have not engaged in agricultural pursuits, and serve as an incentive to go and do likewise.

I believe that it the government shall see fit to adopt the plan of concentrating the Indians of this agency upon the reservation, as herein indicated, in less than a score of years it will be relieved from all charge on their account, and the Indians become comparatively civilized and wholly self-supporting. In my frequent visits to the different reservations I have found a growing inclination among the various bands to altogether abandon hunting and fishing, which has now become a most precarious means of subsistence, and adopt the habits and usages of civilization with its attendant benefits. This sentiment has been greatly stimulated by the success of those who have done so now upon this reservation; and a comparison of the contentment, plenty, and comfort which these enjoy with the want and indigence of the others has been most potent and effective in its influence.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. A. RUFFEE,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

BLACKFEET AGENCY, MONTANA,
July 28, 1879.

SIR: I have the honor to submit this my third annual report of affairs at this agency.

This agency is located in the northwest corner of Montana, 60 miles from the Canada line. Its situation is on Badger Creek, which is one of the tributaries of the Marias River.

The tribes under the supervision of this agency, the *Blackfeet*, *Bloods*, and *Piegans*, are really one people, having the same origin, language, and habits. They are every year merging more and more into one tribe, known by the general name of Piegan. This is, however, exclusive of another branch of the same family, known as the Northern Blackfeet, who roam almost entirely across the line in the neighboring Dominion of Canada.

As near as can be ascertained, the Indians belonging to this agency number about 7,500 persons. They are organized in bands, or large families, numbering from 10 lodges up to 100, and are governed by laws made by the band chiefs in council, by whom also one or more head chiefs are elected. The agent, as the representative of the Great Father, is recognized as authority above the chiefs, and his approval is necessary for all trials and punishments, every offender being brought to the agency for trial.

It is less than ten years since these Piegans were exceedingly hostile, a terror to the people of the Territory, whose lives and property were in constant danger. The terrible retribution made upon them by Colonel Baker, in the utter extermination of "Double Runner's" band, put a check upon their warring operations against the whites, and since that day there has been not only no outbreak but a constantly growing friendly disposition, which has during the past year shown itself in the fact that there has been no theft or outrage of any kind committed on white men during the year.

The hostile Sioux under Sitting Bull are among the natural and implacable enemies of the Piegans, and reliance can be placed upon their co-operation with the whites in case of any offensive movements in this direction by the Sioux. During the past two or three years there has been a sort of armistice between the Sioux and these Indians, in order that they might hunt the buffalo over the same general range, but even this truce has now ended. According to their custom, these Indians, late in the fall of last year, went on the winter hunt, dividing into two bands. The larger one, under White Calf, head chief, went toward the Bear Paw Mountains, where they found a moderate quantity of buffalo, and many Indians of other tribes engaged in hunting; among these were Sioux from across the Canada line. An understanding was made that they should not war upon nor steal from each other, but should camp together peaceably; this was adhered to until near the time for breaking up camp, when some of the Sioux stole from the Piegans 35 ponies, and made for across the Canada line, but were pursued and overtaken. When called upon to stop and talk, their reply was by firing on their pursuers; a fight ensued, in which the Sioux lost six warriors and the Piegans one. The stolen ponies were run across the line and reported as having been received in Sitting Bull's camp. Since that time there have been other smaller encounters reported, and the old feeling of hostility against the Sioux has been revived.

Another and smaller band, under Fast Buffalo Horse, went north toward Elk River, and were exceedingly unfortunate, taking few buffalo. The scarcity of food and the extreme severity of the winter caused great suffering among them; both they and

their ponies became so much weakened as to travel with difficulty. One squaw and one child were frozen to death, and the whole band had a narrow escape from destruction, finally returning to the agency in a deplorable condition. The experience of the winter has convinced their best men that the time has come for making such change in their manner of life as the failure of buffalo renders imperative. One said, "The time is close when the tail of the last buffalo will be seen disappearing from the prairie."

REMOVAL OF THE AGENCY.

Under the authority given by the department for the removal of the agency buildings to a better location, work was promptly commenced, and such of the employés as could be spared were sent to camp at the new location, and all winter were occupied in cutting logs for use in spring when required, and in forwarding such other work as was possible. The removal was commenced as early as the backward season permitted, and was carried on uninterruptedly, until now there are good buildings in a suitable location. In effecting this change the Indians have not been mere lookers on, but have given efficient help in digging cellars, hauling stone, mixing mortar, hauling poles for fencing, helping to erect the fences, and other work. It was owing to the labor performed by the Indians that the removal was effected at small cost, and without any special appropriation for the purpose, which otherwise would have been absolutely necessary.

AGRICULTURE.

Notwithstanding the heavy extra labor involved in the removal of the agency, our farming operations were not neglected. New ground has been broken up and planted an excellent irrigating ditch made, and our crops of potatoes, oats, barley, turnips, pease, &c., are now maturing, and look as if there would be an abundant yield. In all these operations the Indians have given ready and efficient help, in planting, hoeing our growing crops, &c.

Quite a number of these Indians have also selected locations near the agency, erected cabins, plowed, planted, and fenced patches of ground, and are turning their attention to the care of cattle. In all these operations the employés have, in addition to their other duties, given help and instruction, laying out their irrigating ditches, &c. One of the Indian farms, that of "Running Crane," has nine acres of potatoes and turnips now presenting a most promising appearance. Other Indian farms have nearly as much land under cultivation, and will produce good crops.

