

(Translation.)

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,
COUNTY AND DISTRICT OF SAGUENAY,
NOTRE-DAME BETHSIAMITS,
20th September, 1880.

To the Honorable
The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honor, as Superintendent of the Montagnais Indians, to submit for your information a tabular statement with my report, containing information collected by me, the result of observations made during my visit amongst the different bands under my care, who live at Grande Romaine, Natashquan, Mingan, Seven Islands, Godbout, Escoumains, and the Reserve of Notre-Dame Betsiamits.

GRAND ROMAINE.

I met with 31 families, 3 widows with children, 1 orphan girl and 2 orphan boys, 13 families whom I did not see were then in the woods, the total number are estimated at 171 souls; next year I hope to give you a correct census, as I know they will be glad to meet their agent.

Charlie Lafontaine is Grand Chief; they all live in wigwams of birch bark; the result of the hunt was small last winter, but there is not much poverty, those that are better off assist the poor. I had no annuity to distribute amongst them; they say they would be very glad to receive it like their other brothers.

There was no sickness. There were some cases of liquor having been supplied by a trader of the neighborhood, but as there was no Magistrate on the spot to make him pay a fine, I had to content myself with giving him a good lesson, which I hope will make him more careful in the future; but, unfortunately, other roving traders can supply their wants.

At present Grande Romaine will be the great rendezvous for all the Indians, from St. Augustine to the east of Natashquan. I know that this will be the best place for them on account of the game and seal in the summer,—it is also what they wish.

These Indians are all Catholics: their missionaries will build a chapel next spring. The Hudson's Bay Company intend to establish a store there for the Indians. I am very glad on their account as it will, perhaps, be the means of driving away the traders who demoralize so many of these poor Indians.

I have talked with them and advised them to fish for cod while they are at the sea; they are pleased, and will be disposed to do so; they already have six boats, but they will require lines, hooks, salt, barrels, and a seine for *capelin*, and a wooden building for storing their fish; two herring nets would also be of great assistance; by this means they could live well in the summer. They wish to have the River Grande Romaine to fish for salmon and trout; they ask your Government to be good enough to give it to them, and supply them with nets.

No farming can be done there, not even for potatoes; the soil is only sand and rock, called *plaque*, covered with moss; wood is scarce, and what there is, small and stunted; the spring is late, autumn early, the climate is cold—it freezes every month during the summer, so the settlers on the coast say. At the time of my visit, the 17th and 18th June, ice and snow was still there, and it was very cold.

These Indians complain that the whites wrong them, by preventing them from hunting the seal on the ice in the spring, either by driving them away or ill-treating them, as at the Bay of Manshonache, Point Marier, and at Wattohiakastic to the east of Grande Romaine.

These Indians go a great distance into the woods; they usually arrive here from their hunting grounds about the first of June, and return by the end of July, and then they all go to the woods, old as well as young, widows, &c.