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Choctaw Academy in Kentucky

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CHOCTAW ACADEMY IN KENTUCKY.

MARCH 3, 1845.

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. BENTON, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred a resolution the House of Representatives, adopted on the 10th day of December, 1844, instructing the said committee to inquire into the manner in which the Choctaw academy, in Kentucky, is conducted; "whether the Indian youth sent there for instruction are properly attended to in respect to their clothing, boarding, morals, and general education," report:

That they have examined the papers in possession of the committee, having reference to the aforesaid institution; sundry of the most recent and authentic of which are annexed to, and make part of, this report. From this examination, the committee are not satisfied that the abuses alleged to have existed in the management of the Choctaw academy are well founded. Serious charges, however, are contained in the papers before the committee, against individuals connected with that institution; but they are not of a character, and not sustained by sufficient evidence, to warrant the definitive action of the committee. It will be found also that the information before the committee is, in many respects, contradictory.

Believing that they are not advised, by the information in hand, as to the condition of said academy, to an extent to enable them to recommend a proper remedy; and, besides, not having time at this late stage of the session to perfect any measure of reform, the committee beg leave to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Office of Indian Affairs, January 27, 1845.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, enclosing a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 10th December last, inquiring into the manner in which the Choctaw academy in Kentucky is conducted; "whether the Indian youth sent there for instruction are properly attended to in respect to their clothing, boarding, morals, and general education."

In reply, I beg leave to refer you to Doc. No. 109, 2d session 26th Congress, which will be found in volume 3, Executive Documents of that session, as

containing all the information called for by the present resolution, up to 1st March, 1841.

I also enclose copies of papers (numbered from 1 to 29 inclusive) which cover the period up to 31st December last; and which are believed to contain all the information called for by the resolution, in the possession of the department.

You will perceive that these papers embrace an investigation into the condition of the academy in October, 1841; to which are added the quarterly reports of the inspectors from the commencement of 1841 to 31st December last.

There are a great many papers on file in this office in relation to the academy, but what I now send are considered sufficient to answer the resolution fully. If, however, the committee should desire it, all the original papers (which are very voluminous) are open for their inspection, and will be handed to them at any moment, either at this office, or at the room of your committee.

The letters and resolution are returned herewith, as you requested.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD.

Hon. J. M. HUGHES,
House of Reps. U. S.

CHOCTAW ACADEMY, October 21, 1841.

SIR: Your second note has been received, and I now proceed to answer the interrogatories in detail.

Question. How long have you been connected with the Choctaw academy?

Answer. Two years and ten months.

Question. What has been the condition of the school for six months past? Has it been as prosperous and quiet as usual? If not, state the particular facts in relation thereto.

Answer. The school has for the last six months been in as good condition, if not better, than it has been since I have been attached to it.

Question. Do you know of any causes of dissension existing in the school? If you do, state those causes particularly.

Answer. I am not aware of any.

Question. What has Colonel Johnson's disposition and conduct been towards the students? Has it been kind, or not?

Answer. Every action of Colonel Johnson towards the students, that has come under my notice, has been kind and fatherly in the extreme.

Question. Have you made known to him any causes of complaint existing as to the school for six months past? And if so, has he been ready to remove such causes?

Answer. For the last six months, I have had no cause of complaint of sufficient importance to trouble Colonel Johnson with; previous to which, however, I have called on Colonel Johnson to redress grievances, which has been cheerfully performed. It may not, perhaps, be irrelevant here to state a single case in point. In the spring of 1839 some person or persons attempted to burn the old academy situated on the hill, in which attempt they were so far successful as to injure the house materially. I applied to Col-

onel J., and stated that the house could not be made as comfortable as I could wish, and requested that he would have the house now occupied by the school fitted up. (It was then used as a store and wagon-shop.) He immediately had the goods, &c. removed, and the house fitted as it now remains. I have never yet called on him for anything for the use or benefit of the school, but it has been cheerfully furnished.