The following are the statistics regarding agriculture, as nearly as can be estimated

Land under cultivation this year, about	75 acres.
New land broken this year, about	50 acres.
Increase acres of Indian farms, about	40 acres.
Wheat	60 bushels.
Oats and barley	380 bushels.
Potatoes	12,600 bushels.
Turnips	1,000 bushels.
Carrots	100 bushels.
Peas	100 bushels.
Hay	250 tons.

No wheat or grain of any kind has been sown by Indians, for the reason that there is no flouring-mill in operation within hundreds of miles of this place. Their farming operations are principally devoted to the raising of potatoes and other root crops, of which they are exceedingly fond.

EDUCATION.

The day-school has been well attended, and while the great camp was near, the room was uncomfortably crowded. The progress has been marked and satisfactory; the intelligence and docility of the children was pleasing to see. I do not think the same large number of white children could be so easily controlled or kept in order by two teachers. The boarding-school or "home" for Indian children, which is to be provided for in the buildings at this new agency, will enable me to provide for several boys who are to be apprenticed to the blacksmith, carpenter, and farmer, and will also secure the constant attendance at the daily sessions of the school of many bright scholars, whose presence could not otherwise be secured, owing to the nomadic habits of their parents.

MISSIONARY.

The favorable field these Indians present for missionary work is yet unoccupied, although appeals to the proper quarter have not been wanting. I often feel my efforts

for the civilization of these savages cramped by the want of a religious teacher or missionary. My mere order will not do away with the few objectionable superstitious observances they practice; their judgments must be convinced and better views given them; for example, their faith in their medicine-men as doctors. One of our chiefs had long been afflicted with asthma; the agency physician had done what he could for him, but the chief was easily persuaded, when away from the agency, to try the native practice, which was, to bore a hole in his chest, and another in his back, and by blowing in at the one, force the evil spirit out at the other. Of course I only knew of this when it was over, and when all I could do was to bury the victim of this practice.

RESS.

The example of the few who had built cabins and given up their wandering mode of life has this year been followed by larger numbers, and applications for location and help are frequent, receiving such attention as I can give. The inclination to wear civilized costume is also on the increase; labor is held in better estimation by the men, more are willing to take part in it, and the number of men and women who work regularly, and not by fits and starts, is increasing.

When it is remembered that until two years ago no civilized labor of any kind had been performed by any of the Indians at this agency, and that any kind of labor except that of the hunt was held to be degrading and despicable by the men, the altered state of feeling in this regard is very remarkable. Now some of their most iufluential chiefs set an example to the rest by going into the field and working themselves, instead of simply standing by and seeing their squaws work. The growing scarcity of buffalo and other game, the success of the few Indian farms first started, and, principally, making the Indians perform labor for most of the supplies issued to them, has brought about this rapid and commendable change of disposition and habit, which only needs to be wisely and patiently fostered in order to make these Indians self-supporting in a very few years. To bring this about, much yet remains to be done in helping these Indians to help themselves.

SANITARY.

The health has been good; only such diseases prevailed as colds, sore throat, &c., yielding easily to the proper remedies. A few cases of lung disease made the want of an hospital felt, as without one there is no certainty of the physicians prescriptions being followed, and opportunities are offered for the native "medicine-men" to undo or ruin all. I trust soon to have a suitable hospital erected.

POLICE.

The establishment of our police force has been of great service; their authority is respected, and in the few cases where they have been called upon to act, the men have shown a disposition to perform faithfully their duty. Good order is preserved everywhere, and turbulent or unruly spirits are rare.

CONCLUSION.

Looking back on the year's events, there is much of encouragement for the next. The increased willingness to work, the prompt following of the farming example, the obedience to their laws and the decrease of crime, their general docility and universal friendliness to the whites, all point to the better condition of these Indians, which it is to be hoped nothing will occur to frustrate.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN YOUNG,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

CROW AGENCY, MONTANA,
July 29, 1879

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith my first annual report of Crow Agency, in accordance with your circular letter of instruction, dated June 18.

TRIBES.

The Indians under my charge are the *Mountain Crows* and the *River Crows*, two separate tribal organizations speaking one language, and whose traditions, habits,

customs, modes of living, and disposition are identical. The Mountain Crows number 2,150 souls and the River Crows about 1,150, and together they are able to put into the field about 900 warriors. They are wild tribes without acknowledged leaders. Two qualifications are indispensable to chieftainship, viz, force of character and the ability to dispense hospitality around the wigwam fire; any one may therefore be a chief who can meet these requirements and secure a following. Hence the whole tribe are broken up into bands of from ten to thirty lodges. But little authority is exercised or possessed by any chief over his followers. They are mercurial and nomadic and very rarely remain long in any one camp. During the period that they were encamped at the agency last winter (four months), they changed camp three times.

HABITS.

When grass begins to grow in the spring they all sigh for the excitement of the chase, strike their tents, and, like a grand army, move out upon the broad prairies to engage in their summer hunt, which they keep up until mid-summer, when they return to the agency, dress their hides, make their lodges, and remain until fall, when robes are good, when they go out to kill the buffalo and secure the robes and dry the meat, which constitute their stock in trade. So soon as this hunt is concluded, which usually runs to the middle of January, they return to the agency, tan their robes, draw their annuities, and enjoy themselves singing and dancing, with a hilarity unknown to any other people on the continent.

