

necessary to secure the hay field contiguous, and, although it took rather more land than we need, I thought it better he should also include the coal mine.

FORT MACLEOD, 30th May, 1881.

SIR,—I have the honor to inform you that I have visited the Piegan reservation; it is favorably situated upon Old Man's River, with a fair amount of timber for fuel and fencing purposes; building timber is procured further up the river.

As yet the farming of the Indians has been principally done on the north-west side of the river, where are the house and buildings of the Farming Inspector.

The soil is light with a gravel subsoil; the high bench lands although, too, very light soil, will, I think, be found better suited for farming than the valley, and subsequent breaking of land will be done there.

The Indians have settled well to work, having built 65 to 70 houses in communities forming four villages; their land broken is all fenced and planted, and they appear very contented; the last ration list contains 914 souls.

The Indian crop in the aggregate consists of 46 acres of potatoes, 19 acres of barley, 8 acres oats, 23 acres turnips, and 5 acres of gardens.

The Indians are pagans, and practice polygamy. The Rev. Mr. McCay, C. E., has a house built among them, but as yet has not, I am informed, remained with them long at a time; he talks of building a school-house upon the reservation.

These Indians have large numbers of horses. I was pleased to hear that many had provided themselves with cooking stoves by exchanging horses for them. The large number of horses owned by these Plain Indians is their greatest drawback in keeping cattle. The horses are little, if any, good for any purpose, excepting to carry an Indian, and they keep the pasture, for a couple of miles surrounding their camp or settlement, eaten bare.

The cattle they had given them by the Government wintered well as to condition, but the Instructor reports many missing—some few may have gone back to the herd; straggling Indians from Fort Macleod killed some, two being found and partly taken away a few days before my visit, and two Indians are now serving out a sentence, being caught red-handed a few weeks previous. The cattle I saw looked very well, they have a fair average of spring calves. The Indians are milking some of their cows which is a little hard upon the calves, as they do not receive a fair share of the milk.

#### *Home Farm.*

This farm, from produce of last year's crop, furnished all the seed required to seed it this year, and the reservation, excepting the turnip and garden seeds; also, was able to turn over to Mr. Bruce, for the supply farm, seventy-five bushels of barley for seed; 450 bushels turnips were rationed to the Indians during the winter that were grown here. It is planted this year with seven acres of potatoes, nineteen acres barley, sixteen acres oats, six acres turnips, half an acre of a garden.

The men employed upon this farm and reservation are:—

Kettles, Farming Instructor.....	\$60 83	per month.
Greer, 1st Assistant (since left).....	35 00	"
Chrisler, Farm Laborer.....	35 00	"
Armstrong, Farm Laborer.....	35 00	"
Begg, Cook .....	35 00	"

Unlike in the north, where the cook does a great deal of other work, returning a little earlier from work at noon and at night in order to prepare the meals, the cooks upon the farms and reservations here and at the saw mills do nothing else, which appears to me to make it a "soft job," where they have so few to cook for and so little to cook; but at present I can see no advantageous way of changing the custom.