Question. Have you heard any person make such complaint to Colonel Johnson? and if so, did he refuse to attend to it? And if such complaint was made, state by whom, and what it was.

Answer. I have never heard any complaint made to Colonel J., but was attended to.

Question. As far as you know, what has Colonel Johnson's course been towards Colonel Pitchlynn, up to the time he determined to leave the school?

Answer. So far as it has come under my notice, Colonel Johnson has been very kind and friendly towards Colonel Pitchlynn; and I always thought, before that time, that they were on the best of terms.

Question. During your connexion with the academy, has Colonel Johnson shown a disposition to remove any reasonable complaints against his agents connected with the academy?

Answer. I am not aware of any being made to him. As I stated before, I have never known any reasonable complaint made to him, but what has been promptly attended to.

Respectfully,

O. P. ROOD.

W. S. CRAWFORD, esq.,

Choctaw Academy.

Report.

We, the undersigned inspectors, have met on the 5th and 6th of April, 1842, and have examined into the condition of the Choctaw academy, and have read the report of the superintendent, D. Vanderslice; and we find the facts as to the numbers of the students, health, progress in their various studies, and their accommodations, correctly stated; and we deem it unnecessary to go into greater detail, having done so in the most of our quarterly reports. We enclose a report of a sub-committee within the quarter.

WM. SUGGETT, *Chairman.*

WILLIAM G. CRAIG.

JOHN DOUGHERTY.

WILLIAM JOHNSON.

THOMAS JELT.

WILLIS DEHONEY.

F. C. McCALLA.

Report of the committee of board of inspectors, April 1, 1842.

The undersigned, agreeably to the orders of the board, as their secret committee, visited the academy in the interval since the sitting of the board, and beg leave to report: That they proceeded to examine the establish-

ment, and the progress of the students in their different rooms and classes; and it is with a great degree of pleasure that they found all things equal to their most sanguine anticipations. We were particularly struck with the advancement of some of the students in their classes since the last quarterly examination; many are now reading and writing, who, at the previous examination, were in their spelling-books. There were no complaints, but all seemed cheerful and happy.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN DOUGHERTY.
WILLIS DEHONEY.

To BOARD OF INSPECTORS,
Choctaw Academy.

CHOCTAW ACADEMY, KENTUCKY,
October 5, 1842.

SIR: At the annual meeting of the board of inspectors of this institution, ending on this day, the undersigned most respectfully report, that they have performed the duties assigned them, and are gratified to state that the students, though few in number, are in the enjoyment of unusual good health and spirits, are comfortably clad, and well attended to.

The course of instruction is as reported by the superintendent, and the teacher is well qualified.

No cause of complaint in anything has come to our knowledge; and we are pleased to say that the institution is doing well.

Very respectfully,

WM. SUGGETT.
THOMAS JELT.
WILLIS DEHONEY.
WILLIAM JOHNSON.
F. C. McCALLA.
WILLIAM G. CRAIG.
JOHN DOUCHERTY.

Hon. JOHN C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

SIR: The undersigned, inspectors, of Choctaw academy, Kentucky, have met on the 30th June and 1st July, and report that the conduct of the students, during the past quarter, has been exemplary. There is no complaint in the school or neighborhood against the students, that we know of. They are making good progress in their various studies. For further particulars, we refer you to the report of the superintendent, herewith accompanying.

Most respectfully,

WM. SUGGETT.
THOMAS JELT.
WM. G. CRAIG.
WILLIAM JOHNSON.
WILLIS DEHONEY.
JOHN DOUGHERTY.
F. C. McCALLA.

Report of the undersigned, the only remaining inspector of the Choctaw academy, in Kentucky, for the quarter ending December 31, 1843, (1842.)

JANUARY 14, 1843.

