

## San Joaquin Republican, Volume 3, Number 5, 15 January 1853 — OUR INDIAN POPULATION. [ARTICLE]

[Back](#)

### OUR INDIAN POPULATION.

All the difficulties in which our people have been involved in the Indian region have either been the result of our own imprudences or have been brought about by the absurd acts of those persons whom the government styled "Indian Commissioners." The Indian, in his native condition, has qualities of head and heart which, when he receives proper treatment, make him the friend of the white. Ask the border men, the hunter, the old pioneers; they will all say that while the Indian is a bitter enemy, he can be a faithful friend. It is true that he has many vices, and that he commits horrible cruelties when at war; but these vices arise more from a want of education than from an innate badness of disposition. It cannot be expected that the aborigines should be acquainted with the blandishments of polished life or the courtesies and proprieties which exists even in war amongst christian nations. His notions are rude, and it is only surprising that ignorance has not made these men more dangerous than they really are. It is estimated that there are some 100,000 Indians in California—men who *will* live, if they have to steal and massacre in order to obtain their bread. Now, it is manifest that, for the sake of the common peace, some disposition should be made of

them, and it is fortunate that they are accommodating in their disposition and willing to place themselves under the protection of the whites—that they acknowledge our superiority and are disposed to give place. We have warred with the tribes, but with the most disastrous results, so that policy and the ordinary dictates of humanity compel us to recommend the continuance of a pacific treatment. But while we would recommend this pacific policy, we do not mean such as was adopted by the garrulous Reddick McKee and his associates. There was no reason in what they did. They transcended their powers and left matters in a worse state than they found them. They treated with the Indians and then discovered that they could not fulfil the conditions of their own treaties. The enormous Indian reservations, which comprehended some of the fairest lands in the State, the enormous speculations which have a shameful notoriety, and the utter incapacity of the late Commissioners themselves, have disgusted our people and involved the Indian question in difficulties which did not before belong to it.

We want no more tinkering with the Indian question. Let some definite policy be adopted by the incoming administration, and be firmly carried into effect. The one that has been proposed which is at all adequate to meet the question effectually is that which has just been proposed by Lieut. Beale, the Indian agent for this State, and which has just been trans-

mitted to Washington. Perhaps no man in the Union is better qualified than he by experience and education for the task of conciliating the Indians, and therefore any recommendation proceeding from him must have great weight. He proposes to annul all the arrangements made by his predecessors, especially those establishing the enormous Indian reservations. In their stead, he says it would be well to make other reservations, subject to suitable conditions, but much smaller in area, and he thinks that five would be amply sufficient for all the Indians in California. For instance, one might be located near the junction of the Gila with the Colorado, one between the San Joaquin and the Fresno, and the others in the northern districts. These reservations to be military posts. In fact, he proposes to establish military pueblos, somewhat similar to those in New Mexico; or a system in some sense the same as that which has hitherto prevailed in this State at the missions, the difference being in the nature of

agricultural knowledge—that they are most apt scholars—and that they might be made very useful laborers. These reservations, Lieut. Beale thinks, would produce enough corn, by means of Indian labor, to feed the army of the United States, and to spare. A band of the Mariposa Indians is already employed in the

cultivation of the soil, thanks to the agent's industry.

**FLOUR IN THE MINES.**—We are informed, through Brown's Express, that large supplies of provisions

**WILD HORSES.**—The wild horses on the plains of the San Joaquin are almost innumerable. The recent inclement weather and floods have driven them to the high lands. Many thousands of them are now to be met with in the region lying between the Merced and the Mariposa, and the hunters with the lasso are taking them by the hundred. At the present time the wild horses are easily caught. They are driven from the rolling country on to the plain, where they mire down and become an easy prey. Lieut. Beale assures us that a hundred horses a day might be caught in this manner.

**HOGS LOST.**—Judge Emory lost eighty hogs from the late overflow of the Stanislaus. He says that the rise of the water was unprecedented in rapidity, and at one time that noble stream was 500 yards in breadth.

**EMORY'S FERRY.**—We are glad to hear that this ferry is again in operation. The road on the other side of the river has been much improved within the last few days, and the Dug-out is now, as our informant says, "as pretty a road as any in the country."

**DICKENSON'S.**—At this ferry, on the