

tentive hearers. Yet there are many drawbacks to this mode of teaching. The volumes are hieroglyphic. Their perusal imparts no conception of a written alphabet, of arithmetic, of secular history, of current events, or of literature properly so-called. The world that lies outside of personal observation is unknown to the ordinary Micmac.

Last year the erection of a small, yet comfortable and sufficiently commodious, school-house was begun in the Indian Village at Boat Harbor, and with the assistance received from your Department, was this year fairly finished. A young lady (Miss Jollymore) whose attainments easily procured her a first-class license at the provincial examinations, and whose many good qualities otherwise render her services as teacher particularly valuable, undertook to open school in the new building. Her labors so far, have been very successful. I base great hopes on this. Parents and children seem equally anxious to second her efforts; and, if the experiment results (and I have little doubt it will) as beneficially as we all anticipate, the advantage to the race must be signal. Were nothing to be gained but the means of passing the long winter evenings, in listening to the harmless tales of adventure in which the poor children of the forest delight, the amelioration, in the monotonous character of their existence, would be worth striving for. But I anticipate more; I look forward to the time when the young Indian may become an accountant, a clerk, perhaps the chief clerk of a business firm; for no one is more scrupulously honest in his dealings, or more attached to the employer who does fairly by him.

I commend their school, the first in this district, to the favorable consideration of the Department.

In treating with Indians, and especially in dispensing to them the public grants, the agent has sometimes difficulties of a peculiar nature that, perhaps, it would be well to mention here. Vouchers for the distribution of blankets in the fall, and of seed in the spring, are easy enough to be obtained. The chief, the minor captains, and the populace generally meet the agent in solemn conclave, and at an appointed time, and the allotment to each family is defined, an acknowledgment is signed of the amount received. At other seasons, however, sudden cases of illness may occur, or other emergencies may arise, which do not admit of consultation with the higher authorities of Indiandom. The agent must simply take steps to alleviate distress, so urgent in its demands as to forestal all regular methods of procedure. He must make disbursements for which it is often impossible that he can at the time secure regular vouchers. A week later the recipients of Government bounty have moved away from their reserve and have settled somewhere else, and likely, as not, will be absent for six or twelve months. There can be no regular remedy: a cast-iron process will not always suffice for Micmac necessities.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. MACDONALD.

DISTRICT No. 9, ANTIGONISH, N.S.,  
27th September, 1880.

The Honorable

The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs,  
Ottawa.

SIR,—The Indians of this agency are so conservative in their ways and habits that the report of one year must differ but little from those of preceding ones.

It can be seen by the tabular statement, that during the past year a number of dwelling-houses has been built. These houses are small, but, according to their own ideas, comfortable. They are occupied, however, during only a part of the year, as some of the owners go away during the fishing season, and in many cases, during the winter months, encamp in the woods of the neighboring districts where they can more easily procure materials for cooping and basket works.