The undersigned has been compelled to delay this report, on account of indisposition and the badness of the weather. I have availed myself of the present fine weather to prosecute the examination of the Choctaw academy. In order to save the recapitulation of facts and circumstances, I refer you to the report of the superintendent, made at the commencement of the current quarter. I have found it correct in every particular which has come under my observation. I will therefore state, generally, as follows: that the boys are making good progress in all their studies; their general conduct is good; their accommodations are good; their clothing good and sufficient; their rooms are well furnished, and their diet good and plenty.

The boys are well satisfied; and, upon particular inquiry, they make no complaints. Mr. Isaac S. Gardner, the senior teacher, is a moral, talented, and well educated man, much beloved by the students, and is every way well calculated to instruct and conduct a school.

The moral deportment and high standing of the superintendent are, I presume, too well known to the department to need notice from me; suffice it to say, he deserves the confidence of the government, and has both the interests of it and of the aborigines of our land at heart.

I have received from the superintendent \$4 for my attendance on the 13th and 14th January, as inspector.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

WM. SUGGETT,
Inspector Choctaw Academy

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

Report of the inspector of the Choctaw Academy, made this day, the 30th day of December, (being Saturday,) 1843, at the close of the quarter.

The undersigned has been trustee and inspector of the Choctaw academy in Scott county, Kentucky, from the commencement of the school; and he is happy to find that, after proper inspection and examination on the 29th and 30th December, 1843, (Friday and Saturday,) and having read the report of the superintendent, he not only sanctions that quarterly report, but he rejoices to state, that at no time has he been more gratified at the prospect of educating usefully, morally, and religiously, the children of the red man—the native sons of the forest. The students are promising; many of them have joined the temperance society, formed at the academy by the students and the white population of the neighborhood.

The teachers, Mr. I. S. Gardner and Mr. Rood, are gifted, and qualified to do their duty—Mr. Gardner has no superior—besides subordinate teachers of good character and qualifications.

The treatment of the students is excellent, and without any complaint on their part.

Their eating, clothing, and lodging are good and comfortable; and the boys are in good health, and generally admirably good spirits.

The christian must rejoice at these good results of the Indian school

which has, to the personal knowledge of the undersigned, sent out to the world, and back to the nations sending them, young men distinguished for learning, for business habits, for eloquence, for their morality and religion.

It has sent out good physicians; those who have made good merchants, good chiefs, and good ministers of the gospel—some of one denomination, and some of another. The government is referred to the report of the superintendent of this date, for a more minute detail.

All of which is respectfully submitted by me, on Saturday, the 30th day of December, 1843.

WM. SUGGETT,
Inspector.

JULY 1, 1844.

The undersigned, as inspector to the Choctaw academy, reports that he has been engaged on the 29th of June, and Monday, the 1st of July, in examining into the condition of the school; and is happy to find that, in every department, there is care, attention, and regularity in the management of this valuable institution.

The superintendent and teachers are devoted to their several duties; and the progress of the students is equal to what might be expected under the disadvantages which attend the tuition of boys who commence without a knowledge of the English language, and are ignorant of a letter in the alphabet.

Strict attention is paid to the habits and morals of the students, and the accommodation of clothing and boarding is praiseworthy, and equal to the wishes of any reasonable student.

The undersigned has examined the report of the superintendent, and the accompanying papers, which he finds correct, and recommends them to the consideration of the government.

Respectfully,

WM. SUGGETT,
Inspector.

HON. WILLIAM WILKINS,
Secretary of War.

Report of the inspectors of the Choctaw academy, Kentucky, for the quarter ending on the 31st day of December, 1844.

SIR: The undersigned, in accordance with his duty, has inspected the Choctaw academy, on the 31st December, 1844, and the 1st day of January, 1845.

