

Fires of Incendiary Origin.

The following letter from the Indian Office emphasizes the necessity of careful watchfulness at all Indian schools to guard against fires and outlines the policy which will be pursued in such cases where the fires may be of incendiary origin and traced to pupils. The warning should be effective.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

Washington, June 26, 1906.

The Superintendent, U. S. Indian School, Chemawa, Oregon.

SIR: Despite the fact that this office has emphasized the necessity for adequate fire protection and watchfulness at the various Indian schools, fires still occur. Most of these are due to incendiary origin and in a number of cases have been traced to pupils, so that stern measures became imperative, and however distasteful such action may have been it was found necessary to make an example of those concerned in these unlawful acts.

One of the most flagrant acts occurred on the evening of January 17, 1905, in the destruction by fire of the boarding school on the Menominee Reservation in Wisconsin. After a thorough investigation of the cause of this fire had been made, two Indian pupils of the school, Louisa LaMotte and Lizzie Cardish, were charged with the crime, and Superintendent Freeman, in charge of the Green Bay Agency, was directed to bring criminal action against these girls. In October, 1905, the U. S. Grand Jury of the U. S. District Court returned an indictment against Louisa LaMotte and Lizzie Cardish, charging them with arson of the Government Boarding School buildings at Menominee.

On motion of the attorneys for the defendants this indictment was quashed.

On January 25th, 1906, the U. S. Grand Jury again indicted them and they were arrested. Their trial came on at a session of the U. S. Court held at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in June, 1906, when Lizzie Cardish changed her plea from "Not Guilty" to "Guilty" and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Louisa LaMotte was discharged on motion of the U. S. District Attorney.

The punishment for the crime was very severe, but should be a warning to all pupils in Indian schools throughout the United States that this Office will not tolerate crimes of this character.

You will publish these facts and this warning in your Indian school paper, so that all may be advised of the policy which will be pursued hereafter. While the financial loss in the destruction of the Menominee buildings was large fortunately no lives were lost, but such chance exemption from fatalities may not occur hereafter, and every effort must be put forth both by Superintendents and this Office to protect the lives of Indian pupils committed to the care of the Government.

Very respectfully,

C. F. LARRABEE,

Acting Commissioner.

PROPOSALS FOR WOOD, FISH, PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES, ETC. Chemawa, Oregon, June 23rd, 1906. Sealed Proposals, plainly marked on the outside of the envelope "Proposals for Wood, Fish Etc.," and addressed to the undersigned at Chemawa, Oregon, will be received at the Indian School until two o'clock p. m. of Saturday July 14, 1906, for furnishing and delivering at the School when required during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1907, about 2000 cords of wood, 5 tons oil meal, 26000 pounds fish, besides a quantity of packing, tees hubs, pipe tools, sewer pipe, valves, elbows, electric lamps sockets, switches, etc., as per full list and specifications obtainable at the School. Bidders are requested to state the price of each article to be offered for delivery under contract. All supplies so offered will be subject to rigid inspection. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids or any part of any bid if deemed for the best interests of the Service. Each bid must be accompanied by a certified check or draft upon some United States depository or solvent National bank, made payable to the order of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for at least five per cent of the amount of the proposal, which check or draft shall be forfeited to the United States in case a bidder receiving an award shall fail to execute promptly a satisfactory contract in accordance with his bid; otherwise to be returned to the bidder. Bids accompanied by cash in lieu of certified check will not be considered. For further information apply to E. L. CHALCRAFT, Superintendent.