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Daily Alta California, Volume 4, Number 98, 9 April 1853 — SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 9 [ARTICLE]

SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 9.

"It is always darkest the hour before day!" This, we believe, is a fact in natural philosophy. But whether or not strictly a fact—whether truism, tradition or superstition it is a very pleasing and a popular belief, and answers equally well in its application to physical things or political conditions, as in its literal sense to express faith, hope and cheer. We commend it as a stout and comforting assurance, a gladsome, winning adage, to some of our citizens who seem to have grown hypochondrical of late and "so alarmed as to be quite alarming," on the subject of the City Front Extension. In their dis-tempered imaginations the scheme has already been consummated, the dread decree pronounced! A ghostly train of defunct high rents and water front advantages, of crippled business, ruined harbor and ruinous alterations in street grades, passes before their mental visuals, and they are horrified, panic-stricken and incapable of deliberate thought or action. *Their* darkest hour is full of the presage of disaster; they have no faith or trust beyond.

The truth appears to be that some of our good easy-going complacent, self-satisfied citizens have dwelt for the past few months, through all the storm that has been raging in the Legislature and other quarters regarding the Extension, in a sort of fancied security; their faith at anchor in the peaceful conviction of moral right, upon which they have been content to trust their fortunes as well. From this unhappy lethargy they have been suddenly aroused by the announcement that the Extension Bill has passed the Assembly! As men do when startled to consciousness, "awaking with a start," they have

obeyed the guiding impulse to move in a direct line—oftener into the danger than from it. They do not stop to reason or reflect on the consequences of their action. Thus, we hear of individuals investing sums of money in what are called "Extension lots," recklessly endeavoring, with that contemptible selfishness which is so marked a feature in the business operations of a certain class of merchants in this community, to secure themselves against the evils of an extended water front, and scarcely dreaming that they are but contributing by their misdirected appliance of capital to the support of the scheme they so abominate, and which is to ruin them, with the city, if successful. With characteristic disregard of everything except their own selfish interests, and an ignorance that is almost as culpable as

unfaithfulness to the requirements of honest citizenship, they no sooner perceive the dangers surrounding them than they clasp their hands in mute despair, close their senses to all surrounding scenes, and pitifully present themselves as applicants for the promised advantages of Extension. It is not the State nor the city they seek to benefit. They do not care a farthing for the interests of either, or the necessities of those who shall come after them. It is solely and singly for the benefit of themselves. The purchase of Extension lots is their "anchor to windward." They invest their means (and supply the facilities at Benecia,) to provide for their future gains. They truly cast their money into the Bay; there let it rest!

In an adjoining column will be found the translation of an original communication which has been addressed to one of the Real Estate Sales Houses of this city on the subject of Water Front titles, Extension, &c. &c. It has the signatures of ten or a dozen gentlemen, well known among our foreign merchants, who, anticipating a change in the "location" of the property which they purchased, presuming the city to be protected in her metes and bounds, by virtue of her vested rights; desire information respecting the course they must pursue in view of the change of water front. Here is excitement and apprehension

water front. Here is excitement and apprehension in another quarter; though with this class of our citizens not without some reason. They are strangers to our laws, or to what passes for law in this country, and there are just grounds for their nervousness and anxiety. Here are made manifest the first effects of the proposed extension, upon our foreign community; these are the early fruits of the iniquitous scheme. But we assure the gentlemen their alarm is altogether premature. The Extension Bill has not yet become a law, and by the grace of God and a few honest men in the Senate of California it *will not* become a law! The communication to which we refer is predicated on the supposition that the present water front will be broken up, in which event the property of the signers will be thrown back six hundred feet from the "location" which they purchased. They have acted with undue haste, and on a wrong presumption in making their complaint, though it is indicative of the feeling which exists among foreign property holders in this city regarding the extension.

The tenacity which some people have manifested in their efforts to effect a reduction in the wages of labor and to lower and degrade it by bringing into competition with free white labor that of inferior races is really marvellous. It has been attempted at various times to introduce negro, Asiatic, Kanaka and every other kind of labor that could be had at a cheaper rate than can that of American citizens. The last thing we have heard of in this line appeared in the form of a bill introduced in the Assembly yesterday, the purport of which was to reduce the Indians to a state of slavery. The bill is very long and provides to have the Indians bound out for any given number of years to serve such white men as will give the required security for their maintenance and support.

There are various provisions and penalties in the bill, but they do not hide the fact that the effect of its passage will be to render the miserable and degraded remnant of an unhappy race, which is fast fading from the face of the earth, the servants and dependants of their exterminators. An act of this kind will

surely sound badly in history. The Indians! the poor degenerate Indians! Is it not enough that they are fast fading away and that all that remains of a race that once peopled this entire land are now too low and degraded to resist, and is it possible that the closing act of the fading drama of the red man's history is to be the reducing him to a state to which an Indian never submitted before. It is true they may be placed in a better condition physically than if they roam wild as has been their way. But so it suits them, and no other life can now render them any happier, and we trust that all attempts to render them subjects of their superiors will at once be indignantly voted down.