

Benicia Correspondence.

BENICIA, CAL.

October 31st 1853,

DEAR AMES:

The man who comes to Benicia to get news, reminds one of the old Scotch saw, "gaeing to the gate's hoos to theig woo."

The farming community hereabout complain most bitterly of the low prices of products this year, and they have undoubtedly given a backset to agriculture that the State will not recover from till the year after next. It is a problem with them, what to plant. Some say wheat, others barley, and these latter give as their reason, that as so much disappointment has been produced by its culture this year, little will be grown or imported next. My opinion, if I might be permitted to express one is, that agriculture cannot successfully compete with mercantile, mining, and commercial interests in California. These are so great as yet, that labor is kept at too high a gauge to permit our farmers to profit over importers. This of course does not apply to the Southern ranchero, who could undoubtedly coin gold at the present time, if he had spent the last four years in taming his cattle, and increasing his stock of cows. This, unfortunately, few have done, hence there is no danger of their arriving at any incommensurate wealth over their neighbors, during the present high prices of beef.

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The Rogue River Indian war, as you long since have known, has been brought to an end. Capt. Sully's company, of the 2d Infantry, are the only troops which return to Benicia to pass the winter. The rest are posted at Forts Jones and Lane, not to protect the hardy, valiant, dare-devil, double-fisted, bone and sinew pioneer from the attack of Joe's tribe, but rather to prevent the free and enlightened from butchering in cold blood, the red man, when he resents the vilest impositions of slavery and debauchery that are forced upon him. The poor politician has a hard row to hoe in our community, and as an example General Lane in his late remarks on these troubles while in San Francisco, had to deny himself the right of reprehension *in toto*, and only indulge in eulogy on that portion upon whom it might fall with most grace. Certain it is, that his remarks were anything but a full exhibit of the true state of the case, or of *all* his feelings, if we are to judge by reports of officers of the regular army on the ground with him.

My love to all our old friends, and give me an occasional gossip if you can afford the time.

Yours, as Ever,

H.

