In reply, I have to state that I regret exceedingly that the crops planted at so great expense to the Indians for their use and support in time of want have failed to bring forth their accustomed yield of seed and harvest, and that it becomes necessary now to supply the deficiency occasioned by such failure by diverting funds appropriated for specific purposes to the more pressing wants of the Indians in the purchase of necessary supplies and provisions.

I am fully aware of the responsibility and care you will have during the winter in guarding against the many urgent appeals that will be made upon you for charity to alleviate the suffering and prevent starvation among your Indians; and while there may be some doubt, under the law, as to the right of diverting appropriations from the channels for which the same were intended, I see no other practicable course for me to pursue than to adopt your suggestions. The old adage, "necessity knows no law," I think justly applicable in this case. Therefore you have my consent, if you find it absolutely necessary, to apply the funds of the Poncas, mentioned in your letter, viz: "manual labor school" fund now on hand, $1,918 93, and "building at agencies and repairs thereof," $2,113 40, to the purchase of such provisions as may in your judgment seem best, provided that the Indians will consent to the money being so expended, bearing in mind the importance of buying such articles of food as will do the most good to the greatest number.

You are at liberty to make the purchases at whatever time you deem the most economical.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. P. DOLE, *Commissioner.*

NEWTON EDMUNDS, Esq.,
*Governor and ex-officio Sup't, Yancton, Dakota.*

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## MONTANA SUPERINTENDENCY.

No. 137.

BLACKFOOT AGENCY, FORT BENTON,
*Montana Territory, September* 1, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to submit, herewith, my first annual report of the condition of the Indians within this agency. In accordance with instructions issued from the Office of Indian Affairs, October 13, 1863, I left Washington and proceeded, by way of Salt Lake, Bannock City, and Virginia, to Fort Benton, arriving on the 21st of December last, and entered immediately upon the discharge of my official duties. I found the affairs of the agency in a most deplorable condition, and the feelings of the Indians inclined to war and open hostilities—actual war existing among a portion of them; in fact, the whole field presented the appearance of unutterable confusion, wild chaos, and a medley of unharmonious discords. No agent having been in the country for over eighteen months, the Indians began to feel as though they were forgotten by their "Great Father," and expressed themselves to that effect. This feeling was fostered and increased by the failure on the part of the contractors to deliver their annuities last year, and, to a certain extent, led the Indians to believe that the government was unable, or did not in good faith intend, to carry out the treaty obligations. The peaceful pursuits of the chase were, in a measure, discarded, and the scalping-knife and war-dance substituted in their place. War parties were continually roaming the prairies, passing and repassing the agency, and hardly a week passed that a fight did not occur between these hostile parties. The most prominent in these encounters were the Gros Ventres and Piegans, owing to their close proximity to each other, though

parties of Bloods and Blackfeet were frequently in the affrays. To bring peace and quiet out of this chaos and confusion was the object for which I labored. To effect this I sent expresses to the chiefs of the different tribes to come and see me. For a long time these expresses were disregarded, or did not reach them. The 15th of January brought most of the Piegan chiefs to the agency, and I held a council with them, and learned that they were willing to make peace with the Gros Ventres, but were fearful they could not control their young men. After considerable talk, they agreed to meet the Gros Ventres chiefs, and sent tobacco to them to show their pacific intentions. On the 13th of February the Gros Ventres came to Fort Benton and met the Piegans, and peace was made between them, which, with slight exceptions, I am happy to say, has been faithfully kept by both parties till the present time. The full particulars of this meeting were detailed to you in my letter of February 18, to which you are respectfully referred. I regret to state that the Blood and Blackfeet Indian chiefs did not come to this place last spring. By this failure on their part, no opportunity has presented itself to secure a meeting between them and the Gros Ventres chiefs; consequently no peace arrangements have been effected between these parties, and a hostile feeling still exists towards each other; though, owing to the great distance intervening between them, an opportunity does not often present itself to gratify their hatred and revenge. Every effort has been made on my part, and these efforts will still be continued, to secure a meeting of these chiefs, and I do not despair of yet succeeding.