Whatever may be said to the contrary, they are the devoted friends of the white race, and have been our allies in all the Indian wars of this section. They are comparatively easy to control, and were it not for the meddlesome interference of the designing white men with whom they come into contact, the task would not be nearly so arduous. They look upon the white race as being superior, and naturally listen to them; hence the importance of excluding from the reservation the indolent, vicious, corrupt vagabonds who infest their camps to demoralize them and consume their rations.

THEIR GRIEVANCES,

as developed in council, several of which were held in the winter and spring, were the trespasses on their lands by hunters, trappers, prospectors, ranchmen, timber-thieves, travelers, and drovers. They say that the Great Father (the President) agreed to keep white men off of it, and that the white men cut their timber, destroy the grass, and frighten the game away. I at once gave notice to all trespassers that these irregularities must cease, and am gratified to say that they have almost entirely disappeared. Some complaint was made against the order of December 23, 1878, issued from the honorable Commissioner's Office, forbidding the Indians going beyond the limits of the reservation, but not a single lodge has since been pitched beyond the Yellowstone.

THEIR PROPERTY,

aside from robes and camp equipage, consists almost exclusively of horses and mules, of which they have about 12,000 head. Have urged them to convert a portion of this stock into cattle, and have shown them that in a few years they might become independent by growing cattle. In order to further stimulate them, I have asked the authority to issue to each one a few heifers with which to start a herd, provided that they should first locate themselves upon ranches. They know nothing of constructing houses, and I would recommend that a portion of the present appropriation be expended in building cheap but comfortable houses for such as would occupy them and settle upon the land.

THE RESERVATION

is about 300 miles long and extends from the Yellowstone River on the north to Wyoming Territory on the south, and covers an area which aggregates something over 10,000,000 acres, most of which is rough, rugged, and mountainous, although along the Yellowstone River and the streams flowing into it from the south there is some farming-land, but it is limited, and requires irrigation. The broken country from the valley to the mountains is covered with as fine, rich, and nutritious bunch-grass as can be found on the globe, and our agency herd of about 1,000 cattle wintered the entire season upon this food without other care than the herder to look after them. The numerous streams which flow from the mountain furnish an abundant supply of pure, fresh, cool water at all seasons of the year; the snows are comparatively light, which the strong winds carry off from the hillsides, so that stock can always graze there; the streams are all lined with a heavy, dense growth of aspen, cottonwood, and willow,

which furnish shelter during storms, so that the country seems in every respect peculiarly adapted to pastoral pursuits. Notwithstanding the many adverse criticisms, I believe the location of the

AGENCY

to be the best that could have been selected. It is located on a bench near the Rose Bud Creek, and about 15 miles distant from the Yellowstone. A ditch, tapping the former about a mile above the agency buildings, conveys a stream of pure, cold water through the stockade, corral, and slaughter-house. The snow-fall is much lighter here than upon the Yellowstone, or upon either side of us; the scenery is grand, and the location not only healthy but exceedingly pleasant, with a goood wagon road out in almost any direction. There is an excellent farm and garden adjacent to the agency.

FARM WORK.

I found by actual measurement that there were just 27 acres of ground broken, which, after giving thorough preparation, was planted, five acres to oats, half as much to field pease, and the remainder to corn, potatoes, and garden vegetables. In addition to the above I have broken 10 acres of prairie, which is now sown to turnips. The Indians were given such portion as they could be induced to plant, and instructed in the manner of preparing the ground, planting and tilling the crop. All the crops promise a flattering yield, and I trust the result will not only induce these individuals to plant more largely next year, but induce others to engage in the work. We have hauled poles and partially inclosed an additional 100 acres for pasture.

NEW MILL.

We have most of the logs upon the ground for the construction of the new mill, the machinery for which I found here upon taking charge of the agency. We have a patent turbine wheel with 22 feet fall, and as much water as we can utilize. We expect to get the mill into operation this fall.

SCHOOL

The school must necessarily be one of the great auxiliaries in the important work of civilizing this people. One of the chief difficulties to be overcome is to induce children who have lived entirely without restraint to submit to the confinement of the school-room, and the irksome duty of preparing lessons, as well as the discipline necessary to success. Yet I believe our school compares favorably with the frontier schools of white children. A number of new scholars have been added, and good progress has been made. We have encouraging prospects for an increased attendance next term.

THE HOME

has been reorganized and placed in charge of a competent and experienced matron, who endeavors by kind words and patient effort to make it cheerful and pleasant for the children. Our facilities are too limited to expect to accomplish much in this direction, as we cannot accommodate more than from 15 to 20 children. Those now in the home are polite and respectful at table, and strive to be clean and neat, especially on the Sabbath day. The girls are taught to make bread, cook, and to cut and sew garments. The boys are taught the work of the farm, the care and management of stock; in short, self-support.

PROGRESS.

It has previously been the custom, at the issue of the annuities to Indians, to find the camp filled with white men who took every advantage of the Indians' ignorance of the value of clothing to cheat and rob him of the same. Some two weeks before the last issue, I posted notices about the agency that any one found engaged in this work would be punished to the full extent of the law. No trading was done, and the Indians gladly wear the goods furnished them.

