

sad havoc with houses and property. It cannot always be trusted, however, without additional height and breadth, which will ere long be done.

A most singular phenomenon occurred yesterday at 2 P. M. A dense and dry fog enveloped the city and vicinity, and has continued to this 1 P. M., obscuring the sun, moon and stars, and making daylight almost invisible. Houses above third street cannot be seen from the levee. Can you or your readers explain the cause?

Judging from the reports above, below and around us, we have escaped profitably while all others have been great losers. The holidays were a festival, and trade vastly improved; time enough given to fill the Old Fort with ample stocks of merchandise. The health of the city was never better than now; doctors resting on their oars—occupation gone.

A pleasure party started this morning for sporting and a trip to Davis' Ranch, 12 miles west of Washington, inland. The fog and abundance of game will give them a fine chance for sport, unless their pocket compasses should "dry up." A party of Dutch men and women have built a large raft, have a store and table thereon, chairs and a pack of cards, and drift with the tide during the day, tying up at their various Mynheer friends' ranchos, and at meal-times hauling up to a lay-out of sauerkraut and ale; picking up drift-wood enough to cook by, and lodge I know not where.

Freight to the Fort \$30 per ton to-day, owing to necessity for transshipment at Sixth street, from mud to water boats.

Beef is scarce, and each day growing more difficult to obtain. The demand for interior, via river, is more than equal to the city's demand, and at inflated prices. The loss of stock will, I fear, produce serious injury to the country; the aggregate value cannot be fully ascertained for a month yet. Lisle's bridge has not started a hair's breadth, and is passable for all teams that can get to it. From my window the vanebries indicate a perpetual Fourth of July, or *feu de joie*, in which the unfortunate mud larkers are the special ring performers.

Yours,

JOB.

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 4th, 1853.

GENTLEMEN:—In your report in the *Alta* of this morning, of the decision of the United States Land Commissioners, in the case of A. A. Ritchie, claiming the rancho of Suisun, you state that "objection was taken, on the ground of the blood of the grantee, he being an Indian," which was not considered satisfactory to the Commissioners, "inasmuch as the Mexican constitution, laws and decrees fully recognized persons of that race as citizens of the Republic, and entitled to all consideration as such."

Now, as any objection to the grant could only have proceeded from me, as the only law agent of the United States present, and the only person heard in objection to the claim, it concerns me materially, that my objection should be correctly stated, and that I should not be represented, as I am in this report, maintaining a proposition utterly untenable and unfounded.

My argument, which was entirely wanting, and is now before me, was, on the contrary, in a great measure devoted to the establishment of the fact of the entire abolition, by the Mexican government, of all distinctions founded on blood or race or descent alone; and, consequently, of the entire equality of all Mexicans, according to the legal definition of the term Mexicans, whether of Indian, African, European or any other race.

No objection whatever was urged by me against the grant to Solano, or against the transfer of the property by him to Vallejo, on the ground that he was of Indian blood; my objection, and the only one urged by me, was founded on the fact as declared by him in his petition to Vallejo for permission to occupy the land, and as declared, moreover, in the grant of the property to him by Governor Alvarado, that he was a savage Indian and the chief of a tribe of savage Indians, and that as such he was not a Mexican, nor entitled to receive a grant of lands in California, which by the laws of Mexico could only be made to Mexicans.

This was the objection made by me to the grant, and it must have been the same, not considered satisfactory by Commissioner Thornton, as no other was made on the trial. Whether I established it or not, or what arguments I used, are questions which I do not propose to examine; my only object being to relieve myself from the imputation of endeavoring to sustain a proposition so utterly contrary to all well known facts, as that any one would be disqualified by the Mexican Constitution or laws, from holding or disposing of lands, or from exercising any other rights on account of his blood or race, or descent alone, without any other grounds of disqualification.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
ROBERT GREENHOW,
Associate Law Agent of the U. S.

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