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No. 92.

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*San Francisco, September 30, 1853.*

SIR: In pursuance of the intention which I communicated to you in my letter of the 26th ultimo, I left Los Angeles on the 30th, and arrived at the Tejon pass on the 2d instant.

I found the Indians in that quarter quietly engaged in farming, but anxious to know the intentions of the government towards them. Mr. Edwards, whom I had employed as farming agent, had been unable to assure them of anything permanent in relation to their affairs. He had, however, with great tact, and with the assistance of Mr. Alexander Godey, by travelling from tribe to tribe and talking constantly with them, succeeded in preventing any outbreak or disturbance in the San Joaquin valley. I immediately collected together the headmen and chiefs, and deputations from every quarter of the mountains and plains lying between the "Four Rivers" and that point, a distance of about one hundred and fifteen miles in length by about the same in breadth.

With these Indians I held council for two days, explaining to them the intentions of the government in relation to their future support. After long deliberation and much talk among the headmen and chiefs, they agreed to accept the terms I had offered them, which were as follows:

The government should commence with a system of farming and instruction, which would enable them in a few years to support themselves by the produce of their own labor.

That for this purpose the government would furnish them with seed of all kinds, and with provisions sufficient to enable them to live until the produce of their own labor should be sufficient to support them. I pointed out to them the impossibility of their remaining any longer a barrier to the rapid settlement of the State, and of the necessity which existed that they should leave their old homes in the mountains, and

settle at some other point where the government would be able to watch over and protect them from the whites, as well as the whites from them. I pointed out to them, also, the difference between themselves and those who had embraced this new mode of life, as farmers, at the Tejon, and endeavored to make them sensible of the difference between a certain and reliable means of support by the produce of their own labor, and the exceedingly precarious one of dependence upon the spontaneous productions of the soil; and that even this mode of existence, precarious as it is, was becoming still more uncertain by the rapid increase of our white population. To all this I had no difficulty in bringing them to assent. A difficulty, however, arose here, which it was very hard to overcome. This was their disinclination to leave their old homes and hunting-grounds and to settle so far away from them; and I found it utterly impossible to overcome this difficulty until I had promised them that the reserve selected for them should be somewhere in the vicinity of the place where that conference was held. On my promising this, they consented unanimously to my proposition; and I have no doubt that they are all, by this time, on the spot awaiting my return.

Before I determined, however, upon locating the reserve at that point, I called upon Lieutenants Stoneman, Parke, and Williamson, of the United States army, who had had been surveying the country carefully with a view to the location of the proposed Atlantic and Pacific railroad, to know whether, in their opinion, there was any other point north as far as the Sacramento river where an Indian reservation containing the requisites of good land, wood, and water, and also sufficiently accessible to admit of the establishment of a military post, existed within their knowledge. The reply of these gentlemen, coinciding as it did with my own knowledge of the country, and with the views of Mr. Wilson, late Indian agent, on whose experience I placed great reliance, determined me in the selection of that point as one of the reservations authorized by the act of Congress. A copy of the letter of the gentlemen above referred to will be forwarded by next mail.

The Tejon valley, or at least a large portion of it, is said to be covered by a Spanish grant; but as I found no settlers on it, or any evidence that it had been settled, and under the fact that there was no other place where the Indians could be placed without the same objection, I concluded to go on with the farming system at that point, and leave it to Congress to purchase the land should the title prove good, or remove the Indians to some less suitable locality. It is almost impossible to find, at this time, any extent of country either unclaimed by Spanish grants or free from white settlers, who hold under pre-emption right. And this has proved a most serious difficulty in carrying out the intention of Congress, as expressed by the late law in relation to Indian affairs in California. This law gives me no authority to purchase lands for the United States for Indian purposes; it having been supposed by myself, as well as by every one else, that there was a sufficiency of vacant public land for all such purposes.

But since my attention has been directed by necessity to that subject, I have discovered the fact, that between the southern boundaries

of this State, and as far north as I have any knowledge, there is not sufficient land for a single reservation of the quality required. I say of the quality required, because I esteem it indispensable that if the system I propose, of farming with the Indians, should be carried out, the land on which the system is to be commenced should be of the best quality, since the failure of the first crop might so far discourage them as to render subsequent attempts abortive.

It is also right and proper that this land should be well watered, well timbered, and adjacent to a mountainous country, for it is not to be supposed, that the habits of a race who have been for ages accustomed to a certain mode of life can be suddenly and entirely changed.

The rapid settlement of the northern part of this State, and the fact that the richest mineral region known to the world lies in this portion of California, leads me to the belief that it would be a wise policy to commence now the removal of the northern Indians to the southern part of the State, which is thinly settled, and possesses little or no mineral wealth.

To do this it will be necessary to purchase from the claimants a sufficiency of land on which to place them; and I recommend that authority for the purchase of Spanish grants, in localities which may be found suitable for Indian reservation, be given. Inquiry into the matter enables me to say that these purchases can be made at the government price, and in many cases for much less. In connection with this subject I have consulted the congressional delegation of this State; after discussing the matter verbally, I addressed each one a letter, which, with its reply, will be forwarded by next mail. I shall be in a great measure governed in all my operations by the advice of those gentlemen.

It may be necessary to adopt some other plan of colonization with the tribes inhabiting the extreme northern border, as they differ materially from those living further south—being bolder, more warlike, and less disposed to agricultural pursuits.

I have already informed the department of the experimental farm which I established late last fall on the San Joaquin river. This experiment, so pre-eminently successful and gratifying in its results, has placed beyond all doubt the question whether Indians can be made a self-supporting and useful class of population. This farm, commenced with Indians of the wildest and most uncivilized character, has enabled me not only to support, by their own labor, those tribes engaged in it, but has been forcible, beyond all other means of persuasion, in inducing others to accede to the propositions I have made them on the part of the government; and what is still more important is the fact that, by its example and through the means of those I have employed, I have been enabled to preserve peace throughout that extensive region.

These Indians, but a few years ago so completely wild and untamed, are now free from the necessity of robbing for food, and have laid the foundation of their own future comfort by a life of honest labor. I enclose to you herewith a copy of the report of the farming agent.

The war now existing with the Indians at the north is, properly speaking, within the borders of Oregon; and I am credibly informed that very few California Indians have joined the hostile tribes.

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In conclusion, it gives me pleasure to state, that I have entire confidence in the ultimate success of the plan I have proposed for the support of the Indians in California; and that if this plan is pursued, that they will ultimately form industrious and useful communities.

The small experiment I have already made proves that they are worthy of the paternal care of the government.

It is impossible at present to enter into a detailed estimate of what this plan will cost to carry it into complete effect; but judging by the high rates of everything in this State, and the number of Indians to be provided for—variously estimated at from 75,000 to 100,000—the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, (\$500,000,) in addition to what has already been appropriated, will be required.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. F. BEALE,  
*Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

HON. GEO. W. MANYPENNY,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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