

No. III.

INDIAN AND MILITARY AFFAIRS IN CALIFORNIA.

No. 7.

Report of General Smith.

HEAD-QUARTERS PACIFIC DIVISION,
Sonoma, March 13, 1851.

GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the General-in-chief of the date of December 26, 1850, which reached me on my return from the Gila. It requires me to report, "what reduction in the number of troops now in (these) two departments may be made with safety to the public service?"

The object of maintaining troops in this division is, I presume, to protect the Territory and people from hostile aggression, either from foreign nations by sea or from the Indians on the frontier; and to aid in the execution of the laws. As the Indians and maritime frontier are each over a thousand miles long; as the latter is open to the fleets of all the nations of the world, and the former lined with Indian tribes—many of whom have been provoked to hostility by intrusions on their lands and outrages on their people, and are now arrayed in arms—it cannot be supposed that any diminution of the already inadequate military force here would be suggested, unless with the intention of replacing it by some other description of force calculated to answer the purposes intended.

The only other such force is the militia of the State, and the general and Secretary of War can decide on the relative efficiency and economy of the two. I must observe, however, that the militia in California are not organized. The State is indeed divided to form corps, and officers, especially the higher ones named, but the men have not been mustered or enrolled.

It is not certain, however, that economy will be eventually consulted by employing regular troops only, for the State is raising a military force not to be mustered into the service of the United States, the privates of which are to receive as much pay as any officer of the division except myself; and the Federal Treasury it is expected will finally pay the expense.

As to aid in executing the laws—especially those protecting the Indians and restraining intercourse with them—it can hardly be expected from those engaged in the very infractions to be prevented.

Whatever arms are delivered to the frontier people here will be lost to the United States; many of them will be soon sold to the storekeepers in the mines and will be purchased by the Indians for gold, which they bring from the mountains.

Whatever may be the result of the efforts of the commissioners in making treaties with the Indians, I have now no hope that peace will be maintained, for certain persons have determined that there shall be a war, and there is not sufficient military force and no judicial authority to restrain them. On this subject, the Indian commissioners can give the Government *more direct* information than I can.

It will be seen that in my opinion the diminution or increase of the mili-

[1]

138

tary force in this division will depend entirely on the selection the Government may make of the means to be employed here.

With respect, your obedient servant,

PERSIFER F. SMITH,

Brevet Major-General Commanding Pacific Division.

Brevet Major-General R. JONES,

Adjutant-General of the Army.