

The Clear Lake Indians.

We extract the following account of the Clear Lake affairs, from an extra *Herald*, by way of showing that we are perfectly willing, and indeed anxious, to give as prominent a place to one version as to another. Our columns have always been open to any respectful communication, and we should have cheerfully given place to any account of the affair written by General Smith or any officer of our army, whether it differed from information, derived from other sources, or was of a similar tenor. We have not done with this subject yet, but for the present merely subjoin the General's own recital of the affair, notwithstanding it is a little obscure in some particulars. It will be seen that *The Watchman* received an account of this affair differing from our own in no important particular, and we understand that it was derived from an officer of the army.

The Clear Lake Indians.—Letter from Gen. P. F. Smith.

SATURDAY MORNING, June 1.

We received the following communication last night, too late for publication in our regular steamer edition. The necessity of at once sending forth an official contradiction of a charge so monstrous, by the steamer which bears the charge itself to the United States, has induced us to issue an extra this morning. The following is the letter of Gen. Smith on the subject. Our cotemporaries cannot be any longer ignorant of the source from which we derived our information.

To the Editors of the San Francisco Herald

GENTLEMEN: I have only this morning, (Friday, May 31st,) seen in the "Alta California for the Steamer Oregon," an article headed "Horrible Slaughter of Indians."

It is a falsehood from the beginning to the end.

~~It is a falsehood from the beginning to the end. The tribes punished are not the Indians either of Sonoma or Napa Valleys. They have, for a long time, inhabited the borders and islands of Clear Lake, fifty miles distant, and the head of Russian river beyond.~~

~~No one of the whites murdered was the one who killed an Indian in Sonoma. The latter is now alive and lives at Sonoma.~~

The outrages committed on the Indians in Sonoma and Napa, a few months since, were murders of peaceful laboring Indians on the farms in those valleys. The offenders were arrested and escorted by Lieut. Davidson himself, as far as the Sheriff thought necessary for security, committed for examination by a magistrate in Benicia, brought by a writ of "habeas corpus" before a court in San Francisco, and released on bail to appear for trial. The tribes on Clear Lake were not approached. Lieut. Davidson was not the Commander of the expedition, and it ought not to be necessary

to say, that "an order of extermination without sparing sex or age," would neither be given or executed by any officer or soldier of the American army. The tribes attacked, have murdered some of the farmers living nearest them, and attacked others without success, burnt all the houses, and driven off all the cattle where they succeeded—murdered citizens travelling to the mines on Trinity river—defied the authorities—dared the troops to approach them, organized and prepared for a long and armed resistance, and arrayed themselves and fought when they were approached.

One of the editors of the "Alta California" has informed me that Captain Frisbie and Doctor Ely, living at Sonoma, are his informants. Neither was with the expedition, or in that part of the country in which it acted; and if either has made the statement published, it has been to indulge some personal feeling or serve some private interest, at the expense of truth. How can the conductors of any respectable press, on such testimony, with the means of learning the truth close at hand, assail the officers and soldiers of an army with accusations of cruelty and cowardice, belied as they are, in a most extraordinary manner, by the whole experience of the war just finished. The publication, made in the absence of all the officers engaged on the expedition, who are now on other arduous duty, and on the eve of the departure of the mail for the United States, demands and receives from me, on behalf of my fellow soldiers, the qualification of a base and malicious falsehood, from whomsoever it may come.

PERSIFOR F. SMITH;

Br. Maj. Gen. U. S. A.

Alta California.

SAN FRANCISCO, MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 3, 1850.

Printed by