

work. When there has been a longer interval than usual between my visits the chief, and others have spoken to me of it, and expressed the hope that I would not discontinue them. I find that on all the reserves from which we draw our pupils, they are pleased to have our visits, as indicating our continued interest in them. I would like to be able to do more visiting than I can at present.

A party of us from the school drove out to the Birdtail Sioux reserve this week, and it was very cheering to us to drive through their large and splendid fields of wheat, which promise a large yield. They have, too, a great many acres of summer-fallow, and it is well ploughed, and looks like a garden.

You asked me for some description of the Indian Sun Dance :—The Indians—that I have met with—believe that there is one God over all, but that to his white children he gave a book (the Bible) to teach them how they are to serve Him, while to his red children he gave no book, but by visions, or dreams that come to certain Indians in each band, he makes known his will towards them. Thus it is given by dreams to a certain Indian, that for a number of years he is to have the conduct of the sun dance, and he becomes the master of ceremonies. During the winter or summer preceding the dance some of the Indians have dreams that indicate that by going through some of the sun-dance ordeals, either the torture, or fasting, or dancing ordeal, he or some member of his family will get relief from some sickness they may have, or they will earn pardon for some past misdeeds. A date is fixed upon for holding the dance, and word is sent to the other reserves, and a week before the time the visitors begin to arrive. This interval is spent in horse-racing, gambling, etc. A sort of pavilion made of long poles is erected, and inside this skeleton of a building the dance is held. The three principal features of the recent Lizard Point dance were: fasting, dancing, and the torture. To a number it was revealed by dream that they should fast, and for three days and three nights they neither ate nor drank, and kept continually blowing on a little whistle, such as boys are fond of making from the branches of a certain kind of bush. The dancers shuffled their feet in a clumsy sort of way, keeping time to the beating of a large drum. This was kept up for perhaps twenty minutes at a time, with a breathing space of one or two minutes between each dance. The same dancers continued during the three days and three nights, and without breaking their fast. The torture consists in pinching up the skin on each shoulder in front; through this double fold of skin a hole is pierced, and a stick run through the two holes, to either end of this stick