

No. 40.

OFFICE INDIAN AFFAIRS,
San Francisco, Cal., June 30, 1864.

SIR: I arrived here on the 26th, after a visit of two weeks to Round valley and Mendocino. I reached Round valley on the 15th instant, and met Mr. Steele there, as per agreement, on the 18th. We proceeded to take an inventory of the property, and completed it by the 20th, the result of which will more fully appear when receipts for the same are forwarded to your department. I beg to say, however, that I receipted for a great many articles which are utterly worthless, and which seem to have passed from the hands of one superintendent to another to swell the list of property, and make some showing for the disbursement of funds which have gone through their hands. Pretty much all the farming implements and tools, besides being old and in a worn-out condition, seem to have been refuse goods in the first place, and were disposed of to the government in the absence of any other purchaser. In this list of worthless property I do not include purchases made under Mr. Steele's administration, for really although the list look large, there is no personal property on the reservation, aside from the stock, of much value except that purchased by him, and I shall expend all such as is worthless in my reports during the year. I found the crops in excellent condition, with a fine prospect for an abundant yield—enough, indeed, to feed all the Indians there, or that may come there, for the next twelve months. My only fear is, that we may not be able to save

it all, but I made the best arrangements I could by purchasing lumber and employing men to build granaries to do so. I found the stock all in good condition; but the mules and horses, except a few of the latter, are old and worthless. The cattle and hogs are in good condition, but much scattered. I have no knowledge as to the correctness of the number for which I receipted, but was governed, as I could only be, by Mr. Steele's receipt, less the expenditure. It shall be my first care, when the harvest fields are cleaned, to get up what can be found, and ascertain as nearly as possible what the government owns. The Indians there are all in excellent condition and spirits. There is plenty of corn and grain to feed the squaws and children till the crops are gathered. To the field hands, of which we can turn out about two hundred, we feed beef once a day while they are at work, giving them vegetables and corn beside. We can get along with the goods we have on hand for clothing until New York shipment arrives. I found a bad state of feeling existing between Captain Douglas, the commanding officer at Fort Wright, and the officers and employes on the reservation. Without going into any details concerning the troubles, I simply pass it by, saying that I brought about amicable relations between the military and Indian department in the valley, by removing the supervisor and such of the employes as had taken part in the ill feeling. I appointed a young man, Saul M. Ferran, temporary special agent for the reserve; gave him strict instructions in writing relative to his duties, and invested him with full power, through Captain Douglas, to have them obeyed. He is a stranger to me, and was one of Mr. Steele's employes. He is a quiet, intelligent young man, and I feel that I can trust him. The settlers there are all extremely anxious concerning the intention of the government relative to the purchase of their improvements. I informed them that I had already recommended the department to take preliminary steps for the purchase of their improvements, in order that Round valley may be had for the exclusive use and benefit of the Indians. Colonel Henly, former superintendent, called to see and talk with me on the subject. He is the ruling spirit among the copperhead settlers in the valley, and of course knows more of the situation of the original lines than any other man; indeed, I think more than he would care to tell. He talked very fair to me, however, and proffered me his influence among the settlers in the purchase of their improvements. I think the purchase can be made without much trouble and on reasonable terms. In regard to the government at once taking steps to possess itself of Round valley for reservation purposes, I have nothing to add to my letter of June 1. *Instead, however, of confining the limits of the reserve to a certain number of acres, if there is no law of Congress to interfere, I would respectfully refer the department to the report of Mr. Steele, in Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1863, page 402, concerning metes and bounds of reservation, in which I fully concur. Mr. Steele and myself had a consultation in regard to the matter there, and this was our conclusion.*

MENDOCINO RESERVE.

