

12-29-1854

Report of the Secretary of the Interior,
communicating, in compliance with a resolution of
the Senate, a report made by R. H. Schoolcraft, on
the state of Indian statistics.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/indianserialset>

Part of the [Indian and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

S. Exec. Doc. No. 13, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess. (1854)

This Senate Executive Document is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899 by an authorized administrator of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact darinfox@ou.edu.

REPORT
OF
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

COMMUNICATING,

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate, a report made by R. H. Schoolcraft, on the state of Indian statistics.

DECEMBER 29, 1854.—Read, referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 27, 1854.

SIR: In reply to the Senate resolution of the 20th instant, I have the honor to state that no special report was made to me by Henry R. Schoolcraft, on the 18th of November last, on the state of Indian statistics.

Such a report was, however, made to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and, supposing it to be the one referred to by the Senate, I herewith transmit a copy of the same.

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

R. McCLELLAND,

Secretary of the Interior.

HON. JESSE D. BRIGHT,

President of the Senate of the United States.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Office Indian Affairs, December 26, 1854.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the reference by you to this office of the Senate resolution of 20th instant, calling for "a copy of the special report of Henry R. Schoolcraft, of November eighteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, made to the Secretary of the Interior, on the state of Indian statistics."

There is on file here a report from Mr. Schoolcraft of that date, but it is addressed to me. Presuming it to be the one mentioned in the resolution as made to you, I herewith transmit a copy of it.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. W. MANYPENNY, *Commissioner.*

HON. R. McCLELLAND,

Secretary of the Interior.

WASHINGTON, *November 18, 1854.*

SIR: I deem the time appropriate to report to you the present state of the investigation confided to me, respecting the Indian tribes.

It has, from the inception of the plan, been found difficult to overcome the reluctance of the Indians to furnish their statistics. Even their gross population has been wrung from them. Exaggerated estimates of the Indian population have prevailed from the planting of the colonies. The earliest attempt to give certainty to the numbers residing between the Alleghany and the Rocky mountains was made by the French government in 1736. Returns filed in that year, in the proper bureau in Paris, enumerated sixty tribes, having an aggregate population of 16,403 warriors, which, at the rate of one warrior to every five souls, a ratio since adopted, gives 82,015 souls, (vol. 3, p. 553.) At the period of taking Canada, beginning with the taking of Quebec in 1759, Captain Thomas Hutchinson, a geographer for the colonies, estimated the western population of the tribes at 73,580, which, at the ratio stated, gives 14,696 warriors, (vol. 3, p. 557.) In 1764, when Colonel Bouquet marched against the western Indians, he computed the number of fighting men capable of being brought into the contest at 56,500, a manifest over estimate, which is owing in part to the duplication of tribes by employing synonyms, (vol. 3, p. 559.)

In 1778, during the early part of the American Revolution, when the topic had great vitality, the number of warriors capable of being brought into the field was carefully estimated at 12,430, producing a gross population of 62,150 on the line of the frontiers. Of the number of fighting men stated, 1,760 are assigned to the six nations of Iroquois, (vol. 3, p. 560.) In 1806, Pike estimated the Indian tribes of the upper Mississippi alone at 32,852, (vol. 3, p. 562.) The Indian forces under British orders, in the war of 1812, were estimated in London at 9,650 fighting men, which, by the ratio heretofore assumed, supposes a gross population of 48,250, (vol. 3, p. 557.)

American estimates of the force engaged in the war of this era, in northwest and the Mississippi valley, north of the mouth of the Ohio, rate them at 9,000 warriors, (vol. 3.) It is evident that this estimate excludes the Prairie tribes, few or none of whom were brought into this conflict, except a part of the Sioux, in 1812. The heavy depopulation of the India tribes which took place in this sanguinary war, was owing less, it is believed, to the numbers who fell in battle, than the vast destruction caused among them by camp-disease and hardships and suffering during, and particularly *after* the contest, when their condition was one of utter poverty and destitution, for they had neglected both hunting and planting. This was, indeed, the lowest point in the scale of number of those stocks and tribes who had engaged in these, to them, fruitless contests. If the period from 1812 to 1816 was a very marked one in their depopulation, that from 1816 to 1824, continued to be one of languishing depression and inanity. The Indian mind was broken down and sunk in despondency. The marching of armies through the country, the changes of habit, against which the most energetic chiefs had inveighed, and the flaccid state of the fur trade had rendered their vast territories worthless to a hunter population. And if after the last named year they again appear to rise in the scale, it is

owing to the fact that whole tribes, the fragmentary tribes, were transferred next into the fertile districts of game country, and that large bodies of the wild tribes were included in the schedules, who roved over the illimitable plains next the Missouri river. Two states of society, we are assured from the days of Adam Smith, of which one is the superior and in the ascendant, cannot exist in prosperity together. And it now became evident that the Indian tribes could not be preserved without transference from the scenes of their decline within the States and Territories, to an area over which their own laws should prevail. Georgia was the earliest to assert the incompatibility of divers systems of policy, and the question soon found advocates throughout the Union. Stress is laid on this epoch, because it is conceived to be the nadir in our Indian history.

