

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

TO THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

FOR

THE YEAR 1879.



WASHINGTON:  
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1879.

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled,* That the President of the United States is hereby authorized and requested to take such measures as, in his judgment, may be necessary to prevent such metallic ammunition being conveyed to such hostile Indians, and is further authorized to declare the same contraband of war in such district of country as he may designate during the continuance of hostilities.

To carry into effect the above-cited resolution, the sale of fixed ammunition or metallic cartridges by any trader or other person in any district of the Indian country occupied by hostile Indians, or over which they roam, is hereby prohibited; and all such ammunition or cartridges introduced into said country by traders or other persons, and that are liable in any way or manner, directly or indirectly, to be received by such hostile Indians, shall be deemed contraband of war, seized by any military officer and confiscated; and the district of country to which this prohibition shall apply during the continuance of hostilities is hereby designated as that which embraces all Indian country, or country occupied by Indians, or subject to their visits, lying within the Territories of Montana, Dakota, and Wyoming, and the States of Nebraska and Colorado.

U. S. GRANT.

The foregoing resolution is, at best, only a specimen of very loose legislation. In lieu thereof a well-considered penal statute should have been enacted forbidding such sales not only in the Northwest, but wherever there are non-civilized Indians, whether on or off reservations. The danger always is that such trading will be carried on just outside reservation limits, where all sorts of contraband sales are effected and where Indian agents are powerless.

Again, the joint resolution prohibits the sale of "metallic ammunition" only, and not of arms as well. The right of purchasing arms *ad libitum* is the evil complained of. Without arms, ammunition would be of no use, and the latter can be traded in to any extent with little danger of detection, since it can be easily carried concealed about the person. The sale of arms, on the other hand, could be readily detected and exposed; and it is against such sales that legislation should especially be directed. It would almost seem as if the very men engaged in this murderous traffic had framed the above resolution to protect their guild and to enable them to ply their trade with impunity. When it is considered how many lives have been lost during the time which has elapsed since the passage of this resolution (which virtually permits this unhallowed trade in the implements of death), it is strange that no adequate legislation has been had for the protection of human life. A law by Congress prohibiting under severe penalty the sale of both fire-arms and fixed ammunition to non-civilized Indians, is the only common-sense and practicable method of putting an end to this dangerous traffic.

#### INDIAN EDUCATION.

The work of promoting Indian education is the most agreeable part of the labor performed by the Indian Bureau. Indian children are as bright and teachable as average white children of the same ages; and while the progress in the work of civilizing adult Indians who have had no educational advantages is a slow process at best, the progress of the youths trained in our schools is of the most hopeful character. During



the current year the capacity of our school edifices has been largely increased, and some additional schools have been opened. The following tables will show the increase of school facilities during the year :

	1879.	1878.
Number of children, exclusive of the five civilized tribes, who can be accommodated in boarding-schools.....	3,461	2,589
Number of children who can be accommodated in day schools.....	5,970	5,082
Number of boarding-schools .....	52	49
Number of day schools .....	107	119
Number of children attending school one or more months during the year, male, 3,965, female, 3,228 .....	7,193	6,229
Number of children among the five civilized tribes attending school during the year.....	6,250	5,993

In the last report of the Indian Office an account was given of the plan of Indian education initiated at Hampton, Va. The progress of the children sent to Hampton last year has been very satisfactory. They have learned as readily as could have been expected, and the success attending the experiment has led to the establishment of a training school of the same kind at Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa., under the immediate charge of Lieut. R. H. Pratt, U. S. A. He has now in full operation a school consisting of 158 Indian children of both sexes, three-fourths of whom are boys. These children have been taken in large numbers from the Sioux at Rosebud, Pine Ridge and other agencies on the Missouri River, and from all the tribes in the Indian Territory except the civilized Indians.

Carlisle is pleasantly situated in the Cumberland Valley. The soil is fertile and the climate healthy, and not at all subject to malaria. In the grounds surrounding the barracks a large amount of gardening can be done advantageously. The buildings are comparatively new brick buildings, in a good state of preservation, and furnish pleasant and commodious quarters for those already there, with a capacity to provide accommodations for at least four hundred more children. It is hoped that Congress will make further provision by which the number of pupils at this school may be largely increased.

These children have been very carefully selected, having undergone the same sort of examination by a surgeon to which apprentices for the Navy are subjected, and only healthy ones have been accepted. The pupils will not only be taught the ordinary branches of an English education, but will also be instructed in all the useful arts essential in providing for the every-day wants of man. The civilizing influence of these schools established at the East is very much greater than that of like schools in the Indian country. All the children are expected to write weekly to their homes, and the interest of the parents in the progress and welfare of the children under the care of the government is at least equal to the interest that white people take in their children.

In addition to the scholars at the Carlisle training school, the number during the coming year at Hampton will be increased to about sixty-



five. Benevolent persons all over the country are taking a deep interest in both of these schools, and are contributing money to promote the improvement of the pupils, by furnishing articles that cannot be supplied and paid for under government regulations.

From the statements herein made it will be seen that the work of education among Indians has been largely increased, and the facilities now enjoyed will tend very materially to promote the work of Indian civilization. The interest of the Indian chiefs and ruling men in these educational movements is very great. They have already expressed a desire to send school committees from their tribes to see and report upon the progress and treatment of their children in the government schools, and permission to come east for that purpose will be granted to a limited number. The older Indians, and those experienced in the affairs of the tribes, feel keenly the want of education, and as a rule have favored all endeavors to educate their children, and it is a rare thing to find an Indian so benighted as not to desire to have his children taught to read and write in the English language.

Arrangements are now in progress for opening a school similar to the Carlisle school at Forest Grove, Oregon, for the education of Indian children on the Pacific coast.

#### INDIAN FREIGHTING.

In the month of July, 1877, it was proposed to the Sioux chiefs Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, in a council held with them at their old agencies in Dakota, that they should begin the work of their own civilization by hauling their annuity goods and supplies from the Missouri River to the new locations to which they were about to remove, distant respectively 90 and 183 miles westward from the river. The Indians promised that, whenever the government should furnish them with the means of transportation, they would willingly embark in the enterprise. Owing to the impending removal of the Indians and the lateness of the season, it was decided, after due deliberation, to defer putting the plan into execution until after the removal should have been accomplished and sufficient supplies should have been transported to the new locations to carry the Indians through the first winter. The department did not wish to incur the risk of making a trial of what was looked upon as an experiment, when any failure might deprive the Indians of sufficient food and shelter to enable them to withstand the rigors of a Dakota winter.

As related in my last report, a serious combination was made by contractors to take advantage of what was supposed to be the necessities of the government in the hope of thereby extorting exorbitant rates for the carrying of supplies from the Missouri to the two agencies. After advertising twice successively for bids for transportation without obtaining reasonable proposals, it was determined to purchase four hundred and twelve wagons and six hundred sets of double harness, and to hire the