visit to the seat of government, and trust the steamer hourly expected may bring me letters.

With high regard, your most obedient servant,

REDICK McKEE.

Hon. LUKE LEA,
Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington City.

[Not dated. Received at Indian Office on the 2d February, 1852.]

SIR: In compliance with the instructions given to me from your department, I will now, with your permission, proceed to report to you my acts and observations touching my duties as one of the Indian commissioners and agents for California: and the manners, habits, customs, and extent of civilization of the various tribes of Indians with whom I came in contact in the State of California.

A few days after the receipt of my commission, instructions, &c., I left my residence, in Kentucky, and embarked for California. After a somewhat protracted and perilous voyage, I reached the city of San Francisco, in California, on the 8th day of January, 1851. I ascertained that my colleagues (Colonel McKee and Dr. Wozencraft) had preceded me a few days. On reaching San Francisco, I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Wozencraft, from whom I learned that Colonel McKee was absent, temporarily, at Sacramento. In a few days Colonel McKee returned, and we at once met for the purpose of determining upon a plan for our future operations.

The country was in a high state of excitement, on account of the many depredations that were being daily committed by the Indians, in various portions of the State, on the lives and property of the citizens, with whom they were at open war.

After discussing various plans for conciliating the good feelings of the Indians, and to get them to ratify those feelings by entering into written treaties, binding on them, towards the government and each other, we adopted, as the basis of our future operations, the plan which was duly communicated to your department.

Being directed by our instructions "to act in a body, or separately in different parts of the Indian country," it was finally agreed (though not without opposition) that we would act in a body, or as a joint board. We then determined to visit first that section of the State where the Indians were the most hostile and troublesome; and, in order the better to prepare us to act advisedly upon this subject, as well as to learn from the most reliable sources (as we conceived) something of the manners, habits, customs, and extent of civilization of the Indians, we visited San José, the seat of government of the State, where the legislature was then in session.

From the governor of the State, and the different members of the legislature, we obtained much valuable information. After spending a few days at the State capital, we returned to San Francisco, preparatory to our departure for the Mariposa country; having determined in

the mean time to visit that part of the State first, as the Indians in that section, from all we could learn, were the most hostile and troublesome.

After our return to San Francisco, we had an interview with Gen. P. F. Smith, the officer in command of the United States troops, at the time, in the State of California, who readily consented to furnish us with a suitable escort of officers and soldiers, together with transportation; and, indeed, evinced an earnest desire to render whatever assistance he could, in any manner, to aid the commissioners to effect the objects of their mission.

In a few days, all things being in readiness, we left for the Indian country, accompanied by an escort of some two hundred men, commanded by experienced and most gentlemanly officers.

On reaching Stockton, the commissioners deemed it prudent that two of the board should visit a friendly tribe of Indians on the Stanislaus river, known as José Jesus Indians, whilst the other member should continue with the escort, for the purpose of attending to the interests of the board in that quarter; the two leaving for the Stanislaus river to join the expedition again in a few days on the San Joaquin river, near the mouth of the Stanislaus. Dr. Wozencraft and myself undertook to visit the before mentioned tribe, our object being to have a "talk" with them, apprize them of our mission, and the plan agreed upon for the basis of any treaties that might be made with the Indians, and, if possible, to obtain runners from that tribe to the hostile tribes in the vicinity, that being the only means by which we could communicate with the hostile tribes, and to obtain from them all the information we could, touching the strength, character, residence, and feelings of the hostile tribes. A ride of some forty-five miles through a level, sandy country at the base of the "foot-hills" of the Sierra Nevada, brought us to the house of the Messrs. Dent, (brothers,) on the Stanislaus, in whose vicinity the Indians were living. These gentlemanly brothers received and treated us with great kindness, and gave us much valuable information concerning the Indians of the country.

On the day after our arrival the Indians were sent for, and on the following morning a large number of them were in attendance. Through the assistance of Judge Dent, who kindly offered his services as interpreter for the occasion, we held a conversation with the chief captains and principal men of the tribe. We found the chief and some of the principal men and captains to be shrewd, sensible men; but the great majority of the tribe were low, degraded, and worthless creatures; in the scale of intelligence, scarcely one degree above the higher order of the brute creation. We advised them of our plans for ameliorating their condition, and advised them to continue, as they were, at peace with the whites. They professed to be much pleased with the terms proposed, and particularly with the idea of an education that would enable them to read and write. We then proposed to them to furnish us with runners to the hostile tribes, but could not prevail upon any to go, because they said they had for many years been at war with those tribes, and dare not now venture among them; but they informed us that we might possibly obtain persons for our object from a small band of Indians on the Tuolumne river, some of whom, from what we could

learn, held a doubtful position between the whites and hostile Indians—friendly to both parties, but trusted by neither.

We immediately started for the Tuolumne river, had an interview with the tribe alluded to, and, after much persuasion and promises of reward, succeeded in getting one of their captains, (Cipriano,) and four of his men, to undertake the expedition to some of the hostile tribes, with a message to them to meet us at that place in ten days, guaranteying to them a safe conduct. We then left, and joined the expedition at the point agreed upon on the San Joaquin river.

As soon as everything could be got in readiness by the military escort, we started to the point on the Tuolumne river designated for meeting the hostile chiefs. We reached the point by the day agreed upon, but the Indians had not arrived. After waiting a few days, some three or four of the hostile chiefs, with a few of their warriors, came in. We received and treated them kindly; but they were silent, and appeared distrustful. Everything was done that could be done to insure their confidence, and induce them to cease their hostility and enter into a treaty of peace and friendship. We asked them many questions in relation to the causes of the difficulty between them and the whites, their condition, strength, &c.; to all of which very unsatisfactory answers were given.

The chief of the Volumne tribe, being the principal spokesman and prominent member of the delegation, showed clearly, by his manner, that he was not disposed to come to terms, although professing a willingness to do so; but as it was the only alternative for bringing about an interview with the various hostile tribes in the vicinity, we agreed on a day when they, together with all their tribes, and as many more of the hostile chiefs, with their tribes, as they could prevail upon to join them, should meet us on the Mariposa river, at a designated point.

