

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Benicia, September 4, 1855.

SIR: I have reports from Brevet Major Hailer, commanding the expedition against the Snake Indians, dated July 31.

The command reached Fort Boise July 15, Mr. Olney, Indian agent, being with it. The next day a talk was held with some two hundred Indians there collected, of whom sixty-five were warriors; and it having been ascertained that four of the murderers were present, they

were seized, brought before a board of officers, or, as Major Haller terms it, a military commission, and, their guilt having been clearly established, three were hung on the graves of their victims, the 18th; the fourth was shot by the guard in endeavoring to escape. The proceedings of the commission are herewith enclosed.

The command then continued to the great Cammish prairie, thirty-five miles west from crossing of Malade river, and upwards of sixty miles beyond Fort Boise. One emigrant train had been met and escorted to Fort Boise, and detachments had been sent out towards the Salmon falls, and other routes where emigrants were expected, and where they might be molested by the Indians.

It appears that a tribe known as the White-knives, numerous and powerful, are the authors and instigators of most of the outrages committed by Indians upon emigrants, their object being plunder. They cover a large extent of country along the south side of Snake river for one hundred miles above and below the Salmon falls, across to the headwaters of Humboldt river, and down that stream, and across to Lake Syloi, at or near the head of Malheur river. It was Major Haller's purpose to visit this tribe, and to cut them off from their fishery. He had some expectation of a hostile reception from them.

The activity and energy of Major Haller, and the officers of his command, deserve commendation.

The excitement in Scott's valley has somewhat abated. The origin of the difficulty there seems to have been the refusal of a white man to give up a squaw, for whom he had paid one horse; the Indian from whom the purchase was made having stolen the squaw from the Applegate tribe. This man was one of those murdered, and his body alone was much mutilated after death. Captain Smith, at Fort Lane, has some of the Indians implicated, and has refused to surrender them to a company of volunteers, except on a warrant or requisition from the governor of California, their reserve being in Oregon. Upwards of a hundred Indians, chiefly women and children, have collected for protection on the military reserve at Fort Jones. Captain Judah informs me that there are constant threats of a night attack upon his post for the purpose of killing these inoffensive people, but that he has made known that he shall repel force by force. It is found necessary to issue flour and beef to the Indians thus collected on the reserve, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs declining to subsist them.

At a council held by the Oregon superintendent, thirty miles from Fort Orford, an Indian shot a white man. As usual, the Indian was demanded that he might be hung. He was protected by the detachment of troops from Fort Orford; and while being conducted to be given over to the civil authority, in charge of a constable, and guarded by a corporal's guard, the boat in which he was was pursued by a party of whites, who fired into the boat, killing the prisoner and the Indian who was poling the canoe. The corporal warned the party before they fired to keep off, and returned their fire, killing three of them; the rest gave up the pursuit. The superintendent had sent for the commanding officer of Fort Orford, and, notwithstanding the ex-

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citement, was endeavoring to keep the Indians together and finish the council.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
JOHN E. WOOL, *Major General.*

Lieut. Colonel L. THOMAS,
Asst. Adjt. General, Headquarters of the Army, New York City.

Mostly on Indian affairs—interesting. Respectfully submitted to the
Secretary of War.

OCTOBER 3, 1855.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER, *Adjutant.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
October 5, 1855.
