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Daily Alta California, Volume 3, Number 79, 20 March 1852 — From (he H»wSh. [ARTICLE]

From the South.

The steamer Sea Bird, Capt. Haley, arrived from San Diego and intermediate ports, early yesterday

morning. She brings a large load of passengers.

The Sea Bird has encountered very heavy weather on her trip up, but has sustained no serious damage.

The intelligence is one week later. Though unimportant, we find a few items of interest.

The San Diego Herald says an express had arrived from the Gila, with news of the safe arrival of Major Heintzelman's command at the junction of the Gila and the Colorado. They found that the Indians had destroyed Camp Yuma, and stolen all the government property left there.

In the Herald of March 3th, we find the following :

We publish the following narrative as communicated, trusting that our informant has been deceived—and in that case, shall be most happy to publish a correction :

Isaac Van Ness, formerly a resident of this place, but latterly the owner of some property in Lower California, accompanied by an American whom he had hired to do some work, was ordered by Capt. Castro, the Commandante of San Tomas, to be arrested. An officer and a few soldiers were dispatched to execute the orders. The Americans surrendered, and whilst on their way to San Tomas, were cruelly murdered by the soldiers—Van Ness receiving four balls in the back. The bodies of the two Americans were left exposed upon the roadside, dismembered and otherwise disfigured, in a most inhuman and shameful manner. We understand that depositions narrating the above facts were taken before the proper authorities of Old Town yesterday, and that they will be forwarded by the first mail.

And in relation thereto we have received the following letter :

SAN DIEGO, March 10, 1852.

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Editors Alta California:—You have, or will have by this steamer, the account of the killing of Van Ness and McDonald, in Lower California, and as but one side of the story is listened to by many here, may be led astray.

Don Manuel Castro, the highly esteemed and gentlemanly Commandante of Lower California, arrived a few days since, to explain fully this matter, that no feelings might be entertained against him by his numerous friends on this side of the line. Van Ness had been lurking around this town some four months, trying to raise a *robbing party* to go to Lower California. Most of the old citizens here having property there, kept the Commandante constantly posted up in his movements. He was once arrested here for this same thing, (about January last.) and the outraged community was upon the very eve of *hanging him, I myself preventing it.*

Finding his way down there, he was watched closely, until a warrant was issued for his arrest; he resisted, and both were killed—Van Ness and McDonald firing first. The officer in charge of the party was questioned closely by Don Manuel, and committed, according to his statement, no outrage, as the American has represented in his affidavit.

Castro, the Commandante, says that if anything improper has been done, he will deliver the officer in charge to the authorities of the United States, but is satisfied that nothing was done, except to *rob the bodies*, which he thinks is quite likely. He returns in a few days, and will be able to get a true statement. Most truly, c.

The Los Angeles Star of the 6th March says, that Mr. White has arrived at Chino, having recovered 650 of the sheep which were driven away by the Indians on the desert. He also brings word of the murder by the Apaches of Don Damas Lopez and party, who were coming through from Santa Fe with a drove of from 5,000 to 7,000 sheep.

The Star details some slight depredations of the Tulare Indians in stealing horses and cattle.

The Star complains that of 700 or 800 U. S. troops who are now in the southern portion of the State, only 20 are appointed to the defence of that large county.

A great horse race is to come off at Los Angeles on the 31st of this month. The stakes amount to \$4,000 in cash, and 2,000 head of cattle three years old, worth \$40,000. The race is made by Messrs. Pyle and Brady against Pio Pico and Teodocia Yorba.

and Brady against Pio Pico and Teodocia Yorba. The first party have entered the "Black Swan," and the second "Sarco," a California horse. The distance to be run is nine English miles—4½ out on a straight course, and back.

**Our Monterey Correspondence---Disastrous
Flood on the Salinas.**

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Messrs. Editors Alta California:—We have very disastrous accounts from the interior. The Salinas River, swollen by the recent heavy rains, has overflowed its banks, and entirely destroyed the crops in its vicinity. The amount of damage is not as yet known. A rumor is afloat of a distressing loss of life; but as it is vague and unsatisfactory, I hesitate to give it as evidence. Boats have been despatched from this place to succor the farmers, (many of whom are said to be clinging to their housetops,) and to enable them to save their effects. The reports are so contradictory that I do not consider their details worthy of confidence or repetition. In a few days I will doubtless be able to give you particulars.

Monterey continues dull, as usual; little or no business doing. The only vessels in this port are the Queen of the West, from San Francisco, bound on a fishing cruise; the schooner A. Emory, and the brig Robert Bruce, which last has been detained here several days by the prevalence of bad weather.

R.