These Indians, like those on the Stanislaus, are a low, degraded, ignorant set of creatures, possessing some animal courage and a good deal of low cunning; but little reliance is to be placed in them; yet I do not hesitate to say that, with proper treatment, they can be easily domesticated, if I may be allowed the expression, and their condition, morally, mentally, and physically, greatly improved.

From the Tuolumne we moved to the Mercede river, distant some twenty miles; we remained here a few days for the purpose of recruiting our animals. Whilst at that point we were visited by a small band of Indians living in the vicinity, who were entirely friendly with the whites. They bore the prominent characteristics of the other Indians we had seen, except that they were generally better clad, and appeared more cleanly than any we had yet met with. There were but few of them; and living in the vicinity of, and on friendly terms with, the whites, they had acquired more of the habits of civilized life than the wilder tribes of the mountains.

In a few days we moved on to the place designated for the Indians on the Mariposa river, or rather on one of its tributaries; we reached the point of rendezvous on the day previous to the day agreed upon. The encampment was called (by Captain E. D. Keyes, who commanded the escort) Camp Fremont, in honor of Colonel J. C. Fremont. In a day or two a few Indians came in, and they continued to arrive

in small parties for several days, until delegations from six tribes had arrived, to wit: the Li-yan-to, Po-to-yan-to, Co-co-noon, Ap-yang-ape, Ap-la-che, and A-wal-lache, with whom we concluded a treaty on the 19th of March, 1851, which we regarded as an entering-wedge towards the effecting of treaties and allaying the hostility of the Indians in that part of the State. These tribes, with one exception, had been hostile. They occupied the country about the headwaters of the Tuolumne, Mercede, and Mariposa rivers, embracing some of the richest gold mines in the State; from the most of which they had driven the miners, killing many of them, and having driven off and destroyed a large number of horses, mules, and beef-cattle. By the terms of the treaty, they surrendered all claims to this extensive, rich mineral region, and accepted a tract of country allotted to them between the Tuolumne and Mercede rivers, to which they removed shortly after the treaty, and where they were living quietly and contentedly, and doing well, when I last saw them, in the month of September.

Pending the treaty of Camp Fremont, messengers were obtained from the tribes present, and despatched to the Chouchilla tribe of Indians, considered as the most formidable and warlike of all the tribes in that vicinity. They, together with all the neighboring tribes, were requested to meet us at a place named on the Fresno river. The commissioners repaired to the place designated, but after remaining for several days beyond the time fixed for the treaty, and the Indians not coming in as expected, it was deemed advisable to change the place of meeting to the San Joaquin river, some of the tribes south of that river having sent delegations to the Fresno river with a request that the commissioners would meet them on the San Joaquin for the purpose of making a treaty.

After waiting on the San Joaquin for some time, small bands of Indians arriving almost daily, it was finally ascertained, about the 26th of April, that delegates from all the tribes who were at all likely to come in had arrived, and were willing to treat. The commissioners determined to commence negotiations with the representatives of the tribes then present, some sixteen tribes being represented, to wit: the How-ach-ees, Chook-cha-nees, Po-ho-ne-chees, Chou-chil-las, Nook-choos, Pik-cak-ches, Cas-sans, Toom-nas, Tal-lin-ches, Pas-ke-sas, Wa-cha-hets, I-to-ches, Cho-e-nim-nes, Cho-ke-me-nes, No-ton-o-toes, and Was-mil-ches; and succeeded on the 29th of April in closing a treaty with them, which was duly signed, &c.

The Indians treated with on this occasion inhabited the country on the Mariposa, Chouchille, Fresno, Upper San Joaquin, and King's rivers, embracing a large extent of the very richest gold region in the State, from which they had entirely driven the miners, after killing many of them, and destroying their property. They, by this treaty, surrendered their title to hundreds of miles of country, rich in gold, and accepted a district of country, specified in the treaty, sufficient for their purposes, and well adapted to their wants. Shortly after the treaty they all removed to, and settled in, the district of country allotted to them, and were working industriously, doing well, and living contentedly in their new home, when I left them, in September last.

The Indians embraced in this treaty are a very superior order of

beings to the low, degraded characters that we had before met. They are more athletic, more energetic, and much more intelligent, besides being more fierce and warlike, which proved to be the case with the Indians generally as we travelled south.

After the conclusion of this treaty the commissioners, in view of the work to be performed, and the pressing necessity of their presence in other parts of the State, where Indian difficulties were daily increasing, and new obstacles arising to prevent their adjustment, deemed it advisable to separate, and act separately at the same time in different parts of the country, thereby enabling them the more speedily to accomplish the object of their mission, and restore peace and quiet to the State. In accordance with this agreement, the State was divided into three departments—northern, middle, and southern. Lots were cast, and the northern fell to Col. McKee, the middle to Dr. Wozencraft, and the southern to me.

As soon as our respective districts were allotted, I employed N. H. McLean as secretary, at five dollars per day and travelling expenses, and H. J. Burton as interpreter, at four dollars per day and travelling expenses, to be paid by me. I also obtained messengers from the Wacha-heck tribe of Indians, and despatched to the various tribes inhabiting the country south of King's river, the Cahwia river, and about Tulare and Tache lakes, requesting them to meet me on the south bank of King's river, at a place designated, by a day named, for the purpose of treating with them.

