

Indian Reservations.

The following correspondence of Mr. McKee, U. S. Indian Commissioner, we take pleasure in laying before our readers, in reference to the acts of the Board of Commissioners that have been so unjustly commented upon:

EDITOR OF THE HERALD—

Gentlemen: Your editorial of this morning, calling public attention to "a most important debate" on the above subject, in the Assembly on Thursday, will, I hope, justify my troubling you with the following note.

For several weeks, during the early part of the session, I noticed occasional outbursts of eloquent criticism and denunciation in the Legislature, generally ending in some distant, mysterious insinuation of enormous frauds on the part of the U. S. Commissioners, or their friends; and urgent appeals for the passage of resolutions condemnatory of their course of policy, and especially of the reservations of the land made by them for the use of the Indians. Understanding that opposition to the "treaties" had been agreed on by the leaders of "the party" in this State, and that such tirades, intended for *buncombe*, might be expected, they were generally allowed to pass. About the last of January, however, at the request of the Chairman of the Senate Committee, I visited Sacramento, for the purpose of making a public explanation of our policy and proceedings, and if possible, disabuse the minds of the honest and well-meaning part of the Legislature on that subject. The meeting was public. All the various Indian Committees were invited, and some of the members did attend. I made a brief statement, and answered all the questions propounded. My remarks were afterwards published in the papers, and several gentlemen of the Senate have since told me they understood the subject much better in consequence. As to the other House, I suppose my labor was lost, for I had scarcely returned to this city, before I saw a notice of a report submitted by Mr. Coates, from the Committee on "Indian Reservations," reiterating the old story, only in a more offensive form. This week I happened to be in Sacramento, and was astonished to find that the resolutions appended to Mr. Coates' report, had been actually hurried through the house to a third reading. Anxious that so respectable a body as the Assembly should be saved from the *faux pas* of endorsing as facts the exaggerated, ridiculous assertions of that report, I addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, the note alluded to by your correspondent, viz:

SACRAMENTO, THURSDAY MORNING,
March 4th, 1852.

Indian Affairs, the note alluded to by your correspondent, viz:

SACRAMENTO, THURSDAY MORNING,
March 4th, 1852.

Wm. H. LYONS, Esq., *Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Indian Affairs*—

SIR: Though I arrived here early yesterday morning, it was not until a late hour last night, that I met with the "Times and Transcript" of Tuesday, giving a report of the House proceedings on Monday, the 1st inst.

From this I learn that the House, having under consideration the report of the Committee on Indian Reservations, submitted on the 16th ult., by Mr. Coates, proceeded to act upon certain resolutions appended thereto, denouncing the treaties made with the Indians of California by the U. S. Commissioners; and by implication, the official conduct of the several agents; and that upon your motion, the said resolutions, as amended, were engrossed, and ordered to lie over.

I have this morning procured a copy of Mr. Coates' report, and for the first time perused it. I scarcely know in what terms, consistent with due respect to the Honorable Committee, to characterize that extraordinary production. I will only say, that it appears to be founded on gross misinformation and ex-parte reports, calculated to mislead the House in its action upon a very grave question.

I would therefore respectfully ask the favor of your calling the attention of the House again to the subject, and if the rules preclude a reconsideration of the vote ordering an engrossment—or if it shall be deemed inexpedient to recommit the report, &c., to the same committee, that a special committee may be appointed to investigate and report upon such facts as may be pertinent, and thus enable the Assembly to act understandingly upon the subject.

If such special committee shall be raised, composed of gentlemen wholly disinterested in pecuniary results, I flatter myself that I can with little difficulty satisfy them and the majority of the Assembly; that the report of the Committee on Indian Reservations, presented by Mr. Coates, is a very unsafe foundation upon which to base grave legislative proceedings.

In this event, I will also submit, that the remarks attributed to the member from Shasta, Mr. Fleming, in relation to the reservation in Scott's Valley, are not only at variance with the facts of the case, but with the written representations made to the Indian Department by the claimants or squatters upon that part of the public domain—by the parties directly interested, including the Hon. member, Mr. Fleming, and his partners.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

REDICK MCKEE,

U. S. Indian Agent for N. California.

Subsequently I was honored by introduction to the chairman of the Committee on "Reservations," Mr.

domain—by the parties directly interested, including
the Hon. member, Mr. Fleming, and his partners.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

REDICK McKEE.

U. S. Indian Agent for N. California.

Subsequently, I was honored by introduction to the
chairman of the Committee on "Reservations," Mr.
Cones, and arranged with him to meet his Committee
some evening in the early part of the ensuing week, to
have an explanation of the matters at issue.

As by the action of this Committee, of the House it-
self, of the public press—this whole subject has been
brought prominently before the public, I shall request
that the proposed meeting be in the public hall of the
House, that the Governor, State officers, and all the mem-
bers of the Legislature shall be invited to be present. I
will then endeavor by a plain statement of facts, and an
exhibition of irrefragable documents—not to clear myself
*of charges of fraud or speculation for I throw all that sort of
thing back in the faces of the insinulators, with the utmost dis-
dain and defiance*—but to show that the whole system of
opposition to the policy of the United States Agents in
this Indian business, grows out of either the most
wretched partisan feelings—a desire to make political
capital at the expense of the people of California; or ex-
treme and most reprehensible *ignorance of the whole sub-
ject.*

That a large majority of the present Legislature desire
to act understandingly and fairly upon this momentous
subject, I cannot for a moment doubt. The misfortune
appears to be, they have committed the preparation of
reports and the indication of measures for discussion
and adoption, to young, hasty, inexperienced men, who
eschewing patient labor and investigation, snatch at
street or bar-room gossip, and then jump at conclusions,
without the least regard to the feelings of public men, or
the accuracy of their facts.

To elicit truth on this subject, to give the Legislature
facts upon which they may safely base action, (if, indeed,
they shall feel it their duty to act this session,) will be
my object at the proposed interview. I hope your cor-
respondent will be "*among us taking notes.*" Meantime
if those honorable members of the House, who have been
so lavish of their criticisms and denunciations of the
"Indian Commissioners," will so arrange their business
as to give this matter an hour's attention, they may dis-
cover that *facts and figures* are, after all, more reliable
than mere *gossip*. Of one thing they appear now to be
fully aware, and that is, the Commissioners may be at-
tacked with perfect impunity in the House.

Respectfully, yours,

REDICK McKEE.

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FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 13, 1852.

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