

INDIAN OUTRAGES IN WESTERN KANSAS.

Murders, Ravishment, and Theft Laid to the Charge of the Pawnee, Otoe, and Omaha Tribes—Cornfields Bobbed and Agricultural Implements Carried off—The Settlers Ordered Away and Threatened with Death—An Official Investigation to be Had—The Indian Chiefs Asked to Participate, Etc.

WASHINGTON, October 9.—The Commissioner of Indian Affairs has received a despatch from E. H. Taylor, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern Superintendency, enclosing a letter from Major-General W. F. Rusk, who was appointed a special agent by the Governor of Kansas to investigate certain murders and depredations alleged to have been committed by the Omaha, Pawnee, and Otoe Indians. General Taylor, in his report, says:—

I have the honor to inform you that consequent upon the perpetration of certain murders and other outrages committed against the citizens of Western Kansas during the past spring and summer, have been appointed by the Governor of Kansas special agents to collect facts, and to bring the parties to justice. In prosecuting my work I have visited the scene of murder and outrage, and have learned many facts of which you are as follows:—One man was killed on the 13th of May, while near three companions, who were on their claims upon a tributary of the Solomon river.

He was shot by three Indians, who were dressed in United States uniforms, and armed with revolvers. The Indians, who were undoubtedly Pawnees, as many of them, similarly dressed and armed, have frequently passed through the settlements exhibiting discharges from the service as Pawnee scouts. The man killed was scotched by the Indians at the same time took two mules and a horse.

On or about the 17th of May six men were killed. No testimony of eye-witnesses can be obtained, but the presence of Pawnees and Otoes at the place of the murders, before and after the same, together with the fact that some of the men were killed by arrows, and that many arrows, taken out of their bodies and picked up along the line of retreat, were found to be of the same make as those which were used in the murders, as also that traces were made against the life of one of the murdered men by members of both tribes a few days before the occurrence of the murders. These murders were undoubtedly committed by the Pawnee and Otoe Indians.

In the month of July, a settlement upon White Rock river was visited by Pawnees, who took corn from the fields and robbed the people of agricultural implements, tools, etc., and having surprised a family in camp, during the absence of the husband and father, they carried away, and after subjecting her to ravishment by a large number, supposed to exceed forty, they left her, where her friends found her in the morning in a state of insensibility.

In the month of August, Pawnees and Omahas to the number of more than eight hundred visited a settlement upon a tributary of the Solomon, and took possession of the fields of corn, and when remonstrated by the owners they claimed the land upon which the farms were located as hunting and trapping ground. They ordered the settlers off, using menaces and threats of death if they did not go, and if they were returned. They remained in the threatened settlements until the crops were gathered.

Such acts of hostility and violations of treaties call for justice and indemnity. This the settlers desire to obtain under the law; and that the matters may be prepared in a proper form, the various witnesses and parties interested intend to meet at Lake Sibley, upon the Republican river, about the 15th of October, and proceed in the investigation before an officer of the law. I have visited the Otoes, and they agreed to meet me at their place on the 10th of October. I desire the presence of chiefs and head men of the Pawnee and Omaha tribes, and sincerely desire your official co-operation in securing their presence.

I would respectfully present the fact that these oft-repeated outrages have caused a deep feeling and a strong determination on the part of the entire citizenship of the State to obtain justice and safety, and inasmuch as the above mentioned acts are in violation of the laws of the State, and will prove much to their interest to render every possible assistance in securing a full and impartial investigation. Your obedient servant,

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