No. 78.

UTAH SUPERINTENDENCY.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, W. T.,
Great Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, September 6, 1858.

SIR: In accordance with the regulations and requirements of the Indian department, I have the honor to submit to you a report of my doings among the Indians of this Territory.

I received my commission on the 9th day of September, A. D. 1857, and with the least possible delay thereafter commenced my journey to my superintendency. It was the opinion of the Secretary of the Interior and yourself that I could reach Fort Leavenworth in time to come out under the protection of Colonel Cook’s command, but I found on my arrival at the fort that the command had left and were en route twelve days. I did not overtake it until it reached Fort Laramie.

My party reached Camp Scott, near Fort Bridger, on the 17th day of November last, after experiencing extremely cold weather in the mountains; and it was only through the kindness of Colonel Cook (to whom I am much indebted) that we were enabled to reach the camp of the Utah army.

On account of the inclement state of the weather, and the troubled condition of affairs in this Territory, I was compelled to remain during the whole of last winter at Camp Scott, and of course was not very favorably situated to attend to the duties of my office. I had a building erected, however, and entered upon my official duties in the best manner possible under the circumstances.

The tribes and fragments of tribes with whom I had business relations during my forced residence at Camp Scott are as follows, to wit: on the second day of December last I was visited by San-Pitch, a principal chief of the Utahs, and a few of his men. I will speak more elaborately of this tribe in the progress of this report. They wished to see Agent Hurt, who was then residing at Camp Scott. I gave them a few presents; this was my first official act with the Indians.

On the 10th of December following, Little Soldier, chief, and Benj. Simons, sub-chief, of a band of Sho-sho-nes, with some of their principal men, called on me; several merchants, however, who had recently and for several years resided in Salt Lake City, and who were well acquainted with this tribe from their proximity to the Mormon settlements, regarded their visit with suspicion. It was believed by many that they were spies. I learned, however, that their reason for visiting camp was to ascertain the object and ultimate destination of so many soldiers in the Territory. All this was explained to them, and after receiving some presents they departed for their homes in Weber valley. Ben Simons understands and speaks English sufficiently well to answer for an interpreter. I visited this tribe in April last. They then encamped on Bear river. The territory claimed by them includes Salt lake, Bear river, Weber river and Cache valley. Almost all the arable land belonging to them is occupied by white settlers, and, if not in actual cultivation, is held by virtue
of certain legislative grants as herd grounds. I can learn of no effort having been made to locate any portion of this tribe. This is to me surprising, as they have frequently solicited me to select some suitable place to enable them to raise wheat and corn. It was my intention to visit Weber and Cache valleys with this object in view. Several events, however, which have lately transpired, render this impossible this season. There is no tribe of Indians in the Territory with whom I have any acquaintance that have been so much discommoded by the introduction of a white population as the Sho-sho-nes. For the past few years they have been compelled to live in the mountains, (as the game has all been driven off the lowlands,) where the snow frequently falls to such depths as to be destructive to man and beast. But notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which they labor from the introduction of a white populace, I cannot learn that they have ever molested any of our citizens, but, on the contrary, have always been friendly.

About the 22d day of December last, I was visited at Camp Scott, by White-eye and San-pitch, Utah chiefs, with several of their bands. They were destitute of provisions and almost in a starving condition, while it was not in my power to procure provisions for them. I was assured by Agent Hurt that they had always been peaceably disposed towards the whites. After making them some presents I dismissed them, and they returned to their camp on Henry’s fork. These Indians belong to one of the principal tribes of this Territory. There is but one other large tribe, (the Snakes,) as I am informed. Both the principal tribes are, of course, divided into a great number of small bands, but all submit to the authority of one or the other of the chiefs of their respective tribes.

The best land belonging to the Utahs is situated in Utah valley, which is well watered by numerous small streams. All the land that is susceptible of cultivation is occupied, and most of it is now being farmed. There are eight towns in this valley, with populations ranging from three hundred to four thousand souls. It was once the favorite hunting ground of the Utahs, but civilization has driven the game from the valleys; there remains, however, an abundance of fish in all the streams. Much has been done and is doing for this tribe, (the Utahs.) Three years ago Agent Hurt opened up two farms for them on land claimed by them, one on Spanish Fork creek, in Utah county, the other on Salt creek, in Sanpete valley, one hundred and seventy miles south of this city. I visited Spanish Fork farm in June last, and, together with ex-Agent Armstrong and Thomas J. Hurt, took a list of the government property on the farm.

