

MISSISSIPPI CHIPPEWA INDIANS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

RELATIVE TO

An appropriation for the relief of the Mississippi Chippewa Indians on the White Earth reservation.

FEBRUARY 8, 1873.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., January 30, 1873.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith, first, two letters, dated January 6, 1872, addressed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs by the chiefs of the Mississippi Chippewas on the White Earth reservation; secondly, two letters, dated the 27th instant, addressed to the Secretary of the Interior by the Right Rev. H. B. Whipple, of the Episcopal Church, who has, for a long time, taken a deep interest in the protection and welfare of these Indians.

The destitute condition of these Indians, disclosed by the papers herewith, calls for prompt action and immediate relief. It is needless to call the attention of Congress to the necessity for such action and relief in any other terms than those contained in these letters.

I beg, therefore, to recommend, first, an appropriation of \$25,000 for immediate use, in preventing starvation and other suffering by this tribe of Indians; and, secondly, the passage of a law authorizing these Indians to sell a township of land to the United States for the sole use of the Pembina Chippewas, (the subject of which was embraced in a letter addressed by this Department to the Speaker of the House on the 13th instant,) and from the proceeds of such sale to reimburse the Government for the \$25,000 to be immediately appropriated. I cannot too earnestly direct the attention of Congress to the necessity for the immediate passage of the two propositions herein indicated, or some equivalent therefor.

This communication I have forwarded to the House by the hand of

Agent E. P. Smith, in charge of these Chippewas, who will be able to give the Committee on Appropriations, or any other committee to whom this letter may be referred, any other information which may be required upon this subject.

The papers, herewith inclosed, having been referred to the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs for his views, I now transmit a copy of his report dated to-day, in which he urges the same measures as have been previously indicated in this letter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. DELANO,
Secretary.

The Hon. the SPEAKER of the House of Representatives.

WHITE EARTH, MINNESOTA, *January 6, 1873.*

SIRS: We feel that we are going to pass a hard winter, and many will begin their suffering in a few days. Our supply of provisions which we gathered last fall by fishing and hunting, and making rice, is very near exhausted, and when that is gone, what are we to do? We asked our agent in council the other day if he could help us any in the way of provision; he told us he could not, and had no work for us to do, and no means in his hands to assist us in any way except by a surplus of annuity-money from last fall's payment, which would amount probably to \$1 per head, and which we would get toward spring; if we had that dollar now, it is not supposed we could live two or three months on it; a white man may probably get along with it, but an Indian could not. What are we to do? Our agent cannot help us, and the traders cannot feed us for nothing; they have given us a great deal on credit, and as soon as they stop doing so, we shall have nothing to depend upon. To whom, then, shall we look upon for relief but to you who may have pity on us in our present condition? If this starvation which is staring us was caused by laziness or mismanagement of domestic affairs, we would be ashamed to ask for aid after so much has been done by your religious societies. You are, I suppose, aware that our crops were entirely destroyed by the grasshoppers in the month of July last, and we have no means in advance like the white man whom we are trying to imitate. We fear we shall be obliged to turn heathen again, as far as our provisions are concerned, for a short time, for it is not expected that any person will let his children suffer when he has a yoke of oxen in his possession; although we know we will do wrong in killing them, as it will enable us to do our planting next spring, and we are certain our agent will not give any more. No one knows the extent of suffering there will be, and when known in full it may be too late for some of us. Some of our good people on this reservation do not believe there will be much suffering; no one will believe when he himself will sit at his table full of luxuries, but let some of our Christian friends go round to our huts and see what we eat, how much we have to eat, and they may be able to pass their opinion more correctly on us.

We remain, yours, friends and brothers,

WAUB-AUN-AU-QUOD. +
ME-SHA-KE-KI-SHICK. +
MEN-E-DO-WAU-BE. +
NAY-BAN-A-SKUNG. +

In presence of—

C. H. BEAULIEU.
J. J. ENMEGAHBOOH.

The INDIAN COMMISSIONERS.