Drunkenness has almost entirely disappeared with these people, at least while on the reservation, except around military posts. They realize that they are in a transition state, and that new modes of life must soon be adopted; they know that the chase must soon cease as a means of livelihood, but with a full knowledge of this change confronting them they love the old life as dearly as ever, and only by kindness, patience, and perseverance will these people be induced to adopt the habits and customs of civilized pursuits.

CONCLUSION.

The Indians are provided with the authorized ration every week that they are here to receive it; their grievances have in the main been removed; they are urged to adopt the modes of civilization; they are treated as *men* and *women*—human beings—and are taught that the only road to prosperity and happiness lies over the path of civilization and industry.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. R. KELLER,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

FLATHEAD AGENCY, MONTANA,
August 12, 1879.

SIR: The Flathead reservation, consisting of 1,433,600 acres of land, a large portion of which being well adapted to agricultural pursuits and grazing purposes, is dotted everywhere with Indian farms and habitations, where heavy crops of wheat, besides other grains and vegetables, are raised; and the past year shows a steady increase in the number of Indians thus engaged in civilized pursuits. The fact is beginning forcibly to dawn upon them that food and raiment must be obtained from mother earth, and slowly, but surely, they are advancing step by step in agricultural pursuits. But they need encouragement and assistance in the way of implements of labor, a supply of which should always be at the agent's command, so that when an Indian is induced to fence in a farm he can be assisted. Such a line of policy in a few years would put every head of a family upon a permanent home, and from past experience I find that the Indian who has once tasted the benefits of civilizing pursuits becomes anxious and ambitious to extend his operations, increase his herds, and surround his family with the comforts of life.

By reference to accompanying statistics it will be seen that an estimate of some 20,000 bushels of wheat, 4,000 bushels of oats, besides large quantities of potatoes, turnips, and other vegetables has been made of the product of the reservation during this season, which is a large increase over last year.

EDUCATION.

The establishment last year of a boarding and industrial school for boys and girls on this reservation was a most judicious step, but the fund for feeding and clothing the children is altogether too small, as the desire among parents for the education of their children is so general that the number far exceeds the amount appropriated to provide for them. The school is in a flourishing condition, and under the present management of the Sisters of Charity, who have competent teachers for boys in field, mills, and shops, as well as the school-room, the children are making rapid progress. A printing-office is also in operation at the mission, where one of the boys receives instructions in the art of printing. A dictionary of the Kalispel or Flathead Indian language, compiled by the missionaries of the Society of Jesus, containing 640 pages, has just been completed at this office, and in order to show its character I copy the following preface from its pages:

The design of the present work is to afford assistance in the study of the language, mainly to those who have dedicated themselves to the teaching and regeneration of these Indian tribes.

The method of classifying the Indian words according to their etymology, or under the roots from which they originate, though fraught with no little difficulty to the unlearned, has, however, been pursued, and by many advised, as the only proper one in view of the highly educated character of the missionaries for whose perusal the work is intended.

That a better order, a better diction, and a better typographical dress could have been made use of, is freely acknowledged by the author, who labored under no inconsiderable difficulties to bring this edition, such as it is, to consummation, and he hopes that others, availing themselves of his labor, may correct the many blunders, and give it that finish of which the language is capable.

The author owes much to the manuscript dictionary of Rev. G. Mengarini, who, first of all the Jesuit missionaries, possessed himself of the genius of this language, and besides speaking it with the perfection of a native Indian, reduced it also to the rules of a grammar.

The abbreviations used in the dictionary seem plain enough without further explanation.

The Arabic numbers between parentheses refer to the different conjugations, which will be found in the appendix.

SAINT IGNATIUS MISSION, M. T., *July* 31, 1879.

MISSIONARY LABORS.

All of the Indians of this reservation are brought under the influence of religion and are practical Catholics. Polygamy is punished as a crime by tribal law, and the mar-

riage rite, which in every case is performed by the missionaries, is respected and enforced. On Sunday, the 3d day of August, upon the occasion of a visit to St. Ignatius Mission by his grace Charles John Seghers, bishop coadjutor to the archbishop of Oregon (whose diocese extends over this reservation), some 1,400 Indians, men, women, and children, greeted him at the mission church, and knelt before him for his blessing. On that day the rite of confirmation was administered by the bishop to 108 Indian children. On Thursday, the 7th day of August, his grace laid the corner-stone of a new church at the agency, now in course of construction by the missionaries aided by Indians. Logs were delivered at the agency saw-mill by them, and they also assisted in the labor of sawing. Twenty-two thousand feet of lumber is now carefully piled upon the ground, to be used in construction of the church, the labor and expense of which will be borne by the missionaries. The influence of religion and education is the true source of the regeneration of these Indian tribes, and it should be the care of all connected with the Indian service, no matter in what capacity, to foster and encourage its advancement upon the reservation. The archbishop was accompanied here by several missionaries from the different Catholic Indian missions, and also a delegation of chiefs and headmen from the Nez Percés, Cœur d'Alénes, and Umatillas; among the latter was head-chief How-lish-wam-poo, who accompanied Chief Moses to Washington on his recent visit; and of the Cœur d'Alénes, head-chief Seltis. The visit of those chiefs to this reservation had a good effect, as in their council with the Indians all spoke of the great advantage of cultivating the land, adopting the white men's habits, and educating their children to industry and self-reliance.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