He has been one of the trustees and one of the inspectors from the first establishment of this institution, and, for the last two or three years, he has been acting as sole inspector. The quarterly reports, for many years back, will demonstrate the rigid rules and excellent organization of the academy, and its great utility in sending from its bosom so many moral, educated, and pious students to the tribes to which they respectively belonged. He has seen well educated, pious, and talented preachers of the Gos-

pel sent from the school; many useful and well-educated mechanics and business men, and some good physicians, and many talented, eloquent scholars. The clothing of the students, up to this date, has always been equal to that worn by the sons of independent farmers; and when some of the students among so many have been neglectful of their clothing and careless, as will always be the case where so many boys are congregated, every rational measure has been taken to correct such carelessness; and always extra clothing has been supplied, so that no student should materially suffer. Up to this date, the greatest exertions have been made by all the officers of the school to lead the students in the path of morality and religion. In addition to their own exertions, preachers of the Gospel of every denomination have, by strong invitations, and of their own accord, been in the constant habit, without regard to the days of the week, of coming to the school, preaching to the students, and giving lectures upon morals and good conduct.

The education of the boys has been more or less rapid, according to the industry and capacity of the students, as well as to their condition when brought to this school—many being in a state of perfect ignorance of our language and of letters. If irregularities have existed at any time in the habits of the students, it is because human nature is imperfect, and prone to sinful practices; but in no instance have these irregularities been encouraged by the officers of the school, but, on the contrary, the superintendent and teachers have been gentlemen of exemplary deportment. There is no doubt that there has been less irregularity in this school, than in schools of the same number of white scholars. For the last two years, (including this quarter,) there is an improvement in the general good conduct of the students. Mr. Gardner (at the head of the teachers) is industrious, punctual, learned, and a most exemplary man in his morals and conduct; and the other subordinate teachers are respectable. The boys are now clothed well for the winter; and the institution, in all respects, is in a comfortable condition and in good order.

The undersigned has examined the report of the superintendent of this quarter, and he approves of the same. And, conscientiously believing that no one school has ever produced one-tenth part of the benefits to the Indian race as this, he would be wanting in his duty to them, and to his country, not to recommend it to the kind patronage of the President and the Secretary of War.

All of which is respectfully submitted, this 1st day of January, 1845:

WM. SUGGETT,

Inspector Choctaw Academy.

HON. WM. WILKINS,
Secretary of War.

LOUISVILLE, KY., November 24, 1844.

DEAR SIR: Without a commentary on the subject of the deplorable condition of the Indian department, as managed for the last 12 or 15 years, with regard to the acquisition of the lands from these children of the forest; the reservations for the purpose of opening the doors for those choice districts, at subsequent periods, to fall into the hands of partisan favorites; the appropriation and payment of their annuities; the system of peculation

which has been carried on in this branch of that department of the public service; the total neglect of supplying the Indian with the improvements in the important branches of civilization and agriculture, as provided by the acts and appropriations of Congress to these objects; permit me to call your attention to the Indian institution located in this State, called the "*Choctaw academy*."

This establishment, as you are aware, is under the patronage and control of Colonel R. M. Johnson. It would not be in my power to explain to you, in the hurried limits of this letter, the deplorable condition of this institution and its inmates. Curiosity prompted me to visit it about the 1st of September last, when my heart yearned to find the young Indian, who had been transferred from his forest home to that (should be) hallowed spot for improvement in mind and morals, in, if possible, a much more degraded state than the most neglected "negro quarters" I ever saw. The young Indians were, as I was told, about 60 in number, from different tribes; and, instead of presenting a collection of human beings governed by rule and order, they were ranging about in rags and at rude plays, without a guide or governor, with the prospect that, when they would leave that retreat, they would be neither white man nor Indian. Inquire into the mode of this establishment. More anon.

Yours,

F. JOYCE.

Hon. W. P. THOMASSON.

NEAR WHITE SULPHUR, KY.,

January 8, 1845.

DEAR SIR: I have received yours, enclosing the resolution of Mr. Thomasson, and the letter of Mr. Joyce, relative to the Choctaw academy.

