

1878

Report of the Agent of the Penobscot Tribe of Indians

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Indian Agent, State of Maine

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REPORT OF THE AGENT

OF THE

PENOBSCOT TRIBE OF INDIANS,

FOR THE YEAR

1878.

AUGUSTA:

SPRAGUE, OWEN & NASH, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1878.

REPORT.

To the Honorable Governor and Council of Maine:

Agreeably to the laws requiring the Agent for the Penobscot tribe of Indians to make yearly report of the moral, social and physical condition of that tribe, and also an account of the receipts and expenditures of money in their behalf, the following is respectfully submitted as such report for the year 1878:

RECEIPTS.

April.....	By warrant	\$1,000 00
June	“	2,000 00
July.....	“	1,000 00
October	“	3,000 00
December...	“ to balance.....	1,724 05
	By amount from appropriation for annuity.....	391 50
	“ received of F. Gilman, rent of 5 islands.....	15 00
	“ received of W. H. Chesley, rent of Brown islands.....	16 00
	“ received for grass sold.....	5 00
		\$9,151 55

This has been expended under the several treaties, laws and resolves of this State in behalf of the tribe, for the following general purposes, viz:

For agricultural purposes, per resolve	-	\$800 00
bounty on crops, “	-	400 00
annuity, “	-	1,800 00
superintending school committees of Oldtown, Greenbush and Lincoln, per resolve.....	-	450 00
repairs of chapel on Indian island, per resolve.....	-	144 35
repairs of schoolhouse on Mattanawcook island, per resolve.....	-	50 00
salaries of superintendents of farming, per resolve...	-	150 00
Susup Socklexis, salary as Governor, per resolve.....	-	50 00
Sockbesin Swassian, salary as Lt. Governor, per resolve,	-	50 00
Rev. M. C. O'Brien, salary as Priest, per resolve.....	-	100 00
salary of Agent, per resolve.....	-	300 00
For interest on trust fund as follows, viz:		
spring dividend.....	\$694 86	
support of poor, aged, infirm and sick	2,075 28	
medicine and medical attendance.....	389 22	

For funeral expenses.....	\$110 27	
wood for tribe.....	809 83	
distribution of clothing, widows, children and aged..	254 36	
agricultural purposes in excess of appropriation.....	103 42	
bounty on crops in excess of appropriation.....	130 00	
repairs on chapel " "	166 35	
incidental expenses.....	123 61	
		\$4,857 20
		<u>\$9,151 55</u>

The items composing these general charges are herewith submitted in the accompanying vouchers. Not included in the above named warrants, are the rentals from leases of the tribe's shores for the year 1877.

Amount unexpended from rents accruing in 1876, - - -	\$191 91
“ of rents accruing in 1877, - - - - -	4,770 00
	<u>\$4,961 91</u>

From this fund have been paid, under the requirements of the resolve of the Legislature of 1873, the special appropriations for the year 1877, to wit :

To S. S. Committee of Oldtown, for support of school on Oldtown island, 1877, - - - - -	\$250 00
To S. S. Committee of Greenbush, for support of school on Olamon island, 1877, - - - - -	100 00
To S. S. Committee of Lincoln, for support of school on Mattanawcook island, 1877, - - - - -	100 00
To Rev. M. C. O'Brien, salary as Priest, - - - - -	50 00
To Rev. John Duddy, salary as Priest, - - - - -	50 00
To Stephen Stanislaus, salary as Governor, 1877, - - - - -	50 00
To Saul Neptune, salary as Lt. Governor, 1877, - - - - -	30 00
To members of the tribe, as required by chapter 267, laws 1873, as per account marked "H," - - - - -	4,326 00
Leaving balance to be added to fund of 1878, for distribution, - - - - -	5 91
	<u>\$4,961 91</u>

Prior to 1873, the specific appropriations named above, were paid from the State funds. Since that time they have been paid from the proceeds of shore rents, in accordance with the resolve of that year. The Legislature of 1878, taking into consideration the fact that the shore rents must produce a much smaller amount than in previous years, and that the tribe should have the full benefit of the income

derived from rental of their own property, provided for the payment of the specific appropriations in same manner as before the passage of resolve of 1873, and as the latter course was in better accordance with the treaty stipulations.