My intention was to leave Camp Barbour, on the San Joaquin river, the day after the separation of the board, but was detained until the 3d of May, waiting the arrival and delivery of a lot of cattle, purchased by the commissioners for the use of the Indians treated with at the last-mentioned treaty, which were delivered on the morning of the 3d, and in the evening the encampment was broken up, and we started for King's river. On the evening of the 4th, after travelling from 3½ o'clock a. m. until 4 p. m. over a desert plain, destitute alike of water and vegetation, we reached the northern bank of King's river, where we encamped for the night. The next day I crossed the river, and an encampment having been selected by the commanding officer, the troops, baggage, &c., were crossed over, and the camp called by the commanding officer "Camp Belt." On the evening of the same day delegations from two tribes (the Yo-kols and Cho-e-nees) arrived at camp. Other runners were sent out, and from day to day large bodies of Indians arrived in camp until the 11th, when twelve tribes, represented by upwards of four thousand of their people, had arrived. Learning from the messengers who had been sent out that no more need be expected, I announced to the chiefs present that on the next day I would meet them in council. We met on the 12th, and after explaining to them in the general council (which I had previously done with each separately) the object of meeting them, and what was desired by the government of the United States, together with the plan by which the government proposed to improve their condition, and bring about feelings of peace and friendship between them and the whites, I proposed to them the terms and conditions on which I was willing to treat, (being the same contained in the treaty, for the particulars of

which, reference is here made to the same.) After deliberating among themselves for some time they all expressed themselves satisfied with the terms proposed except Francisco, the chief of the Cah-wia tribe, who objected to giving up the country occupied and claimed by his tribe; but after much consultation with the other chiefs present, and after I had again represented to him the advantages and benefits that he would derive from the treaty proposed to him, and assuring him that it would be impossible to treat with him upon the terms that he proposed, he finally agreed to the terms proposed by me, and on the 13th the treaty, after being fully explained, clause by clause, to them, was formally signed, sealed, and attested.

The twelve tribes embraced in this treaty are the La-ches, Cah-wia, Yo-kols, Ta-lum-nes, Nie-chum-nes, Hol-en-nas, To-e-ne-ches, Tu-hue-ma-ches, In-tim-peches, Cho-e-nuco, Ne-mil-ches, and No-tow-too. They are generally large tribes, very warlike, and by far the most athletic, courageous, and intelligent Indians that I had met with up to that time. They occupied the country between the Cahwia and King's rivers, from the Sierra Nevada to the Tulare lake, and one tribe, the Cah-wia, occupied the country south of the Cahwia river, known as the Four Creek country, a large body of the very best agricultural land in the State of California; and I was not surprised at their reluctance to cede it away. This tribe, with most of the others here treated with, were hostile to the whites, and being bold, daring warriors, and very powerful, athletic men, had committed many acts of violence upon the laws and property of the whites. To their other vicious qualities they add those of treachery and great cruelty, particularly the Cah-wias, and those tribes in their vicinity who were leagued with them.

One melancholy act perpetrated by the Cah-wias may not be amiss in this place, as its tends to show the treachery and bloody cruelty of the tribe. In the early part of the winter of 1851, a gentleman by the name of Wood, with some fifteen others, were engaged in the erection of a bridge across the Cahwia river, for which they had obtained the consent of the chief and his tribe. After hostilities had commenced between the Indians and the whites in the Mariposa country, and had extended as far south as the Upper San Joaquin, but unknown to Wood and his party, who were living on terms of the closest friendship with the Cah-wias, the chief and his warriors made a sudden attack upon them, killing all except Wood, who was taken prisoner after a manly resistance. They immediately suspended him to the limb of a tree and deliberately proceeded to flay him, literally stripping the skin from his entire body whilst yet alive.

After the conclusion of the treaty of Camp Belt, I ascertained that the escort could not move for several days, as they had to await the arrival of provisions from Stockton. I employed the time thus allowed me in exploring the country, and visiting some of the tribes with whom I had treated, who lived near the Tulare lake. I also, with a small party of men, and accompanied by Lieutenant Hamilton, descended King's river in a small boat to Tulare lake, crossed the lake, explored its western and northwestern coast, and returned to camp on the 20th of May. On the 21st Captain E. D. Keyes, who had command of the escort, rejoined us at Camp Belt, after a temporary absence, having

accompanied Colonel McKee and Dr. Wozencraft, who left me at the San Joaquin river, to San Francisco. After his return some conversation occurred between us upon the subject of dividing the escort and establishing a military post at some suitable point within the boundaries of the country set apart for the Indians at the two last-mentioned treaties, to wit: San Joaquin and King's river treaties. This conversation led to the following correspondence between Captain Keyes and myself copies of which I herewith enclose, marked A and B.

On the 23d of May, the two companies designed for the military station on the San Joaquin took up their line of march for that river. On the same day I employed Mr. Kit Barbour as secretary, at same price—McLean having left—and agreed to pay him at the rate of two dollars per day for taking charge of Indian goods; and on the 27th, with the two remaining companies as an escort, I started for the Cah-wia river, where I had arranged to meet several tribes living south of that river, from some of whom delegates had been sent, on the 26th, to see me on King's river, and to others of whom I had sent messengers in advance, requesting them to meet me at that point. After reaching the designated point, on the 29th of May seven tribes, viz: the Ko-ye-to, Nu-chow-we, No-la-si, Wack-sa-che, Pal-wish-a, Po-ken-welle, and Ya-wil-chuie, represented by upwards of twelve hundred of their people, had arrived in camp, and expressed a willingness to treat. Accordingly a treaty was commenced on that day; but owing to the refusal of the chief of the Ko-ye-to tribe, and his people, to surrender their country and remove to the country offered to them, (the same designated in the treaty,) the treaty was not concluded until the 30th, when it was formally signed and sealed, &c., by the parties, after being fully read and explained, clause after clause, to the Indians. Most of the tribes embraced in this treaty were leagued with the Cah-wia Indians in their hostility to, and depredations upon, the whites, and very much the same character of Indians as the Cah-wia tribe.

This treaty was made on the ground where, but a few months previously, the unfortunate Wood and his party had been betrayed and butchered by the Cah-wias and their confederates. The encampment was called Camp Keyes, in honor of the commanding officer of the escort.

The Indians included in this treaty occupied the country south of the Cahwia and north of the Tulare river, extending with the Cah-wia tribe from the Sierra Nevada to Tulare lake, embracing a large extent of the very best agricultural land in the State; and the mountain district occupied by them is supposed to contain rich gold mines, but their hostility heretofore has prevented the whites from thoroughly prospecting this region for gold.

