

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I herewith submit to the committee the information I gathered during the months of July, August, and September last. In accordance with the plan of the committee, dividing up the labor among its several members, I arrived in California the last of June, and in a few days after my arrival, in company with Mr. Maltby, the superintendent of Indian affairs for the State, I left San Francisco to visit the different Indian reservations, and by the last of August had been upon all the reservations in the State, and during the tour I made such observations and obtained such facts as time and circumstances would allow.

At Crescent City, in the northern part of the State, I parted with Mr. Maltby. He returned to San Francisco, re-visiting the Hoopa Valley reservation on his return, to re-appraise with the agent there and the United States surveyor the property of the settlers in that valley, that, with their approval, the government might purchase it for reservation purposes. I continued my journey north to the city of Portland, in the State of Oregon, for the purpose of meeting and conferring with Senator Nesmith, with whose labors mine were intimately associated on the Pacific coast; but I found, on my arrival in Portland, he had left for the eastern part of his State and the Territory of Idaho to examine into the condition of reservations there. I had yet to go into the State of Nevada, before returning to the city of Washington; so I did not remain in Portland, but went by first steamer to San Francisco. From San Francisco, by steamer, railroad, stage and riding horseback, I made my way to Fort Churchill, in the State of Nevada. This is a central point midway between the only two reservations in the State. Here I found some of our volunteers stationed, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel A. E. Hooker, who kindly offered his services to aid me in my labors. He sent men to each of the two reservations, distant from five to seven hours' ride, to notify agents and Indians to come to the fort and confer with me. The soldier sent out to the northern reservation reported on his return that he could not find the agent nor any prominent Indian. All he could learn of the agent was, that he left the reservation some weeks before, and had not been seen upon it since. From the Southern or Walker River reservation, the agent, Franklin Campbell, placed there temporarily by the superintendent, and about twenty Indians came to the fort. The information obtained there, and at Carson City, and herewith submitted, shows but little advance made in Indian affairs in the State of Nevada as yet. The statement of Mr. Warren Wassen, who kindly offered any aid he could give, was taken at Carson City, on my return from Fort Churchill. The superintendent of Indian affairs for the State, Mr. Lockhart, was absent in the city of Washington, as I was informed. I did not see him, and have no doubt the information was correct.

Large sums of money have been appropriated by the government during the last ten or more years, to be expended in the State of California for the purpose of buying the friendship of the Indians and to better their condition. I regret much that such liberal appropriations do not exhibit more fruit and a much better condition of things. The benevolence of the government has far exceeded its beneficence. While the government has been liberal in its appropriations, it has not properly guarded the avenues by which these appropriations must go in order to reach the Indians, nor sufficiently provided for their impartial distribution.

While I am clear in the opinion that there should be some changes in the system of conducting our Indian affairs, and in which changes, I have no doubt, all the members of the committee will agree, it gives me pleasure to be able to speak favorably of the administration of Indian affairs in the State of California at the present time. Mr. Maltby, the superintendent, is a man of strict integrity, is very attentive to his business, and exhibits great interest in the welfare and improvement of the Indians. Whatever he receives from the government for the use and benefit of the Indians he will faithfully disburse among them. The agents are careful, considerate men, and appear to have the confidence of the Indians. While the Indians complained of the articles they received from government, on account of their very poor quality, they had no complaints to make against the agents.

Mr. Franklin Campbell, the acting agent on the Walker River reservation, in Nevada, of whom I have made mention already, was highly spoken of by all, both white men and Indians. I believe he has since been duly appointed agent of that reservation. I saw no one else in Nevada connected with the Indian department except Mr. Parker, at Carson City, who had just been appointed superintendent of the State, but had not yet entered upon the duties of his office. I am not informed beyond the statements herewith submitted what should be done in that State in reference to Indian affairs.

There are now in the State of California four reservations. The government is paying rent for Tule River farm, used for Indian reservation, and also for lands on which Indians are kept at Smith river, called the Smith River reservation; the latter is the most northern in the State, and the former is the most southern. Nome Cult or Round Valley reservation is central in its location in comparison with the others, and at present furnishes facilities for sustaining more Indians with less expense than any other reservation in the State. The government has there several thousand acres of land free of rent charge. There have been some intrusions by way of locations of claims that will doubtless be disposed of without much trouble. This valley is singular in its formation; it is about six miles in length by about four miles in width, and is surrounded by a mountain barrier twenty to thirty miles in extent, and has but a narrow outlet for drainage. The valley is estimated to contain from fourteen to sixteen thousand acres, the larger part of which is fine agricultural land. Under proper culture the valley is capable of sustaining several thousand Indians. I am inclined to the opinion that the government should have the entire control of the whole valley, and that it should be used entirely for reservation purposes; this would require the removal of several settlers now occupying portions of the valley, but by what tenure they hold the lands I am not able to say, or whether they have any title other than possession. The statements I obtained at the reservation gave but little light upon the subject.

Mendocino station is treated as a part of the Nome Cult reservation, having only an employé there. The report of the superintendent shows that the Indians will soon be removed, if not already, to Round Valley, and the station be entirely abandoned. Hoopa Valley reservation is yet in an unsettled condition. If the settlers in the valley accept the appraisement recently made, of which I have spoken, the whole valley unencumbered will belong to the government. The necessity that called for this step is to be deplored. It is quite inaccessible; is surrounded by high mountain barriers, and contains only about fifteen hundred acres of land. The great merit in the movement in making the valley a reservation is to appease a band of several hundred Indians, whose home is in the valley and mountains adjacent, and who have been very troublesome by their frequent depredations made upon the white settlements. If those Indians could have been removed to some reservation already provided, it would have been far better, but it was contended that they could not be successfully removed. Smith River reservation lies upon the coast in the extreme northern part of the State; it is within a few miles of Oregon line. Government pays rent for the lands that make this reservation. The location is a very good one; it is eligible, and the land fertile. Reports herewith submitted explain the condition of things there very fully, together with the statements taken during my visit there. I think, however, that very soon the government can provide for all the Indians in the State on three reservations—one in the north, one central, and one in the south. Tule River farm now used as a reservation, with some lands adjacent, would make a good reservation. The lands are fertile and the location eligible. I have no doubt, however, but there are other locations equally as good in every respect.

Changes can easily be made, and the system of providing for and managing the Indians greatly improved by the observance of good faith towards them. Mental, moral, and religious instruction would be a blessing to them, and appropriations now made and properly expended by the government for this purpose, in my judgment, would be not only just to them, but in time would be a saving financially to the government.