In 1825, when it became evident that the tribes and remnants of tribes must perish if not colonized, and the plan of transferring them west of the Mississippi was originated, the whole aboriginal population east of that stream was found to be 129,266, who owned collectively 77,402,318 acres of land, (vol. 3, p. 596.) These tribes were situated in the following States and Territories :

	Acres of land.
Maine 956.....	92,260
Massachusetts 750.....	
Rhode Island 420.....	3,000
Connecticut 400.....	4,300
New York 5,143.....	246,675
Virginia 47.....	27,000
South Carolina 450.....	144,000
Ohio 12,150.....	409,501
Michigan 28,316.....	7,057,920
Indiana 1,073.....	10,104,000
Illinois 6,706.....	3,314,560
Indiana and Illinois 3,900.....	
Georgia and Alabama 20,000.....	
Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee 9,000.....	
Mississippi and Alabama 21,000.....	
Mississippi 3,625.....	53,576,176
Florida 5,000.....	4,032,640
Louisiana 1,313.....	
Missouri 6,810.....	44,806
Missouri and Arkansas 5,407.....	3,491,840
Arkansas 6,700.....	8,858,560

Thus far the government had been dealing with numbers more immediately pressing on the limits of the States and Territories. In the year 1829 new and comprehensive estimates were submitted by Generals Clark and Cass of the entire Indian population of the United States, by which the total number is placed at 313,130, (vol. 3, p. 587;) of this number 20,000 were east of the line of the Mississippi, north of Illinois, and west of the lakes; 94,300 west of the Mississippi and east of the Rocky mountains, not including Louisiana, Missouri, and Arkansas; 20,000 on the Rocky mountains; and 80,000 west of that range,

along the line of the Pacific, between latitudes 44° and 49°. These elaborate and well-considered schedules exhibited a population of 16,093 as still residing within the area of the thirteen original States. Of these 1,000 were within the State of Tennessee, 1,877 in Ohio, 23,400 in Mississippi, 19,200 in Alabama, 939 in Louisiana, 4,050 in Indiana, 5,900 in Illinois, 5,031 in Missouri, 9,340 in Michigan, *7,200 in Arkansas, and 4,000 in Florida, making 61,997 within the new States. The changes which have taken place in these home masses of the aboriginal population will be presently noticed.

The first endeavor to procure the statistics and industrial means of an Indian tribe was made by the legislature of New York in 1845, in relation to the six nations of Iroquois, a people who were found to be the indigenous population of the entire western part of that State (west of the present site of Albany) in 1609. They had consequently lived 236 years in the same general position, having contracted their limits from time to time by sale and cession, but having had, through the whole period, ample space for their agriculture, industry, and expansion. These corn-growing tribes, when Champlain marched against them, were seated at their castles in New York. They had been the means of defending their country from French encroachment during the whole colonial period.

By the principles of their confederation, their military power, and their skill in oratory and negotiation, they had acquired a high reputation. Down to the year 1776, they were the pivot on which all Indian negotiation turned. In the mean time, the Powhatan tribes of Virginia, and the entire groups of the Algonquin stock from North Carolina to the St. Lawrence, had either been extinguished as tribes at comparatively early dates, or taken shelter in fragmentary masses in the west. During this time the area of that ancient hunting ground of the Iroquois, in New York, had been filled with the largest part of a population of †3,042,574, thrifty farmers, mechanics, merchants, manufacturers, and professional men. The result of the Iroquois census was found to be, contrary to general expectation, highly favorable. These tribes had, from the era of the revolution, been surrounded by all the circumstances which usually lead to Indian depopulation, with but partial, and for the most part, recent attempts to teach them. Yet, inclusive of the estimated number of 2,006 in Canada and Wisconsin, they were found to have a total of 6,942, which is but 1,858 less than the number assigned them in 1776, (vol. 3, p. 560.) Of the 3,753 residing in the State of New York, there were 746 families who cultivated 13,867 acres of land. Of these, 1,781 were males, 1,972 females. Of the males, 371 were farmers, 20 mechanics, and two professional men. The tribes raised 11,308 bushels of wheat, 45,499 bushels of Indian corn, 28,866 bushels of oats, 1,054 bushels of buckwheat, 16,681 bushels of potatoes, and 353 bushels of turnips.