We left Camp Keyes on the evening of the 30th of May, *en route* for Tulare river, where I expected to meet four tribes not yet treated with. They had not reached that point by the day agreed upon; and as those tribes had always been friendly to the whites (except Spaniards and Mexicans,) I determined to move on to Paint creek, a place equally accessible to them, and further removed from the "Four-creek" Indians, with whom some of these tribes had been at war for several years.

At Paint creek we encamped, calling the encampment Camp Burton,

in honor of Capt. H. S. Burton, of the United States army. At this place the four tribes referred to, to wit: the Chu-su-te, Wo-wol, Co-ye-tie, and Ya-seem-ne, to the number of about seventeen hundred, met us on the 3d of June. I had but little difficulty in concluding a treaty with these tribes. The country occupied by them, respectively, being the most suitable location for them, I allotted them a sufficient district for their purposes; indeed, the entire country heretofore occupied and claimed by them is an extremely poor one, and might have all been given to them.

These Indians I found to be superior, in every respect, to any Indians I had yet met with, particularly the Chu-su-te and Wo-wol tribes. They seem to possess more courage, magnanimity, and intelligence, coupled with superior physical powers, than any Indians either in the San Joaquin or Tulare valley; and although they have heretofore always regarded the Spaniards as their enemies, they have ever been friends to the Americans—as they call persons from the United States—at all times rendering them every assistance in their power, even going so far as to take part with the whites in the war between them and the Four Creek Indians.

From Paint creek we proceeded to the Texon (Tahone) pass, the extreme southern terminus of the great Tulare valley. At this point the two great ranges of mountains that encircle the extensive basin known as the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys, viz: the Sierra Nevada and coast range, unite and come together. We reached the pass on the night of the 8th of June, and called the encampment after General P. F. Smith, having sent runners in advance of me to the Indians in the vicinity. On the 9th, delegations from eleven tribes arrived to the number of about six hundred. On the 10th a treaty was concluded with the following tribes, to wit: the Texon, Cas-take, San Juris, Woas, Carises, Buena Vista, Lena-huon, Hol-e-clame, Cho-ho-nuts, Tocia, and Hol-mie-uhs. These tribes occupied the country from Buena Vista and Carises lakes, and Kearn river, to the Sierra Nevada and coast range mountains. Many of them had recently been at war with the whites, while others had lived on terms of friendship with all except the Spaniards. Between these there was, and ever has existed, the most deadly hatred. A few days before we reached the pass a fight had taken place between a party of Spaniards and a body of Indians, in which some injury was done on both sides, and a few lives lost; and we found the Indians, when we reached the pass, occupying the heights with a large force, expecting an attack from a body of men that they had learned were coming against them from Los Angeles and Santa Barbara; and it was with some difficulty that their excitement could be allayed.

They are a fine-looking set of Indians, and are shrewd and cunning, and withal good warriors, having been trained to it by the constant conflicts between them; have fire-arms, and are expert in the use of them. The tribes are generally small, having been greatly reduced in numbers by war, not only with the Spaniards, but with neighboring tribes and with each other; but the greatest destruction was produced by the small-pox, which was *said* to have been intentionally spread among them by the Spaniards of the country, who both hated and

feared them. I saw at this treaty a very old Indian, who was the last and only survivor of what had once been a large and powerful tribe.

Having now formed treaties with all the tribes throughout the great valleys of the San Joaquin and Tulare, extending from the Sierra Nevada to the coast range of mountains, embracing a district of country about five hundred miles in length, by from two to four hundred in width, I determined to cross the mountains at this (the Texon) pass and proceed to Los Angeles, where I hoped to obtain information and means to enable me to prosecute my mission to the Colorado river, and to the extreme southern boundary of the State.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 11th of June we left Camp Persifor F. Smith, and commenced our difficult and dangerous journey across the mountains, and on the evening of the 15th had the satisfaction of encamping in the plains at the foot of San Fernando mountains, some twenty-five miles from Los Angeles. The travel over the mountains was truly a laborious one, having at times literally to let down our wagons by ropes from the tops of some of the mountains; yet unexpectedly we succeeded in crossing these mountains without any material loss or injury save the breaking down of one or two wagons. On the 16th of June we reached the neighborhood of Los Angeles, and encamped within four miles of the town.

At this place I received information from the most reliable sources that it would be entirely impracticable to reach the Colorado river with my present escort, as it would be impossible for infantry troops to cross the great desert intervening between Los Angeles valley and the Colorado river; and being destitute of funds, having received but two hundred and thirty-one dollars of government funds since separating with my colleagues on the San Joaquin river, and learning that a military post would not be necessary in treating with the tribes in the vicinity of Los Angeles and San Diego, I determined on the 17th of June to discharge the military escort that had thus far accompanied me; accordingly I addressed a note to that effect to Captain E. D. Keyes, who was in command of the escort, a copy of which, together with his answer, I herewith enclose to you, marked C and D.

I then despatched messengers to the Cahuillas and other tribes in the vicinity of Los Angeles, (all of whom were friendly with the whites) to meet me on a day fixed, at a designated point, for the purpose of entering into a treaty. Before the time fixed had arrived I received several messages, informing me that the Indians in the Tulare valley had or were about to commence hostilities with the whites.

Under such circumstances I felt much embarrassed, not knowing what was best to be done; whether to remain and treat with the Indians to whom I had sent messengers for the purpose, or to return, and, if possible, prevent the threatened outbreak if it had not taken place, or, if it had, to try to quiet it. Taking everything into consideration, and believing that I could control those Indians with whom I had treated, and thereby prevent much loss of life and property, I concluded that I would best advance the object of my mission, and promote the interest of all parties concerned, more by returning to the Tulare valley than by remaining to treat with Indians who were entirely friendly to the whites. Accordingly, on the 30th of June I

started to retrace my steps through the mountains back to the Tulare and San Joaquin valleys, accompanied by my secretary, interpreter, and seven men whom I had employed as an escort in the absence of the United States troops, who embarked on board of a ship, on the 25th June, for Monterey and San Francisco.