The letter denounces generally the conduct of the Indian Department towards the Indians for the last twelve or fifteen years, and more particularly this institution towards the Indian youth educated here. What a blessing it would have been to the country, and to the poor Indians, if the authority which has been so shamefully abused by others, had been vested in this good man—judging him from his own letter, as otherwise he is a stranger to me! It is usual for gentlemen who visit this institution to call upon me, or the superintendent, or the principal teacher, who is always in his place; but Mr. Joyce called upon neither, as far as I can learn, when he visited the school, about the 1st of September, to gratify his curiosity. It would have given me pleasure to have seen this good man, who has so much sympathy for the poor Indians; for I profess to feel some kindness for them also; and whatever may have been his partisan feelings, I should have labored to convince him that this was no partisan school, which was located at the request of the Choctaws, established upon my premises by Mr. Adams, President, and the Hon. James Barbour, Secretary of War, without solicitation on my part, and patronized by each administration since. In the proceedings of Congress, I read the resolution of Mr. Thomasson a few days before the close of the last quarter, and I requested the officers to make their reports so as to give the facts as to the points involved in the inquiry; which was transmitted, the 1st day of this month, to Mr. Crawford, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I refer to that report, and stand pledged for its general accuracy, viz: report of the superintendent, D. Vanderslice;

of the inspector, William Suggett; of Isaac S. Gardner, O. P. Rood, and the statement of J. W. Forbes—not an officer, but a neighbor. I also stand pledged that these officers of the institution are respectable and well qualified for their respective stations. I refer you to these papers, and to this communication of mine, which shall contain a faithful statement. For the last year I have personally superintended the whole institution; and everything has been done, and everything shall be done, as far as I have judgment to do it, for the comfort, the education, and the elevation of the students now here; or who may be sent here. The food of the students is well prepared, and in due time; sufficient in quantity, and equal in quality to that which supplies the tables of the independent farmers of the country; and the most perfect satisfaction prevails among the students on this point, although everybody knows that students are hard to please. They are encouraged to complain, if the cooks fail in quality or quantity; and immediate attention is paid to such complaint, which is seldom made. The students are clothed for the winter in October, and for the summer in April; the quality as good as that which is used by the independent farmers of the country for themselves and their children, and in quantity ample; and that portion of the students who are careful of their clothes, are always as well clad, as decent, and as fit for company, as the white population. That a portion of the students, principally the boys from ten to fifteen years of age, are less provident and careful; and in September, at the close of the summer, they do not look as well; their clothes would be nearly worn out, even with care, just before putting on their winter clothes. These boys often deserve, and always receive, the reprimand of a parent to his child. Clean and decent clothes, put upon children of ten and twelve years of age, Sunday morning, may look dirty, and even ragged, by Saturday night, and might excite unpleasant sensations in the bosom of even a good man, who did not know that, in all such cases, clean clothes (and patched, if torn) were given to each boy on Saturday evening, for the ensuing week. I regret, as much as a man can, this neglect in a portion of the students, while every exertion is made to correct it. The power of God, alone, could prevent it; and sensible, honorable, and liberal men, know how to judge of these things, and make the proper allowance. Nearly all the Indian youth come to this school perfectly ignorant of the English language. They require more recreation each day; and every faculty of the human mind is called into action, to overcome the great difficulty to their advancement. At least one half of the children are of ten and twelve years of age; and hence the great and controlling advantage of this school, which has separated the Indian youth from his tribe. What the student learns in books at such a school, is not equally influential to civilize him as the knowledge he acquires of our language, our habits, our manners, and of all the arts of common life. In all cases, without any exception, every officer connected with the school has treated the students (the Indian youth) as a parent would treat his child.

