

Letter from Lt. Wiley of the Union Volunteers.

Feb. 12, 1855.

MR. EDITOR, SIR:—According to information received this evening, there appears to be a misunderstanding among some of our friends in regard to what was to have been the mode of operation as agreed upon by Capt. Judah of the regular service and the companies of Volunteers under the commands of Capts. F. M. and Chesley Woodward—consequently I deem it just, as one of the Volunteers, that the public should be informed of the circumstances under which we have acted and then discriminate between right and wrong.

When Capt. F. M. Woodward's company arrived on the Klameth river, we found the citizens of the river divided among themselves in regard to the best course to pursue. We found Capt. Judah earnestly and energetically working to effect a compromise among the different parties on the river, and to prevent the shedding of "innocent blood." We found also that it was impossible to accomplish any thing so long as that state of things existed; consequently after hearing the opinion of Capt. Judah, and hearing his instructions read, we made a proposition which was presented in writing, and was, I believe, unanimously adopted by all the forces on the river. I have not the proposition with me, but the purport was this: That Capt. Judah through his interpreter should procure the services of one responsible Indian from each rancho from the mouth of Salmon river to the mouth of Klameth, to assist us, (the whites,) in capturing and exterminating their hostile brethren, the Red Cap Indians, and any one refusing to comply should be considered as an enemy; while we on our part, were to use our influence to prevent any depredations being committed on any of the friendly Indians during our absence.

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In conformity to the proposition, runners were dispatched immediately to the different ranches on the river for their Chiefs; in due time they came and were informed of what we wanted them to do and they gave their assent to assist us in carrying out our object. We told them to send word to the various ranches for all the friendly Indians to remain at home, and not go to the mountains, as all the Indians that were in the mountains were our enemies. We also told them not to harbor or feed any Red Cap Indians which they agreed to do, and if any of the hostiles came in that they would tie them and come immediately and inform us of the same. So under these circumstances we divided our companies and started to the mountains, and after trailing the hostiles for several days over the mountains and by different trails we found that they all pointed immediately to the Moreo and Capell ranches. In the mean time Capt. Young, with another party of men were trailing others of the same tribe and on different trails to the same point. It was upon this information, and at the request and earnest entreaty of our guide (an old Weitchpeck Indian,) that Capt. Woodward went with five others on the evening of the fourth to the above ranches, and after being informed by the Indians through our interpreter (an other Weitchpeck, who speaks English,) that there were Red Caps in camp contrary to their promise to us, and after being led by them into an ambush of "hostiles" and almost miraculously escaping with our lives; the next day we made the attack upon them as published in your last number.

Now sir, these are stubborn facts, and it is for a discriminating public to decide whether in making the attack we did violate our promise to the Indians, or whether we are guilty of murdering defenceless and innocent Indians.

Yours

R. WILEY