Among the Bloods, Blackfeet, and Piegans, friendly relations exist; but, with the exception of the Piegans, all are unfriendly towards the Gros Ventres; and this same feeling is fully reciprocated by the latter. A feeling of distrust and want of confidence in each other exists among them all to a certain extent, and were it not for the fear of being severely chastised by the whites, open hostilities would be frequent and bloody; but the fear of the whites keeps them in their places; and, with the exception of horse-stealing, the latter are seldom molested. There is no one thing that would prove more beneficial to these Indians than the presence of troops stationed for a time at this place; its effects would be electrical. It would strike terror into their midst, show them the power of the government, and arrest their depredations in horse-stealing. I earnestly hope that my previous recommendation with regard to this subject will not be disregarded.

In no place or department, connected with this agency, did I find a worse state of affairs than on "Sun River Farms;" here the worst management and the grossest neglect were most apparent; the property had been mostly disposed of to pay the debts of the farm, the buildings were in a dilapidated condition, showing evidences of neglect and decay. But little stock remained, and that of the poorest kind. A great many of the farming implements were disposed of or missing, and everything showed gross neglect, and the utter absence of all effort or interest in the protection of the property belonging to the farm. I found the farm in the possession of Mr. Malcomb Clark, who claimed to be government farmer by authority of one Robert Limon, who had placed him there in accordance with authority delegated to the said Limon by my predecessor, Dr. Reed. Mr. Clark united with the duties of farming those of "hotel-keeper" and trader, and the farming with these combinations was carried on, no doubt, to the entire satisfaction of the proprietor, regardless of the interests of the Indians or government. It was evident to me that Mr. Clark was not the man for the place. I therefore, on the 1st day of January, 1864, ten days after my arrival here, placed Mr. James A. Vail in charge of the farm. Mr. Vail was highly recommended to me for honesty and industry, and an experienced farmer; he was, in fact, the only man that could be secured, at that time, capable of managing the farm. I deemed this course absolutely necessary in order to save what little property remained, and at the same time protect and secure the buildings and

outhouses from ruin. Mr. Vail, on taking possession, was instructed to repair the buildings and farming implements, build a stock corral, prepare the land for cultivation, and safely secure and protect all property found on the farm, taking a full inventory of every article found. It was my intention to cultivate at least one hundred acres of land, but, as the time drew near for planting, a serious obstacle presented itself in procuring of seed, and as a last resort I was compelled to send to Bitter Root, or lose all the labor thus far expended, and defeat the main object I had in view. Another serious obstacle presented itself in the procuring of hands; the close proximity of the gold mines, where hundreds were rushing, had raised the price of labor two hundred per cent. and taken away all the surplus laboring class, and it was difficult to secure a hand for any length of time at any price. Another drawback was in the depreciation of "treasury notes," which were thirty-three and a third per cent. discount, and it was not till the 1st of April that one could be hired for the year. At that time I secured the services of Mr. William Gay, who is still on the farm. My messenger to Bitter Root failed to get seed corn, but potatoes, oats, barley, turnip-seed, and some other seed, were procured in small quantities. This seed was all sown, and bade fair to produce excellent crops; but during my absence at Fort Union the heavy rains set in, and in the month of May the farm was inundated three times, completely destroying the potato crop, the most valuable of all, and seriously damaging all the other crops. For the details in working the farm I refer you to the letter of Mr. Vail, herewith enclosed. On my return from Fort Union, learning the disasters that had befallen the crops, I released Mr. Vail at his request, and discharged all the remaining hands except Mr. Gay, who was placed in charge. Subsequently I hired Mr. Oscar Thorp to assist in harvesting the damaged crops. These men are now at work for forty-five dollars per month each, and treasury notes are worth just fifty cents on the dollar, leaving them the enormous sum of twenty-two and a half dollars each month for their services. As soon as the crops are gathered, I shall make a detailed report with reference to the expenses, condition, and location of the farm. On the 9th of May I left in a Mackinaw boat for Fort Union, with eight men, to look after the annuity goods left there last year. I arrived there the 19th of the same month, examined the goods and reported their condition to the department in my letter of May 21, to which you are respectfully referred for full particulars.