There is quite a discrepancy in relation to the extent of this reservation between the agent who commenced it and the authorities of Spanish Fork City. Upon my first visit to the farm Agent Hurt had not returned to it. Not knowing the quantity of land he intended to include in the reservation, I marked some natural boundaries myself. Upon the return of Agent Hurt he assured me that the points I had designated were the ones he always intended as the boundaries of the reservation.

In regard to the reservation I had a personal interview with the
authorities of Spanish Fork City, and it is really extraordinary to me that they have never raised objections to this reserve prior to this time. It is with extreme regret that I am forced into a controversy with them, imperative duty requiring me to take the course I do. Years ago, at the request of the then superintendent, (B. Young,) Agent Hurt commenced the Indian reservation precisely where indicated—has made improvements from time to time at a cost of from $15,000 to $20,000, and now, for the first time, is required to give an account of his "stewardship" to the inhabitants of Spanish Fork City. I am clearly of the opinion that this claim is unfounded, from the letter of Agent Hurt as well as from my own observation. I shall, therefore, proceed to have the reserve enclosed as soon as possible.

Strenuous efforts will be made to induce this tribe (the Utahs) to locate permanently, as no permanent good can ever be done for them so long as they roam about in their wild state.

I visited San-Pete creek farm last month, (August,) which is situated in the west end of San-Pete valley and county. This farm was opened about two years ago, under the directions of Agent Hurt, for a band of the Utahs under Chief Arapene, a brother of San-Pitch. It is the second farm within the boundaries of this tribe, and is well watered and timbered, and has a sufficiency of good grazing land; for these reasons I consider it a more eligible location for an Indian reserve than that at Spanish Fork.

On this farm there are one hundred and ninety-five acres of land under cultivation, and will produce this year (1858) about twelve hundred bushels of wheat, besides small quantities of corn and potatoes.

From the loose manner in which business had been previously conducted on the farm, I appointed a new overseer, who is acquainted with the Indian language.

The Indians are to perform all the work; with proper care in imparting instruction, not only this but all the other Indian farms may in a short time be worked by Indian labor.

The experiment of agriculture among the Indians of this Territory has not been as successful as might have been anticipated, when we consider the destitute condition of those for whom it has been introduced.

Indians are proverbially lazy, and only the pinchings of hunger will drive them to work, so much white labor has heretofore been employed to do work for them, and they have not been sufficiently taught that their subsistence depends upon their own labor. But notwithstanding the comparative ill success of the agricultural experiment, it is the only available means of ameliorating the condition of the Indians in this Territory, as game enough could not be found to subsist them for one year. In my opinion, reservations should be made without delay. Every acre of arable land that can be irrigated will be occupied in a very short time. I will give this subject my earliest attention. I have instructed Agent Dodge to attend to this as soon as possible in Carson valley.

A farm was commenced several years ago for a small tribe called the Pah-vants, on Corn creek, in Millard county, under the direction of Agent Hurt. Ranosh, the chief of this tribe, visited me, and ex-
pressed a desire that some good white man might be placed upon the farm to direct them, assuring me that the Indians would do all the work. His request was not as Indians generally are, for paint, beads, &c., but for agricultural implements. I employed a Mr. Boyce to take charge of this farm, at fifty dollars per month. No other white labor will be employed. Eighty acres of wheat were raised upon this farm this year. I will visit it in January and define a reservation.

I have visited a small tribe called the Go-sha-utes, who live about forty miles west of this city. They are, without exception, the most miserable looking set of human beings I ever beheld. I gave them some clothing and provisions. They have heretofore subsisted principally on snakes, lizards, roots, &c. I made considerable effort to procure a small quantity of land for them, but could not find any with water sufficient to irrigate it. I will give this matter my attention as soon as possible after my return from the Humboldt.