WHITE EARTH, MINNESOTA, *January 6, 1873.*

SIR: In a council we had with our agent, Major E. P. Smith, he asked us if we would permit the Chippewas of Pembina to come on our reservation. We have talked the matter over with other chiefs of our band, and we feel sorry for our friends and relatives who reserved no homes when they ceded their land to their Great Father. They are now like birds flying from tree to tree, but finding no spot they can call their permanent homes.

If the Chippewas of Mississippi were as rich in lands as they used to be in former times, we would willingly invite them to come and make their homes with us, without recompense; but we are too poor, for many of us, as well as other new-comers, have but a little to start with to commence a new mode of life, and many have nothing at all with which they would be enabled to help them; neither do we see anything to continue this way of living which our Great Father has laid out for us, unless it is by the generosity of Congress, which has not forsaken us up to the present time, and may again extend a helping hand, which might be used for the other Mississippi bands which expect to join us next summer. We have, therefore, agreed that we will sell a certain tract of land on this reservation to our Great Father, which our agent and the chiefs shall designate hereafter, for a home for the Pembina Indians, or any other Chippewas, (but for no other tribe or nation,) and the money which our Great Father will give us be used as our agent and the chiefs may agree upon in council, for the benefit of the Chippewas of Mississippi on this reservation, who have made their homes here at the present time.

Respectfully, yours,

WAUB-AUN-AN-QUOD, his x mark,
Chief.
MESILA-KE-KE-SHIICK, his x mark,
Chief.
MEN-E-DO-WUBE, his x mark,
Chief.
NAY-BUN-A-SKUNG, his x mark,
Chief.

In presence of—

C. H. BEAULIEU,
J. J. EMMIGABAUII.

The Hon. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C.

ROME, NEW YORK, *January 27, 1873.*

MY DEAR SIR: Inclosed I send you a letter of the chiefs of the White Earth Indians. If the proposal was to sell any portion of this reservation to whites, I would oppose it. These Indians have sold us land worth millions, and they have been robbed as few Indians ever have been. This reservation ought to be the home of all of the Chippewas, and if by the sale of any part of this for others to come, or by appropriations, this end can be carried out, I believe great good could be done. I am sure you will do all you can for these people, only I beg of you to set your face as a flint against the sale of one foot of this reservation to whites. The Indians would only get a pittance, and Ahab repeat the robbery of Naboth.

God bless you and reward you for all your heroic efforts for this helpless race. Does not Christ our King look down and see all such blessed work? And will not He repay it?

Your friend,

H. B. WHIPPLE.

Hon. Mr. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

POST-OFFICE, FARIBAULT, MINNESOTA,
January 27, 1873.

MY DEAR FRIEND: The letter which I mark No. 2 tells its own sad story. These men are our friends. They have always been true to their plighted faith. They are now living as white men. They are Christians. It will be an awful blot on the nation if they are allowed to starve. They had planted large crops, and early in June these crops looked well, and every heart was glad.

In July there came a grasshopper plague, which destroyed every vestige of their labor. They did the best they could to gather rice and fish, but now starvation stares them in the face. You must aid them. If their agent is in Washington please show him this letter. I have no means, or I would at once provide for them. The letter only reached me to-day, on account of our severe storm. I have telegraphed one of my clergy to buy five hundred dollars' worth of provisions, for which I will be responsible.

Assuring you of my deep gratitude for all your efforts for this poor race,

I am your friend,

H. B. WHIPPLE.

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 30, 1873.

SIR: I have the honor to return, herewith, the letters of Rev. H. B. Whipple, of January 27, 1873, with inclosures, this day referred to this Office by the Department, relative to the destitute condition of the Chippewas on the White Earth reservation, and would respectfully recommend that Congress be asked to appropriate \$25,000 for their relief.

In this connection I would respectfully invite attention to the matter of the sale, by said Indians, of a township of their land, which was submitted to Congress with letter of the Department of 13th instant. Should such sale be authorized, the \$25,000 could be re-imbursed to the Government from the proceeds of such sale.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. R. CLUM,
Acting Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.