whites, a large part of the school-children, and generally a few adult Indians.

The scouts who were enlisted last autumn to operate against the Sioux have returned. I fear their going may be the cause of trouble between them and the Cheyennes, who were then with the Sioux, but have since moved to this Territory.

While the scouts were at Hays City, Kans., *en route* home, after being mustered out, a white man, who erroneously thought one of them was trying to break into his store, shot at him several times, inflicting wounds from which he died in the post-hospital at Fort Hays. I am informed the civil authorities will investigate the case at the term of their court held in October. Meanwhile the man who shot him shot another man shortly after, and is now in jail for that offense, and will probably go to the penitentiary for it.

Five of the scouts also went out to near Grand Island, Nebr., and stole six horses. They got to the agency with two, which I am keeping till the owner comes for them, and the guilty parties were sent to Fort Reno for sixty days in the guard-house. These are all the crimes by or against Indians that have come to my knowledge.

Very respectfully,

CHAS. H. SEARING,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

OFFICE OF PONCA INDIAN AGENCY, INDIAN TERRITORY,
Quapaw Reservation, August 25, 1877.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit my first annual report since my connection with this agency; and in submitting it I must necessarily be brief upon many important points, owing to the short time that I have been connected with this people.

The removal of the Ponca Indians from their old reservation in Dakota to Quapaw reservation, Indian Territory, has been the most important event of the past year connected with this agency, and, with the matters incident thereto, will form the principal subject of this report.

In obedience to instructions received from the Indian Office, I left Hillsdale, Mich., on the 24th day of April last, arriving at Columbus, Nebr., on the 28th, at which place I had expected to find Agent Lawrence with the Ponca tribe of Indians *en route* for their new home in the Indian Territory. In this I was disappointed, as Lawrence arrived on the same day with only 170 of the tribe; more than three-fourths of the tribe having refused to leave their old reservation in Dakota, stating, as reported to me, that they preferred to remain and die on their native heath, in defense of their homes, and what they claimed to be their rights in the land composing the reservation upon which they were living, than to leave there and die by disease in the unhealthy miasmatic country which they claimed had been selected for them in the Indian Territory.

The detachment of Indians that came with Agent Lawrence went into camp near Columbus, awaiting the arrival of Col. E. C. Kemble, United States Indian inspector. Colonel Kemble arrived on the 30th, and, after consultation with Lawrence and myself, ordered that on the following day I should take a transfer of the detachment and Government property, and that he, Kemble, would take charge of the same and conduct the train through to the Indian Territory, and that I should return to the old Ponca reservation and bring forward the refractory portion of the tribe.

In compliance with these instructions, early on the morning of the 1st of May, 1877, Agent Lawrence transferred the detachment of Indians and Government property over to me, and I took formal charge of the same; and in further compliance with said instructions, on the 2d of May, in company with Agent Lawrence and the clerk and interpreter of the agency, I left Columbus via Omaha and Yankton for the old Ponca agency in Dakota, at which place we arrived May 5th. The next day being rainy, and the Indian village distant about nine miles from the agency, I did not see but few of the Indians, and those were morose and not at all inclined to be communicative.

On the morning of the 7th, the chiefs, headmen, and soldiers of the tribe began to assemble at the agency, and at ten o'clock, about two hundred having congregated, I called them together in council. I opened the council by addressing the Indians upon the subject of my mission among them; telling them kindly, but firmly, what the Government required of

them, and what my orders were in the premises, and what I should expect them to do. They listened to me with marked respect, and before I had finished talking I noticed that the defiant, hostile expression which they had shown had softened, and I was confident that I had made a good impression upon them. At the close of my remarks I was responded to by the following chiefs: White Eagle, Standing Buffalo, The Chief, Cheyenne, and others of the headmen and soldiers. They said that they had listened to my words, and that they were good, and that they had decided to follow me to the new home selected for them by their Great Father at Washington. On the following day I had another council with the Indians, with like effect as before.

On the 9th, I went to Springfield, Dak., and secured transportation and supplies for their removal and subsistence, which occupied my attention until the 14th, on which day I returned to the agency. During my absence, one or more of that class of disreputable white men who infest the immediate vicinity of nearly every Indian agency, and who are ever in the way of promoting good order and discipline among the Indians, and who are the bane of all good government, had poisoned the minds of the Indians, and endeavored to persuade them against leaving the reservation; and I found that all the good which had been accomplished at the council of the 7th and 8th had been controverted and destroyed, and that the work had to all be done over again; the Indians being even more hostile and defiant than ever.

