

During the time they are in the woods they are not exposed to demoralization, nor to contagious disease.

The Indians are by nature nomadic. Certain posts seem to have grown less, while others have increased, but this only by the change of some families who remove from place to place. The Montagnais are a roving tribe.

It is impossible for me to give a statement of the quantity of furs taken, as the Indians sell the greater part of them to the traders. Perhaps I may be able to give you an idea next year.

At present the Indians are all in the woods with the necessaries for the winter, that is, all those who can hunt.

I took it upon myself to take to Beauport Asylum, at Quebec, an old Montagnais woman who was crazy and out of her mind. I was not able to watch her here, and I feared that the Indians would abandon her. At the same time I took an orphan girl to the Convent of the Sacred Heart at St. Sauveur de Quebec, that the good Sisters might keep her.

I hope that your Government will give me something for these expenses.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

L. F. BOUCHER,
Indian Superintendent.

BEAR RIVER, 11th September, 1880.

The Honorable

The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honor to submit, for the information of the Indian Department, the following report and tabular statement:—

I found the year ending 30th June, 1880, one of the hardest I have ever known; the low price of furs, and also porpoise oil, I suppose, had something to do in making the times hard, as hunting and killing porpoise are the two principal industries that the Indians of my agency engage in, and when the price of oil and fur are good, there are many that can really make a good living; but as the Indians never lay by a dollar, they are sure to be in trouble the first approach of hard times. I had an unusually large number of aged and helpless to care for last winter. The way I managed this was to allow a certain amount weekly to families that would board them; by this means I managed to do a great deal of good; these old people always very grateful for help when it is so much needed; quite a number of them died during the winter. I cannot report any marked improvement in farming. The Micmac was never intended for a systematic farmer; those that plant, do so in small patches, raising barley enough to get them through the winter; potatoes are the only thing raised to amount to much.

The reserves are very rough, almost covered with granite; there is excellent grazing ground on the reserve which the Indians hire annually to the white people; this, I consider, is the best use we can make of it at present.

I can see a marked change in the children that attend school; when these attain to the years of man and womanhood, we may reasonably expect improvements that we look for in vain at the present time.

The moral character of the Indians, as a general thing, is quite as good as can be expected, when the manner in which they are brought up is considered. I regret to say that, notwithstanding the stringency of the liquor law, there are in many cases a too free use of ardent spirits, which always has an immoral tendency.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN HARLOW,
Indian Agent.