

No. 73.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, BOISE CITY, I. T., *September 4, 1866.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit my first annual report of the condition of the superintendency of Idaho.

Arriving here on the 14th of June last, I found that my predecessor, ex-Governor Lyon, of Lyonsdale, had left for San Francisco on the 21st of April preceding. I regret his failure to turn over to me the papers and funds belonging to the superintendency in the manner contemplated by the department, as from this failure the interests of the superintendency have materially suffered and my position been rendered most embarrassing. Being thus destitute of funds, as well as papers that should be in this office, my principal means of obtaining information concerning the various tribes of the Idaho Indians has been by correspondence with parties who have travelled among them. From these considerations, as well as the fact that I have so recently entered upon the duties of my office, I shall not be able to make so full and complete a report as I could have desired, or, as would seem to be required of me, in order that you might be fully advised of the condition and requirements of this superintendency for the coming year.

The Territory of Idaho is situated between the 42d and 49th parallels of north latitude, and the 110th and 117th west longitude, being triangular in shape, and embracing an area of not less than 100,000 square miles. The surface of the country, for the most part, abounds in dry and barren sage plains, rough and rugged mountains, interspersed with here and there an occasional fertile valley and grassy mountain side. Hence the natural resources for Indian subsistence are very limited, being almost exclusively confined to roots, fish, and crickets. A great portion of the country being thus uninhabitable by either whites or Indians, will serve as an explanation why the tribes of Idaho are divided into so many bands, and why these bands have their locations so remote from each other. The nomadic habits of those living in the southern portion of our Territory, added to their remote distances from each other, render it very difficult to obtain reliable information concerning them.

Since entering upon the duties of my office I have availed myself of every reliable means to obtain information in relation to those bands of Snakes or Shoshones inhabiting the southeastern portion of Idaho, embracing Fort Hall and those regions of country traversed by the headwaters of Snake river. The information I have obtained is imperfect and unsatisfactory. Their estimated numbers, by individuals who have travelled in their country and spent some time among them, is so various and conflicting that I do not consider myself warranted in an attempt to even approximate their number. The reliable facts obtained may be summed up as follows:

There are in the regions last indicated various roving bands, whose principal subsistence is upon the fish obtained from Snake river and its tributaries, roots, and crickets. Some of them are ostensibly on peaceable terms with the whites, but from the fact that scarcely a year passes without depredations being committed upon the emigrants passing through their country, I am inclined to the opinion that, on favorable opportunities for plunder, they are treacherous and not to be trusted. The southwest portion of Idaho, including the Owyhee country and the regions of the Malheur, are infested with a roving band of hostile Pi-Utes and outlawed Shoshones, numbering, from the best information, some 300 warriors. These Indians have been the source of much trouble to the white settlers, and will continue to be until thoroughly subdued by the military. During the present summer they have massacred no less than 100 Chinamen and a number of whites, besides driving off large quantities of stock belonging to the packers, teamsters, and white settlers.

In addition to the Indians already mentioned, inhabiting the central and southern portion of Idaho, may be included the Boise Shoshones and Bruneau Shoshones. The former, consisting of a band numbering some 200 souls, have lived for some time past in the vicinity of Boise city, and obtained a precarious subsistence by fishing, digging roots, gathering crickets, and performing menial service for white settlers. Their fear of the hostile Pi-Utes, and the fear of being mistaken for hostile Indians and killed by the whites, keeps them confined principally to one locality. Their lodges, two miles above this city, are constructed of bushes, and are totally unsuited to protect them from the cold of a rigorous winter. From reasons already given, they have been afraid to visit their kammas grounds, as usual, during the present summer. Their stock of roots, consequently, is quite meagre. Their subsistence for the coming winter will depend principally upon the few salmon they may be able to take from the Boise river. They are in the most destitute condition in regard to all the necessaries of life, shelter, food, and clothing, and unless something shall be done by the department for their relief, their situation during the coming winter will be a most pitiable one.

