

Shasta Courier, Volume 2, Number 5, 9 April 1853 — The Illoile Imlimm. [ARTICLE]

[Back](#)

The Hostile Indians.

A few weeks since, in view of the numerous and aggravated offences of the Indians against our citizens—in view of the fact that for months they had on every occasion killed our people and destroyed their property, at the same time refusing all propositions for peace, and avowing the determination of waging a still more fearful war against us—in view of all this we urged our people to raise companies and chastise the savages—whip them terribly, *if needs be*, exterminate them. For this the *San Francisco Evening Journal* raises its hands in holy horror all through an entire column—a column that would, if properly done up, have formed a model address before a congregation of good old ladies in the east, whose sympathies, too far-reaching to stoop to relieve distress and ignorance around their feet, must needs go out to the uttermost ends of the earth, and furnish every little Hottentot, Congo and Hindoo baby with a red flannel shirt and a fine-tooth comb. The *Californian*, with hands piously clasped across its bowels, and eyes upwardly inclined, utters a sanctimonious groan and thanks its stars that the *Journal* has given the *Shasta Courier* “fits”—wholly oblivious to the fact that one of its principal editors was a leader in a political party, a portion of whom, but a few years since, we saw shoot down in the streets of Sacramento its mayor and other valuable citizens—not to save their lives, but to preserve a piece of property. The Ma-

rysvine Herald, too, throwing itself into a serio-tragico-comico attitude, in guttural accents exclaims, "Lo, the poor Indian!"—wholly forgetful of the fact that a few months ago its cry was blood! blood! and only blood! in the case of a poor *white* man who stole a few bags of provisions—and in fact never slept soundly until Tanner was launched into eternity from the end of a rope.

Such are the three wise men—counsellors—who have volunteered the advice to our people to act like Christians, and not slay the poor Indians even if they do kill our brothers.

We confess that praise is always more pleasant to us than blame. Yet in this case, gentlemen, we believe that we are right, and hence your censure does not disturb us. We value the lives of our people more than we do your good opinion. We are vain enough to believe that we know more about this matter than either of you; indeed we are impudent enough to entertain serious doubts of your competency in speaking upon this subject at all. We do not believe that you who, some of you, perhaps have never been amongst hostile Indians an hour in your lives, are exactly the proper men to point out to our people, who know the Indian character thoroughly, the proper course for them to pursue toward their savage foe.

Your suggestion that we "devise some humane policy" is all very fine for you. But we have no time to wait and deliberate. The evil is here right upon us. It is a question of life and death and pecuniary ruin. We must act. Would you have us permit the "poor Indian" rob and kill our people without an effort to prevent it? We do not urge a destructive war against the Indians because we love (God save

the love) them less than you do, but because we love our own people more. Are the lives of a thousand of these red devils to be compared in value to that of one good American citizen? Which would be the greater loss to the world and to christianity? You forget that we are defending our lives. How else would you have us act, if not fight them? Do you suppose that we have not time and again made efforts to conciliate their friendship? We tell you that it is the fault of the savages that the war now exists. The whites are anxious for peace, and if the Indians would consent to live on terms of amity with them, they need never suffer for food.

We repeat, then, all that we have heretofore said, and tell our people, unless Government relieve us from this difficulty, they must wage such a war as was waged years ago against the Indians of the Northwestern Territory—when a United States officer, one whose deeds occupy a bright page in the history of our country, “hunted them through the mountains and shot them down without mercy”—“pursued them to their homes” and burned their lodges, destroyed their winter’s food—aye, captured their squaws and children, if we remember aright, and retained them as hostages.

In the meanwhile we recommend our good christian brothers, who tell us to be merciful to the Indian at the expense of our friend’s life, nay, to feed and make him fat, to read a chapter or two almost anywhere in the Old Testament, and learn how Moses and the Children of Israel “smote” just such enemies as we are contending against.

This article has been automatically clipped from the Shasta Courier 9 April 1853, organised into a single column, then optimised for display on your computer screen. As a result, it may not look

exactly as it did on the original page. The article can be seen in its original form in the [page view](#).