On the 15th, I held another council, which was largely attended by the chiefs, headmen, and soldiers of the tribe, and which was of more than four hours' duration. At this council the Indians maintained that the Government had no right to move them from the reservation, and demanded as an inducement or equivalent for them to give up the reservation and move to the Indian Territory, first, the payment to them by the Government of the sum of \$3,000,000; and, second, that before starting, I should show to them the sum of \$40,000, which they had been told had been appropriated by the Government for their removal. To all of which I replied positively in the negative, telling them that I would not accede to nor consider any demands that they might make, but that I would take under my consideration reasonable requests that they might submit touching their removal, and, as their agent, do what I could for them in promoting their welfare; that I demanded that they should at all times listen to my words; that they should go with me to their new home, and that they should, without delay, give me their final answer whether they would go peaceably or by force. The Indians refused to give answer at this time, and the council closed without definite results, and the Indians dispersed with a sullen look and determined expression.

On the following morning, however, May 16, they sent word to me at an early hour that they had considered my words and had concluded to go with me, and that they wanted assistance in getting the old and infirm, together with their property, over the Niobrara River, which was much swollen by the rains and at a low temperature. I at once employed from the young men of the tribe a suitable number for the purpose, and at five o'clock p. m. had the entire tribe with their effects across the river, off the reservation, and in camp in Nebraska.

It was a hard day's work, the river being about forty rods wide, and the current so swift that it was found impossible to move the goods across in any other way than by packing them on the shoulders of the men, the quicksand bottom rendering it unsafe to trust them on the backs of animals; even the wagons having to be drawn across by hand. The agency property having been crossed on the 14th, we were now happily ready for a forward movement so soon as the transportation could be arranged.

A severe thunder-storm occurred during the night of the 16th and heavy rains prevailed during the day and night of the 17th, rendering it impossible to make any further preparation for breaking camp. During the 18th the weather was cloudy and cold, with occasional showers, but final preparations were completed for leaving the Niobrara and commencing our long march the following morning.

For two or three hours before day-break on the 19th it rained heavily, making a dreary prospect for a start, but at nine o'clock the clouds began to lift, and at ten o'clock I gave orders to break camp, which was quickly responded to by the Indians and employés, and in a short time the train was wending its way up from the river's bank over the bluffs and toward the south, and I was pleased in the thought that the removal of the Poncas was now a settled fact, and that the same had been accomplished without serious outbreak or trouble, notwithstanding hostile appearances matters connected therewith had occasionally taken. We marched 12 miles to a point on Ne-wa-ches-ka Creek, and there went into camp. The following day it rained heavily during the forenoon, and, it being Sunday, we remained in camp. During the day an Indian child died.

Journal of the march.

May 21.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched to Crayton, a distance of 13 miles. Roads very heavy. The child that died yesterday was here buried by the Indians, they preferring to bury it than to having it buried by the white people.

May 22.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched to Neligh, a distance of about 25 miles. The day was cool, and, the road being high and comparatively good, the travel was made without much inconvenience.

May 23.—The morning opened with light rain, but at eight o'clock a terrific thunder-storm occurred

of two hours' duration, which was followed by steady rain throughout the day, in consequence of which we remained in camp. During the day a child died, and several women and children were reported sick, and medical attendance and medicine were obtained for them.

May 24.—Buried the child that died yesterday in the cemetery at Neligh, giving it a Christian burial. Broke camp at ten o'clock, and marched about 8 miles, crossing the Elk Horn River about two miles below Oak Dale Village. Were unable to cross at Neligh, the road being about two feet under water and the bridges being washed away. The road was fearfully bad, and much time and labor were expended in making the road and bridges at all passable over the Elk Horn Flats, where the crossing was effected.

May 25.—Broke camp at half-past six o'clock, and marched 90 miles, to a point on Shell Creek. No wood at this place, and none to be had, except what little had been picked up and brought in by the teams. Weather cold, damp, and dreary. The Indians during the day behaved well and marched splendidly.

May 26.—The morning opened with a heavy continuous rain, which prevailed until ten o'clock. Broke camp at eleven o'clock, and marched 8 miles farther down Shell Creek, when it again commenced raining, and we went into camp. The evening set in cold and rainy, and no wood to be had, except what was purchased of a settler.

