

No. 17.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
March 28, 1865.

SIR: Your communication of the 20th, by the kindness of Mr. Hoffman, was duly received. I can assure you I feel very much gratified by your favorable reception of my application, and if appointed shall endeavor faithfully to perform the duties entrusted to me.

As you may not be perfectly informed of the condition of the Indians in this portion of the State, you may not think it presumption on my part to offer a few suggestions in regard to them.

I presume you are already aware that nearly all the Indians in the lower portion of the State (excepting those on the Colorado river) are partially civilized, and were at a time connected with or under the influence of the various missions in this part of the State, and by the breaking up of the missions they became scattered again throughout the mountains, and established their rancherias wherever they could find a small tract of land with sufficient water for irrigation; and as water is not abundant, they have been obliged to occupy many small places to obtain sufficient land for cultivation.

The San Luis Indians are much further advanced in civilization than any other tribe. They have some horses and a few cattle, and they also cultivate more land than the other Indians, and many of them work on the ranches as servants, and also in the vineyards.

The Cohuillas are not nearly as far advanced in civilization. They live further in the mountains and are more scattered; nevertheless they also cultivate small patches of ground, but in a very rude manner, having very few tools to work with. There are several rancherias on and near the eastern slope of the mountains, which are known by the names of their chiefs, and there is quite a large rancheria at a place called Agua Caliente, and another at Toras, on the La Pagoras.

I am not aware that the government has ever done anything for any of these Indians, and I do not think they require any assistance, except in farming tools and some seeds, till they can get a start; but they do require protec-

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tion from a vagabond and desperate set of white men and Mexicans, who go among them to sell whiskey, and induce them to steal and rob for their benefit; and it is very important that an agent down here should be empowered to call on the military for assistance (when necessary) in the removal or arrest of such parties, as they are generally very desperate characters.

As the planting season is now approaching, a little assistance in the shape of farming tools, and a few hundred pounds of corn, with pumpkin and melon seeds, will do a great amount of good, if judiciously distributed among the various rancherias.

The past season has been a very hard one for the Indians, on account of the drought; they have been obliged to consume even their seed-corn and grain, to keep them from starving, and many more than usual come into the settlements to beg. I am sure a small amount expended at this time would be worth to the Indians more than ten times the same amount after the planting time has passed.

With high regard, I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. A. STANLEY.

Hon. AUSTIN WILEY.

P. S.—Should you conclude to do anything for the Indians down here, I will cheerfully undertake the distribution without remuneration, only asking an allowance for the necessary expenses incurred in doing the same.

Please let me know by return steamer.

Your obedient servant,

J. Q. A. STANLEY.
