

No. 102.

CALIFORNIA SUPERINTENDENCY.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*San Francisco, September 4, 1858.*

SIR: In obedience to the regulations of the Department I have the honor to submit this my annual report for the year 1858.

The reports of the agents and sub-agents will give you a general view of the management of the reservations.

The Indians in the counties of Los Angeles and San Bernardino are in a better condition this year than they have been since the country has been settled by American population.

Under the judicious management and advice of Special Agent Colonel J. J. Kendrick, they have raised good crops, and are now busily engaged in collecting and storing for the winter large quantities of wild food, and as the crop of acorns promises to be good, the prospect is that the Indians of the south will be well supplied with food during the ensuing winter. They are well contented and desire no change from their present condition.

At Tegen, as usual, the crop is short on account of the drought; but by industry and care in collecting wild food, and economy in the use of the products of the farm, there will be sufficient to carry them through the winter without suffering.

At Tule river farm an ordinary crop has been produced, and the Indians at that place are well provided for.

The King's river farm has produced a good crop, and there will be an abundance of food for all the Indians in that vicinity.

At the Fresno the crop is but ordinary, and the Indians belonging to that agency will as usual be compelled to rely to a considerable extent on wild food for their subsistence.

It is proper to remark, that in almost every locality in California there is a sufficiency of the natural products of the country for the subsistence of Indians residing there, and they could support themselves quite well, were it not for the encroachments of the whites, and the consequent destruction of their food by the settlement of the country.

The Indians belonging to the Fresno agency are accustomed to this mode of living, and only a sufficient number are kept at the reservation to perform the labor of the farm; the remainder are induced to remain in the mountains and upon the plains where they obtain a sufficiency of food, and under the protection of the agent, remain at peace with the whites, only visiting the reservation at given periods for the purpose of receiving blankets, clothing and such other presents as are provided for them. In times of scarcity they also receive a portion of the products of the farm.

This method of protecting and providing for them gives entire satisfaction, and they are well contented, desiring only that it should be continued.

I have heretofore expressed the opinion that the Fresno should be abandoned, and the Indians removed to some other location, but the success of the present plan has been so satisfactory for the past year that I am inclined to favor a further trial of it, for at least one year longer.

For the character, condition, and wants of the Indians not upon reservations, or under the protection of agencies, I refer you to my annual report of last year. No change upon those points having taken place since the date of that document.

The Nome Lackee reserve is flourishing equal to my most sanguine anticipations. The crop is large; quite sufficient to feed double the number of Indians now there.

This will enable us to remove and place upon the reservation from the surrounding country such as by their contact with the whites have become diseased, or have become otherwise obnoxious to the settlements, thus to some extent answering the expectations of the country in reference to the practical utility and policy of Indian reservations.

At Nome Cult the crop promises a large yield, and proves that to be as good, if not the best location for the purposes of a reservation yet selected.

The valley which has been heretofore described containing upwards of twenty thousand acres, and surrounded by rolling hills of fine grazing, and abounding in the various descriptions of Indian food, would probably subsist more Indians than any place of the same extent that can be found in the State. It is also isolated from other agricultural lands, and is incapable to white settlement.

In view of these facts I repeat my recommendation that the entire valley be set apart as a reservation. The settlers in the valley have all made their improvements with the knowledge of the fact that a recommendation had been made for its occupancy for Indian purposes.

Their claims and improvements can all be purchased at reasonable prices; there are about twenty settlers in that portion of the valley not now occupied by the government, and I am of opinion that their claims can be purchased for a sum not to exceed fifteen thousand dollars, which is not more than the actual value of the improvements, all of which are substantial, and would be needed for the government.

Mendocino reservation, though prospects in the spring were dis-

couraging, has produced a good crop, and the fisheries are yielding well, and the prospects are that that reserve will yet justify the favorable expectation entertained in regard to it at the time of its location.

Klamath reservation is progressing steadily and quite satisfactorily. The crop is good, and with the yield of salmon at the fisheries the Indians are contented and happy.

The Matole station, near Cape Mendocino, has produced a good crop, and is a very advantageous location for an Indian farm, but the settlers in that vicinity, for reasons unknown to me, are hostile to a reservation, and should this feeling remain unchanged it is possible it will have to be abandoned, and a point lower down the coast selected as the northern terminus of the Mendocino reservation.

The Indians upon the reservations perform cheerfully all the labor required of them, and many have become expert in every description of agricultural labor. The experiment so far as learning them to labor, or their willingness to perform it is concerned, is entirely successful.

But the problem as to whether the Indian is capable of, or will be benefited ultimately by civilization, or whether he was intended by the "Great Spirit" for any other than the wild and savage life in which our ancestors found him, remains yet unsolved, and will perhaps continue an inexplicable enigma to baffle the investigations of the curious, and give contradictory results to the trials of experience so long as there is one of his race left as a sample for experiment, or an example to puzzle and perplex the minds of those most interested in their welfare.

It is gratifying to be able to state that a condition of uninterrupted peace prevails among the Indians in every portion of the State, and that there is to be apprehended no danger of future disturbances so long as the existing policy is pursued.

The agents and sub-agents have been attentive and faithful in the discharge of their duties, and the employés, in the main, industrious and true to the trust reposed in them.

In conclusion it affords me pleasure to bear testimony to the uniform kindness and hospitality with which the Indians have been treated by the mass of our population, and a corresponding regret at being obliged to say that a few have behaved towards them in a manner revolting to every principle of humanity, descending to the lowest grades of abandoned crime.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOS. J. HENLEY,  
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