There were 1,350 acres cultivated in meadow, and 6,868 bearing fruit trees. There were 948 horses, 839 sheep, 2,275 neat cattle, 3,485 hogs, 802 milch cows, and 20,341 pounds of butter made.

There were 14 school houses and churches, and 462 children at

* In 1832 the population was found to be 14,000, (vol. 3, p. 599.)

† Census of 1850.

school. Other statistics of a highly interesting character were obtained, which operated to draw attention to their condition, and led to some beneficial legislation in their behalf, (vol. 1, p. 441.)

Such was the state of information on this head; when, early in 1847, Congress directed the present investigation to be made. It was believed that similar information from the other tribes in the United States would produce beneficial results.

Most of the tribes of the Mississippi were mere hunters, some of them in the wildest state of barbarism; roaming after deer; worshipping demons; at war with each other and with the principles of the civilized world.

How many had deviated from this type of barbarism, and how far they had gone towards the industrial state, could only be conjectured. Of their statistics nothing was absolutely known beyond the Iroquois experiment.

The system of paying annuities to tribes, either to chiefs as distributing magistrates, or to the mass of heads of families, *per capita*, had proved almost equally unsatisfactory, the one by capricious and unequal distribution, and the other by regularly squandering the fund, without benefit to individuals or tribes. No data exhibited the striking difference which existed between the hunter and the semi-civilized tribes. As a general fact, it seemed that those tribes who received the largest annuities dwindled away most rapidly, and made the most equivocal strides to advance in their industry or social condition. To denote the necessity of laws to protect chattels and property, it seemed requisite to show that the Indians had chattels and property to protect.

Between a temporary wigwam and a house, a fence and cultivated fields and a forest, the raising of domestic cattle, and the pursuit of wild game, the condition of society must be widely different.

Statistical forms were therefore immediately prepared and distributed to the agents throughout the Union. The first object was to obtain details from the colonial tribes at the west, who were known to have made the greatest advances in the line of civilization, namely, the Appalachian group of the Muscogeas, Chickasaws, and Choctaws, and the various local bands speaking the language of the Achalague, or Cherokee.

Difficulties have been encountered in this which were not anticipated. Whether the tribes misapprehended the object, or felt reluctance to exhibit their means, basing itself on other reasons, is unknown. These impediments to a complete analysis of their vital and industrial statistics still exist, except with respect to the Chickasaws. By tables, transmitted from the agent in 1850, they are shown to have a tribal aggregate of 4,260. Of these 1,029 are males under the age of 18; 1,089 are females under the age of 16; 960 are males between 18 and 60; 1,182 females between 16 and 60. Eighty persons are found between the ages of 60 and 100. There are 627 persons of mixed blood. The number of deaths in a population of over 4,000 was 27. The number of deaf and dumb, seven; lunatics, six. There were 11 orphans, three blind persons, and one over the age of 100. The quantity of grain raised was 265,351 bushels of corn; 4,252 bushels of wheat; 63,917 bushels of potatoes, and 14,402 bushels of oats.

There were 209 pounds of cotton picked. They possessed 5,789 horses; 14,788 neat cattle; 1,148 sheep; and 24,142 hogs. There were 193 pleasure wagons; 2,264 slaves, of African descent, (vol. 4, p. 508.)

Subsequent information, derived from the pay-rolls in 1853, denotes a population of 4,715; being an increase of 455, (vol. 4, p. 582.) Agreeably to the reports of teachers, the number of horses were 5,000; neat cattle, 6,500; hogs, 100,000. They raised 220,000 bushels of grain, and cultivated 750,000 acres of land. Sixty thousand acres of this was planted in corn. They possessed 2,000 agricultural implements, (vol. 4, p. 589.)

In 1805 the Chickasaws ceded to the United States 345,000 acres of land, for which they received \$22,000. In 1833 they ceded 6,422,400 acres, for which they received \$3,646,000, (vol. 2, p. 609.) This tribe receives a permanent annuity of \$3,000. It possesses an investment in State stocks, guaranteed by the United States, of \$4,416 39; \$3,000 are pledged to the support of orphans, and \$2,000 for incompetent persons, (vol. 2, p. 561.) At an early day they adopted the policy of investing the proceeds of their lands in public stocks, through the agency of the United States treasury; and they are believed to be at this day, in their fiscal means and policy, very far in advance of any tribe in America.