I have ascertained that the informer (Mr. Joyce) made a visit here about the time he mentions, without the knowledge of the superintendent, the principal teacher, or myself; that his visit was very short. A person having less sympathy for the poor Indian might have imposed upon himself by appearances. The school having diminished one-half, one-half of the buildings had been unoccupied for two years, and out of repair, and looked bad; and no doubt these deserted rooms and houses were supposed to be those

occupied by the students. Besides, at that very time we were removing the unoccupied houses half a mile, where wood is convenient, and I may say inexhaustible, for the comfort of the students. If his visit had not been so rapid, (not half an hour,) and so unknown to me and all others connected with the school, he would have been informed that, in October, all the rooms occupied by the students were annually repaired and put in good order for the winter. If he had done us the favor and honor of visiting the dining-room, he would have seen a building that cost \$3,000, and with capacity for two hundred students to eat at the same time. If he had honored the principal teacher (Mr. Gardner) with a call, he would have seen a framed building, sixty feet long, and three rooms within, sufficient to teach one hundred students—wanting some repairs for the winter, which it has received. The buildings which the informer (Mr. Joyce) saw, are a small portion of the buildings which were then used for the school.

The buildings occupied on the 1st of September wanted repairs, but were good enough for the children of the richest—yet not too good for the poor Indian, but good enough for the children of any class of society. These buildings have been occupied for the last twelve years, and at many of our annual exhibitions and examinations ten thousand have been called together; and this is the first occasion on which a complaint has been made against the buildings. It is very true that it is extremely difficult to make the students keep their respective rooms clean, neat, and in good order—particularly in the warm season; many *will* abandon their rooms for the green grass and shady trees by day and by night, and no human power can prevent it; and if the informer (Mr. Joyce) had called upon the officers of the school, he would have been informed that it was the most inauspicious time for appearances to one disposed to find fault; as, in a short time after he made his visit, the worn-out summer clothes were replaced by good winter clothing, made of as good jean and linsey as we use to clothe ourselves—precisely the same. It is more easy to find fault than to mend. Early in the spring, the whole school and its appendages will be snug and comfortable in new quarters.

If Mr. Joyce had called upon me, as other visitors of the school have done, these and other facts, I think, would have convinced him that there was one person near this school that had as much sympathy for the poor Indian as he himself, whether in this school or in the far west. Everything has been done, and everything shall be done, to advance and elevate, to civilize and educate the children who are now here, or may hereafter come.

In order to accomplish the great object of civilization and education, we have resorted to every expedient that reflection and experience have suggested; among other things, we have omitted vacations—keeping school all the time, except a few days in the year, such as the 4th of July and Christmas day—to keep the boys from idle and dissipated habits. I have, on several occasions, taken students to the city of Washington, who were not inferior to the most polished young men from our own colleges; and these were only common specimens of more than one hundred young men who have been educated here and sent home. Without wishing to disparage other schools, I will venture to assert that this has done more to elevate and civilize the aborigines than any other school that has ever existed since the revolution: “the tree is known by its fruit.” In looking into the evils and irregularities incident to our best organized institutions to teach, and which are above human control, as long as man is liable to err, I put in high

claims for this, as to order, discipline, and the happy results to those who have been educated here.

The informer (Mr. Joyce) says he saw the boys engaged in "rude play, and lounging about without a guide or governor." What does he mean by "rude play?" He does not specify. It is a great misfortune that we have not the advantage of his superior sympathy for the Indian youth, by pointing out what he calls "rude play" as unfit for the Indian youth; and, also, to have pointed out what play, not rude, he would recommend. The boys here indulge in the bodily and athletic plays which my teachers tolerated in my boyhood, and no governor or guide was ever considered necessary in those plays. Playing ball, running, jumping, playing marbles, prisoner's base, and all such, are the "rude plays" in which the Indian youth here have indulged, and in no other. We have never permitted the boys to box. Since the existence of the school, I have never known more than two or three fist fights. Some of these plays before referred to are the "rude plays" which are condemned; and at other times they indulge in the bow and arrow. We have indulged and encouraged these plays, and never have considered a guide or governor necessary to teach or control them. If it could be ascertained what were considered "rude plays" by Mr. Joyce, and what were not "rude," and his advice should meet the control of those who have the power to direct, we would with pleasure conform. I hope it was not intended to make the boys give up these ordinary athletic exercises for "sell the thimble," "hide the slipper," "sister Phebe," and the like.