The steamers Benton and Fanny Ogden arrived at Fort Union and passed up the river, the former the 30th of May, and the latter the 10th of June. On the 13th the steamer Yellow Stone arrived with the Blackfeet annuity goods for this year. I was pleased to see these goods so near their point of destination, and congratulated myself that the sad disappointments to the Indians of last year were not to be repeated this. I went on board, when I met the contractor, Mr. C. P. Chouteau and Special Agent H. W. Reed, my predecessor in office, both of whom gave me a very cordial greeting. I was glad to learn from Agent Reed that he was on his way to this place to settle up his unfinished business, and willingly offered him all the assistance in my power for accomplishing that object. As he has probably given a detailed report of the trip of the Yellow Stone, and his failure to reach this place, I pass over this to other matters. The Yellow Stone arrived at Cow island the 20th of June, and after repeated attempts to pass the rapids, finally gave it up as being impossible, discharged her freight and passengers, and started down the river July 1, leaving everything on the banks of the river, one hundred and seventy-five miles by water and one hundred and twenty-five by land to Fort Benton. To say nothing of the causes that produced this failure to land these goods at Fort Benton, the disappointment, harassment, loss of time and delay caused by such failure is, to say the least, extremely irritating and disagreeable. These repeated failures to deliver goods to their point of destination on the Missouri by steamer as per contract is getting to be a nuisance unbearable, and might be easily avoided

were a less grasping disposition shown by steamboat men; the want of water certainly cannot be put forward this year in extenuation of this failure. I remained at Cow island till July 4, when the steamer Effie Deans, Captain Labarge, came up and took the passengers of the Yellow Stone and landed them on the 8th at the mouth of the Morias, twelve miles from Fort Benton; here the freight and passengers were discharged, and I arrived at this place the same day. I confidently expected Captain Labarge would bring up the annuity goods at Fort Union and cancel his contract for their delivery here, and was most sadly disappointed when I learned he had not the goods. This failure is an outrage of the most flagrant character, and in my opinion demands the most thorough investigation without fear or favor. Some one has assumed a responsibility that should subject him to the full penalties of the law for such transgressions. I know not the cause that produced this failure; I only know the annuities were left at Fort Union; the reason they were left I leave for those to answer who were instrumental in producing such a result.

I hope Agent Reed has fully reported this outrage and put the department in full possession of the facts. If it is possible to secure trains to haul these goods from Fort Union, I shall most certainly do it and see them distributed this fall. My opinion is that the interest of the Indians will not be promoted by storing them at Fort Union another season. It is now two months since the annuity goods for this year were landed at Cow island, and as yet no part of them have been delivered at this place. As I write, however, a train of twenty wagons is leaving the fort for the goods, and probably by the 20th of the present month they will be here.