On reaching the Tulare valley, I learned from the Indians that a marauding party of white men, to the number of some fifty or sixty, had, a short time previously, visited their rancherias and committed some gross acts of outrage and violence, which had produced much excitement and distrust among them at the time, and for which they had threatened to take revenge. From this circumstance, and other outrages committed on other tribes by the same or similar parties of unprincipled white men, the report of the intended insurrection that had been conveyed to me had, no doubt, arisen.

I called the Indians together; had a talk with them; exhorted them to remain at peace with the whites; observe strictly, on their part, the promises made by them in the treaty, and rely upon the government for redress and protection; and then gave them some presents, and left them apparently well satisfied and contented.

I continued my journey through the valleys, visiting all the tribes, holding councils with them, making them presents that I had brought with me for the purpose, and advising them to a strict observance of the treaties, and a reliance on the government for protection and justice. In every instance I left them well satisfied and contented. But the most conclusive argument that was brought to bear upon them, convincing them of the good faith of the government towards them, and rendering them contented and happy, was the assurance that the beef which had been promised to them by the terms of the treaty would in a few days be furnished to them. This was the more gratifying news to them, from the fact that they were in a very destitute condition, the whites, during their war with them, having destroyed all their stores of provisions. The chase ever to them a very precarious mode for a scanty supply, and the fishing season not having arrived, many of them were in a state of almost actual starvation; to avoid which, they had either to be supplied with provisions in their new homes, or resort to their practice of stealing animals from the citizens, which would necessarily have led to difficulties and bloodshed, and a total disregard and breaking up of those treaties which had cost so much labor and expense to make, and again throw the country into a state of confusion; breaking up every interest, and in all probability involving the government in a war, that, besides the loss of many valuable lives, would cost many millions of dollars to terminate.

In view of these facts, and being urged thereto by the voice of the whole country and the calls of humanity and justice, without any direct authority from my instructions or otherwise, on the 28th of May last I made a contract with Colonel J. C. Frémont, subject to the approval or rejection of the same by the proper authorities at Washington, to supply the beef stipulated by the treaties entered into in the southern district of the State, to be supplied to the Indians; but I will here remark, that this contract was not even entered into until after I had exhibited to Colonel Frémont my letters of appointment and in-

structions, and expressing to him my conviction that, if ratified, the contract would not be paid by the department until acted upon by Congress and an appropriation voted for that object. I herewith enclose copies of the correspondence between Colonel Frémont and myself upon the subject, which you will please to find, marked E and F.

Colonel Frémont proceeded at once to supply the beef necessary, under this contract, and in the months of July and August, according to my instructions, delivered a portion of the cattle to the different tribes, and the remainder (nineteen hundred head) he delivered to me, on the San Joaquin river, and I immediately turned them over to sub-agent Johnston, taking his receipt for the same, a copy of which is herewith submitted, marked G.

On the receipt of the beef, at the request of Colonel Frémont, and for the purpose of placing the transaction in as tangible a form as possible, I drew drafts on the honorable Secretary of the Interior for the price of the beef, say $183,825.

The quantity of beef received by me for the Indians was greater than the amount stipulated to be supplied to them in the year 1851. My reason for receiving a larger supply, was the fact that during the rainy season, which usually continues from the month of October or the first of November to the first of May, it is impossible to furnish supplies or even travel with animals through that part of the State; and, again, that it is the season when the Indians, if not kept quiet, are most likely to commit depredations upon the whites. I deemed it prudent, in view of these difficulties, to receive a supply sufficient to last them until next May, and accordingly did so; besides, you will observe that the beef received was not alone for the Indians south of the San Joaquin river, but for those south of the Mercede river, the country set apart for the Indians at Camp Barbour, embracing both sides of the San Joaquin river, with Indians on each. The whole reserve was provided for by me, in accordance with an understanding between Dr. Wozencraft (whose district embraced a portion of this reserve) and myself.

On reaching the San Joaquin reserve, I found the Indians much dissatisfied; so much so, that they had even threatened violence to the whites, and a return to their old haunts in the mountains. The cause for this I found to be, first, the encroachments of the white miners on their territory, and working the few poor mines in their district; and by far the greatest source of complaint was the want of beef, of which they complained most bitterly, and, in truth, not without a cause, as they were entirely destitute of provisions, except the very scanty supply furnished by the chase, and a few fish caught in the rivers—a very precarious supply indeed for seven or eight thousand hungry souls. After visiting the various tribes in the district, and assuring them that a supply of beef would be ready for them in a few days, and promising them that I would see the miners and get them to leave the district, which the greater number of them did at my solicitation, in a short time I had the good fortune of seeing peace, quiet, and contentment prevailing throughout the entire district.

Having had no direct intelligence from your department since my arrival in the country, and being desirous of conferring with my colleagues, one of whom, (Colonel McKee,) if not both, I incidentally

learned were in San Francisco, I set out for that place, hoping to receive some communications direct from your department, which I doubted not had been addressed to me at that place, but I had failed to receive them on account of the impracticability of communicating with that point, owing to distance, character of country, &c., between that and the points of my operations.

I reached San Francisco on the 28th day of July, after an absence in the wilderness of six months. On my arrival in the city I had the pleasure of meeting my colleague, Colonel McKee, from whom I obtained some information, derived from your department, touching our duties, and I remained there a few days awaiting the arrival of the mail steamer, which was expected to bring a mail from "the States," by which I hoped to receive a letter from the department.

A few days afterwards I left San Francisco and returned to the San Joaquin river, where I remained until I received intelligence that the Indians in the vicinity of Los Angeles and San Diego were expressing dissatisfaction at not being treated with, and producing some alarm among the whites lest they might commence hostilities. Colonel Johnston, the sub-agent for the district of the San Joaquin valley, being on the ground, and having received and turned over to him the beef before spoken of, and the Indians throughout the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys being quiet and satisfied, I determined to return to San Francisco, and, if I could make the necessary arrangements for the purchase of goods for presents to the Indians, and procure the money necessary to meet other incidental expenses, proceed by sea to San Pedro, the embarcadero for Los Angeles, and from thence proceed to the Indian country in the vicinity, and enter into treaties with them.

