

## THE OTTAWA RESERVE.

### Climate, Soil, Products, &c.

#### THE OTTAWA INDIANS,

Numbering now a few more than two hundred persons, were removed by Government in the year 1836, from near Toledo, Ohio, to their present Reservation in Kansas.

They were more numerous than now, and lived in scattered bands in Ohio. One of these bands had, for several years previous, a Mission School in its midst; but it seems to have made no favorable impression on the Indians. They were a terribly degraded race. When they first came to Kansas they frequently indulged in revelry and for three and four days and nights men, women and children promiscuously mingled in drunkenness and debauchery.

Rev. J. Meeker, a Baptist Missionary, had been for six years among the Shawnees. The Ottawas were no sooner settled in Kansas than he went among them, and commenced a work of love, which continued for more than twenty years, and until his death. They were miserable, dirty beings, living in wigwams made of bark and skins—their highest ambition to bedeck themselves with paint and feathers. They were, in short, just such creatures as many Western letter writers, who profess to be Christians, and some so-called Indian Missionaries (I blush to say it) are now pronouncing as utterly incapacitated for any improvement.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the Indian character seems as little understood now as when the Pilgrims landed. Perhaps Cooper and his imitators have helped to educate those who ascribe to Indians the vir-

tues of demi-gods and the craftiness of devils, while Indian teachers and Missionaries who have, to say the least, mistaken their profession, and interested traders and speculators, have helped on the other extreme notion, that they are creatures without any sentiment but that of hate, and incapable of anything but greater depths of degradation.

In relation to the late terrible war in Minnesota, the barbarities of the Indians are pointed at as certain proofs that all "blanket" Indians should be exterminated, while others attempt to entirely excuse these atrocities and shield the perpetrators from punishment. As usual, "truth lies between extremes."

Indians are *human beings*. Nothing more, nothing less. For two hundred years they have vainly struggled against their fate. Good men have laid down their lives to help them and teach them. But for one such Missionary their white brothers have sent a thousand frontiersmen with the rifle in one hand and a bottle of "fire-water" in the other.

Government was charged with taking the hunting grounds of the Indians for white settlers, and leaving its red children to starve, and so it humanely stipulated to give them annuities. Bad men flocked around them to secure this money as traders. Good men would hardly endure the deprivation of this life for the pay. Bad men educated the Indians into all the vices they were before guiltless of. Meantime Government has sought numerous devices to correct the evils of its system. To protect the Indians