Word having reached me that the Gros Ventres had all assembled within two days' travel of Cow island, I deemed it advisable to go down and distribute their annuities to them, and on the 16th of August, in company with my interpreter, started for Cow island, where we arrived on the 18th, having travelled on horseback one hundred and twenty-five miles in two days. I immediately sent my interpreter to inform them that I would distribute their annuities to them at that place, and on the evening of the 22d I had the pleasure of seeing the whole Gros Ventres tribe encamped in their lodges about a mile above the freight pile. On the 23d I distributed their annuities to them, and although the amount was small in comparison with what they had been accustomed to receive, they took it willingly and were well pleased and all satisfied. No disposition was shown to steal from or pilfer the baggage or in any way molest it, and on the morning of the 25th the camp broke up and left, all in the best of spirits, and at sundown not an Indian remained in camp. From an actual count made in person, I find this tribe have two hundred and thirty-three lodges, with an average of eight in each lodge, including women and children, making in all one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four (1,864) souls. I consider this the best governed tribe in the Blackfeet nation; their head chief appears to have complete control over them, and his word is implicitly obeyed. This chief is called the Far-ma-see, or the "Sitting Squaw;" he is a fine specimen of the red man, tall, powerful, athletic, and said to be the bravest man in the nation, and he is a great friend to the whites. He had learned that the whites were on the Yellow Stone fighting the Sioux, and just before he left he came to me and offered his services and those of his braves to go to General Sully and fight the Sioux. I told him I had no authority to accept his services, but if he wished to go to General Sully's camp to see him on the subject, I would send a letter by him to the general, stating his wishes. He said he would go, and expects me to send him the letter in October, when he will start. I do not anticipate any trouble from this tribe; they occupy the extreme eastern portion of the Blackfeet lands, in the vicinity of Milk river, near its mouth. They speak a different language from the other tribes of the nation and appear to be an entirely different race of people.

I regret that the wants of the department require this report to be made before the distribution of annuities to the remaining three tribes. Owing to the non-arrival of the annuities, no opportunity has presented itself for a general meeting of these tribes, consequently the facts relative to their condition and numbers have not been sufficiently ascertained to justify a detailed report at present. I see no way to remedy this defect but to send a supplemental report after the distributions are made, which I shall endeavor to do, and forward the same with my quarterly returns the first of next month.

The general condition of the Indians of the Blackfeet nation, taken in the light of civilization, is degrading in the extreme; the first glimpses of Christianity or morality have not yet shed their benignant rays around them; their habits and customs are to-day the same as a quarter of a century ago. All the benefits they have received from their intercourse with the whites have tended rather to degrade than enlighten them. Their immoralities and vices are quickly discovered, and as eagerly followed; thus they have all the low vices of the whites added to their own degraded natures. The mantle of virtue, if it ever covered any of the whites that have lived in this country, certainly has not descended to the Indian; he yet stands a monument of savage royalty among his native mountains and prairies, free and untrammelled from the shackles of an enlightened conscience, or the virtuous examples of his white brethren, proud, haughty, and contented in the glorious exploits of his fathers, which he desires to emulate and, if possible, eclipse. To bring them out of this pit of degradation is the work of time. When I contemplate this vast field, and view the obstacles that present themselves, I shrink even from attempting anything for their amelioration. I therefore leave the subject for the present, hoping that the day is not far distant when a change for the better will be effected in the minds of these degraded savages.

During the past winter the greatest obstacle that I have had to contend against, and the one causing the most serious difficulty, was the sale of whiskey to the Indians, the full particulars of which were detailed to you in my letter of January 23, to which you are referred.

The unsettled condition of the Indians, and the time occupied to restore peace and quiet among them, have prevented me from doing anything towards promoting an interest in education. I hope in the course of the coming year to be able to turn my attention to this subject.

During the past season I have been seriously annoyed by the demands made upon me for horses stolen by the Indians the past few years. There are quite a large number of these claims, and the subject is quite an important one, and demands a solution from the department. These claims should either be allowed and paid or rejected.

The want of agency buildings is severely felt; no agent should be left dependent on a "trading post" for an office or storehouse for Indian goods, and I sincerely hope that arrangements will be made the coming year for the erection of these very necessary buildings.

The agency is one of the most distantly located of any within the jurisdiction of the Indian department. At present its correspondence is carried on with the home office. For at least six months in the year it is impossible to hold communication with that office. You can hardly fail to see how necessary it is that the appropriation for this agency should be placed at some point accessible at all times for the agent's use.

The policy of the government has been for years to license certain persons to trade in the Indian country. In former years, before adventurers had explored the unknown regions of the west, or discovered the vast gold placers of the mountains, this policy may have been beneficial and justifiable, but at the present time, when the country is filled with white people, passing and repassing through the Indian lands and mingling freely with the Indians, it seems to me that this

time-honored custom should be abolished, and the Indian trade opened to all who are disposed to embark in it.