On reaching San Francisco I received a letter from the department advising me of the fact that only the sum of $25,000 had been appropriated for the object of our mission, and that so soon as that amount had been expended we were to cease our negotiations and confine ourselves alone to our duties as agents. This was in the month of September, and the letter referred to from the department was under date of 27th of June, 1851.

Disappointed in my intended trip to the Indians in the neighborhood of Los Angeles and San Diego, everything connected with my duties as agent being arranged and moving on harmoniously under the management of agent Johnston, who was left in charge, and the rainy season about to set in, when business of every description would, in all probability, be suspended, I determined to visit Washington city, report to the department, and visit my family in Kentucky. Accordingly, after making the necessary arrangements, I left San Francisco on the 4th day of October, 1851.

Having now, sir, given you a somewhat detailed account of my acts as commissioner and agent of the government, with some of the reasons that influenced my actions, I will now, with your permission, briefly give you the result of my observations touching the manners, habits, customs, and extent of civilization of the Indians in California with whom I came in contact in the course of my official actions.

In the first place, as a general rule, like all other wild savages, they may be said to be an extremely ignorant, vicious, and faithless people,

with occasional individual exceptions to the rule. They may be divided into three classes, (which distinctions they themselves recognise,) to wit: the Christian or Mission, Gentile, and Monas or lost tribes. The first are so called from the fact that before the acquisition of the country by the government of the United States, the Catholic church (to which almost the entire population of California belonged or were attached) established, in many parts of the country, places for religious worship, called missions. One of the ostensible objects of these institutions, as I understand, was to domesticate, enlighten, and Christianize the Indians of the country. To these missions many of the Indians were induced to come, and many others were forced to them, often having been decoyed by stratagem into the power of those having charge of the institutions. When taken to the missions they were forced to labor for the establishment, and held the position of servants or slaves in it. Judging from present appearances, I would suppose that but little if any attention had ever been paid to either their moral, mental, or religious education, for they are, with a few exceptions, the most degraded, immoral, vicious, and faithless Indians in California; they really appear to have learned or been taught all the vices, without any of the virtues, of civilization. Indeed, the Gentile or wild tribes regard them as so much degraded by their so-called moral and religious training, that on their return to the tribe they can never attain a higher position than that of a mere captaincy.

The Gentile class constitute the tribe proper, occupying the valleys and low hills near the base of the mountains; the Monas or lost tribes inhabiting the higher mountains back from the Gentiles, or tribe proper, by whose permission and protection they visit occasionally the plains and water-courses for the purpose of fishing and hunting. In fact they maintain towards the tribe proper the character of colonies or dependencies, always assisting them in times of war, and at all times secreting the large bands of animals stolen by the tribe proper from the citizens of the country.

The Indians of California, I believe without exception, are all great rogues and robbers, having practised it from time immemorial. They do not regard it as a crime, dreading only the punishments that have but recently been inflicted upon them for their acts of depredation.

Before the acquisition of the country by the United States government the Indians of the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys were in the habit of crossing the coast range of mountains, which separated them from the Spanish settlements that were principally confined to the seacoast, and driving off large bands of horses, mules, and cattle, often as many as five hundred head at one time, across the mountains, at some one of the few passes through which alone those mountains can be crossed, and then feast and feed upon them until they were all consumed, when a similar expedition would be repeated. If the Indians succeeded in reaching the plains with their booty, they felt secure, knowing that the Spaniards dare not follow them so far—the Spaniards fearing them as an enemy, from the fact that the Indians had on many occasions proved themselves their superiors in a man-to-man fight. In this manner they obtained the necessary food for subsistence without the constant labor

of the chase, or any other legitimate mode of obtaining a supply; and hence I account for their habits of indolence and theft.

After our acquisition of the country, and when the discovery of gold called many of our countrymen to it, the Indians found a different order of things to encounter. When robbed, our countrymen would pursue them not only into the valleys, but even into the mountain fastnesses in the Sierra Nevada, and soon taught them that concealment alone was the only means by which they could enjoy their booty; that they could not, as heretofore, rely upon fighting off their pursuers, and those whom they had injured. Then it was that the services of their dependencies (the Monas) came into play by concealing in the mountains animals stolen by the tribe.

The Monas are emphatically a wild tribe. I met with many of them who had not before seen the face of a white man. They live in the range of the Sierra Nevada; and, from the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the food on which they subsist, and the kind of exercise to which they are accustomed from the broken and mountainous country in which they live, they are, in physical organization and development, certainly superior to any class of Indians that I have ever known; indeed, some of the finest specimens of the human form that I have ever met with, I have seen among those wild mountain tribes. So perfectly are they developed in every part, that I doubt whether the chisel of the sculptor or the pencil of the artist could fashion them superior. But these tribes or bands, like the others, are ignorant, vicious, and faithless, though in vice and worthlessness they are nothing like so degraded in the one, or wanting in the other, as the other tribes or classes. The truth seems to be, that heretofore the greater the intercourse between the Indians and the so-called civilized society of the country, the more degraded and debased the Indians. Yet I am satisfied that, by a proper course taken with them, they can be more easily civilized and Christianized than any Indians I have ever seen; and I do not hesitate to say that a faithful and energetic execution of the regulations adopted by the commissioners in the several treaties made with the Indians will in a few years have entirely changed their habits, and fitted them for the enjoyment of the advantages and benefits of civilized life.

They practise no kind of religious rites or ceremonies, and but a very few of them entertain a belief in any state of future existence after death. The few who have any such belief hold to the doctrine of transmigration, believing that the spirits of the chiefs and great men exist in the grizzly bear and elk, whilst the common people are transformed into the cayote, a species of the wolf common in that country; but by far the larger portion of them believe that with this life terminates their existence forever.