The arrival this month of the agricultural implements, wagons, iron, steel, &c., forwarded upon my requisition to your office, is a great source of encouragement to the Indians, particularly the *Kootenais*, who are very poor and ill-provided for in the way of implements of labor. The home of those people is some 80 miles from the agency, and owing to the great distance but little supervision can be given by the agent over their planting, fencing, and improvements, but their chief, Eneas, is an excellent man, and is using all his efforts to induce his people to cultivate the land. The Indians of this tribe are naturally a set of wandering and thriftless vagrants, and until the last two years did not attempt to cultivate the soil, living chiefly by hunting, fishing, and gathering berries and roots. But at present, under the good influence of their chief and other encouragements, several farms have been inclosed by them, and they promise to inclose more land this fall. The *Flatheads* and *Pend d'Oreilles*, more especially the former, are far in advance of the Kootenais in all the pursuits of labor, education, and self-reliance.

EXPIRATION OF THE TREATY.

In view of the fact that the treaty existing between the government and the tribes of this reservation expires this year, before they have reached a point where government aid can be dispensed with, some new arrangement should be made and conclusion reached in regard to the removal or permanent settlement of the Bitter Root Flatheads, and all the vexatious questions in regard to them. Under Chief Charlos some 350 Flatheads still cling to their homes in the Bitter Root Valley, refusing to remove to this reservation. The rapid settling up of the valley by a white population has hedged those people in so closely that there is scarcely grazing room for their cattle and horses, and although in my opinion the Jocko Reservation far exceeds the Bitter Root Valley in all the advantages of agriculture, grazing, water and timber, for some cause those people refuse to take advantage of the inducements offered to remove here, and also refuse to accept the patents issued by the government for their lands.

THE SANITARY

condition of the Indians has been good, and the resident physician has the confidence and respect of the Indians. "Medicine-men" are not now known to these tribes, and the doctor's prescriptions and advice are generally carefully followed by patients.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PETER RONAN,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

FORT PECK INDIAN AGENCY,
Poplar River, Montana, August 12, 1879.

SIR: I have the honor to present to you the annual report of the condition of affairs at this agency. I relieved Maj. Wellington Bird, the former agent, and assumed control of the agency July 7, 1879, a little over thirty days ago.

The tribes comprising this agency are the *Yanktonais*, numbering 4,043, and the *Assinaboines*, numbering 1,469. According to the census taken last October, the whole number of both tribes is 5,512; males, 2,827; females, 2,685.

The agency buildings are located 75 miles above Fort Buford by land, on the north side of the Missouri River, on a high plateau of land 30 feet above the level of the river bottom and back one and a fourth miles from the river. The Poplar River comes in from the north and empties into the Missouri one mile above. The agency buildings comprise the agent's house, 38 by 40 feet, two stories high; a warehouse 33 by 100 feet, two stories; a barn 27 by 72; school-house 20 by 40, and small log blacksmith shop, besides the trader's store and stables. Three or four houses for employé's families are very much needed, and should be erected this fall if possible.

The Yanktonais are located near the agency at Poplar River, where there are about 400 acres inclosed on two sides by a fence made of cottonwood posts and poles, the Missouri and Poplar Rivers inclosing the other sides. In this inclosure there are 130 acres broken and under cultivation, 82 acres of which is divided into 93 allotments, and assigned to that many families. Seven miles below, there were 70 acres broken last fall, 30 of which are under cultivation and divided into 30 allotments; these 123 allotments have been subdivided by the Indians so that some 200 families have an interest in them. They were planted in corn and potatoes principally, the ground being plowed by contract and the planting being done by the Indian women, assisted by the agency employés. Only about one-fourth of the potatoes came up; besides the crops were planted too late, and did not get advanced far enough till the dry and hot weather of July and August came, and the present prospect is a small yield; I would estimate 1,000 bushels of corn and about the same of potatoes. The corn will be used generally in the roasting-ear and for drying for winter use, and will afford a small moiety for some 200 families. The agency planted 56 acres in corn, potatoes, turnips, beans, and pease, but owing to lateness in planting and failure in potato seed, the yield will be small. The turnips are now affording some food for the Indians, and with their roasting-ears and potatoes their subsistence is materially assisted. This is the first attempt at farming among this tribe, and I think they already see the advantage of it, and that next spring, if more land is broken up, a large portion of them will try to raise crops for themselves.

The Assinaboines are located 25 miles further up the Missouri River, on the same side as Wolf Point. There is a log warehouse there from which the government rations are issued; also a steam saw-mill, log house for the farmer, and a log school-house; also the trader's storehouse. They are in advance of the Yanktonais a couple of years in regard to farming, and this year they have 100 acres in crops, divided into 100 original allotments, besides about 15 acres in small scattered farms that they have plowed and dug themselves. Their crops were got in in good season and condition and are looking well at this time, and promise a good yield of corn and potatoes. I would estimate their crop of corn at 2,000 bushels, and potatoes and turnips at about the same amount. The kind of corn raised here is the small Ree corn, which matures early, but does not yield very much per acre.

These tribes are all living in tepees or lodges, with the exception of a couple of families, but a great many of them express a desire to have houses built, and say they will cut the logs in the timber and assist in hauling them if the government will furnish them flooring, doors, and windows, and assist them in building; and as there are large bodies of cottonwood timber along the Missouri River from which good building-logs can be got, such houses can be constructed very cheaply, and would afford them good, comfortable houses.