The condition of the Bruneau Shoshones, a band of some 400 souls, living on the Bruneau river, some one hundred miles distant from here, is very similar to the condition of the band just described. The two bands speak a common language, and are on friendly terms with each other, and have a mutual desire to be combined and located together on a reservation, and to be instructed in the arts of civilized life. On my arrival here I was informed, unofficially, that ex-Governor Lyon had entered into some sort of treaty with the Bruneau Sho-

shones which contemplated the location of a reservation near the mouth of the Bruneau river, though there is no evidence of such transaction in this office. I am informed from various sources that a reservation could not be judiciously located on the Bruneau. This information is confirmed by the report of Special Agent George C. Hough, herewith transmitted, and to which you are respectfully referred for a more detailed account of the Bruneau band.

From the enfeebled condition of the tribal authority of the Indians of southern Idaho, it is deemed inexpedient to attempt the formation of treaty stipulations with them. The policy of entering into treaty with large and powerful tribes where they have an active and vigorous tribal authority recognized among them, is doubtless a wise and judicious policy, but even in such cases it is supposed that the treaty is designed more for effect upon the Indians than to compel the government to do justice to them. Believing that the government does not require the bonds of treaty regulations as an inducement to do justice to the weak and scattered bands of southern Idaho, and further, believing that a treaty with one band would have no effect upon another band, it is recommended as the most practical, humane, and economical course to pursue, that the government proceed at once to locate on some suitable situation in southern Idaho a reservation of proper dimensions, including, if possible, a good fishery, kamas grounds, grazing grounds, tillable lands, timber, &c. The reservation being located, the Boise and Bruneau Shoshones could at once be removed to it and put under training, and as other bands should be subdued, they could be brought in and combined with those already on the reservation. The government, in the mean time, recognizing, as a test of friendship on the part of the subdued bands, a willingness to settle and remain on the reservation. A military force, sufficient to protect the Indians from bad white men, would also be sufficient to retain the Indians in their bounds. Could this have been done for the Boise and Bruneau Indians this year, and had they been furnished with the usual assistance provided for other reservations, of farmer, blacksmith, farming implements, &c., they would doubtless have been able, next year, to produce a liberal share of their own support. It is further recommended that the department afford the Boise and Bruneau Indians some relief during the coming winter in the way of clothing and provisions; and should the suggestion to locate them on a reservation meet with favor, it is recommended that the location be made and the Indians removed to it before winter, if possible.

The immense wealth of the Pacific coast has had the effect to people our shores with a vast population in advance of the extinguishment of what is called "the Indian title." Idaho is not an exception to other States and Territories west of the Rocky mountains, and all the unhappy consequences resulting from a promiscuous intermingling of whites with the Indians have been painfully experienced in our Territory. The mountains of Idaho, abounding as they do in many rich deposits of precious metals, some of them, perhaps, the richest known to the world, will still continue to invite an increasing population to our Territory. These deposits of mineral wealth not being confined to any particular locality, but abounding in both northern and southern Idaho, some of them almost fabulous in richness, will continue to present in the future, as now, the most profitable fields of labor for the active and industrious miner and tradesman, and as profitable investments for the capitalist as can be found in any other part of our Union. Hence, we may reasonably calculate the already unhappy condition of affairs will but increase in an equal ratio with the increase of the white population until all the Indians of our Territory are separated from the whites and taken under the fostering care of the government.

The Indians of southern Idaho are fast fading away, and as we occupy their root grounds, converting them into fields and pastures, we must either protect them or leave them to the destroying elements now surrounding them, the result of which cannot be doubtful. A humane magnanimity dictates their protection and speedy separation from those evils to which they are exposed by intermingling with white men.

Prominent among the tribes of northern Idaho stand the Nez-Percés, a majority of whom boast that they have ever been the faithful friend of the white man. But few over half of the entire tribes of the Nez-Percés are under treaty. The fidelity of those under treaty, even under the most discouraging circumstances, must commend itself to the favorable consideration of the department. The influx of the white population into their country has subjected them to all the evils arising from an association with bad white men, and as might well be expected, the effect upon the Indians has been most unhappy. The non-payment of their annuities has had its natural effect upon the minds of some of those under treaty; but their confiding head chief (Lawyer) remains unmoved, and on all occasions is found the faithful apologist for any failure of the government. Could this tribe have been kept aloof from the contaminating vices of bad white men, and had it been in the power of the government promptly to comply with the stipulations of the treaty of 1855, there can be no doubt but that their condition at this time would have been a most prosperous one, and that the whole of the Nez-Percés nation would by this time have been willing to come under treaty and settle on the reservation with those already there. Our remote distance from Washington, the great length of time required for the passage of communications to and from the department, in connection with the unsettled condition of the country, are doubtless good reasons why the payment of their annuities has been delayed. But could the annuities now due them be promptly paid, and the new treaty stipulations be promptly met, it would have a fine effect, not only upon those under treaty, but also upon those who are still opposed to