For the government of the tribe, or the management of their families, they have but a few simple rules. The power of the chief must be exercised in accordance with the will of the tribe expressed through their captains and chief warriors or headmen. He does not possess the absolute power of the chief of a tribe on the Atlantic side, yet his power and position are always respected, and he is treated with some degree of deference.

Polygamy is allowed in all the tribes, the number of wives being determined by his capacity to support them, and over whom his power is unlimited; and although the females do the greater portion of the labor, yet they are not treated so badly, or worked so hard, as the squaws of those tribes in the Atlantic States.

The Indians in California differ from those in the Atlantic States in many particulars. They have none of that morose and stubborn kind of stoicism that laughs at nothing, weeps at nothing, and is never surprised at anything. They possess the reverse of this in an eminent degree; and yet they possess as much animal courage, endurance, and cunning, as any Indians I have ever seen.

They may be said to know nothing practically of civilization, and may be regarded as so much blank material in the hands of the intelligent philanthropist, to be moulded and fashioned in such manner as may be deemed fit; for when their passions for revenge or plunder are not excited, they are generally a mild, quiet, indolent people, easily managed by a decisive, firm, and liberal course of treatment.

In war and the chase their principal weapons are the bow and arrows, with the knife. They are very expert indeed in the use of these weapons, particularly the bow and arrow, being able at the distance of thirty paces to drive an arrow through a man, or even an ox, unless stopped by a bone, and the rapidity and accuracy with which they discharge their arrows make them truly a formidable enemy at a short distance. Many of them, besides, have guns, in the use of which they are very expert. Taking into consideration the character of the country, which is generally a barren plain, or more barren mountains, with the knowledge the Indians have of it, the facilities for evading any force that might be sent against them, and the opportunities afforded them of attacking small parties, and making descents from their mountain fastnesses upon the neighboring mines and ranches, and every man at all acquainted with the facts would say that a war with those Indians would be much deplored. If, for instance, peace had not been restored between the whites and Indians during the past year in California, and the miners had been prevented from working the mines, thereby cutting off the vast supply of gold from that country, what, I ask, would have been the present condition of the old States? I leave it to commercial men to say.

A proper policy by the United States government through her agents, and just treatment of the Indians by the people of California, will, without doubt, insure a continuation of the peace and harmony that now exist between them; otherwise, a war, the termination of which no man can tell, must be the consequence.

The whole number of Indians, including men, women, and children, with whose tribes treaties have been formed in the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys, would amount to from twenty-five to thirty thousand souls; and from the best information that I could obtain, I judge that the number of those in the vicinity of Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, San Luis Rey, and San Diego, together with the tribes east of the great desert, near the Colorado river, would number some twenty or twenty-five thousand more—making, in all, at least forty thousand in the southern part of the State. In this estimate I include all the Indians

south of the Stanislaus river, and embracing a district of country at least seven hundred miles in length, and from three to four hundred in width. To take a proper charge of such a district of country, and such a number of Indians, the services of two agents, or sub-agents, would be required: one for the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys, the other south of the Texon pass. And I would further suggest that a military force of mounted men be assigned to each of those divisions: a small force in each would be sufficient—say, seventy men each; but they should be required to remain in the Indian country, so that, at all times, when their services were needed, they would be in readiness to act. A small military force of the kind, to patrol the country, would be of incalculable service in keeping the Indians in subjection and preventing lawless and unprincipled white men from committing acts of outrage and insolence towards the Indians, so well calculated to produce discontent, if not an open rupture between them and the whites generally. And I cannot too strongly recommend the appointment of a general superintendent of Indian affairs for the Pacific country, who should be required to locate at some suitable and accessible point, from whom instructions, &c., might emanate to the agents and others connected with the department in this country, which cannot be received, frequently, in due time for the emergency, from the department at Washington, owing to the great distance intervening. All of which is respectfully submitted.

With sentiments of respect, I am your obedient servant,

G. W. BARBOUR.

Hon. LUKE LEA,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington City.

A.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ESCORT,
Camp Belt, Rio de los Reyes, May 21, 1851.

SIR: In accordance with the conversations which I have had the honor to hold with you upon the apparent necessity of having a military force stationed on this reservation, and in the neighborhood of the San Joaquin river; and in view of the fact, also discussed with you, that we may safely pass over the country south of this river with a smaller force; I have given orders to divide the escort, so as to send companies B and K, 2d infantry, under Lieutenant Moore, to establish a post at the site of Camp Barbour, and to retain with you companies M and F, 3d artillery, with supplies for at least fifty days from the time of leaving this camp. To this arrangement I have already received your verbal approval, and you will oblige me by communicating it to me in writing for the information of the commanding officer of the department.

As Lieutenant Moore will receive instructions to maintain the treaties with the Indians on this reservation, will you be pleased to furnish copies of those treaties for his guidance.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

E. D. KEYES,
Captain 3d Artillery, commanding Escort.

Col. G. W. BARBOUR, *Indian Commissioner, &c., &c.*

B.

CAMP BELT, ON KING'S RIVER, *May* 21, 1851.

SIR: I have received your note of this date, requesting me to state in writing the opinion and wish verbally expressed by me to you on the subject of dividing the troops under your command, and sending a part of them to some point within the Indian reserves to insure the faithful performance of the treaties recently entered into with the various tribes in this section of the State, and hasten to comply with that request.

Having treated with the greater part, if not all, of the tribes in this part of the country that have recently been at open hostility with the whites, I am well satisfied that, for all purposes of safety and protection in visiting and treating with the numerous tribes not yet visited and treated with in the southern district of the State, a much smaller force than your entire command will be amply sufficient.

In the next place, for the purpose of protecting the whole, and securing a faithful compliance on the part of the Indians with the terms of the several treaties recently made with them in this part of the State, I am satisfied that it is *absolutely necessary* to have a body of troops stationed at some convenient point within the territory set apart for the occupancy of the Indians that have been treated with.

