

The Hoopa Reservation.

The following communication speaks for itself. We commend it to the attentive perusal of every one. It seems to us that the Superintendent has done all and the best that he could under the circumstances. But if the Department at Washington can be induced not to approve of the location he has made for a Reserve, he will be but to glad—more than this—he will cordially unite with them in the endeavor to accomplish this.

Sir:—My attention having been called to an editorial notice of a meeting of the citizens of Humboldt county, relative to Indian matters,—a question in which I naturally as well as officially, feel much interest—I ask the privilege of a place in your paper to make an explanation in regard to my recent action in locating a Reservation in Hoopa Valley, about which there seems to be some dissatisfaction, and a great misunderstanding. As my views in regard to the only practical solution of the Indian troubles in Humboldt and adjoining counties are not unknown to the readers of the Times, and rather than rest under the imputation of having changed them at a time when I was in a position to carry them out, I venture to set myself right, at the expense of incurring the displeasure of my superiors for disclosing official correspondence. On the 1st of June last, six days after I received my commission, I wrote to the Department, concerning our northern Indians, as follows:

"It might be well for me to mention here that there is a large number of Indians between Smith river and Round valley, that I have not included among those that could be kept upon the Round valley Reservation. I refer to the Humboldt, Klamath, Redwood and Trinity Indians, with whom we are at war. At present I will not go into details concerning the nature and number of these Indians, but will simply say that a Reservation must be provided for them South of San Francisco, from whence there is no possibility of their return."

In the same communication I further said:

"My experience enables me to assert positively that no means can be devised which will bring peace to that distracted district except the removal of the Indians to some point South of San Francisco."

Shortly after writing the above I met Gen. Wright and asked him if he could subvert the Indians then held as prisoners on the Peninsula, and such as might be brought there, until such time as my request for permission to move them South could be heard from, informing him at the same time of my policy. He readily assented, and subsequently endorsed my views in the premises as being

at the same time of my policy. He readily assented, and subsequently endorsed my views in the premises as being correct, and the only policy by which permanent peace could be brought about.

On the 4th of June, learning that Capt. Hull had taken more Indian prisoners to the Bay I wrote the Department as follows:

"I informed you that there were Indian prisoners held at Humboldt Bay, and gave the reasons why they could not be placed on any of the Northern Reservations. Since then 200 more prisoners have been taken and more will be bro't in soon. It is of the utmost importance that these prisoners be removed at the earliest practicable day. Another salutary effect which would be produced by this move would be to assure the people and the troops, who have long suffered by these Indians, that a step had at last been taken in the right direction to relieve them."

Waiting anxiously for a reply, on the 2d of August I received an answer.—

Among other reasons which induced the Commissioner to decline my proposition concerning the removal of the Humboldt and Trinity Indians was the following:

"When these Indians shall have been subdued by military force, or induced to submit by peaceable negotiations, I apprehend that but little or no difficulty will be encountered in securing their concentration upon the Round Valley Reserve, or upon such other Reservation as I hope soon to learn will then have been located. Until that time there is no appropriation at the disposal of this Department, specifically applicable to defraying the expenses of feeding and providing for the Indians in military custody. * * *

Aside from the great expense involved in the removal and in subsisting the Indians after their arrival it would be very unwise on our part and extremely disastrous to the Indians."

Two days after the receipt of this letter Gen. McDowell sent for me, and a consultation of several hours was held, touching Indian matters in that District. Col. Black, Col. Drum, and the chiefs of Quartermaster and Commissary being present. The General informed me that positive instructions had been received from the War Department that the subsistence of Indians, in the capacity of prisoners or friendly Indians would no longer be allowed. I had been directed not to relieve the military authorities from the care and subsistence of the Indians now held by them as prisoners."

Here was a dead lock. Several hundred prisoners were held on the Peninsula, and as many more were being subsisted at Hoopa as a condition of their friendship. The General, who is a prudent man, and not afraid to use discretionary

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subsist them until a point can be raised than I can well spare. Moreover, I have plenty of Indians already on Reservations to occupy my time. I have not exceeded my authority in locating the Reservation, although my action is subject to the approval or disapproval of the Department. Already some influence has been brought to bear on those high in authority against the movement. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether they succeed or not. Any action the citizens there may take against the proposed location meets my heartiest approval, for I do not wish to array myself against my friends there, or do anything that, in the aggregate, will work a hardship or injury upon them. My sympathies are with them—I expect to make my home again among them. I have done what I thought best for their interests, and, no difference what may be the result I shall be satisfied with my action. I think such influences can be brought to bear, if they have not already been, as to induce the Department to disapprove of my action, in which event I can only leave the Indians as I found them—to be taken care of by the military authorities, if there should be any there to take care of them. If not they will have to take care of themselves, as I have no power to subsist Indians except upon Reservations.

In conclusion I have simply to say that this explanation is made for the satisfaction of those who have the good of our country at heart, and must be taken as my answer to all queries concerning my action in the premises.

Yours truly,

A. WILEY,

Superintendent Ind. Affs., Cal.

To Hon. J. E. WYMAN.

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