With great respect,

RH. M. JOHNSON.

Col. CAVE JOHNSON.

SCOTT COUNTY, KY.,
January 10, 1845.

SIR: In answer to your request to state all I know about the Choctaw academy, and particularly how the boys are treated, I have only to say, that, having lived in the vicinity of the academy from its commencement, I have had ample opportunities to become acquainted with its management; and, besides, my oldest son completed his Latin studies at this school, which, together with my frequent visits, enable me to understand the discipline of the institution. I am well acquainted with all the officers, and consider them every way suitable to such an establishment. I have known you for many years, and have witnessed your exertions since you have been connected with the institution, and particularly since you have been at its head, to inculcate morals, the principles of religion, and the usual education to be had in our academies. I have listened to you with pleasure when publicly addressing the students, and, among other things, teaching them to walk in the path that would lead to happiness here and hereafter. I am also well acquainted with Mr. Gardner, the principal teacher; and I have no hesitation in saying he is well qualified for his station, both as a moral man and a scholar. He has much experience as a teacher, and seems suited to teach the Indian youth. Mr. Rood is also a good teacher, and a man of respectable standing.

With regard to Col. R. M. Johnson, the patron of the school, his course

has been that of a kind father to the young Indian ; and this embraces everything.

The buildings are suitable to the purposes to which they are applied, and appear to be comfortable.

Frequently, when business called me to the academy, opportunities have offered which enabled me to see the provision issued to the cooks ; and it was surprising what a large quantity they consumed. It is impossible that they have or can suffer from want, judging from the vast quantity both of animal and vegetable provisions that is daily prepared for them. I presume there is no complaint on that score.

Their clothing is of the most comfortable kind—pretty much like that used by boys and young men in the neighborhood.

My plantation joins that on which the academy stands ; and, in the course of my business, I am often brought in contact with Col. Johnson, the teachers, the students, and yourself ; and this enables me to say that the government of the students at this institution is parental. It may be proper to state, that, since the reduction of the number of students, a part of the houses have been unoccupied, and consequently have a dilapidated appearance.

Very respectfully,

RICHARD THOMASON.

To Col. D. VANDERSLICE,

Superintendent Choctaw Academy.

I live within a short distance of the Choctaw academy, and I fully concur in the above statement of my relative.

NELSON THOMASON.

We, the undersigned, live in the vicinity of the Choctaw academy, and have from its first location, or at least for twenty years. From personal knowledge of the facts, we fully concur with the statement made by Richard Thomason respecting the management of the school and the treatment of the students. They are well provided for as to diet, and their clothing is good. The officers of the school are respectable, and of good character, and worthy of confidence. The buildings are better than those used by the schools in the country for white children. One of the undersigned studied in the academy.

ELZEY THOMASON.

JOSEPH THOMASON.

JOSEPH T. THOMASON.

THOMAS THOMASON.

ELIAS THOMASON.

JAMES THOMASON.

GRANVILL THOMASON.

ELSA THOMASON, SEN.

JANUARY 18, 1845.

By the request of Col. R. M. Johnson, I do certify that I have sold to him 200 yards of linsey and jeans of real substantial quality—such as a great many of the white men and boys of my county wear for laboring clothing. This was purchased for the use of the Indian boys ; for I have seen them wearing the same goods, which I would say is a very suitable article of clothing for them.

I do also certify that, for the last year, since Col. Johnson has been at home and attending to his own affairs, I have not been annoyed by the Indian boys, nor have I heard any complaint in the neighborhood of the kind.
SANDFORD BRANHAM.

I am an adjoining neighbor to the colonel, and a manufacturer of woollen goods.

S. B.

It is the very same clothing that I now have on, and have all the winter.
RH. M. JOHNSON.