

## S. Doc. 4.

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SAN FRANCISCO, May 13, 1851.

SIR: By this mail I transmit, in another envelope, a joint letter from myself and colleagues, dated at Camp Barbour, on the Upper San Joaquin river, 1st instant, accompanying a copy of a highly important treaty, concluded, on the 29th ultimo, with sixteen more of the mountain tribes—making a total of twenty-one tribes treated with and happily settled in a little short of three months. Referring to that communication for all particulars, I now beg to report, that on the 3d instant Dr. Wozencraft, our secretary, and myself, left that camp and arrived here on the 8th instant. I was quite disappointed in not finding remittances or despatches from you, by the steamer which left New York on the 26th of March. By the mail due here the 20th instant I shall hope to receive answers to some of the numerous communications I have addressed to your office since I left New York. You will see by the papers that another awful calamity has visited this city, and also Stockton. Many millions of property was destroyed. Fortunately, twenty bales of my New York purchases were stored in a different part of the city, and are safe. Our only loss is five bales blankets, shirts, &c., stored in Stockton; these are a total loss: original cost \$481 12.

On the San Joaquin I turned over to Col. Barbour, for his southern district, all the goods we had left; original cost \$2,257 17. In that delightful climate but little clothing is required by either whites or Indians. To the latter, presents of *beef* and *flour* are far more useful and acceptable than *money* or *clothing*. And for mere trinkets, (as rings, beads, &c.) they have far less regard than any other Indians I have met. There is a small description of beads, white and blue, which they use as a representative of value, as we do money, and serve as a circulating medium for the settlement of debts of honor—gambling debts. Gambling with sticks and cards is an accomplishment of which they are very fond, and for which they are indebted to the Mexicans. In all our treaties you will observe that we have dropped the old custom of stipulating for annuities of money, and substituted expenditures during a few years for provisions, farming stock, school-houses, teachers, &c. In the end I think this will be found the safer and cheaper plan, and hope it will meet your approval.

If the report I see in the papers, of your estimate for our purposes in California being cut down to \$25,000, be correct, I shall deeply feel the mistaken policy of Congress. And if the Indians on the frontiers shall again become dissatisfied, and a war breaks out, it will be found when too late that no greater blunder could have been made. The sum you asked for, \$75,000, is the very lowest that should have been named. Enclosed I will hand you copies of letters which, as disbursing agent of the commission, I have deemed it proper to address to my colleagues, Col. Barbour and Dr. Wozencraft. From these letters you will gather my views, and render it unnecessary for me to write you in this letter as fully as I should otherwise do. My ledger as disbursing agent shows the following results, which give a *bird's-eye view* of the present state of our finances:

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Folio 14. Travelling expenses, &c.....	\$2,329 70
16. Provisions account.....	5,522 25
18. Merchandise account, for presents, &c.....	8,055 98
19. Interpreter's account.....	538 10
23. Salaries (to 9th April).....	7,047 00
Advance to Col. Barbour for expenses .....	500 00
"    to Dr. Wozencraft.....	1,080 80
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	25,073 83
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To the credit of the government I will have the original appropriation of \$25,000; amount remitted by Grant & Barton, per my order, to my son in Virginia; amount of reclamation for two bales lost on the Isthmus, \$144 10; and some \$50 or \$60 received for shirts and blankets sold to soldiers of our escort at the request of their officers. With this you will also receive, if the copy can be completed in time, a full transcript of our journal while acting as a joint board. Hereafter each of us will act on his own judgment and responsibility.

With due regard, your most obedient servant,

REDICK McKEE.

LUKE LEA, Esq.,

*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington City.*

P. S.—The transcript of our journal to the 4th of April is all that can be made ready for this mail. The remainder will go by next steamer.

R. McK.