

ASSABASKASING AGENCY, LAKE OF THE WOODS—TREATY No. 3,
KEEWATIN, 13th August, 1883.

The Right Honorable
The Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honor to transmit the following Report and tabular statement connected with the Indians of this Agency, for the year ended 30th June, 1883. I also enclose herewith an account of agricultural implements, seeds and provisions on hand, and an account of office furniture of this Agency.

An epidemic of measles appeared in the Lake of the Woods district during the last summer, which carried off a number of children; the small-pox also made its appearance during the last winter in two places: first, near Rat Portage, where it only broke out among the white people and, second, at Rainy River, between Manito Rapids and Fort Frances, where it carried off some Indians belonging to the Fort Frances Agency, but did not reach any of the Indians belonging to this Agency, otherwise, excepting those affected with the secondary venereal disease, the Indians of this Agency have been healthy; during the year there have been thirty-eight births and forty deaths, of which twenty-five were of children.

The crops of last fall at the Lake of the Woods, Rat Portage and Islington, were not so good as might have been expected. The failure was caused by the dryness of the season, and in many places at the Lake of the Woods the potato bug ate up all the potato crop. The Indian corn was quite a failure, and what grew did not come to maturity. The Indians secured in pits last fall as much of their small crop of potatoes as they thought would be enough for seed purposes for this year's planting; but the severe cold of last winter destroyed more or less of the seed, which was only found out when the pits were opened after the ground was thawed in the spring; in consequence of this the Indians did not plant so much as they did last year, and for the want of Indian corn seed a great deal of the broken land is lying idle and I fear that this year the crops will be a general failure.

The two bands of Shoal Lake Indians had a good crop of potatoes, but the Indian corn was quite a failure. These two bands had plenty of potatoes for seed for this year's planting, but had very little Indian corn for planting purposes.

The hay crop was good throughout this Agency. The Indians secured enough for the use of their cattle during the winter.

The fisheries of last fall were not so good as in years before.

The wild rice crop was a failure in the Lake of the Woods and the Indians felt the want of it during winter. In Shoal Lake, and in the lakes to the north of that lake, the rice crop was good and the Shoal Lake Indians laid up a good store for their winter's use.

All the bands of Indians within this Agency complain of the want of good strong grubbing hoes, the only tool that is fit for breaking new wooded land for the plough, and they have desired me to ask the Department to supply them, as a favor, with some hoes. They say that they understood that each family cultivating land was to receive two hoes; that new rising families were to be included, and the new rising families are those that are most in need of hoes.

The annuity supplies for the Indians of this Agency this year were delivered in good time at each place of payment, in good condition, and, as far as my judgment goes, appeared to be of the best quality.

I am sorry to have to report again that the sale of intoxicating liquor does not diminish.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. McPHERSON,

Indian Agent.