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Sioux Indians. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting a letter from General H. H. Sibley, relative to the destitute condition of the Sioux Indians near Devil's Lake, Dakota Territory.

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SIoux INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

A letter from General H. H. Sibley, relative to the destitute condition of the Sioux Indians near Devil's Lake, Dakota Territory.

APRIL 24, 1868.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., April 22, 1868.

SIR: For the consideration of Congress, I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 17th instant, from General H. H. Sibley, giving additional information relative to the destitution prevailing among the Sioux Indians near Devil's Lake, Dakota Territory.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. H. BROWNING,

Secretary.

Hon. SCHUYLER COLFAX,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, *April 17, 1868.*

SIR: I have the honor to state that the information conveyed to you of destitution among the Sioux Indians at Devil's Lake, Dakota Territory, in my letter of December last, has been verified by more recent advices from that remote region. The number of lives lost by starvation and exposure cannot be accurately stated, but be that as it may, there is no doubt that the survivors are very much in need of relief as soon as it can reach them. If there is any fund at your disposal applicable to such an object I respectfully suggest that it be promptly employed, and that some competent and reliable agent be appointed to proceed with the supplies of food and clothing without unnecessary delay to the scene of suffering. The number of Indians in the camps at or near Devil's Lake is probably between five and six hundred, although some estimates are much higher than these figures.

It is very important, apart from any considerations of humanity, that these savages should be assured of the friendly feeling of the government towards

them by some tangible demonstration, otherwise they may be enticed or driven by sheer necessity into hostilities, which will involve other bands of the same tribe on the north and east of the Missouri river, and endanger the white settlements on the frontiers of this State, Iowa, and Dakota Territory.

If I am not in error, the Indians at Devil's Lake, on the reservation, when 500 in number, are entitled to a United States agent by treaty stipulations. If so, I trust a good and faithful man will be selected to take charge of them in that capacity.

I trust you will not consider me as intrusive in volunteering these suggestions to the department over which you preside. They are prompted by a desire for the establishment of friendly relations between the government and the Indians, and a hope that the latter may be saved, by a just and liberal policy, from impending destruction.

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

H. H. SIBLEY.

Hon. O. H. BROWNING,

Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D. C.