May 27.—The morning opened cold, with a misty rain. Rain ceased at half-past seven o'clock, and we broke camp at eight, and marched 8 miles farther down Shell Creek, when a heavy thunder-storm coming on, we again went into camp. Several of the Indians were here found to be quite sick, and, having no physician and none being attainable, they gave us much anxiety and no little trouble. The daughter of Standing Bear, one of the chiefs, was very low of consumption, and moving her with any degree of comfort was almost impossible, and the same trouble existed in transporting all the sick.

May 28.—Last evening I gave orders to break camp at five o'clock this morning, intending, if practicable, to reach Columbus before night, but a heavy thunder-storm prevailed at that hour. Broke camp at seven o'clock; marched 7 miles, when we came to a slough, confluent to Shell Creek, which was only made passable after two hours of active work in cutting willow brush and bringing a large quantity of wheat straw from a distance of thirty rods, with which we covered the road thickly. After crossing the slough we marched to a point on Shell Creek and camped, having made about 14 miles during the day.

May 29.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and crossed Shell Creek; for about 5 miles the road led over a divide and was quite good, but in coming down on the flats, which extended for five miles between the Bluffs and Columbus, we found the roads for the entire distance almost impassable, owing to the many deep, miry sloughs which cross the road, and the general flooded and yielding condition of the soil aside from the sloughs. Teams had to be frequently doubled in order to get the wagons through. The difficulties were finally overcome, and the train marched into Columbus at two o'clock, and went into camp on Soap Fork, having made a march of about 10 miles, the march of 5 miles across the flats occupying about seven hours. Major Walker, who had accompanied us from the Niobrara to this place with twenty-five soldiers under orders from the War Department, took leave of us and returned to Dakota.

I remained in Columbus until June 1 for the purpose of obtaining necessary supplies and having needed repairs done on wagons, harness, &c. Broke camp at eight o'clock and marched 10 miles crossing Platt River Flats, over which we found the condition of the roads about the same as over the flats north of Columbus.

June 2.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched 17 miles, going into camp near Ulysses. Roads in bad condition.

June 3.—Had some trouble in getting started. Broke camp at eleven o'clock, and marched 8 miles. Went into camp on Blue River. Many people sick, one of whom was reported in a dying condition. Had bad roads, and rained during the afternoon.

June 4.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 15 miles, and went into camp on Lincoln Creek, near Seward.

June 5.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 14 miles, and went into camp near Milford. Daughter of Standing Bear, Ponca chief, died at two o'clock, of consumption.

June 6.—Remained in camp all day for the purpose of obtaining supplies. Prairie Flower, wife of Shives White, and daughter of Standing Bear, who died yesterday, was here given Christian burial, her remains being deposited in the cemetery at Milford, Neb., a small village on Blue River.

In this connection I wish to take official knowledge and recognition of the noble action performed by the ladies of Milford in preparing and decorating the body of the deceased Indian woman for burial in a style becoming the highest civilization. In this act of Christian kindness they did more to ameliorate the grief of the husband and father than they could have done by adopting the usual course of this un-tutored people, and presenting to each a dozen ponies. It was here, in looking upon the form of his dead daughter, thus arrayed for the tomb, that Standing Bear was led to forget the burial service of his tribe, and say to those around him at the grave that he was desirous of leaving off the ways of the Indian and adopting those of the white man.

Quite a heavy rain during the afternoon. The storm, most disastrous of any that occurred during the removal of the Poncas under my charge, came suddenly upon us while in camp on the evening of this day. It was a storm such as I never before experienced, and of which I am unable to give an adequate description. The wind blew a fearful tornado, demolishing every tent in camp, and sending many of them into shreds overturning wagons, and hurling wagon-boxes, camp equipage, &c., through the air in every direction like straws. Some of the people were taken up by the wind and carried as much as three hundred yards. Several of the Indians were quite seriously hurt, and one child died the next day from injuries received and was given Christian burial. The storm caused a delay until the 8th for repairs and for medical attendance upon the injured.

June 8.—Broke camp at Milford, and marched 7 miles. Roads very bad. Child died during the day.

June 9.—Put the child that died yesterday in the coffin, and sent it back to Milford to be buried in the same grave with its aunt, Prairie Flower. Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched to within 3 miles of Crete.

June 10.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched 1 mile beyond De Witt, where I employed a physician to visit camp and prescribe for the sick. A woman had a thumb accidentally cut off, which caused further commotion in camp.

