

42

of a certainty that several children had died from starvation.

How did the Commissioner of Indian Affairs receive the agent's report? Did he endeavor to have the million pounds of beef re-entered in the annuities? By no means. He concluded the reports of Mr. Gallagher were somewhat exaggerated, and gave the matter no further thought.

The winter of 1889 set in, and still there was no evidence that the promises would be fulfilled. Fortunately it was a mild winter, and the Sioux did not suffer more than during the summer. Mr. Sweeny, one of the school-teachers upon Medicine Root Creek, relates that the children under his instruction brought their dinners in little beaded sacks. Out of curiosity he opened several of these "lunch baskets," and examined their contents. None of them contained more than a small piece of jerked beef and a hastily prepared heavy biscuit. No bread, cake, pie, or vegetable was found in any of those examined. He told me further that the children could get very hungry on the colder days, and during recess would dig out chipmunks and prairie dogs, which they cooked and ate without seasoning. The teacher fed many of the hungry little ones at his own home, using/ p.555/ a considerable part of his slender salary in this charitable work.

The report of Agent Gallagher, submitted to the Indian Bureau upon his resignation in favor of Agent Royer, showed a number of cattle smaller by one-third than was reported by Mr. McGillicuddy. It had taken the Sioux ten or twelve years to accumulate the herds of horses and cattle which the documents show were ranging upon the reservation in the summer of 1889. What has become of the five thousand missing steers? Did thieves steal them? The deputy marshals say they have not arrested more than forty cattle-thieves upon the reserve during the past two years, and these offenders never secured more than one or two head before capture. Is it probable the Sioux would deliberately kill the herds of which they were so proud, unless forced to do so by hunger?/p.557/ When the rations were reduced one million pounds they