

1890 which are enclosed on three sides; but the fourth one is left without a door and is entirely unfinished on the inside, which is an eye sore to me and to many of the owners. I think it is possible to make the repairs more substantial, and two good coats of paint should be included in the repairs, which in most cases has not been so.

I think there ought to be enough lumber furnished so that there could at the Agency carpenter shop be made a cupboard, a good kitchen table, a small table for bed room (which also serves as a family sitting room,) and a wash-stand. As none of the houses have closets, there should be a wardrobe put in and a bureau should be issued to every family. I have found but three families who can boast of any table linen, and their stock consisted of only one cloth, which sometimes does duty as an extra shawl, or is used as the family handbag.

I think it possible to teach them the proper use of such articles, and would suggest to the Department that a special lot of goods be issued the families by the Agent at the suggestion of the Station, who would know just where the things were needed and would be used.

It should be understood by the women that whatever was given them was for their daily use, and that the Station had a correct list of them, and would expect them to be ready to bring to her view every article for her inspection. This would insure their being put to use, and make it impossible for them to dispose of them to the white settlers, so many of whom procure clothing and bedding for a mere pittance, that has been issued to the Indians.

The crops this year have been almost a total failure, especially on the hills, partly because of the drought, and largely because they have been so poorly cultivated. I do not see any help for the latter, unless the Department creates several positions for farmers, and fills them with good, competent men, who are adepts at repairing tools, and can by their precepts and persuasive powers induce the men to care for their crops from beginning to end. They are ready to leave everything to the ravages of cattle or fire, to have a day or a week or two of pleasure. This is not true of all, but the major part are not slow to abandon the bird in the hand, etc.

1890 The better class are pleading for a farmer, and claim that they have not been able to raise such crops as they used to, when they had a white man to show and help them.

I earnestly hope the Commissioner will be convinced that the above is a fact, and will grant them the men, for not till then will they make any more advance.

The people are too poor this year to invest much in furniture or bric-a-brac; but some who are buying curtains and other necessary articles with which to embellish their homes. I wish the Department might be induced to furnish them garden and flower seeds, and that the Indians would either have a Santee Indian fair, or else compete with their white neighbors in the county fair. I have been talking the matter over with the Agent and with some of the prominent Indians, and I think we will accomplish something in that line. Everything that can be done to spur them on to industry in Agriculture, and the women to widening their scope of knowledge, should be done, and by seeking to develop all their latent energy we can in time produce a people who will be self-reliant and true men and women, thus solving the Indian problem effectually, and feeling that as a nation our duty has been well done.

Respectfully yours,
Marie L. H. Steer.

17 The Joint Committee on Absent and Isolated Members laid before the Meeting their report for the past year, which was read at this time, as follows, viz:

Report of Committee on Isolated Members
To the Yearly Meeting:
The Committee on Absent and Isolated Members of our Meeting report: That they have received from the different Monthly Meetings lists of their absent members, many of whom reside in large cities, where Friends Meetings are held, and an opportunity is afforded them to attend the same if so inclined. The number reported as absent, including minors, is 232. Of these may properly be termed "isolated"

33 members residing in Iowa, distant from any of our Meetings.

28 " " " Kansas,

20 " " " Missouri,