We arrived at the Upper or Bedahto station on the 22d; there we found Mr. Whipple in charge, the Indians well satisfied, and enough to eat. The crop there is by no means promising, the vegetables having died out for want of rain, and the grain looking sickly. However, I trust there will be enough to last as long as the department will need it for reservation purposes. I reappointed Mr. Whipple and placed him in charge. At the Bald Hill station we found a few Indians, say thirty, with Mr. Stebbens and family in charge. No change was made there. The Indians are well satisfied, and have good treatment and enough to eat.

At the "Old Headquarters," at the mouth of the Nooga, I found things in a somewhat dilapidated condition. *Nearly all the houses were occupied—some by*

former employé's, some by butchers, and some by whites and Indians promiscuously. Here was located the physician for the reservation, Dr. Coxhead. He was convenient to the calls of mill-men and others down the coast, but not in a good place for the Indians on the reservation. As there is little or no sickness there, I discharged the doctor, and directed Mr. Whipple to box up the medicines and move them to the Upper station, administering the medicine himself when needed. I further directed Mr. Whipple to lease the place, Lower Headquarters, to some *one* man who would take care of the property, and give him possession of the whole of it. The Indians that were idling about there I instructed him to move to the Upper station and put them to work, and see that they remained there. On this reservation, as at Round valley, the character of personal property is poor indeed; in fact, almost entirely exhausted. The farming implements are not worth putting in a report at all. Mr. Whipple assures me that he would not have been able to get the crop in last spring had he not used his own and borrowed teams and ploughs. He has nothing whatever to harvest with, but I will send up some sickles, cradles, and rakes, in time to save the crops. So that you may form an idea of the value of the personal property there, which looks so well on paper, I will say that I do not believe \$1,500 could be realized to-day for every head of stock and every piece of personal property on the reservation. I trust, therefore, that the department will lose no time in ordering such portions of this reservation surveyed as will be likely to find purchasers, much of the land being entirely worthless; the Bedahito, or Upper station, the Bald Hill station, and Lower Headquarters, being all that a market could be found for at present. These three stations embrace, perhaps, 1,500 acres of land which might be sold. The Noyo mill, the property of Mr. A. W. McPherson, a gentleman of this city, is also upon the reserve. For a few acres, embracing the mill property, Mr. McPherson would pay a handsome price, and if not inconsistent with law, I would suggest that such a survey be made, and have the land appraised by disinterested parties and sold to him. I offer this simply as a suggestion, as the department is doubtless aware that he was permitted to build the mill there under the superintendence of Colonel Henly, and it seems now that it would be unjust to place the property in open competition between him and other parties by the sale of the land on which it stands.

General Wright informs me that the hostilities in Humboldt, Klamath, and Trinity counties may now be considered virtually closed. In addition to the 500 prisoners which he now holds at Humboldt bay, the commanding officer informs him that pretty much all the Indians, including the hostile ones, are ready to surrender. He fully agrees with me in regard to the necessity of placing them somewhere south of San Francisco, and suggests Catalina island as the proper place. He will hold and feed them until the department is heard from, in answer to my request in the premises.

The financial department of the institution under my charge is somewhat unsettled. Mr. Wentworth went out in debt. Mr. Steele has a little money, but does not feel authorized to turn it over to me. I know nothing of the appropriation, nor when any of it will be along. I have no directions how to proceed or to remedy such a state of affairs. Some things, for the safety of the crops and good of the service, I have been compelled to buy. I have been using my own money to meet emergencies, defray travelling expenses of self and agents, until I find the "demand more than equal to the supply." But I will never importune the government for money. I shall endeavor to render a faithful account of what is appropriated, and not run the department in debt. I would as soon occupy a berth in Libby prison as to be dogged the way Henly and Hanson are for old debts; and in this connexion, I beg of the department not to make it my duty to settle or pay any old accounts under former superintendents. Mr. Steele is an excellent man for such business, and should be retained and charged with that responsibility.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR. 275

Your letter of May 26, with instructions concerning clothing to be shipped, is received and will be attended to.

Also, letter of May 23, concerning annual reports, which will be strictly adhered to.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

AUSTIN WILEY,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, California.
