

—March 28th, 1847.

MR. EDITOR.—We have supposed from your prospectus that your paper was to be devoted to the interests of the people of California, and that portion of us who live in this part of the country have been waiting some time to see what you will say on a subject of great importance to us, and as we conceive to every man in California who has a horse, or ever intends to have one. You will readily perceive that I allude to the horse-thief Indians, that great and particular scourge and curse of the whole country from Sonoma to San Diego.

Now that the war with the Mexicans is ended as far as we are immediately concerned, it is to be hoped the attention of the authorities of the country will be directed to this great and increasing evil. During the Spanish regime, such a thing as a horse thief was unknown in the country, but as soon as the Mexicans took possession, their characteristic anarchy began to prevail, and the Indians to desert from the Missions.-- The first Indian horse thief known in this part of the country was a Neophyte of the Mission of Sta. Clara, George, who flourished about twenty years ago. He absconded from his mission to the river of Stanislaus of which he was a native, from thence he returned to the settlements and began to steal horses, which at that time were very numerous. After pursuing his depredations for some time he was at last pursued and killed on his return from one of his forages. The mission of Sta. Clara has been from that time to the present day, the greatest nursery for horse thieves as the Stanislaus river has been, and is their principle rendezvous. I have taken some pains to enquire among some of the most intelligent and respectable of the native inhabitants, as to the probable number of horses that have been stolen between Monterey and St Francisco within the last twenty years, and the result has been that more than one hundred thousand can be distinctly enumerated, and that the total amount would probably be double that number. Nearly all these horses have been eaten! From the river of Stanislaus as a central point the evil has spread to the north and south, and at present extends from the vicinity of the Mokelomy river on the north to the sources of the St. Joaquin on the

These Indians inhabit all the western declivity of the great Snowy mountains within these limits, and have become so habituated to living on horse flesh that it is now with them the principle means of subsistence.

In past time they have been repeatedly pursued, and many of them killed, and whole villages destroyed, but so far from being deterred, they are continually becoming more bold and daring in their robberies, as horses become scarcer and more carefully guarded. About twenty persons have been killed by them within the knowledge of the writer. Among others, Mr Lindsay and Mr Wilson were killed by them not long ago.— Only about one month since, they shot and dangerously wounded four persons employed on the farm of Mr Webber near the Pueblo of St Joseph, and at the same time stole the horses of the farm, and those also from the farm of Capt Fisher and Mr Burnal in the same vicinity; in all above two hundred head. Within the last ten days, numerous parties of them have been committing depredations on many of the farms in the jurisdiction of the Contra Costa, and scarcely a night passes but we hear of their having stolen horses from some one. Three days ago a party of them were met by some young men who had been out catching wild horses on the plains of the St Joaquin, but as they were mounted on tired animals they were only able to recapture the stolen horses, but could not overtake the thieves.

It would be easy to extend this article to the size of a volume, were I to mention only a tythe of the depredations of these inveterate and daring thieves, particularly should I recount the exploits both in murder and robbery of the renowned Stanislaus and Diosculo, or their successors of the present day, Jose Jesus, Simeon and Felipe, who are said to be more daring and active than ever, since their return from the campaign to the south in military service.

I will conclude by observing that if the attention of the authorities is not promptly and efficaciously directed to this subject, the eastern frontier will be no longer habitable, or worth inhabiting, as there is no security for persons or property.

AGRICOLA.