There has been scarcely anything done here yet in the way of education, nor can I see that much can be done till the Indians are located in permanent houses. There is a teacher at Poplar River and Wolf Point for each of the schools, and I will endeavor to carry out the honorable Commissioner's instructions in regard to education, as I believe that is the true and only method that will insure success.

There are a few good workers among the men when you have white employés with them, but if left alone they get tired very soon. My experience so far is that it requires one white man to every three Indians of the ones that know how to work to direct and keep them at it; and among the ones that are just commencing, one white man to two Indians. As a general thing the female members of the families do all the cultivating, the males not being able to comprehend yet that it is honorable or manly to work. I have had six Indian men each at Poplar River and Wolf Point this summer that assist in plowing the crops and making hay, for which I paid them fifty cents per day, the most of them wanting their money every night, a few of them waiting till Saturday night. These twelve men are now capable of doing a fair day's work, but must have some one to keep them at it. They do not seem to comprehend the necessity of work yet; or, like a great many white laborers, more anxious about quitting-time, that they may draw their pay, than anything else; but, considering their former life, I think they do remarkably well at work. These twelve men that have been working this summer will be able to plant and care for crops of their own next spring. My plan will be, as

soon as one set of hands have learned to farm, to assign them land of their own to cultivate and care for themselves, and then take up another set of hands, and so on; and in this manner in a few years a large number of them can be taught farming and be self-supporting.

I find some difficulty in getting apprentices, for the reason that a young man who commences to work has to stand the jeers of all the other young men in the tribe, and it is hard to find any with enough of courage to do so; at present I have a carpenter and blacksmith apprentice, one each.

One great drawback at present to farming is the fact that government does not furnish them more than half enough to subsist on, and it is necessary that they should go and hunt buffalo for a part of their subsistence, and the season for hunting is just the time when they should be working their crops. A large part of the Yanktonais have been hunting forty miles south of the agency, on their reservation, for a month, and will probably be out till the last of September, small parties of them traveling between their camp and the agency, bringing in buffalo meat and taking back flour. They report buffalo as being plenty, but they have scarcely any ammunition to kill them with, and have to shoot them down with arrows and kill them after they are down with stones (or, in the language of one of the chiefs a fews days ago, "beat their brains out with stones"), and they are dissatisfied because government compels them to get a large part of their living by hunting and will not issue them ammunition. I estimate that government furnishes them rations enough for five months, the crops they will raise this year two months; that will make five months they must get their living by hunting and root digging or go hungry.

The Indians are all on their reservation this summer either at Poplar River, Wolf Point, or the hunting camp, except Many Horn, who has 40 lodges with him. He started north from here, as I understand, about the 1st of July on a root-digging expedition, as there was scarcely any provision here at that time. It being the desire of General Miles, commander of the expedition in the field, that these Indians should return to the agency, on the 28th of July I sent a scout after Many Horn, requesting him to return to the agency. The scout came back and reported that he could not find them, but saw what he supposed was his trail going in a northeasterly direction. Since then I have learned that he is camped near the northeast corner of the reservation at a large lake, hunting and fishing. I understand that Many Horn and his lodges were off on such an expedition last fall when the enumeration was taken and that they have never been enumerated.

Small bands of Crow Indians have been seen on the south side of the Missouri River this summer, and a good many horses have been stolen from the wood-yards, which are mostly on that side of the river; and on the 20th of July Joseph Lambert, the interpreter of the Assinaboines at Wolf Point, with his wife and two children, two other Indian women and one of their children, were murdered, also one of his children and a child belonging to one of the Indian women were badly wounded at the same time; the scene of the murder was on the south side of the Missouri River, about three miles from their homes. There is no positive clue yet as to what Indians committed the murder. It was thought at one time it was done by a party of Indians, under Short Bull, that left the Rosebud Agency about the 6th of July for Sitting Bull's camp, but this party was captured here by General Whistler August 10. Short Bull's band, numbering 52, came into the Yanktonai camp, 40 miles south of here, about the 1st of August. General Miles had written me to have my Indians capture them, and they said they would if they were furnished ammunition, but, having none, they in some manner persuaded Short Bull to come to the agency with his Indians, giving me notice of the time they would be here, and I had arranged so that when they crossed the river here Colonel Whistler's command arrested and disarmed them. They had no permit granting them authority to leave their reserve; said they were going to Sitting Bull's camp to visit friends they had in it. As they came from the south into the Yanktonai camp, it lifts suspicion from them as to this murder. Lambert's little boy that was wounded says the Indians that shot him spoke the same language as his mother, and she was a Crow Indian. Whatever Indians did it, if they can be found, will be turned over to the civil authorities for trial and punishment. This murder so near to the agency caused a general fear among the Indians, and especially the Assinaboines, whom it has deterred from going out on their buffalo hunt and laying in a supply of meat.

Since my arrival here I have not had time to travel over and examine any part of the reservation except that lying between the lower farm and Wolf Point, a distance of 30 miles along the Missouri River, which is fertile and beautiful lying land, and I think with proper cultivation will produce abundantly all such crops as are grown in a latitude as far north as this. Root vegetables of nearly all kinds grow well here, also the small Ree corn, which is about the only kind that will mature. From the indications, I feel satisfied that wheat and oats will produce very abundantly, and I will endeavor to test the matter next season, and trust that by the time another year rolls round, I will be able, from a larger experience and better acquaintanceship with

the habits and customs of these Indians, to furnish you with a more detailed annual report.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. S. PORTER,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

FORT BELKNAP AGENCY, MONTANA,
August 1, 1879.