The census of the tribe as taken by the Superintending School Committee of Oldtown, January, 1878, shows their number to be four hundred and fifty.

Annual election was held Wednesday, November 6th, 1878, at which Stephen Stanislaus was elected Governor, Saul Neptune Lieutenant Governor, and Sabattis Dana delegate to the Legislature of 1879.

Public schools have been taught during the year at all the places designated in the act making the appropriations for their support. In some of them, the money has been fully expended; in the others, arrangements have been made, the schools being now in operation, which will consume the entire fund before spring. The selection of teachers and the general supervision and management of the schools have been peculiarly fortunate, and satisfactory to pupils and parents. The day school on Oldtown island averages nearly fifty scholars. The present teacher of that school is a member of the community of Sisters of Mercy, lately established on the island, and was formerly engaged in teaching in Manchester. From her experience and natural tastes she is well qualified to instruct and arouse the interest and ambition of her pupils. Besides the branches usually taught in these public schools, there have been introduced limited instruction in singing, gymnastic and other exercises, which have tended to promote promptness and regularity in attendance at school. The religious hymns, as sung by the scholars, presents already a very creditable performance. The total and average number of scholars under her careful and judicious exertions has been increased, and in the opinion at least of the older members of the tribe, more progress has been made by the school during the short time it has been under her charge, than for any previous year since its establishment.

The moral and social condition of the portion of the tribe

residing at Oldtown has been notably improved during the past year, owing largely to the special effort put forth in their behalf by the Priest, Father O'Brien, residing in Oldtown village, who has the immediate religious charge of the tribe, and especially is this noticeable in the cause of temperance. By his increased activity about one hundred and twenty-five of the tribe have been induced to sign the pledge to abstain from the use of all intoxicating liquors for one year, with the expectation that it is to be then signed for another year. I have learned of but a very few violations of this pledge.

Bishop Healy of Portland, co-operating with Father O'Brien, desirous of promoting the moral welfare of the Indians, last summer established a community of Sisters of Mercy on Oldtown island, leasing and furnishing a house for them, and providing for their support, without soliciting any aid from the tribe or the State. They, however, requested in aid of their efforts for the benefit of the tribe, that some member of that community should be employed as teacher, to the extent of the balance of the school fund remaining unexpended at the time of their beginning to take such active measures for the improvement of the condition of the Indians, which was about the middle of September. This request was granted by direction of the Superintending School Committee of Oldtown, who have sole direction of the school under the law, and who have since continued to exercise their usual careful supervision over its welfare and conduct. The time and attention of the Sisters is entirely devoted to ministering to the wants of the tribe, attending to the sick, visiting at their houses, inculcating principles of morality, industry and economy, and encouraging them in the exercise of such virtues, and instructing them in sewing and in other domestic duties. Under their supervision a class of young women, married and single, has been formed, who occupy the time of their regular meetings in exercises of reading, singing, sewing and other useful employments.

An evening school has been established and taught by them, for young men whose occupations or inclinations would

prevent their attendance upon the usual school; its number in attendance is frequently twenty-five. It is the design and intention of the Sisters to extend their labors in this direction throughout ten months of each year. The establishment of this community, and the entering upon its beneficiary duties, was regarded as an experiment, which thus far has been deemed a success, and the result satisfactory; but whether after the novelty shall have worn off such results will be continuous and permanent, or whether it can be maintained without material aid from the State, are questions which the future must determine. Certainly the objects in view of this establishment are laudable, and as such should receive the cordial assistance of all well-wishers of their race. From present appearances the discontinuance of its operations would be detrimental to the best interests of the tribe. It would be very gratifying to the majority of the tribe, if the State should increase the school fund, and put it in charge of their resident Priest, or at least join him with the Committee in its disbursement and management of the schools.

