INDIANS—LETTER FROM G. W. TAGGART, ESQ.

[Sometime since we addressed a note to G. W. Taggart, Esq., soliciting information of him in regard to the number of Indians, their mode of living, the prospect of their location, and other queries which will be found interesting to our readers. Mr. Taggart is well acquainted with the Indians in this section and has more influence with them than any other man in the country. He is a reliable gentleman, a man of undoubted integrity and one that should be selected by Col. Henly as Agent for the Indians in this section, in preference to any one we know.]

Union, Nov. 8th, 1854.

DR. COLEMAN,—Sir:—To your note of the 17th of October requesting me to send you a “statement concerning the tribes of Indians within this section of country, and any suggestions I may think proper to make in regard to them—their government—and provision for them,” I would have replied, sir, immediately, with much pleasure, but absence from home, and necessary attention to prior engagements, have rendered this late answer unavoidable.

Upon this subject much that is interesting might be said, but as minute detail would make this communication too long.
Upon this subject much that is interesting might be said, but as minute detail would make this communication too voluminous, I trust the following general statements will be sufficient. The section of country at present unprovided with an Indian agency by our government, is very extensive. It is drained by the Salmon, Klamath, Trinity, Redwood, Mad, and Eel rivers and their tributaries, and extends east and west from the coast range to the Pacific, and north and south from the northern district to the southern vicinity of Cape Mendocino. The Indians within this region are very numerous—probably ten thousand—and divided into several bands or tribes, which also are subdivided into ranches and families almost innumerable.—With regard to their different languages, they form six general divisions, viz: the Weott and Pot-ta-wott Co-will—Eel and Mad river Indians—who occupy Humboldt Bay and the lower portions of Eel and Mad rivers; the Po-liek, A-le-qua—lower Indians—who range along the coast and the Klamath from Port Trinidad to Bluff Creek, a small stream about eight miles above the confluence of the Klamath and Trinity rivers, and about sixty miles from the ocean. At that point begins the territory of the Car-rook At-rah—the north or upper Indians—extending along and up the Klamath some ninety miles, being bounded on the north and east by the Shasta or Scott's valley Indians, who are included in the northern district. The No-te-
east by the Shasta or Scott's valley Indians, who are included in the northern district. The No-te-n-
la-yah No-toostah—Trinity Indians—the fourth di-
vision, occupy the Trinity from its junction with
the Klamath to its south fork, and are also scat-
tered over the Bald hills and on Redwood and Mad
rivers. The Pach-wies, a small band, is located on
New River, and upon the main Trinity, above the
south fork, and extending through all that portion
of country embracing the head waters of Panther
creek, Redwood, Mad, and Eel rivers, is a wing of
the powerful tribe known as the Win-toon—or
“mountain diggers.”

Concerning these Indians, erroneous opinions
have been and are still entertained relative to their
real character and intelligence. They have been
but little understood, and consequently have never
received credit for the intelligence which they rea-
ly possess. They have no chiefs, in the common
acceptation of that term, yet some Indians who are
wealthy in their own peculiar goods, and who have
many relatives, are very influential in their respec-
tive districts. Among these and the principal ones
are Kin-no-rah—-the well known "Trinity Jim;"
Zeh-rip-pah on the upper Klamath, and Mu-ro-
kus and Kew-rap-ish on the lower, with others of
less distinction. Since our first settlement of this
portion of the State, these last mentioned Indians
have been the firm friends of the white population,
and by their exertions much property and many
lives have doubtless been saved from the ravages
of the white man.
and by their exertions much property and many lives have doubtless been saved from the ravages of their less friendly brethren. Indeed many of the difficulties that have occurred in this region have been adjusted by their intervention and assistance. Although many of these Indians, who live in proximity to the whites prefer the white man's food, still the great majority live upon fish, game, nuts, berries and roots which they procure by their own peculiar means, in the respective portions of country they inhabit. But these spontaneous means are lessening daily, and the decrease is in proportion to the increase of the white population. Under these circumstances, and feeling their inferiority to the white man in his means of procuring a livelihood, they begin to feel their embarrassment keenly. Already the settlement and peculiar avocations of white men among them, are making their condition quite astringent by interrupting their fisheries, plowing up the flats where they procure their grass, seeds and roots, killing the game, and cutting down and burning the trees and shrubs from which they obtain their nuts and berries, all of course the natural results of white men occupying Indian territories. Add to this the fact stated in the Humboldt Times of the 28th ult., that "they are ill-treated and abused, bad white men ravish their squaws and whip and beat the men," and it is still more apparent that they keenly feel their incompatibility with their new neighbors. This condition of affairs has instituted much reflection.
already the settlement and peculiar avocations of white men among them, are making their condition quite astringent by interrupting their fisheries, plowing up the flats where they procure their grass seeds and roots, killing the game, and cutting down and burning the trees and shrubs from which they obtain their nuts and berries, all of course the natural results of white men occupying Indian territories. Add to this the fact stated in the *Humboldt Times* of the 28th ult., that “they are ill-treated and abused, bad white men ravish their squaws and whip and beat the men,” and it is still more apparent that they keenly feel their incompatibility with their new neighbors. This condition of affairs has instituted many unfriendly relations between these two classes of inhabitants, and although the Indians were to blame in the first instances of offence yet for the last two years the animosities engendered have been, it must be admitted, fostered by the reprehensible conduct of bad white men.” And even at the present time, on the Klamath especially, it is well known that the conduct of many persons towards the Indians is scarcely less than atrocious.

To any dealings with these Indians, in regard to their removal or otherwise, there are very many obstacles. Among these as prominent is their
strong attachment to their homes, their divisions into innumerable families and ranches, and their hereditary antipathies and consequent feuds, but above all their want of a head or guide or harmonious system. In the east, Indians have chiefs through whom the government operates, but they have none and therefore any adjustment or understanding with them is doubly difficult. Thus of all other points of consideration this is the most important. For whether it is the intention of our government to remove them to some other place or allow them to remain where they are, it is indispensable, in order to avoid if possible the use of force, to entrust their management to a person who is known to them and in whom they have confidence, and who is competent to treat with them on terms of the strictest peace and amity. Trusting that these statements and suggestions will answer your request, I remain yours respectfully,

G. W. TAGGART.