

27.19

Indian

Sarnia 3rd March 1881

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of
 Dep^t. Letter (No. 26,042) dated 22nd Jan^y '81 enclosing
 "A Copy of a Petition from Certain inhabitants of the
 "Township of Sarnia, praying for the reasons given therein,
 "that the land not occupied or used by the Indians on
 "the Reserve should be cleared, - Cleared of weeds and improved
 "by granting leases or otherwise &c. - And asking from
 "me an early report on the subject - and in such
 "Report to state "What number of Acres might be, in
 "your Opinion, leased for the benefit of the Indians; and
 "what rental per Acre should be obtained for the same;
 "Whether the Indians would Consent to such leases being
 "issued - &c.

In reply I beg to say that I
 believe, as things are with the Indians on this Reserve,
 it would be better if they would Consent to lease or sell
 One half, or even two thirds, of their whole Reserve, as
 they seem determined not to utilize it themselves.
 It is perfectly surprising to find strong, active, and
 to some extent, intelligent Indians, who can and do
 work well when hired by white men, so utterly indifferent
 in regard to doing any thing that would improve their
 farms, and benefit themselves and their families.
 But so it is; there are many strong, active Indians
 who with an allotment of 80 Acres, Content themselves
 with

The Honorable

The Sup^t. Gen^l. of Indian Affairs

Ottawa