

Indian Reservations.--Gov. Bigler's Special Message.

Messrs. Editors Alta California :

I have just read the Special Message of Gov. Bigler, published in your paper of the 30th ult., and observe with regret, toward the close of that otherwise sensible document, a somewhat obscure passage about our Indian affairs, and certainly a very unfair, undignified fling at the Commissioners appointed by the General Government to arrange and settle the Indian difficulties in this State.

Charged as those gentlemen were, with the investigation and management of these important matters, and assiduously devoted to their work, as all parties agree they have been, common fairness would indicate that their zeal and success should rather be applauded, and their measures candidly weighed, than denounced in advance, or prejudged by the public press or the public men of the State.

That one or two reckless presses, and the whole band of patriots who have recently been stumping the State with a view to Senatorial, or other honors, have for months been trying to make political capital out of what little they know of this subject, has been and is notorious, and perhaps was to have been expected from men who act upon the maxim "that all's fair in politics;" but that a man like Gov. Bigler, elevated by the people to the highest office in their gift, should lend himself to such unworthy aims, should prostitute his official position to the circulation of false and slanderous accusations as to the measures and official conduct of the Commissioners appointed by the President and Senate, was certainly not expected. In ignorance, or wilful perversion of well known facts, the Governor closes a tirade evidently prepared for "Buncombe," with a grave recommendation to the Legislature to take decided measures to insure the rejection by the Senate of the important Treaties recently made, when they shall be submitted to that august body for ratification; and this purely upon the strength of his *ex parte* assertion that he has been "credibly informed" so and so. His words are:

"A decided expression should be transmitted to the States, and a rejection of the treaties by which these reservations are secured, EARNESTLY URGED."

Another strange feature in this proceeding is, that this recommendation is urged upon the Legislature almost in the same breath with another, asking Congress to assume and pay the entire Indian war debt of the State, which, but for the labors of these Commissioners, and the provisions of these identical Treaties, would by this time have been eight or ten instead of two millions of dollars!

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and pay the entire Indian war debt of the State, which, but for the labors of these Commissioners, and the provisions of these identical Treaties, would by this time have been eight or ten instead of two millions of dollars!

The Governor doubtless understands the science of party tactics much better than that of political economy, still I think he calculates without his host if he expects the intelligent members of the Senate and Assembly to make a leap in the dark on so grave a question—one involving such vital interests—merely upon the strength of his having been "*credibly informed*," and apparently for the sole purpose of discrediting a Whig administration. This, after all, Messrs. Editors, I am constrained to believe, is the foundation of this whole opposition movement of certain politicians to the recently made treaties. The Governor should remember that in a war of this sort there are always "*blows to get, as well as blows to give*," and the U. S. Commissioners are not the men to submit tamely to continued slanders and misrepresentations, come from what quarter they may.

Considering the small amount of means voted by a Democratic Congress; the difficulties which everywhere met the Commissioners in their labors of peace; the present universal peace and good understanding throughout our whole extended frontier; the rapidity with which that frontier is settling wherever the action of the Commissioners has been possible; the certainty that if the arrangements they have made shall not be carried out, (*and they cannot be, unless the treaties are approved.*) that "*confusion worse confounded*" must immediately ensue; that *Indian depredations, wars, war loans, depreciated warrants, increased taxation, or utter ruin and bankruptcy*, must almost inevitably follow, and what can you conceive, Messrs. Editors, more short-sighted, impolitic, unstatesmanlike, than such a recommendation as that made by Gov. Bigler to the Legislature?

How much wiser and better would it be for the Legislature, if they deem it proper to interfere at all in matters which all agree devolve upon the General Government, to institute an inquiry into the actual facts of the case, and learn what is the truth; if the agents of the U. S. have acted unwisely, injuriously to any part of the State, *make it appear*, suggest a remedy for their errors; or an entire change, to a wiser and safer policy. But *don't* ask them to act at random, to "*go it blind*," to do injustice to the Commissioners and to themselves. It may be decidedly better to all parties to have these treaties carried out, to invite the disbursement of some millions of "*Uncle Sam's*" money among our citizens, the addition of perhaps *one hundred* or more families as teachers, farmers, mechanics, &c, to our population; the establishment upon the "*reservations*" of the contemplated Military Posts; in a word, to keep on good terms with "*Uncle Sam*," at least, until he agrees to pay our existing war debt, and thus relieve us from the embarrassment into which hasty and unwise legislation has involved the State. It is not the object of the writer to go into

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If the action of the Commissioners in this Indian business is not judicious, useful, salutary, why do not some of the gentlemen opposed show up their errors, and point out a better and a safer system? They should not content themselves by saying,

"I do not like thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why, I cannot tell;
But this I know full well,
I do not like thee, Doctor Fell."

As to the extent of all the Indian reservations in the State I cannot speak advisedly. I have examined some of them, and risk nothing in saying that there is not a business man or company in California who would, taking them as a whole, pay for them *one dime per acre*, unless expressly exempted from State and County taxes. On each tract there is doubtless some good land—or at least there should be. For every acre reserved or set apart for the Indians, I have no doubt you can find one hundred to one thousand acres of equally good unoccupied public land, in the immediate vicinity of every reservation.

What matters it then to the great State of California, whether the Indians, *till lately the owners of the whole*, shall have in their reservations a few acres more or less?

Apart from the chance of making political capital, I think, Messrs. Editors, you will agree with me, that it is a matter of very little consequence, at least at present, and will remain so while nineteen-twentieth of the lands in the State are lying idle, unoccupied, and to agriculture useless. Some of our *very wise aspirants for office*, I understand, are afraid that we shall not have land enough—that our laboring population will be redundant, and that all the Indians should forthwith be removed without the limits of the State, and settled on the arid plains of Utah. Let me tell you, gentlemen, the Indians of California can never be removed into another State or Territory remote from the sea coast. You have but one choice—KILL, MURDER, EXTERMINATE, or DOMESTICATE and IMPROVE THEM.

SHASTA.

The Superior Court.

Alta California

FRANCISCO, MONDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 9, 1852.

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