SIR: I have the honor to herewith submit my first annual report of the Indian service at this agency.

I arrived at this post June 22, 1878. This agency was abandoned in the year 1874, and the buildings had in the intervening time become much dilapidated.

The Indians I found in a very demoralized state, and very much scattered, some of them being at the Cypress Mountains, some of them on the Marias River, and some of them across the Missouri River. A part of the Gros Ventres and other Indians, however, were camped near the fort. I found them quite destitute, and there being a quantity of flour and pemmican on hand that had previously been purchased by Captain Williams, and left in charge of H. Poner & Bro., I at once proceeded to issue a part of it to them, and a week later I issued to them the balance. Some weeks later I also received permit to purchase $3,000 worth of subsistence stores, which relieved their wants for the time, and placed them in condition to move out in pursuit of buffalo.

HOSTILITIES.

At the time I arrived here the Yanktons were in close proximity to the fort, and were nightly engaged in stealing horses from my Indians. It finally culminated in a battle, in which the Gros Ventres and other Indians were victorious, and from that time on up to this spring they were practically unmolested by the Yanktons. This past spring and summer the country again appears to be full of war parties, and a number of horses have been stolen from the vicinity of the post belonging both to whites and Indians.

My Indians have started several times to go to the Lower Milk River country in pursuit of buffalo, but have invariably been frightened back by hostile Sioux; but since General Miles has arrived in the country, they have succeeded in finding buffalo, and are at this time procuring a supply of meat.

NUMBER OF INDIANS.

My instructions contemplated the presence at this post of about 800 *Gros Ventres* and 100 other Indians, and that number has been continually increased by the return of scattered bands, until now they number 1,135 Gros Ventres and 977 other Indians (*Assinaboines*). There are probably as many as three or four hundred Assinaboines, who were on the rolls at this agency in the year 1874, who, upon the abandonment of this agency, joined the British Indians at Cypress Mountains. They are generally anxious to rejoin their people at this agency, and as a matter of fact, all those northern or British Indians who in their travels to and from the buffalo country, and who all make it a point to camp near the fort for from two to four and six days, express the same desire, and they are unable to comprehend why the stores here should not be dealt out to them, as they are so eminently friendly to the whites. I judge there have been at least 2,000 British Indians camped here at different times this spring and summer, and now, as I write, there are two camps of Crees near by and another expected soon. They are on their way to the British country. With one exception, they have conducted themselves in a proper manner, and in that case they did no particular harm, although their intent was evident. Their hostility arose from the fact that I refused to accede to their demands in way of stores.

SUPPLIES.

I have found the stores for so many Indians wholly inadequate to their wants; but by the most careful economy and purchases authorized by the department I have been able to get them through to this time without actual suffering.

MORALS.

The disposition and conduct of my Indians, with some minor exceptions, has been uniformly good, and I am pleased to say that they have conducted themselves much

better than could be expected under the circumstances. I know of but one case of horse-stealing since I have had charge of them, and those were at once returned to their owners upon my demand, and they have delivered to me a number of horses to be returned to their owners that belonged to white men; and in one case they fought the Sioux and recaptured from them several horses, among which were two belonging to whites, which they brought in and delivered to me.

GAME.

Their supply of game has been very limited, more, however, from the fact that their enemies (the Sioux and Yanktons) have and do hold possession of and completely dominate their territory, upon which buffalo have roamed the past year; so that practically they have been debarred from hunting on their own soil. It has proved a great hardship to them and a source of much uneasiness to myself.

These Indians, in their habits, are perhaps as wild as any Indians that exist. They have only been in contact with the whites to a limited extent for the last ten or fifteen years, and they have but little conception of the ways of civilized life, and I might perhaps say that their intercourse with the whites has not, as far as I am able to judge, tended to impress on them any of the virtues, but, on the contrary, confirmed them in many of the vices and licentiousness of the whites; and still I am surprised that among people so ignorant there is not more of the vices incident to such a situation than there really is.

The presence of squaw men among them, of which there are many, is an unmixed evil, and is a source of much annoyance. They are always able to converse with the Indians in their own language and frequently advise them to their detriment, and in my own short experience I have known considerable mischief being caused by the falsehoods and misrepresentations of such unauthorized and trespassing parties.

An agent situated as I am is not able at all times to assert his authority as promptly as he should, in many instances of depredations by whites upon Indian reservations, for the want of a proper officer, and, in my opinion, to remedy the evil there should be an officer at or near the agency whom the agent could use to enforce his authority. The building of Fort Assinaboine, 25 miles west of here, intensifies the evil, as it has brought into the country many irresponsible and bad white men.

AGRICULTURE.

