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REMOVAL OF DAKOTA AND WINNEBAGO INDIANS.

[To accompany Bills H. R. Nos. 613 and 614.]

JANUARY 26, 1863.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. ALDRICH, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom the subject was referred, would respectfully report :

That by a resolution introduced by Mr. Windom, and adopted by the House on the 1st January, this committee was directed to inquire into and report "the most speedy and economical mode of removing from the State of Minnesota all the Indians within her borders." The committee referred said resolution to the Secretary of the Interior, requesting him to examine the matter and recommend to the committee some plan for their removal.

In compliance with the request of the committee, the Secretary submitted a report suggesting a plan for their removal, which has been approved and adopted by your committee, and is herewith submitted, with a bill providing for the removal of the Sioux or Dakota Indians, and another for the removal of the Winnebagoes.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 16, 1862.

SIR: Your communication of the 12th instant, enclosing the resolution of the House of Representatives, directing inquiry by the Committee on Indian Affairs to be made as to the most speedy and economical mode of removing beyond the limits of the State of Minnesota all the Indian tribes within the State; and also informing me that you had been directed by the Committee on Indian Affairs to refer the resolution to me, asking a plan for their removal, has been considered.

In reply, I have to state that after a careful investigation of the subject, made necessary by the recent Indian difficulties in Minnesota, it has been found inexpedient to attempt the removal of the Chippewas from the State. It is believed that their permanent home may, with more propriety, be established in that State than in any other State or Territory.

There has been no complaint of the Chippewas of the Superior, and it is not contemplated by this department to take any extraordinary action with reference to them. Some of the bands of the Chippewas of the Mississippi have been

guilty of depredations of an aggravated character, insomuch that measures of some severity have become necessary, one of which is the removal of all the scattered bands of these Indians to the vicinity of Leach lake, where they may be under the immediate observation of their agent, and the more easily controlled.

A treaty has been prepared under the direction of this department, to be submitted to said Indians, which it is believed they will assent to, and that the same may be ready for submission to the Senate for its action at its present session. Should the Indians execute the treaty on their part, it is believed that there will be no further complaint of them. Their home around the waters of the lakes, near the source of the Mississippi, is so far removed from the whites, and their routes to the Red river on the one hand, and to the Lake Superior on the other, that it can hardly be supposed that the whites will ever make any encroachments upon these Indians. With the Chippewas of Red lake and river, we have no treaty stipulations, and they scarcely recognize the authority of the United States. An earnest effort is now making to effect a treaty with them, by which they will agree to abandon the Red river country. It is hoped that the effort will soon be crowned with success. The Chippewas cannot be removed from the State without the employment of a large military force; neither would any substantial good be gained by their removal. They will be better located for their own comfort and security, and less injurious to the whites, in the State of Minnesota than they possibly can be elsewhere. There are small tracts of fertile lands in the locality intended for them, sufficient for all the agricultural wants of these Indians; the waters are well stocked with fish, and the wild rice is found in abundance in the lakes and marshes.

The Winnebagoes have a small territory of four and a half townships of land, designed for their permanent homes. It is situated in the county of Blue Earth, surrounded by settlers, with no natural boundary. These Indians are constantly exposed to collision with the whites, who now entertain, it appears, hostile feelings towards all Indians. It is due, however, to these Indians to say that recent investigations have failed to show that any act has been committed by them at all justifying the ill-will existing against them, and it is only for their security and advantage that I am induced to advise their emigration. It is with extreme reluctance that they will consent to leave their homes, and the government cannot be justified in requiring them to emigrate unless it can be satisfactorily shown that the Indians will be benefited thereby in everything that may relate to their security, happiness, and future prosperity.

From inquiries made of persons well acquainted with the country of the Upper Missouri river, it is believed that a location may be found for these Indians bordering upon the river Missouri and some of its tributaries, with at least two natural boundaries, of the quality as to wood, water, and adaptation to agriculture described in the bill herewith sent for your consideration, where the Winnebagoes may be established with better prospects of sooner being able to sustain themselves, independent of the government, than in their present location.

