

It seems to the Department that the first thing to be determined is as to whether or not the cultivation of the soil in the district can be prosecuted with any reasonable prospect of success. The Department has always laid great stress upon agriculture as the strongest factor for the reclamation and civilizing of the aboriginal Indian, and as affording the most stable and permanent source of his maintenance, and in so far as the former is concerned has at the earliest stages of development insisted upon farming irrespective of the attendant success, being used as a medium for the inculcation of habits of industry. When, however, these habits have been acquired and Indians can find other reliable methods of providing for their wants, it is not apparent what good end is served by insisting upon the practice of husbandry, where climatic or other causes exclude expectation of success.

On this principle as you are aware, agriculture was largely abandoned in Treaty No. 7, although it may be to an extent revived through irrigation.

It is somewhat difficult to understand from the Inspector's report to what extent he thinks it advisable to encourage the Indians concerned to cultivate the soil, but if it be worth while engaging in the industry at all it must be worth while to do so in a very different way than has so far been practiced, and whatever may be said as to cereals, there can be no question as to the advisability of raising roots and vegetables, the neglect of which the Department deems decidedly discreditable to the management.

The care of live stock by individual holders, already referred to incidentally, is certainly encouraging as also the marked improvement noticed in some of the stables.

As to the Government herd the decided improvement in the method of herding would indicate that the Agent has made an honest effort to remedy the system which was found such serious fault with at the immediately preceding inspection.

The losses however, in this herd or at any rate the majority of them are unhesitatingly ascribed to bad wintering,

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