a settlement on the reservation. I regret my inability to lay before you, from my own knowledge, a definite statement of the condition of the remaining tribes of northern Idaho.

In accordance with instructions received at this office from the department, dated June 13, 1866, I opened a correspondence with Superintendent Waterman, of Washington Territory, and the governor of Montana, touching the practicability of collecting the tribes in the northeast of Washington Territory and northern Idaho on the Flathead reservation. A copy of their several replies is herewith transmitted. Confiding in the judgment and integrity of Agent O'Neill, of the Nez-Percés agency, I also corresponded with him on the same subject soon after, and through him ascertained the following facts: That on the 5th ultimo he, in company with Mr. Whitman, attended by an Indian guide, set out from Lewistown (a village some ten miles from the Nez-Percés agency) on a tour of investigation through the tribes of northern Idaho. He gives it as his opinion that it would be unwise to attempt to locate either the Spokanes or the Cœur d'Alènes upon the Flathead reservation; that neither band could agree with the Flatheads. Spokane Gary, referred to in Agent Chapman's letter, is not understood to be the acknowledged chief of the tribe. He is so considered by the whites on account of his ability to talk English and read a little, but is not the equal of his brother in power and influence over the tribe. The distance from the Cœur d'Alène country to the Flatheads is 170 miles; from the Spokanes to the Flatheads, 220 miles. These Indians would not be willing to remove from their own country and unite with the Flatheads. There is in the bounds of their own country, at the head of the Latch or Hanganman's creek, a fine location for a reservation, on which might be collected all the tribes of northern Idaho, including the Spokanes, Pend d'Oreilles, Cœur d'Alènes, and Kootenays. The location referred to is a beautiful valley some twenty miles in length, and comprises in that length fine farming lands, kammas grounds, grazing grounds, good location for saw-mill, with fine quality of timber adjoining, and is accessible from Lewistown and other points below, from Snake river, by good wagon roads. The combined number of the Cœur d'Alènes and Spokanes amounts to from seven hundred to eight hundred souls. Father Misplie, a Catholic priest, who has spent many years among the Indians of northern Idaho, informs me that the Pend d'Oreilles and Kootenays together number about eighteen hundred souls.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

DAVID W. BALLARD,

*Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Idaho Territory.*

Hon. D. N. COOLEY,

*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

No. 74.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Olympia, Washington Territory, July 27, 1866.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 12, referring to the correspondence of Agent Chapman with reference to the removal of certain tribes of Indians and consolidating them with the Flatheads on their reservation.

I have communicated a copy of the letter of Mr. Chapman, transmitted to this office by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to the agent now in charge of the Colville and Spokane Indians, Mr. George A. Paige, and have requested a report from him on the subject. Mr. Paige will in due time ascertain the minds of the Indians in question and will report it with all the facts bearing on the question.

This office will then correspond with the department and report its views on the subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. H. WATERMAN,

*Superintendent Indian Affairs, Washington Territory.*

His Excellency D. W. BALLARD,

*Governor and ex-officio Superintendent Indian Affairs for Idaho.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, TERRITORY OF MONTANA,  
*Virginia City, August 7, 1866.*

SIR: In answer to your communication of the 12th ultimo, I am instructed to say that Acting Governor Meagher has written to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs "that it is not advisable to transfer the Indians in question to the Flathead reservation, and that he considers Colonel Chapman has quite enough on his hands to take charge of those he has already."

He would write to you himself were it not for his having to start immediately for the Flathead agency.

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

A. H. BARRET,

*Montana Territory*

His Excellency D. W. BALLARD,

*Governor, &c., Idaho Territory.*