The Choctaws at the last returns numbered 15,767, (vol. 4, p. 582.) They have a regular government, schools, and academies, and sustain a newspaper. Education claims a high place in the nation. They are industrious, temperate, and animated by sound principles of progress. They are raisers of the cereal grains, corn and cotton, horses and cattle. They possess mills, and substantial and good dwellings, and conduct their commercial and political affairs with efficiency and foresight. Of their moral and intellectual condition, instructive data are published in vol. 4, p. 582, et cetera. They possess a superlative translation of the entire gospels, in a language at once terse, sonorous and expressive. If such a people should not rapidly advance, it would reverse all the teachings of history.

The Creeks retain more of the element of government by hereditary chieftainship and circles, than any of the transferred tribes, being still located in the districts known to them in Georgia, as upper and lower Creeks. Their aggregate in 1833 was 22,664. Of these the lower Creek towns have 14,142, existing in 3,915 families, namely: 6,555 males and 7,142 females. These families possess 445 slaves of African descent, (vol. 4, p. 581.) In the upper Creek towns the aggregate is 8,522, existing in 2,448 families, viz: 3,958 males and 3,107 females. There are 457 negroes.

The latest returns of the Cherokees, which are derived from the pay rolls of 1833, give an aggregate of 19,367, without denoting the sexes and ages, (vol. 4, p. 582.) The number of scholars in school at the present date, derived from the report of the teachers to their several societies, is 1,100; the number of orphans in schools, 114. The Methodist church reports 1,294 Cherokee christians, and 156 colored members, (16.) The sums expended for this tribe during the revolutionary war and the confederacy, derived from the treasury books, was

\$580,103 41. From 1789 to 1819, the sum was \$213,311 38, and it has increased proportionally since. The whole number of acres ceded by this tribe is 24,766,400 acres, (vol. 4, p. 602.) Their permanent investments are \$766,490, (vol. 4, p. 561.)

Agreeably to the foregoing details of numbers, some of which are, however, a decade back, the gross aggregate of the four semi-civilized tribes is a fraction under 60,000.

There are no reliable details to compute the ratio of increase that should be added to this aggregate for the present population. It was an object of considerable interest when these investigations were commenced to ascertain the number of Indians brought into the Union by the annexation of Texas and the acquisition of New Mexico and California. Texas, within the boundaries finally assigned to it, contains no monumental indices of the fixed residence of an Indian population at former periods. It appears to have been a vast neutral hunting ground between the tribes south of the lower part of the Rio Grande and those of the Mississippi valley. There is not known to be the remains of a teocalli or tumulus along the entire sea-board coast, reaching inland to the mountains, now comprising the fastnesses of the Ninnia or Comanches.

Alcedo, who bestows unlimited encomiums on the fertility of the country and the abundance of its natural resources, describes it as "inhabited by infinite nations of Indians." Mr. Burnett, the first president of the Republic of Texas, represents the Comanches as nomadic, being in a state of complete barbarism, and without even any traditions of any kind, which run back over three generations. He estimates their numbers in 1847, to range from 10,000 to 12,000, having from 2,000 to 2,500 warriors, (vol. 1, pp. 330, 331.) Mr. Charles Bent, the first provincial governor of the country after its accession by the United States, states the whole number of tribes at ten, with an aggregate population of 36,950, (vol. 1, p. 245.) These were reduced by Mr. Neighbors, in 1849, by further scrutiny, to 29,515, (vol. 1, p. 518.)

Of the aboriginal population of New Mexico, considerable discrepancies have appeared. The Pueblo Indians of that territory constitute a distinctive feature. Governor James Calhoun reported the number of these Pueblos in the region of the Rio Grande, at twenty, containing an aggregate of 11,130. To these were added the seven ancient Pueblos of Mogui, estimated at 10,950 souls, (vol. 1, p. 519.) Dr. Ten Broeck, United States army, states the Pueblo of Zuñi, alone, at 4,000, (vol. 4, p. 80.) Major Eaton, United States army, estimates the Navijoes at from 2,000 to 3,000, which is half the number assumed in prior schedules, (vol. 4, p. 220.) The Apaches, Lepans, Jicarillas, and other wild and predatory tribes and bands, are estimated at 36,500, making the probable Indian population of the territory of all kinds, 58,480. Prior estimates have carried the aggregate population some 30,000 higher, (vol. 1, p. 519,) but it is believed on insufficient data, furnished by the agents.

