

WINNEBAGO INDIANS.

MEMORIAL

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MINNESOTA,

FOR THE

Removal of the Winnebago Indians, and the indemnification of the early settlers on their reservation.

APRIL 6, 1860.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

A MEMORIAL to Congress for the removal of the Winnebago Indians, and the indemnification of early settlers upon their reservation.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled:

The legislature of the State of Minnesota would respectfully represent: That the location of the Winnebago Indians upon their present reservation in Blue Earth county, of this State, was a grievous though perhaps unintentional wrong against the early settlers upon that tract of land, and that the presence of these savages, in the midst of a fertile and populous portion of country, is at the present time a serious annoyance to its peaceful inhabitants, and an impediment to its development and prosperity.

Your memorialists would further represent, that many of the citizens of the United States, in pursuance of an act passed August fourth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, giving them the right to settle upon unsurveyed government lands, did settle upon the land now occupied by the Winnebago Indians in good faith, and with the reasonable hope and expectation that Congress would protect them, in common with other citizens of the United States, in their liberty and the enjoyment of their homes and property, and that the validity of their contract with the government would never be impaired.

In the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five the treaty for the location of the Winnebago Indians was made and ratified, and our citizens,

in a time of profound peace, under the protection of our free government, and the operation of its equal laws, were compelled to abandon their homes and property, to forego their guaranteed social privileges and the education of their families, and witness a lawless, savage, and alien race of people take possession of the heritage which you in your wisdom had, by a solemn act, conferred upon them.

Your memorialists would further represent, that these savages are located in the midst of a county containing over six thousand (6,000) free white inhabitants, within three miles of a navigable river of this State, upon a fertile agricultural tract of country which their idle and roving dispositions will ever prevent them from improving; that the present reservation lies between the Minnesota river and a fertile region which would otherwise speedily fill up with an enterprising population; that the contact of races so dissimilar is a positive injury to both, and that the drunken and plundering habits of the Indians wandering throughout the surrounding country in pursuit of game renders the citizens of your government insecure in their lives and property.

Your memorialists would further represent, that for the past five (5) years the citizens of this State have put forth their utmost endeavors to bring this matter to the notice of the general government, and that their repeated petitions on this subject have utterly failed in every instance.

Therefore, your memorialists, the legislature of the State of Minnesota, would respectfully ask that a special committee may be appointed by Congress to make an early examination of this matter, and inquire what reparation justice warrants and wisdom indicates for those who have suffered, and would further ask that if possible these Indians may be removed to some part of the public domain better suited to their habits and well being as a race, and that no treaty allowing them to occupy their present reservation, either in a body or in severalty, may be ratified.

And, as in duty bound, your memorialists will ever pray.

AMOS COGGSWELL,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
IGNATIUS DONNELLY,
President of the Senate.

Approved February twenty-seventh, one thousand eight hundred and sixty.

ALEX. RAMSEY.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Minnesota, March 24, 1860.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original on file in this office.

[L. s.]

J. H. BAKER,
Secretary of State.