

*Coutcheeching.*

I started for this reserve in the morning of the 3rd of July, and arrived in the evening at the Indian village overlooking a beautiful bay lying a couple of miles northward of the agency. The chief, Mickisese (The Little Eagle) complained that a number of families belonging to his band never received any agricultural implements, but upon further enquiry I was informed that those families were formed by marriages since date of treaty, and that the agent did not consider himself justified in giving them any of those articles; but if this interpretation of the conditions of the different treaties be the correct one, and if only the families existing at the dates of the various treaties are entitled to the different articles enumerated therein, there is considerable lack of uniformity in the distribution of the same, for invariably all members of the different bands are indiscriminately supplied everywhere throughout this superintendency with twine and ammunition, gratuities in provisions during payments, seed grain and potatoes for sowing and planting their gardens whereas generally no exceptions of this description are made in the distributions of hoes, axes, spades, scythes, ploughs or harrows. The chief, on behalf of the band, asked that nails, hinges, doors, windows, &c., might be supplied them, but I informed him that they must procure those articles themselves, as such had not been promised them. He asked that they might be permitted to sell the surplus of hay secured, and also a surplus of the products of their farms, as the proceeds of the same would enable them to obtain many indispensable necessaries. He further stated that owing to these restrictions he found it impossible to persuade his young men to engage in agricultural pursuits. This band promised to build a school-house and have it ready next year, provided the Government would give the usual assistance in completing it, and furnish them with a teacher. This I informed them would assuredly be done, as soon as possible after they performed their part of it. They were very glad to hear that in future their annuities were to be given them on their reserve, and they want Gobay to be likewise paid on his own reserve, and not be allowed to trespass on theirs, by camping and cutting firewood on it. The greater portion of this reserve is rocky, but skirting along the bay where their gardens are, the soil being a rich clayey loam is very productive. The village is composed of seventeen houses and five stables. Last season twenty-two acres were under cultivation. They have three horses and seven head of cattle. In 1877 the number of Indians belonging to this band according to the pay-sheets was 66, whereas this year the number of annuitants is 124, and increase of 58, which cannot be accounted for otherwise than by a number of families having been transferred from other bands. I arrived at the agency at Coutcheeching on the 4th of July, but having got badly poisoned with ivy, I was obliged to remain there, under treatment, for several days. Mr. Pither was away from home, having gone to Winnipeg for the annuities required for the payment of the Indians of his district. He, however, very properly left with Mrs. Pither the keys of his office and storehouse in order that I might be able to inspect his books, and the supplies on hand. His office, which is kept in a very neat and orderly manner is supplied with six chairs, a table, desk and stove. His books are correctly kept, and his correspondence properly attended to, but his tabular statement is incomplete, nine columns being imperfectly filled out, and seventeen left blank. In numerous instances, the representatives of families receiving annuities are not properly designated on his pay-sheets in the left hand columns, but are frequently entered in those intended for remarks, on the right hand side of the page. The parties to whom payments were made either for themselves or for others they represented, are not mentioned in the columns for remarks, so that it is impossible to determine, should the question arise, the individuals to whom payments were made. It is very essential in detecting irregularities in the payments of the "other persons" mentioned on the pay-sheets, that the most definite information should be given in the columns for remarks, as to the families to which they formerly belonged, and to whom their annuities were previously paid. There are 319 axes, 67 hoes, 48 spades, 48 scythes, 5 ploughs, 5 harrows, 1 crosscut saw, 1 pit saw, 2 grindstones,