The unexpended appropriations of 1877 being \$144.35, was again appropriated by the Legislature of 1878 for making repairs on the chapel on Oldtown island. It was then the intention to re-plaster the audience room, as the plastering had become badly cracked, and in places fallen off or in danger of falling off, and doing injury to the worshippers. Upon consultation it was deemed best to first repair the foundation, the defective construction of which had occasioned the damage to the plastering. Many of the tribe represented that when the foundation was to be repaired, it should be done with a view of making such alterations or additions as would remedy some inconveniences of the church, and that the tribe would by voluntary contributions in addition to the appropriation defray the cost of the desired alterations. Father O'Brien thereupon employed and paid an architect to furnish plans and specifications for a vestibule, and a suitable chancel and sacristy in the rear of the church. Upon submitting these plans for an estimate of the probable

cost, I found that it would exceed the amount that could be conveniently raised by subscription. An excavation was then made under the entire building, to the depth of about six feet, being deep enough to accommodate a furnace and fuel, or a room for any other desirable purpose. A substantial stone wall was laid up, pointed with cement, the granite underpinning reset, the decayed sills and sleepers replaced with sound timber, cedar posts put in for interior supports, and the basement of the vestry rooms adjoining the chapel rebuilt. The building is now upon firm foundation, not subject to the action of frost, and in good condition for replastering. Upon ascertaining that there would be funds unexpended at the close of the year, in conformity to the expressed wish of the tribe, I have purchased windows to make the change in the chapel, as suggested in the report of last year, by replacing three on each side with those of modern style. There will still remain of the old style windows two in the front, which will be wholly removed whenever the vestibule can be built. The excess in the cost of these repairs over the amount appropriated has been charged in the general account between the State and tribe.

Nearly all the vacant land on the easterly side of Oldtown island has been lotted out and assigned during the past year. On most of these lots clearings have been made, more or less, on some quite extensive, with a view of laying it down to grass as early as practicable. Future applications for lots will have to be supplied by survey and assignments from the public farm on Orson island, under the authority granted by the last Legislature.

Low wages, and continued depreciation in price of baskets, and other wares usually made by the tribe, and decreasing demand for their labor, has prevailed during the year, yet many of the Indians have made improvements in their dwellings, and have erected several new buildings, and generally have devoted more labor and attention to agricultural pursuits. More land than usual has been cultivated, and this, with the increased care and a favorable season, has produced

harvests more abundant than is generally expected. To this unexpected and favorable change in their employment, and its attendant success, is to be attributed the excess of the expenditures for agricultural purposes and bounties on crops over the amount of the appropriations for those purposes. I would here cite in particular an instance of the fact of such increase, the case of Stephen Stanislaus, an Indian living on Mattanawcook island, who received for bounty on crops alone the sum of \$40.50. Seed and plowing have been supplied to seventy-eight members at Oldtown, eighteen at Greenbush, and sixteen at Lincoln. Several have planted this year their portion on the public farm.

Leases of Orson island shores, beginning at the south line of the public farm, extending round the north and east side of the island to the head of the Cook, so called, expired March 10th last. They yielded an annual rental of \$585. On the 15th of the same month they were leased for the year 1878, for \$175.25. On the 15th of April a lease for one year, from January 1, 1878, was made of the east side of "White Squaw's Sons" island, so called, from the boom house to the head of the island; also for same time, the east side of Jackson island, so called, for \$50. Leases now yielding about \$3,000 annually will expire January 1, 1879; others yielding nearly \$1,200 will expire on the January following. It cannot be expected, under the present severe depression of the lumber business, that these leases can be renewed on terms so advantageous to the tribe, and in making the various appropriations this diminution of the resources of the tribe must be taken into consideration.

GEORGE F. DILLINGHAM,

Agent Penobscot Indians.