

MANITOBA PENITENTIARY.

STONE FORT,
6th January, 1876.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a despatch dated Ottawa December 23rd, from the Department of Justice desiring me to furnish you with a report on this Penitentiary for the year ended 31st December last.

I have now the honor to report that it affords me very great pleasure to state that the management of the prison during the above period has been most satisfactory.

The conduct of the prisoners throughout has been extremely good. The two Sioux Indians, that have been confined in the prison since 1873, are now among the best conducted convicts. For some time after their confinement they were most troublesome, one of them made two attempts at escape, and the other one attempt previous to this year. They are now, I am glad to say, promoted, one to the position of orderly of a ward, and the other is working in the prison shoe shop. Both have learned to speak the English language, and understand perfectly all orders and instructions given to them. I may state that a short time since, one of them, "Ma-ha-ha alias Frighten" appeared before me and stated that he wished to work like the white man, and when he got out of prison he intended seeking employment instead of going back to his band, where he would have frequently to steal to obtain a living.

On the 21st March a fire was discovered in the steward and storekeeper's store-room. It had considerable headway when observed. Through the activity and diligence of the turnkeys and first-class convicts it was soon put out.

I had foreseen the danger of fire, and consequently had made every arrangement possible in case a fire should occur. In the different wards I have vats that contain upwards of 600 gallons of water, and in the boiler in the prison yard upward of 300 gallons; with such a quantity of water it is difficult for a fire to make very great headway, as long as proper diligence is exhibited by the turnkeys and guards. I have since procured two Babcock fire extinguishers.

In May last finding among the convicts one who could repair boots and shoes, although not a bootmaker by calling, I decided to open a prison shoe shop on a small scale, and I am pleased to inform you that it has succeeded beyond my expectations. Formerly I was obliged to send all my boots to Winnipeg for repairs; it was consequently very expensive. The opening and successful operations of the prison shoe shop has therefore greatly reduced the expenditure under this head; I have now three convicts employed at this work.

I am sorry to again inform you that the prison garden was entirely destroyed by the ravages of the grasshoppers.

I regret to report the escape of convict No. 21, named Daniels, on the 18th September, while at work with other convicts upon a building outside the walls; the guard's attention was drawn to one of the convicts at work on the roof that was not working according to instructions given. The guard could not make him understand how the work should be done from his position on the ground, and forgetting for the moment, went on the roof and explained to the convict working there what to do. On returning to his post he at once missed Daniels. He at once gave the alarm and all diligence was used to re-capture the runaway, and the search was continued for eleven days, but it proved fruitless. Daniels being a native of this country and knowing the woods thoroughly, succeeded in evading those in search of him.