As the Winnebagoes are without any fault sufficient to justify any substantial complaint, it is but just that if the government requires their removal their new homes shall be donated to them without cost, and that they shall have the benefit of the sale of their present reservations, which it is supposed will realize to them, at least, \$150,000; and to that extent it is to be hoped they will be benefited if they are required to remove from the State.

It but remains to notice the bands of Sioux remaining in the State. Those who are now in captivity in the vicinity of Fort Snelling are prepared and expect to submit themselves and their future abode to the will of the government.

The country immediately west of Big Stone lake in Dakota Territory has been described by persons acquainted as possessing many attractions calculated to make a suitable home for these Indians; but as that locality is in the vicinity

of their present reservation, if they are established upon it, it is probable that apprehensions will continue to exist, both with the whites and the Indians, and ending in frequent collisions. And it being represented that there is an ample unoccupied country upon the Missouri river suitable for their habitation, where they can sustain themselves by their industry, it is thought the better plan to remove them there. To do this considerable sums of money will be necessary, so that they can support themselves by agriculture; and if it be determined to require them to leave the State of Minnesota, it is to be hoped that there will be no hesitation in making the amount adequate to the necessities of these Indians. It must be remembered that numbers who will be required to emigrate had no part or lot in the recent barbarities of the Sioux, but were passive in some instances; in others, active in protecting the whites. That they are now captives, because it was their misfortune to be of the Sioux, and that they are now, and if removed, forever to be deprived of the comfortable and substantial houses and improved farms on which they have lived and expected to continue for all time, according to the treaty with the United States.

Much discretion should be left with the Secretary to provide for those Indians to be removed. Common justice requires that those who are without fault shall be established in their new homes, and placed in as good condition as before.

The bill herewith, if enacted into a law, will accomplish the object desired.

Many of the Winnebagoes and Sioux are intelligent and industrious farmers, ambitious and proud of any success they may gain in that direction. Were these people skilfully located in a fertile district and properly encouraged, it is not unreasonable to expect that they will be enabled to produce sufficient of breadstuffs and the esculents to sustain themselves, and also the wayfaring who may be found in their borders; and when the approaching tide of white emigration shall reach them, that they will have become sufficiently enlightened to resist the torrent, and be found mingling among the mass of mankind with equal rights, acknowledged by all.

Economy will probably be best promoted by leaving the mode of removing these Indians, whether by land or by water, to the Secretary of the Interior. It will afford an opportunity to avail of the cheapest and most expeditious mode when the time arrives.

With many the power to remove these Indians without their consent will be questioned, basing their objections upon the treaties. If, however, the resolution now before the Senate, abolishing all treaty stipulations with the Sioux, shall be adopted, that will remove the difficulty, so far as they are concerned.

With the Winnebagoes, the 4th article of the treaty of April 15, 1859, provides that former treaties may be modified and changed by the President, with the assent of Congress. And it is expressed that this is to be done to render unnecessary any other treaty engagements between the parties.

But aside from these considerations, which it is believed render the proposed action unobjectionable, it is to be considered whether the policy of the government in treating with the Indians is to be continued. When it is considered that it is only a question of time and expense to obtain any treaty from any of the Indians that may be desired; that the money expended for the object is not often paid to those who are most deserving; that the Indians are not regarded as having the ability to protect themselves in the common dealings among men; that they are wards of the government—it appears to me to be quite absurd for the government to bargain with them for lands to which they have no title.

The time is now at hand when these tribes will perish if their habits of life are not changed. Their only hope of existence is in becoming agriculturists, and it is to be considered whether sound policy in this respect does not require that all the efforts of the government shall be given in that direction. Money annuities should cease to be paid to them to any extent; the bounties of the gov-

ernment should be bestowed in clothing, food, and agricultural implements, the building of houses, the employment of instructors in all branches of labor in which they are capable of being improved; and such system should be adopted as would necessarily compel them to labor.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CALEB B. SMITH, *Secretary.*

Hon. CYRUS ALDRICH,

Chairman of Committee on Indian Affairs.