And again, it is a well-known fact that there are vicious and unprincipled white men in the country who are ever ready and willing to take advantage of circumstances; and by vending ardent spirits, and otherwise imposing upon the Indians, would very soon force them to violate any treaty that may have been entered into by them. Such characters can only be overawed and prevented from committing such outrages by the presence of a force sufficient at all times to arrest them, and bring them to justice.

Under all the circumstances, I am well satisfied, and greatly desire that you would divide the troops now under your command, retaining a part as an escort through the remaining portion of the Indian country, and locating the other portion at such place as your knowledge of the country set apart for the Indians treated with, and better judgment, may suggest.

If I should be permitted to express an opinion as to such location, I would respectfully suggest some point on the San Joaquin river.

With sentiments of respect, I am your obedient servant

G. W. BARBOUR, *Commissioner.*

Captain E. D. KEYES.

C.

LOS ANGELES, CAL., *June* 17, 1851.

SIR: Having effected treaties with the greater portion of the hostile tribes of Indians in this (the southern) part of the State, and west of the great desert; and believing, from the best information that I have been enabled to obtain, that it would be impolitic, if not impracticable, to march your command across the desert at this season of the year;

and being desirous, as far as possible, to save expense to the government, I have concluded to dispense for the present with a military escort. You are therefore at liberty to make such disposition of the troops under your command as your better judgment and duty may require.

At parting with you and the gentlemanly officers of your command, you will please to pardon me, sir, for expressing to you, and through you to all the officers and others connected with the command, my most heartfelt gratitude and thanks for the kind and gentlemanly treatment that I have received from each one during the long and tedious campaign through which we have just passed.

During that campaign I cannot flatter myself that all my actions and declarations have been free of offence to all; but if I have offended, in word or deed, I respectfully ask to be forgiven, upon the assurance that such offending (if any) did not result from any unkind or illiberal feeling to any one.

And now, sir, wishing you, and each of the officers of your command, health and happiness, I am your obedient servant and friend,

G. W. BARBOUR.

Captain E. D. KEYES.

D.

CAMP MAGRUDER, NEAR LOS ANGELES,
June 17, 1851.

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your communication of this date, wherein, for reasons stated, you dispense with the further services of the escort under my command.

The sentiments contained in the concluding portion of your letter, which I have shown to the officers with me, we trust we appreciate, and we cannot too sincerely thank you for their expression. All of us regard them as the evidence of that generous and noble character which we have learned to admire in you.

During nearly five months that we have been associated together in the public service, I have not failed to observe the stern integrity of your conduct and the entire forgetfulness of self which has characterized your course. You have labored to prevent war with the Indians, with an intelligence and zeal which merit the approval of the country, and the remembrance of which must afford satisfaction to the succeeding years of your life.

It might have been anticipated that the hardships and deprivations to which we have been necessarily subjected in an uninhabitable and inhospitable country for so long time, would necessarily have developed occasional displays of temper and ill-feeling, but I remember no unpleasant emotion caused by yourself; and if I have ever offended you, I crave your forgiveness, notwithstanding your letter assures me I have it in advance.

In conclusion, my dear sir, allow me to express my sincere hope for

your continued prosperity and happiness, in which I am joined by all the gentlemen with me.

I am, sir, respectfully and truly, your friend and servant,

E. D. KEYES,
Captain 3d Artillery, commanding Escort.

Col. G. W. BARBOUR,
Indian Commissioner.

E.

MARIPOSA, SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY,
May 19, 1851.

SIR: Having established a cattle rancho on the Mariposa river, neighboring to the Indian tribes of the Sierra Nevada, with whom you are engaged in treating, I submit to your consideration the following proposals: I propose to furnish for the present and ensuing years, (eighteen hundred and fifty-one, and eighteen hundred and fifty-two,) all the animals (beef cattle, brood cows, and brood mares) which you shall need for the execution of your treaties with the Indian tribes in the district under your direction; and which I understand to comprehend all that portion of the State lying between the parallel of the upper waters of the San Joaquin river and the southern boundary line. I engage and bind myself to make the deliveries in the course of the present and following years, at such time and place, within the district, as you shall indicate, and to commence the deliveries one month after the date of notification to me of treaties, as they shall successively be made. I propose to furnish beef cattle upon the hoof at the price of fifteen cents per pound net; brood cows, between the ages of three and five years, at the price of seventy-five dollars each; and brood mares, between the ages of four and six years, at the price of seventy-five dollars each.

Very respectfully,

JOHN C. FREMONT.

Col. G. W. BARBOUR,
Indian Commissioner, &c., &c.

F.

CAMP KEYES, ON THE CAHWIA RIVER, CAL.,
May 28, 1851.

SIR: I have received your letter of the 19th instant, in which you propose furnishing beef cattle, brood mares and cows, to the Indians in this (the southern) district of the State, according to the stipulations of such treaties as have been or may be made with the different tribes.

Having received no advices from the Indian department at Washington since my colleagues and myself adopted the policy of supplying those Indians with whom we might treat with beef and stock, &c., I could not, except to a very limited extent, enter into any unconditional contract for supplying those Indians treated with in this (the southern) district of the State; but in view of the necessity for such supplies, and not doubting but that the proper authorities will readily

acquiesce in the policy that we have adopted, I should not hesitate to make such contracts as may be necessary to carry out, in *good faith*, the stipulations of such treaties as may be made with the Indians; such contracts, of course, being left subject to the approval or rejection of the Indian department at Washington.

I have had many proposals offered me to furnish such supplies; but regarding your offer as the best and lowest of any yet made by a responsible man, and believing, as I do, that your offer is a fair one, I have concluded to close with your proposition, subject, however, to the approval or rejection of the same by the Indian department at Washington.

Should this arrangement be satisfactory, you can confer with Colonel A. Johnston, sub-agent for the San Joaquin valley, who is near you, and who will advise you of the time and place, and number of beef cattle wanted for the Indians in this vicinity, with whom treaties have been made. I will advise you as to what will be necessary after leaving this valley.

Respectfully,

G. W. BARBOUR, *Commissioner.*

Col. J. C. FREMONT.