I have had no intercourse with the neighboring tribes of Indians except the Crows. My ideas in relation to this tribe were related to you in my letter of March 25. I still firmly adhere to the recommendations contained in that letter.

Important changes have taken place in this country during the last two years. Extensive gold fields have been discovered, and millions of gold dust secured; emigration has wended its way here by thousands, and at this present time a population of not less than thirty thousand are within the limits of this Territory. The trade of the country is extensive and rapidly increasing; over one thousand tons of freight has passed through this place the present season, and this is but a very small portion of what has been received in the Territory. Hundreds of men are now in the mountains prospecting for the "precious metal," and new placers and leads are being discovered weekly; the pick and shovel are in constant and daily use; the valleys and streams are being occupied for agricultural purposes, and everything indicates activity, thrift, and prosperity. The future of the Territory is indeed hopeful. With these facts before us, the question naturally arises, what policy shall be pursued towards the Indians? This subject demands the most serious attention of the department, and I hope will receive that consideration the coming year which its importance imperatively demands.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GAD. E. UPSON,
*U. S. Indian Agent, Montana Territory.*

Hon. W. P. DOLE,
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 138.

FORT BENTON, *September* 1, 1864.

SIR: I respectfully submit the following report of Sun River farm during the past year: I took possession of the farm on the 1st of January of this year. I found the houses and fences very much in need of repair; the tillable ground much overgrown with weeds and brush, and things generally in about as unfit condition for farming purposes as could well be imagined.

During the fore part of the month of January I had no teams to work with, and I busied myself with repairing the houses, fitting up farming utensils, and getting wood as best I could. About the middle of the month I received two span of mules and immediately commenced hauling wood for house use, and logs for building a stock corral, repairing and removing fences, and clearing the land for cultivation. These duties occupied my time until the 1st of March. During the fore part of this month, by your direction, I had an examination made of the river for two miles above the farm, by a competent person, to see if it was practicable to run a ditch and bring water for purposes of irrigation. The levels were taken, and a road cut; the object was found to be impracticable without extending the ditch further up the river, causing great expense, and it was abandoned. Some two weeks were spent in this examination. During the remainder of May I prepared and planted ground as exhibited in the following table:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ground prepared for cultivation | 120 | acres. |
| Spring wheat sown | 15 | " |
| Oats " | 10 | " |
| Barley " | 2 | " |

| | |
|---|---|
| Turnips sown | 1 acres. |
| Potatoes | 2 " |
| Corn | 2 " |
| Garden stuff | 2 " |
| Total | 34 acres. |

Inability to procure seed is the reason why the whole of the tillable land was not planted. I should have planted not less than forty acres of corn if the seed cou d have been procured, and a much larger crop of each of the foregoing articles would have been planted, but for the difficulty above mentioned. I had not quite completed planting corn when heavy rains raised the river until the water covered nearly the entire farm. This occurred three different times; the water remaining on the farm several days at each time. The wheat, oats, and early potatoes were up before the water raised, and bade fair to produce an excellent crop. So fine was their appearance that I flattered myself that I should raise a crop equal to what is generally harvested from the same amount of ground in any country. But my hopes were blasted, and a heavy loss to the farm has been sustained. I estimate that the following quantities of various articles planted would have been produced but for the inundations:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wheat | 15 | acres | 180 | bushels, | value per | bushel | $6.. | $1,080 00 |
| Oats | 10 | do | 350 | do | do | do | 3.. | 1,050 00 |
| Barley | 2 | do | 60 | do | do | do | 4.. | 240 00 |
| Turnips | 3 | do | 500 | do | do | do | 2.. | 1,000 00 |
| Potatoes | 2 | do | 250 | do | do | do | 6.. | 1,500 00 |
| Corn | 2 | do | 65 | do | do | do | 6.. | 360 00 |
| Vegetables | 2 | do | 100 | do | do | do | 4.. | 400 00 |
| Total | | | | | | | | 5,630 00 |

I have made this estimate rather low, as you will see when you remember the price of these articles in this country. I have required and worked as few hands as possible, discharging all except one, when I found that the crops were so seriously damaged. When I left the farm on the 1st of August, which was by your permission, there still remained five or six acres of wheat, about four acres of oats, probably one acre of barley, a very few potatoes, and nearly one acre of very fine turnips. The wheat and oats were nearly ripe when I left, and by this time are probably harvested by the men employed there.

Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES H. VAIL, *Farmer.*

GAD. E. UPSON,
*United States Indian Agent.*

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No. 139.

BLACKFOOT AGENCY, FORT BENTON,
*Montana Territory, September* 28, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith the following in addition to my annual report of September 1:

The annuity goods arrived here the 19th, and the whole Piegan tribe came in the same day. On the 21st I distributed their annuities to them, which they received in the best of spirits, and went away apparently satisfied and con-

tented. From an actual count in person I find they have three hundred and eighty lodges present; I learn there are some twenty lodges with the north Piegans that were not here, and, I am informed, seldom favor this place with their presence. These would make the total number of lodges four hundred, which I am inclined to think comprises the whole Piegan tribe. I estimate them at seven to the lodge, making a total of twenty-eight hundred, including women and children. There are a large number of chiefs in this tribe, but the only one that wields any influence worthy of note over them is the Little Dog. He is their head chief and has a strong hold upon them, but he fails to control the young men fully; still he prevents them from committing depredations in a great many instances; he is a firm and unwavering friend to the whites, and in most cases I have found him reliable and trustworthy. The rest of the chiefs are mostly talkers and advisers. This is the most numerous tribe in the nation; their home is in close proximity to Fort Benton, and they visit it often; they seldom molest the whites, and are rather disposed to live in peace with the neighboring tribes. I do not regard them a difficult tribe to get along with.

The Blood and Blackfeet Indians came in on the 24th, and I distributed to them, the former on the 26th and the latter on the 27th. The Bloods had two hundred and seventy lodges present, and they claimed that this was all of that tribe. I estimate them at seven to the lodge, making a total of eighteen hundred and ninety. These Indians came a long distance to receive their annuities, and were grievously disappointed when they learned that the goods at Fort Union had not arrived here; but after full explanations they became satisfied apparently and went away in as pleasant a mood as could be expected under the circumstances. This tribe live mostly on the other side of the line in the British possessions; they roam from the Missouri river to the Saskatchawan, and it is questionable whether they can properly be called subjects of the United States.

The Blackfeet Indians present numbered one hundred lodges. These are the most impudent and insulting Indians I have yet met. The whole tribe, from the most reliable information I can get, numbers full three hundred and fifty lodges; they live entirely in the British possessions and never come this way except to trade, get their annuities, or commit some depredation, such as pilfering emigrant trains, stealing horses, or fighting with other tribes, and then run back to their northern home with their booty, defying pursuit. They were indignant because their annuities were so small, and on leaving showed their resentment by killing and leaving on the prairie, some four miles from here, an ox and a cow that were quietly grazing as they passed. I look upon this tribe as being one of the worst in or near this agency, and were it not that the treaty expires next year, would recommend that their next annuity be paid them in powder and ball from the mouth of a six-pounder, but as it is, I recommend that when the present treaty expires they be turned over to the tender mercies of the British crown, whose subjects they undoubtedly are.

The general condition of the Indians in this agency is as favorable as could be expected from such wild and savage beings. The great number of whites, together with the expedition of General Sully, that have shown themselves in this country, has had a beneficial influence upon them, and some have foresight enough to perceive that their power over the whites is fast passing away to return no more forever.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

GAD. E. UPSON,
*United States Indian Agent, Montana Territory.*

Hon. WILLIAM P. DOLE,
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

No. 140.

BLACKFEET AGENCY,
*Fort Benton, February* 17, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to lay before you the following information:

In my letter of the 3d instant I informed you of my arrangement made with the Gros Ventres by the express sent to them on the 18th of January last.