June 11.—Broke camp at six o'clock, and marched to within one mile of Beatrice. Roads very bad.

June 12.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and marched to within 2 miles of Otoe agency. Crossed Wolf Creek with a part of the train, the crossing being very difficult; but the Indians worked splendidly.

June 13.—After considerable time we succeeded in building a bridge over Wolf Creek out of drift-timber, and succeeded in crossing the balance of the train. Broke camp and marched 3 miles, and went into camp again near Otoe agency.

June 14.—Water-bound, and had to remain in camp all day waiting for creek to run down. The Otoe Indians came out to see the Poncas, and gave them ten ponies.

June 15.—Still water-bound, and remained in camp all day.

June 16.—Broke camp at seven o'clock, and reached Marysville, Kans., where we went into camp. During the march a wagon tipped over, injuring a womap quite severely. Indians out of rations and feeling hostile.

June 17.—Purchased supplies at Marysville, and remained in camp all day. Issued rations to Indians. Several Indians quite sick.

June 18.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 9 miles, and went into camp at Elm Creek. Little Cottonwood died. Four families determined to return to Dakota. I was obliged to ride 9 miles on horseback to overtake them, to restore harmony, and settle difficulty in camp. Had coffin made for dead Indian, which was brought to camp at twelve o'clock at night from Blue Rapids. A fearful thunder-storm during the night, flooding the camp equipage.

June 19.—The storm of last night left the roads in an impassable condition, and in consequence was obliged to remain in camp all day. Buried Little Cottonwood in a cemetery about 5 miles from camp.

June 20.—Broke camp at six o'clock, and marched 10 miles. Purchased supplies at Blue Rapids, and issued rations in the evening.

June 21.—Broke camp at six o'clock, and marched 12 miles, and went into camp on Fancy Creek.

June 22.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 15 miles, and went into camp at a fine spring about 8 miles from Manhattan.

June 23.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 11 miles, and went into camp 3 miles southeast from Manhattan. Purchased supplies and got general repairing done at Manhattan. Secured the services of a physician to visit camp and prescribe for the sick.

June 24.—The forenoon was exhausted in getting repairs, settling bills, and in having a physician attend to the sick. Broke camp at one o'clock p. m. Marched 6 miles and went into camp on Deep Creek.

June 25.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched to a point about 15 miles farther up Deep Creek. Two old women died during the day.

June 26.—The two old women who died yesterday were given Christian burial this morning. Broke camp at eleven o'clock, and marched 9 miles. Went into camp on a creek about nine miles north of Council Grove. The weather during the day was very warm and the traveling tedious.

June 27.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 17 miles, and went into camp on Little John Creek, above Kaw agency.

June 28.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 18 miles, and camped on south side of Neosho River.

June 29.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 7 miles, and went into camp on Dry Creek, near Emporia. Purchased supplies at Emporia, and issued rations to the Indians.

June 30.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Passed through Hartford, and camped about 6 miles above Burlington. A child of Buffalo Chief died during the day.

July 1.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 12 miles, and went into camp. Purchased a coffin at Burlington, and gave the dead child of Buffalo Chief a Christian burial at that place.

July 2.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Made a long march of 15 miles for noon camp, for reason that no water could be got nearer. An Indian became hostile, and made a desperate attempt to kill White Eagle, head chief of the tribe. For a time every male in camp was on the war-path, and for about two hours the most intense excitement prevailed, which was heightened by continued loud crying by all the women and children. I finally managed to get the camp back to near something like its usual tranquillity. As the Indian, Buffalo Track, who commenced the disturbance, had given much trouble in camp on other occasions, I ordered him to leave camp and not return without permission, giving him a pass and subsistence to reach Omaha agency, in which tribe he has relatives residing. He has two brothers, but no family or other relatives among the Poncas.

July 3.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Passed through Iola about noon and purchased supplies. Marched about 18 miles. Weather very warm.

July 4.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 17 miles. Camped on a small stream with plenty of timber about 12 miles from Osage Mission.

July 5.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Marched 15 miles and camped on Flat Rock Creek.

July 6.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 15 miles and camped on Mulberry Creek. Weather excessively hot.

July 7.—Broke camp at seven o'clock. Weather excessively warm. Marched 12 miles and camped on Cherry Creek.

July 8.—Broke camp at six o'clock. Marched 12 miles and camped 3 miles south of Columbus, Kans., and about 11 miles from Baxter Springs. Weather very warm.

