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Sale of Timber

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 22, 1884.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. CAMERON, of Wisconsin, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 460.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 460) "to authorize the sale of timber on certain lands reserved for the use of the Menomonee tribe of Indians in the State of Wisconsin," have considered the same, and report thereon as follows:

The remnant of the Menomonee tribe of Indians are located on a reservation situate in Shawano County, in the State of Wisconsin. The reservation is surrounded by timber lands, which are rapidly being settled upon. A portion of the reservation is covered with valuable pine timber. The reservation has been surveyed into allotments, and many of these allotments have been settled upon by Indians. They have been partly cleared, and are cultivated to some extent by the Indians. Fires from outside the reservation and fires that originated on the reservation are injuring the pine timber year by year. It is estimated that at least one-quarter of all the pine on the reservation has been destroyed by fires during the last five years, and it is only a question of time when the whole of it will be destroyed unless it can be cut and utilized soon.

This bill proposes to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to have the timber on the reservation appraised by two or more disinterested appraisers in 80-acre lots. It also provides that this appraisal shall be filed in the land office at Menasha, Wis., that being the land district in which the reservation is situate, and that such appraisal shall be open for public inspection for at least sixty days before the time appointed for the sale of the timber; also, that one copy of such appraisal shall be filed with the Secretary of the Interior.

The bill further provides that the sale of the timber shall be advertised for not less than two months in three newspapers having general circulation in the State. The bill also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, if he deems it for the best interests of the Indians, to employ the Indians to cut the timber and haul the same to the bank of the rivers; that after the timber is so cut by the Indians it shall be advertised, and, after due notice, sold to the highest bidder, at such time and place as the Secretary of the Interior may designate.

If the logs cannot be sold for a price which the Secretary of the Interior deems adequate, he is then authorized to cause them to be run

down the rivers to market and sold in the manner he deems best for the interest of the Indians.

It is estimated that the amount of pine now on the reservation is about 150,000,000 feet, and that it would sell, standing in the tree, at \$5 a thousand. This would amount to \$750,000. The bill provides for an appropriation of \$5,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to pay the expense of survey and appraisal, which sum shall be reimbursed to the Treasury from the proceeds of the first sale of timber, and the residue of said proceeds shall be paid to or funded for the benefit of said tribe, in such manner as the President, with the assent of the chiefs and headmen of said tribe, may determine. The number of Indians now on the reservation, as appears by the last report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, is 1,500.

The committee are of the opinion that it would be for the interest of the Indians that the timber be sold and the proceeds invested for their benefit as provided in the bill, and therefore report back the bill, with amendments, and recommend that it do pass as amended.

Amend as follows:

In line 14, section 1, and following, strike out the words "and shall be made with the express understanding that the tops and refuse of the timber to be cut shall be reserved for the sole use and benefit of the said Menomonee Indians."

In line 6, section 2, strike out the words "within the Green Bay Agency."

In lines 11 and 12, section 2, strike out the words "and the tops and refuse of the timber."

In line 18, section 2, strike out the words "within the Green Bay Agency."