In accordance with that arrangement, on the morning of the 13th the Gros Ventres appeared on the bluff about one mile from the fort and hoisted the *stars and stripes;* this was immediately responded to by the firing of cannon and hoisting the stars and stripes over the fort. A party of whites, with the head chief of the Piegans, went out and met them, and all came in to the fort together, singing and performing other rites characteristic of these tribes. But a short time elapsed after their arrival before the Gros Ventres sent for all the Piegans to come to their room and make peace. All the Indians of both tribes immediately assembled, and the agent was sent for to witness the ceremony. I repaired forthwith to their room and witnessed the proceedings, such as smoking the medicine pipe of peace, making peace speeches, and other ceremonies. They were all of one mind, and determined to make a permanent and lasting peace. After an hour's sitting they broke up with the best of feeling, and apparently as harmonious as two parties could possibly be. I immediately sent for all the Piegan chiefs in camp near the fort, and they came in forthwith, and on the morning of the 16th I held a council with four of the Piegan chiefs and four of the Gros Ventres and several of the principal men of each tribe. The Far-ma-see, or Sitting Squaw, head chief of the Gros Ventres, and the Little Dog, head chief of the Piegans, spoke, each for his tribe and absent chiefs. They said they had been at war for a long time, but now they had made a peace and were determined to keep it, and they were determined their people should keep it. I told them I was pleased with what they had said and done, advised them what course to pursue hereafter and what I should expect of them in the future. The council broke up, and I dismissed them with the best of feeling, and all appeared to be joyously glad. There were about fifty Gros Ventres; the leading men of the tribe have returned to their home, and in two or three weeks will come back with their whole camp to the fort to trade. The Little Dog has gone with them to their camp, and will return with them. It is the intention of both tribes to encamp together on Milk river after they all get through with their trade. When the Far-ma-see left he requested me to make the chiefs of the Blackfeet, Blood, and North Piegan Indians remain at the fort till his return, (in case they arrived while they were away,) as he and his people wanted to make peace with them also.

I feel as though the first and most important step towards a permanent peace among the tribes of the Blackfeet nation has been successfully accomplished, and that but little more work remains to be done to see these tribes in the enjoyment of peaceful relations and free from the restraints incident to the havoc of war. I am confident such will be the result. As regards its permanency no one can tell; time alone must reveal it. There are influences that surround them that are strong for war, and at a time when least expected, these influences may destroy the hopes of the best and wisest of us all. The hostile attitude of the Indians on the north and east may cause an outbreak before the year closes. Whiskey traders may create dissensions among them, and war among themselves be the result. Under the circumstances we ought to be prepared for the worst; we are creatures of circumstances, and the present admonishes us to be prepared, while we must judge the future by the past. My duty

compels me to reiterate the recommendation contained in my letter of the 3d ultimo that a military force be stationed at some point on the Missouri not far from Fort Union.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

GAD. E. UPSON,
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. W. P. DOLE,
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 141.

BLACKFEET AGENCY,
*Fort Benton, February* 19, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following information received from Antoine Frenier, who returned from Fort Union on the 15th. He left Fort Benton on the 29th December last, and has been gone forty-eight days. He has seen and talked with some of the hostile Sioux, and he reports to me the following as the true state of affairs among these Indians.

The Yanctonais and Mississippi Sioux to the number of fourteen hundred lodges, and a few of the Teton Sioux, are moving north; they are now at the mouth of White river, on their way to Mouse river, sixty miles north of Fort Union. One hundred and fifty lodges of the Assinaboines that made peace with these Sioux last fall are moving north with them, and are now in their camp.