July 9.—Broke camp at six o'clock, passing through Baxter Springs at about one o'clock. Just after passing Baxter Springs, and between that place and the reservation, a terrible thunder-storm struck us. The wind blew a heavy gale and the rain fell in torrents, so that it was impossible to see more than four or five rods distant, thoroughly drenching every person and every article in the train; making a fitting end to a journey commenced by wading a river and thereafter encountering innumerable storms.

During the last few days of the journey the weather was exceedingly hot, and the teams terribly annoyed and bitten by "green-head" flies, which attacked them in great numbers; many of the teams were nearly exhausted, and had the distance been but little farther, they must have given out; the hot weather and flies being particularly severe on the ox-teams. The people were all nearly worn out from the fatigue of the march, and were heartily glad that the long, tedious journey was at an end, that they might take that rest so much required for the recuperation of their physical natures.

As for myself, the removal of the Poncas had been a matter of constant care and solicitude from the time of my first arrival at the agency in Dakota until the camp of the Poncas was finally established on the Quapaw reservation; and while I felt the need of that rest which exhausted nature seemed to demand, I found no time for relinquished effort for that purpose, as the situation at the new agency demanded my constant care and oversight in the supervision of affairs, in getting the Indians quietly settled and wonted to their new home, so as to make their removal the best possible success.

THE SITUATION.

On arriving at the Quapaw reservation I found the first detachment of Poncas, those that were brought through from Columbus, Nebr., by Col. E. C. Kemble, encamped on an eleva-

tion a short distance to the south of the commissary building, and I placed the delegation brought through by myself on an elevation a short distance to the north of the commissary. The Indians are all living in their tents, as no buildings have been built by the Government for their accommodation.

The only buildings on the reservation are the commissary building, situated about 2 miles from the north line of the Territory, and about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles nearly south from Baxter Springs, Kans.; the mission-buildings about 2 miles southwest from the commissary, and a few log huts occupied by the Quapaw Indians scattered here and there over the reservation, probably not more than twelve or fifteen in number.

I am of the opinion that the removal of the Poncas from the northern climate of Dakota to the southern climate of the Indian Territory, at the season of the year it was done, will prove a mistake, and that a great mortality will surely follow among the people when they shall have been here for a time and become poisoned with the malaria of the climate. Already the effects of the climate may be seen upon them in the *examu* that seems to have settled upon each, and in the large number now sick.

It is a matter of astonishment to me that the Government should have ordered the removal of the Ponca Indians from Dakota to the Indian Territory without having first made some provision for their settlement and comfort. Before their removal was carried into effect an appropriation should have been made by Congress sufficient to have located them in their new home, by building a comfortable house for the occupancy of every family of the tribe. As the case now is, no appropriation has been made by Congress, except of a sum but little more than sufficient to remove them; no houses have been built for their use, and the result is that these people have been placed on an uncultivated reservation to live in their tents as best they may, and await further legislative action.

The rainy season, which I am informed usually commences in this country from the 1st to the 15th of September, will soon be upon them, and before any appropriation can be made by Congress for the construction of houses, winter will have set in, and they will be obliged to remain in their tents until spring, which will be but a poor protection for their families against the elements.

There is no building for the accommodation of the agent, and he, together with the employes of the agency, is obliged to live in the commissary building, which is also used for storing all agency supplies. This building is 30 by 100 feet; is of balloon frame, inclosed with three-quarter-inch lumber, battened; is not ceiled on the sides nor overhead, except a small portion of the front end, for council-room and office.

SUCCESS OF REMOVAL.

In order to make the removal of the Poncas a success, I believe it to be absolutely necessary to locate them on farms of their selection on the reservation, so far as is practicable; build them comfortable houses in which to live, and furnish them with the means to break the land and for general tillage. I think that in this way the tribe may be made to become self-sustaining in a few years.

The Poncas are a large, well-proportioned and well developed race of people, many of the men being over six feet in stature, and are said to be very good workers.

QUAPAW RESERVATION.

This reservation is a very fine section of country, being mostly rolling prairie, of a rich, fertile soil, and is well watered by fine streams and many magnificent springs. On the western part of the reservation are as fine sulphur-springs as can be found anywhere, and in the same vicinity is a spring known as "Tar Springs," which name is derived from the fact that a substance very much of the nature of tar flows out with the water and covers the surface to considerable thickness. Girting Spring River and other streams is plenty of timber for the use of the reservation for many years. There is plenty of coal found in the western portion, and I am also informed that coal has been discovered east of Spring River, near the eastern boundary of the reservation.

