

SONOMA, January, 1848.

Sir,—In a late letter I promised some remarks on the subject of our Indian relations. 'Tis not probable I shall have every body to agree with me in my ideas of Indian character, and the best mode of treating those in our midst. But let true history correct if I err, and men study the question and reason a little before they too hastily condemn.

Indians, and particularly those in California, are, as we all know, mentally, and morally, an inferior order of our race; are unfit and incapable of being associated with whites on any terms of equality, or of being governed by the same laws, and if retained among us, must necessarily have a code and treatment applicable to their peculiar character and condition.

Were it possible to have all masters just, mild, and good, I would—I say it for the benefit of the Indians themselves—make slaves of them. But since this cannot be so, and besides, the word grating so harshly on the ears of our modern philanthropists, Christians, and envious non-slaveholders, I would suggest the propriety of some sort of an apprentice system being established, and Indians prohibited from passing through the inhabited parts of the country without passes. This may seem severe and anti-democratical advice, but necessity compels such a course, or else, we whites must abide the consequences of the present state of affairs, while the Indians themselves will in time be the greater sufferers.

Either this plan must soon be adopted, or else they be driven out of the settlement—already educated, *Christianized*, border robbers—against whom a continual war will necessarily be waged, for depredations committed, till all are exterminated.

Under the late order of things in California, as indeed, in most parts of the Republic of Mexico, the Indians, if not in name, were *aps de facto*, slaves, and ruled and treated accordingly.

The drunken, roving, vagabond life most have led in California since our flag went up, added to the greater facilities, and even encouragement for robbing and murdering, shows the impolicy of having removed all restraints, formerly held over them.

I will mention one instance out of several I could state, where such encouragement has been given. General V. of this place, had an Indian boy in his family, who attempted the life of his lady, last winter, by poisoning her. He was arrested, confessed the fact, sent to San Francisco, where after being detained prisoner awhile, was suffered to go loose, without any further notice taken of the affair. By the laws of Mexico, which are *pretended* to be administered here, this Indian should have died.

The very impolitic and pernicious course pursued by some, in hiring Indians to work, is fast giving them a much worse character than they would otherwise acquire, and will render them, in time, perfectly useless as such assistants. That is for a farmer, or others, wishing their services, to try and entice them away from such in whose employ they may be, by offers of higher wages or other inducements. This has a strong tendency to make the Indians so treated, much more idle, roving, and dissolute; besides being a mean and unfair act towards the persons whose plans and work are thus deranged and injured, by their hirelings abruptly and secretly leaving them, which in most instances is the case, as they are generally indebted to their employers.

Should the Governor think it beyond the pale of his powers to adopt the system proposed, he might with all propriety order the following;—That a man hiring an Indian for any length of time, shall have a written bargain to that effect, made before an Indian Agent or Alcalde, and the latter be compelled to serve out his voluntarily made time. And also, that any person who shall harbor, or attempt to entice such off during this period, be liable to a criminal prosecution.

The late proclamation, relative to selling and giving Indians ardent spirits, is a good one, and it will be supported by all the order loving portion of our citizens.

This hasty production has merely been penned with a view of calling the attention of those in authority, as well as others, to some discussion, and action, upon this important case,

Yours, &c.,
PACIFIC

California Star

SAN FRANCISCO, JANUARY 15, 1848.

STAR.

THE CALIFORNIA STAR.

SAN FRANCISCO, SATURDAY, JAN 15, 1848.

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