The Teton Sioux are at the mouth of Powder river, a tributary of the Yellow Stone. They number some six hundred lodges. It is their intention to meet the Yanctonais and Mississippi Sioux at their camp-ground on Mouse river, in the spring, as soon as grass starts. A few lodges of the Little Crow's band (this band is a part of those connected with the murder of the citizens of Minnesota) are already encamped at this place. Mouse river has been selected as the general rendezvous for all the Sioux hostile to the government. From this place they will form predatory bands, scour the country, and commit all kinds of depredations, if not prevented by the vigilance of the whites.

At the present time they have but little ammunition, and it is their intention to attack some of the trading posts, in order to secure this article.

They threaten Fort Union, and possibly may attack it on their way north. If they find that General Sully is closely pursuing them, their intention is to go further north, in the vicinity of the Hudson Bay Company's forts. They expect to get ammunition of them, if they fail to get it elsewhere. It is generally believed by the whites at Fort Union (and Frenier is of the same opinion) that the Assinaboines will join them. The Sioux are exasperated to the highest point, and are determined to do their worst. There has been no communication below Fort Union since last fall. It is hardly possible for General Sully to know where these Indians are. The snow is deep, and the distance and dangers to encounter so great that his scouts would hardly venture on so hazardous an undertaking.

There is a camp of Assinaboines five miles from Fort Union, and daily communication is kept up with the Sioux at the mouth of White river. Frenier says scarcely one hour passes but some one goes out or returns from these camps. Frenier also says the whole Cree nation encamped at the Park or Wood, sixty miles from Fort Union. They number fifteen hundred lodges, and are making preparation to fight the Gros Ventres this spring. He also thinks it will be dangerous travelling the Missouri during the months of March and April; that

steamboats will probably be fired into, and that persons should be prepared for emergencies who attempt it. He further reports that all the whites killed by the Indians during the last two years between Forts Union and Benton has been the work of the Teton Sioux. From the foregoing, it must be evident to your mind that prompt and decided measures should be immediately adopted. I would, therefore, suggest the following: that General Sully be immediately ordered to Fort Union with his available force, leaving enough troops on the route for communication below, making that point his headquarters. If his force is insufficient, that he be reinforced and directed to follow the Indians up closely, giving them no time to kill game for subsistence.

The sight of troops in this section of the country will be of incalculable benefit to the government, while it will strike terror into the hearts of the Indians. I am confident, if these suggestions are followed, the Indian war will be over before the close of the present year.

I am, very respectfully, yours,

GAD. E. UPSON,
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. W. P. DOLE,
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

P. S.—I send this letter by Frenier to Bannock; on his return, as soon as the river breaks up, shall send him to General Sully's camp. I shall accompany him to Fort Union.

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## SOUTHERN SUPERINTENDENCY.

No. 142.

OFFICE SUP'T INDIAN AFFAIRS, SOUTHERN SUPERINTENDENCY,
*Leavenworth, September* 24, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to submit, for your consideration, my fourth annual report, which, together with the accompanying reports of the agents, teachers, and physicians, will fully acquaint you with the condition of Indian affairs in this superintendency.

In obedience to resolutions of Congress, and of the Committees of Indian Affairs of the Senate and House, and repeated recommendations of the military authorities, as well as the Interior Department—but, I confess, with strong fears of the policy of the movement on my part—I proceeded to remove to their homes in the Indian Territory all those southern refugee Indians, consisting of Creeks, Cherokees, Euchees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws, which have lately been located within the limits of the Sac and Fox reservations, and of all those of the Seminoles near Neosho falls, Kansas, who were in condition to be moved; most of the families of the latter tribe having the small-pox prevailing among them to such an alarming extent at the time, that I considered their removal impracticable and dangerous to the lives of the former tribes.

The removal of so large a body of Indians, numbering about 5,000 souls, mostly women and children, was attended with a vast amount of perplexity, difficulty, and embarrassment. Nearly three hundred teams were required for the movement, and these had to be secured and gathered up through the country wherever we could get them. But I am happy to state that, notwithstanding the long delays which were suffered in gathering up teams and collecting and loading the Indian families, and awaiting the arrival of the military escort that was to accompany our trains, besides a hot and rainy season upon us on the