

POTTAWATOMIE AND WINNEBAGO INDIANS IN WISCONSIN.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING,

In accordance with a resolution of the House of 6th instant, a report from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs upon the disposition of the Pottawatomie and Winnebago Indians in Wisconsin.

JANUARY 20, 1876.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 17, 1876.

SIR: In accordance with a resolution of the House of Representatives, under date of 6th instant, requiring information from this Department relative to the disposition of certain funds appropriated for the Pottawatomie and Winnebago Indians in Wisconsin, I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of a report, dated the 14th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, together with the statement therein referred to.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
Z. CHANDLER,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER *House of Representatives.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., January 14, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from the War Department, of resolution of the House of Representatives of the 6th instant, referring to the provisions of the act approved June 25, 1864, (13 Stat., 172,) wherein it was provided that the proportion of the annuities to which certain stray bands of Winnebago and Pottawatomie Indians, then residing in the State of Wisconsin, would be entitled if they were settled upon their reservations with their respective tribes, should be retained in the Treasury to their credit from year to year, to be paid to them when they shall unite with their said tribes, or to be used by the Secretary in defraying the expenses of their removal, or in

settling and subsisting them on any other reservation which may hereafter be provided for them; also referring to the appropriation of funds to enable the Secretary of the Interior to take charge of said stray bands, and to the decision of the said Secretary that, under the laws of the United States, the said stray bands of Indians are entitled to their just proportion of the tribal funds, and that the same should be paid to them; also, that under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1875, which provides that any Indian may abandon his tribal relations, take up a homestead, and yet be entitled to a share in tribal funds, a large number of said stray bands of Indians have renounced their tribal relations, made and filed in the proper court declaration of intention to become citizens of the United States, and taken up and settled upon homesteads on the public lands in the State of Wisconsin, and are greatly in need of any funds remaining in the Treasury to which they are, or may be, entitled; and calling upon the Secretary of the Interior to report to said House of Representatives—

First. What amount of annuities or tribal funds said stray bands of Winnebago Indians would have been entitled to if they had been living with their tribe, and what sum or sums of said annuities or tribal funds have been retained in the Treasury from year to year and placed to their credit.

Second. If any part thereof has been expended, under what authority and for what purpose, and the amount thereof, giving the same in detail, the amount expended in taking care of said stray bands of Indians in Wisconsin since the passage of said act, and prior to the year 1871, how expended, to whom paid, giving details thereof.

In reply to that portion of said resolution calling for information as to what amount of annuities said stray bands of Winnebagoes in Wisconsin would have been entitled to if they had been living with their tribe, I have the honor to make the following statement, viz:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Annuities appropriated in 1864..... | \$54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1865..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1866..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1867..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1868..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1869..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1870..... | 54,250 00 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1871..... | 57,535 43 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1872..... | 52,031 84 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1873..... | 47,031 84 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1874..... | 57,031 84 |
| Annuities appropriated in 1875..... | 47,931 83 |

Total annuities appropriated since act June 25, 1864..... 641,312 78

The Winnebagoes in Minnesota numbered, according to the last census of said tribe, fifteen hundred and thirty-one persons, and it is estimated that there were about one thousand of said Indians in the State of Wisconsin, making the total of the tribe twenty-five hundred and thirty-one. On this basis the stray bands of said Indians in Wisconsin would be entitled to $\frac{1}{2} \frac{2}{3} \frac{1}{31}$ of the annuities appropriated for the benefit of the tribe since the act of 1864, viz, \$641,312.78, as before stated, = \$253,383.12.

No portion of this amount has been retained in the Treasury to the credit of the stray bands, it not appearing that any action with that view was ever taken by either the Indian Office or the Department to carry out the provisions of the act of 1864 in that respect.

I transmit herewith, in compliance with the said resolution, a state

ment of the amount expended in taking care of said stray bands of Indians in Wisconsin since the passage of the act of 1864 and prior to 1871.

In the latter part of 1873, and early in 1874, about eight hundred and sixty of the Wisconsin Winnebagoes were removed to the reservation of the tribe in Nebraska. Of the Indians thus removed only two hundred and four remained at the agency, the remainder having left the reservation, and, it is supposed, gone back to Wisconsin.

These latter persons were, during their stay on the reservation, cared for and subsisted out of Winnebago funds arising under treaty, and those of the number removed and who remained at the agency have received their proportion of the tribal funds, either in goods or otherwise.

The amount of funds expended in the care and support of those of the Wisconsin Winnebagoes who removed to Nebraska and remained, as well as those who were there for a short period and then returned to Wisconsin, cannot now be stated, but investigation of the case will be made through Superintendent Barclay White, and upon the receipt of his report in the matter, the same will be made the subject of further communication for the information of Congress.

Although the act of 1864, which requires the retention of the proportion of the Winnebago tribal annuities belonging to those members of the tribe in Wisconsin, has been overlooked or disregarded, the provisions thereof are considered obligatory, and the proportion due to the said Indians of the appropriation for the present fiscal year will be retained in the Treasury, subject to the will of Congress.

The resolution referred is herewith returned.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,
Commissioner.

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.