This reservation has many excellent advantages for stock-raising; grazing being good, water abundant, and hay may be secured in almost unlimited quantity, and of excellent quality, at small expense.

THE FARM.

There is an inclosed farm of about 360 acres in the northern part of the reservation and near Spring River, of which 300 acres were planted to corn this spring by the Government, for the benefit of the Poncas. About 60 acres were destroyed by the heavy spring rains, leaving about 240 acres which is in splendid condition, and promises an abundant harvest. There were about nine acres of wheat on the farm, which I caused to be cut and stacked. I have not yet had it thrashed; but it was light straw, and I do not anticipate much of a yield from it.

SETTLEMENT OF TITLE, ETC.

Among the first and most important things to be done, in my judgment, in order to make the removal of the Poncas a success, is for the Government to settle the title of their reservation in them; and to settle with them for their old reservation and other property which they left in Dakota. As the matter now stands, the title to this reservation remains in the Quappaws, no effort having been made as yet to even remove them from it; and the title to the old Ponca reservation in Dakota still remains in the Poncas, they having signed no papers relinquishing their title nor having violated any of the provisions of the treaty by which it was ceded to them by the Government.

These Indians claim that the Government had no right to move them from their reservation without first obtaining from them by purchase or treaty the title which they had acquired from the Government, and for which they rendered a valuable consideration. They claim that the date of the settlement of their tribe upon the land composing their old reservation is prehistoric; that they were all born there, and that their ancestors from generations back beyond their knowledge were born and lived upon its soil, and that they finally acquired a complete and perfect title from the Government by treaty made with the "great father" at Washington, which, they claimed, made it as legitimately theirs as is the home of the white man acquired by gift or purchase. They now ask that a delegation of their chiefs and headmen be allowed to visit Washington for the purpose of settling all matters of difference between them and the Government; and that they may talk to the "great father" face to face about the great wrongs which they claim have been done them.

I earnestly recommend that their request be granted.

CIVILIZATION.

I believe that the most potent agent that can be employed for the civilization of the Indians is the school-room; and I especially recommend that a boarding and day-school be established and maintained without vacation at this agency. From my experience and observation, I am led to the conclusion that vacations are detrimental, if not fatal, to the success and prosperity of all Indian schools. After an Indian child has been in school for a few months, and becomes somewhat accustomed to its studies and new surroundings, if then allowed to return to the lodge of its parents, it soon drifts back into its former wild habits of life, and all, or nearly all, the good accomplished in the school is lost. Therefore, I am of the opinion that Indian schools should be kept open throughout the year, and that the children should be kept in attendance as steadily as possible. All other modes for the civilization of the Indians fade into insignificance when compared with the civilizing influences obtained by that thorough discipline and instruction had in the well-conducted school-room. Educate the Indian child, and give him good moral training, and the great problem which has occupied the attention of some of our best men during the past century, of how to civilize the Indian, will solve itself by evaporation.

Many of the Ponca children are as fine types of strong physical and mental character as may be found among children anywhere, and I have been impressed with the earnestness with which they sought instruction from the manners and customs of the white people with whom they came in contact during the late removal. Schools for their training and instruction should be opened at once. They will require all the room now occupied by the Quappaw and Modoc children at the mission, and a day-school besides.

SANITARY CONDITION.

The present sanitary condition of the tribe is as good as could be expected considering the radical change in climate the people are undergoing, and the fatigue and exposure experienced during the late removal. Several are now sick, the prevailing diseases being scrofula, consumption, and bilious fevers, with a few cases of fever and ague, and dysentery.

I would recommend the building and furnishing of a hospital, where the sick may be taken and treated under the personal care of the agency physician. As they are now treated in their tents, they are subject to constant exposure, and from want of knowledge of the ways of the white people in administering medicine, do not take the remedies given them by the physician with any degree of punctuality.

DEATH-ROLL.

During the removal from Dakota to this place, nine deaths occurred on the road, all but the first of which were given Christian burial. These burials were accompanied with considerable expense, but the civilizing influences that they exerted over the tribe more than compensated for the money expended. Hitherto they have been in the habit of burying their dead in true aboriginal style, but now their great desire on the death of a friend appears to be for a respectable coffin, and that the corpse shall be buried after the fashion of white people. Since the arrival here there have been eight deaths, all of which have been given Christian burial with but small expense to the service.