

LANDS IN SEVERALTY TO PEORIAS AND MIAMIES.

APRIL 28, 1880.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HASKELL, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 6022.]

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill H. R. 5418, beg leave to present a substitute therefor and the following report:*

The bill provides, as indicated in its title, for the allotment in severalty of the lands of the Indians situated in the Indian Territory and the payment to them of the money held in trust by the United States for their use and benefit, the lands thus allotted in severalty to be inalienable for the period of twenty years. A portion of the funds of the tribe is to be reserved for school purposes.

The bill also provides for the sale of the Miami Indian lands in Kansas and for the distribution of the proceeds; the allotment of lands to be made by a commission appointed by their own council and composed of members of the tribe.

They desire to manage their own domestic affairs, so far as it can be safely done under existing law, free from the surveillance of the Interior Department.

This bill was drawn and introduced solely at the instance of the Indians themselves, and the substitute now reported is the result of modifications made upon their suggestion, a delegation of Miamies and Peorias visiting Washington for that purpose and conferring daily with the subcommittee who had in charge this bill.

These Indians desire that the preliminary steps towards citizenship may be taken now. They are as capable of managing their own affairs as a like number of whites. A large number of their tribe have already become citizens, and are to-day residents of Miami County, Kansas. Those who retain their tribal relationship, and in whose interest this bill was framed, are entirely civilized, are upright, intelligent people, and they naturally chafe under the communistic provisions of the laws governing all Indians who hold their property in common. They desire each of them to reap the reward of their own labor, and pray for the time to come that the accumulations resulting from their toil may, in case of their death, descend to their own children rather than to a tribe or commune.

Under the bonds of the tribal relationship an Indian head of a family, civilized, intelligent, and industrious, may find himself *in occupation* of a farm of 1,000 acres, highly improved and cultivated, the product of his own toil and that of perhaps three or four sons, a family of six or

eight being entitled to occupy that many acres. Should the children die, the father finds that one-half or more of his farm is no longer his, but reverts to the tribe. Should the parents die, the children are in like manner defrauded of their rightful property. The severalty selection, inalienable, guarantees to the most industrious the largest reward; the tribal or communistic principle guarantees to the laziest a certain and sure property interest equal to that of the diligent worker. Accepting the declaration of one of these men, who said, "We want while we live to have and hold secure, each of us personally, whatever we can earn by our labor, and dying, we desire that it may descend to our children," as being the strongest inducement the Indian can have to embrace civilization and acquire habits of industry.

Your committee recommend the passage of this bill.