

Indians that I have ever met. He is bright and intelligent, and is anxious for the welfare of his people. The only location that seemed to please him is situated a few miles west of the Ponca Agency, where the Shaskaskia empties into Salt Creek. The land is fertile and the country is a beautiful one, with sufficient timber for all practical purposes. When he gives up the hope of returning to Idaho, I think he will choose the location I have named.

The Nez Percés are very much superior to the Osages and Pawnees in the Indian Territory; they are even brighter than the Poncas, and care should be taken to place them where they will thrive. The extinction of Joseph's title to the lands he held in Idaho will be a matter of great gain to the white settlers in that vicinity, and a reasonable compensation should be made to him for their surrender. It will be borne in mind that Joseph has never made a treaty with the United States and that he has never surrendered to the government the lands he claimed that he owned in Idaho. On that account he should be liberally treated upon his final settlement in the Indian Territory. Sooner or later the remnant of the tribe that went to Canada will return, and it will be proper and expedient to place them with Joseph's band.

The present unhappy condition of these Indians appeals to the sympathy of a very large portion of the American people. I had occasion in my last annual report to say that "Joseph and his followers have shown themselves to be brave men and skillful soldiers, who, with one exception, have observed the rules of civilized warfare, and have not mutilated their dead enemies." These Indians were encroached upon by white settlers on soil they believed to be their own, and when these encroachments became intolerable they were compelled, in their own estimation, to take up arms. Joseph now says that the greatest want of the Indians is a system of law by which controversies between Indians and between Indians and white men, can be settled without appealing to physical force. He says that the want of law is the great source of disorder among Indians. They understand the operation of laws, and if there were any statutes the Indians would be perfectly content to place themselves in the hands of a proper tribunal, and would not take the righting of their wrongs into their own hands, or retaliate, as they now do, without the law. In dealing with such people it is the duty, and I think it will be the pleasure, of the department to see that the fostering hand of the government is extended toward them, and that it gives them not only land on which to live and implements of agriculture, but also wholesome laws for their government.