I have heretofore spoken of a large tribe of Indians known as the Snakes. They claim a large tract of country lying in the eastern part of this Territory, but are scarcely ever found upon their own land.

They generally inhabit the Wind river country, in Oregon and Nebraska Territories, and they sometimes range as far east as Fort Laramie, in the latter Territory. Their principal subsistence is the buffalo, and it is for the purpose of hunting them that they range so far east of their own country. This tribe numbers about twelve hundred souls, all under one principal chief, Wash-a-k ee. He has perfect command over them, and is one of the finest looking and most intellectual Indians I ever saw.

He prides himself that neither he, nor any of his tribe, have ever molested a white, although the great overland route from the States to California passes immediately through their country.

It seems somewhat strange that this tribe has never received any attention whatever from any of the officials of this Territory. This I learned, not only from the Indians, but from other persons who have been among them for several years, and especially from Major Bridger, one of the earliest pioneers of this country.

The only portion of the country of this tribe suited for agricultural purposes is the valley of Henry's Fork, about forty miles south of Fort Bridger and opening out into Green River valley. This Wash-a-kee wished to reserve, and is very anxious I should open a farm for them. For this purpose I sent Agent Craig to Green River county; but I fear the matter will have to be postponed for this winter for want of a suitable person to take charge of the farm.

For several years an enmity has existed between the Utahs and the Snakes. My attention was directed to this soon after entering upon my official duties. I alluded to the feud during my first interview with the Utahs, in December last, but their war-chief, White-eye, did not seem disposed to talk about it, and it was not until April last that they signified their willingness to make peace with the Snakes. On the 3d day of May I received information that the Snake tribe of Indians were encamped on Green river. Reports were in circulation that they had come to make war upon the Utahs, who were encamped in the vicinity of Camp Scott. Immediately upon hearing the report,
I despatched a messenger to Wash-a-kee to learn his intentions, and if he intimated hostility to the Utahs to persuade him to encamp at some convenient place, until I could have a talk with him. On the 6th day of May my express man returned, and informed me that Wash-a-kee was willing to leave the adjustment of the difficulties between his tribe and the Utahs to me.

Accordingly, on the 13th of May, Wash-a-kee, of the Snakes, White-Eye, Son-a-at, and San-Pitch, of the Utahs, with the sub-chiefs of the different tribes, and also several chiefs of the Ban-acks, (of whom I will speak further hereafter,) assembled in council at Camp Scott, when, after considerable talk and smoking, peace was made between the two tribes. After I had given the Snakes and Ban-acks some presents they left camp.

The latter tribe (Ban-acks) I had frequently heard of, but supposed they were part of a tribe of the same name who live in Oregon Territory, and consequently not within my superintendency; but upon making inquiry I learned that they were a separate and distinct people, claiming a country lying within my superintendency.

In their habits and appearance they are much like the Snakes, with whom they are on terms of the greatest intimacy. They number between four and five hundred, and are all under one principal chief, named Horne.

Immediately after I received your communication in relation to the massacre of the Arkansas emigrants, three hundred miles south of this, on the southern California road, I procured the services of a reliable person, well acquainted with the southern Indians and their language, and since the latter part of June have been in constant communication with these Indians. My endeavor to establish peaceful relations with them has proved successful beyond my expectations. This route to California is now free from all danger from Indians.

I have succeeded in recovering ten of the children remaining from the massacre of last September. It is supposed that there are more in the neighborhood; if so, they will be found.

I am now busily engaged in preparing for a trip to the Humboldt river. Having learned that the Indians in that region were committing depredations upon travellers, and, in one instance, having attacked the mail party and stampeded their stock, I will travel with an escort. In addition to which, one hundred and fifty men, (one hundred mounted and fifty infantry,) upon a requisition from his excellency Gov. A. Cumming, will proceed to the Humboldt, subject to my orders.

It is my present intention to proceed to Gravelly Ford, which is one hundred miles beyond the first crossing of the Humboldt, and, if circumstances permit, will proceed to Carson valley and establish Agent Dodge, who accompanied me, in his position.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JACOB FORNEY,
Superintendent of Indian Affairs, W. T.

Hon. C. E. Mix,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.