The Indians of California have been still more vaguely represented. The earliest estimates filed in this office, since its acquisition, by persons in authority, are too extravagant to bear quotation. The numbers who were collected by the Spanish into Pueblos along the Pacific

coast so late as 1802, constituted 18 mission stations, numbering 14,931, beside 1,300 Mustees and Mulattoes, (vol. 1, p. 520.) After the disbanding of the Pueblos, it was impossible to distinguish between the partially reclaimed and forest and mountain tribes.

Moderate estimates have assumed the latter at 16,000, (vol. 1, p. 520.) Data obtained by Mr. McKee, the commissioner appointed to visit the coast tribes north of San Francisco, in 1852, extending to the Klamath, and inland to Mount Shaster, denote 9,080 in that quarter, (vol. 3, p. 654.) Schedules since transmitted of the number of the Mariposa, Fresno, and Merceda Indians, denote these tribes to consist of 5,024, (vol. 4, p. 608.) It is believed that the aggregate of 48,000 exceeds rather than falls short of the entire number within the boundaries of this State.

Oregon has, from its discovery, been occupied by a multitude of small Indian tribes, creating the impression of great populousness. Nothing is more deceptive. No scrutiny sustains at all the estimates made by early explorers without presupposing a very extraordinary decadence, which is not probable. Lewis and Clark, in 1806, stated the numbers of tribes at 39, and estimated them at 80,000 persons, living in 1,778 lodges. This estimate was repeated by General Clark, in 1829, in the otherwise carefully prepared tables, submitted to the War Department, by himself and General Cass, to which reference has before been made. By a message transmitted to Congress on the 1st August, 1848, schedules were submitted of the Indians of Oregon, which exhibited great discrepancy. From a list of tribes, made by a resident of the Territory, they are placed at 47,200. Another authority, of the same date, stated the aboriginal population at 29,370. In 1852, after the organization of the Territory, General Lane reports the number at 22,733, comprising 29 tribes, with an aggregate of 2,739 warriors, (vol. 3, p. 521.) Early in 1854, an agent at Puget's Sound, Washington Territory, reports seven tribes as existing on those waters, who number 5,895. He estimates the entire Indian population in that part of the Territory at 12,000 souls, (vol. 4, p. 596-598.) This can be regarded merely as the identity of location of numbers previously estimated in Oregon, and is a duplication of the tribes. This error of duplication is chiefly owing to the use of synonyms for petty tribes, which have been employed and produced so much uncertainty and confusion from the beginning.

Utah becomes an element in these territorial estimates. The number of Indians inhabiting the Rocky Mountains was computed, in 1829, at 20,000, but from data received it (vol. 4, p. 596) cannot be put over 12,000. The wars of these tribes with each other, taken in connexion with the scant means of subsistence afforded by these bleak altitudes, tend to check their growth, and keeps down population to old standards.

The entire number of Indians on the new line of frontiers, acquired since the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and of the Pacific Territories, is shown to be 168,002, namely: Texas, 29,575; New Mexico, 58,480; California, 45,235; Oregon and Washington, 22,733; and Utah, 12,000. The gross numbers would, at the usual rate of computation for women and children and old and superannuated men, give 33,600 fighting men;

a truly formidable number for an army of 10,000 troops to cope with. Most of these tribes of the mountains and plains are excellent bowmen, most expert swordsmen, living on little, and moving without baggage, and, to add to their celerity of movement, many of them are mounted on the hardy wild horse.

It is the remark of a British writer on political economy, long resident here, that forty acres of land, if well cultivated, is adequate to the support of a family.—(Cooper.) Estimates were made by me while residing in the west that it required eight thousand acres of land, to be kept in a wilderness state, in order to support a single Indian by the chase. Consequently, a family of five persons would need forty thousand acres. At this ratio a territory of fifty thousand square miles, the average of one of our new States, would demand the rest and disuse of its entire area to remain in the condition of undisturbed forest in order to sustain four thousand Indians living as hunters. Elaborate computations have been prepared by the Topographical Bureau, (vol. 4, p. 183,) that the Indian territories lying between the lines of the Pacific and the Mississippi, and comprising their entire limits, consists of 1,734,595 square miles. Mr. Jefferson estimated one Indian to the square mile on the planting of Virginia.—(Notes on Virginia, p. 152.) If the predatory nomadic bands who assume a hostile attitude on the new line of frontier, from San Antonio to Olympia, be stated at 168,000, their estimated number in the preceding pages, a fraction less than ten square miles is assignable to every soul, or about fifty square miles to an average Indian family.