With but little exception these Indians have never performed any manual labor. They, however, begin to perceive that it is but a question of a few years, at most, before the buffalo and other game will cease to exist, and that soon they must depend upon their own efforts to some extent to procure the subsistence necessary to their existence, and to that end they begin to look forward to the time when they shall commence tilling the soil. In fact many of them will be ready next spring to engage in agricultural pursuits, and it will be my endeavor to induce as many as possible to plant and cultivate a patch of ground for themselves. I will say right here that the land in the near neighborhood of this post, in quality, cannot be surpassed, and in quantity is quite sufficient for all their wants. The rain-fall for 1878 was sufficient to mature such crops as wheat, oats, potatoes, and all kinds of garden vegetables, and the season of 1879 has been, if anything, more favorable than the previous year. I was unable to procure the necessary tools and seeds for plowing and planting until at least two weeks late, which may make a material difference in the crops. The seeds furnished by the department arrived here June 23. From present appearances, however, the crops will be a good average.

I estimate oats raised at 251 bushels; wheat, 1 bushel sowed, 10 to 15 bushels; potatoes, 25,000 pounds. I procured from my Indians a small quantity of Ree corn raised at Poplar Creek Agency, which I planted, and it is now about ready for the table. It will undoubtedly mature; from which I shall endeavor to save sufficient seed for next year. Smaller vegetables are quite promising. Pease, cucumbers, onions, beets, beans, and potatoes we have had in profusion for several days. So that giving as favorable season as the two past there should be no difficulty, with sufficient help and seed, in raising sufficient in this vicinity to largely assist in sustaining this people.

Several of the head men of the different tribes have expressed a desire to have houses built for them, and a piece of ground adjacent broken up so that next year they can raise a crop. I shall try and assist them in building several log houses the coming fall and winter, although my corps of workmen is hardly sufficient for such purposes.

SCHOOLS.

No school has yet been established, but under permit from the Commissioner I shall soon have one in operation, and hope to make it as successful as could well be expected.

SANITARY.

The health of the Indians on the whole has been as good as could be expected, considering their habits and manner of living, but there are many cases and times when a good phyiscian would be a most valuable acquisition.

AGENCY BUILDINGS.

I have repaired the old buildings as much as the appropriations would admit of, and they are now in a very passable condition. I have now material sufficient on the ground ready to use in the building of warehouse, house, stable, carpenter-shop, and office. The employés are now engaged in cutting and stacking hay, of which I propose to put up fifty tons (mowing-machine not yet at hand). As soon as haying is finished we shall immediately proceed to erect the several buildings named.

RIVER CROWS.

By telegram dated December 12, 1878, I was notified that the River Crows were placed temporarily under my charge for the purpose of distributing to them at this post their annuity goods and subsistence stores. I immediately proceeded to their country and after considerable difficulty succeeded in reaching a part of them, and holding a council with them. I informed them of the change in the direction of the goods, and they were much pleased with the change. Subsequently some 30 lodges came to this post and received their annuity goods and subsistence stores. They staid here some ten days and then returned across the Missouri River. This past spring some 35 lodges again came to this post, and remained on the reservation some weeks, but becoming frightened at the rumors concerning the Sioux and their intentions, they again returned across the Missouri River. I expect the greater part of their camp to return here in the course of a few weeks. I am confident that with the settlement of the status of the Sioux, or whenever the situation is such that they, the Crows, can feel assured of their safety on the reservation, the most of the tribe would rather come here for their goods than to go to their old agency. The Crows, Assinaboines, and Gros Ventres appear to get along well together, and by intercourse will soon become fully assimilated.

The number of River Crows has heretofore been placed at 1,200 souls. From the best authority I am able to find, there are not to exceed 900 people, which is probably about the real number of River Crows. I did at an early day use all my power to get the whole tribe to come to this post, but the influence of traders and other interested parties on the Yellowstone and vicinity has been so great that I have been unable to control them.

IN CONCLUSION.

Since writing the foregoing, I have had the pleasure of reading in the Chicago Tribune of July 10 a reported interview with Maj. J. M. Walsh, of the Northwestern Mounted Police. It is perhaps not within my province to notice such matters, nor should I, but that he appears to go out of his way to attack the Assinaboines belonging to this agency. I do not claim for the Indians of this reservation the strict integrity and virtue that he does for the Sioux under his charge, for I do not believe it exists among any tribe of Indians, but I desire to reiterate that, with one possible exception, my Indians have not stolen any horses either from whites or Indians since I have been with them, and in that one case they were immediately given up to the owner upon demand being made; and I do know that in that time at least 175 horses have been stolen from whites and agency Indians within a radius of six miles from this post, and I also know that during the past spring and summer as many as six Gros Ventres have been killed on their own reservation. I do not charge this as all having been done by the Sioux, but a large portion of the horses have been stolen by Indians from the British side of the line, and it is well known that many of the horses went direct to the Oncapapa camp, and we know that the Gros Ventres that have been killed were killed by Sioux and Nez Percé. My Indians will do the same thing whenever the occasion presents itself, viz, kill and steal from the Sioux, but no one can truthfully charge that for the last fifteen months they have gone off their own soil to do it. I also wish to call to mind the fact that hundreds of horses have been run off from the Yellowstone and vicinity, and numbers of whites killed by the same Sioux and Nez Percé, and it is a fact that Trapper Valentine has just returned from a two months' search for his horses through the various north Indian camps. He finally found them with a half-breed, but they were stolen by the Oncapapas and sold to the said half-breed. In stating this fact, I do not desire to in any way impugn Major Walsh's statements, only so far as I know them to be erroneous, but in my opinion time will show the fallacy of some other of his statements and deductions.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. L. LINCOLN,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.