The whole number of Indians in the Union in 1850 was 400,000, (vol. 1, p. 523.) Of the tribes living east of the Rocky Mountains, west of the Mississippi, and north of the boundaries of Texas and New Mexico, to the north boundaries of Kansas, no estimates make the number less than 99,000, including the four Austral tribes.

It is on these tribes that the examples of our laws, industry, arts, teaching, and manners have had most effect.

It is on this line our earliest military posts and oldest Indian agencies are established. It is here that primary and manual labor schools exist. Some twenty of the tribes have more or less fully embraced agriculture, raise large stocks of cattle, live in fixed dwellings, and have adopted the civilized costume. These occupy the new Kansas and Indian territories—four of the tribes, as before recited, numbering 60,000 persons, have adopted systems of government and written constitutions. All these tribes have been transferred from the northern, middle, or southern States, (vol. 4, p. 461.) No small part of them are the descendants of tribes who occupied the area of the Union on the first planting of the colonies. Much effort and much expense has been incurred with them. They have been the subject of humanitarian and benevolent care and sympathy during two centuries. To confound them in our policy with the wild tribes—for a moment to suppose that they partake of the habits and feelings of the robbers, plunderers, and murderers of the bleak plains and mountains, would be the highest injustice. There are men in these reclaimed tribes who are exalted in their feelings, principles, and manners; who acknow-

ledge the best truths of letters, arts, and christianity, and who live an honor to human nature.

The number of Indians in the Nebraska Territory has been computed by competent men, on the ground to occupy 5,315 lodges, containing 52,000 souls, (vol. 3, p. 629.) The number of square miles possessed by these tribes is 136,700, (vol. 4, p. 183.)

Without, however, a full and complete census of the population and statistics of the various tribes, reclaimed and unreclaimed, it is impossible to separate one class from the other, or to adopt a just and comprehensive system of policy—a policy which, at the same time that it promotes the interests of the industrious and lettered tribes, does not operate to paralyze and destroy the nomades. It was this truth that laid at the foundation of these investigations. A just sympathy was felt in the national legislature for a noble but unfortunate race, who were flying before the circle of civilization. It is believed that this policy should be faithfully carried out, notwithstanding the impediments thrown in the way by the tribes themselves, or by the inherent difficulties of the task. Statistics are the very highest test of advancing civilization in the science of government, and it is not to be expected that tribes, newly awakened from the sleep of barbarism, should at once appreciate and desire them.

These are not, however, the only impediments. Some further legislation is required. When it is made imperatively the duty of the Indian agents to procure the statistics, they will be furnished. Such proper expenses as are incurred thereby should be met. With regard to the publication, it should be continued, and extended to all the topics belonging to it. Nothing more is required, and nothing less would complete it. The principles of the census should be persevered in and pushed through. The objections of the Indians are futile, and founded on entire error; such information, by indicating their means and true condition, will enable the government to act understandingly in the premises. The plan of the inquiry is founded on the highest principles of the age. The desiderata already collected are unexhausted; and while efforts are directed to the acquisition of additional facts to analyze their industrial and fiscal means, other efforts should not be omitted to exhibit their intellectual and moral traits, their history and ethnography. To secure the latter ends, the occasion should by no means be neglected to procure a complete comparative lexicon of the Indian languages—no one step could be taken tending so directly and effectively to unravel the complicated thread of their origin and history.

Mr. Jefferson expressed this opinion seventy-three years ago.—(Notes on Virginia, page 163.)

The whole object is one of enlarged humanities. Its completion is conceived to be due, not only to the aborigines as our predecessors in the occupation of the continent, to which their footsteps have been providentially led, but as a cosmic element in the history of the human race, alike interesting to Europe as America.

To us, they have been a peculiar people, indomitably bent on false principles, to whom the nomadic life has seemed to embrace compensations for every other means of human happiness. And, while they have been a proverb, a reproach, a by-word, little would it appear to

conflict with the mysterious workings of Providence, if, in the progress of history, future times should be able to recognize, under this dark, bitter, and hopeless guise of misery and degradation, the vestiges of a people who once, in a peculiar manner, enjoyed the beaming light of the divine countenance.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

Hon. GEO. W. MANYPENNY,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs.