

# DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - APRIL 23, 1873.

## THE MODOC TROUBLE.

THE present war with the Modoc Indians on the Oregon and California line, though the difficulty has taken a more lamentable turn than ever, is believed to have originated in the ill-advised attempt, on the part of the government agents in that State, to remove those Indians to a reservation which they did not like. The whites, therefore, may be considered the original provokers, and the Indians are fighting for their country and their homes, although their recent bloody treachery overwhelms this merit, and renders them worthy of condign punishment.

The San Francisco Chronicle, a very enterprising paper, gives a history of the trouble. On last Thanksgiving Day Major Jackson's company of cavalry went down from Fort Kamath with orders to remove the Modocs by force. The Modocs refused to be removed, and a skirmish ensued with the troops. An armed mob of civilians from Linkville joined in the fray and in the attempt to forcibly remove the Modocs. This seems to have fired the latter to seek revenge on innocent whites.

After the skirmish a portion of the Indians went down the east side of Tule Lake, murdered all the settlers, about fourteen, entrenched themselves, and prepared for war. Troops were ordered from Camp Warner and Bidwell and Vancouver in December, and a battalion of Volunteers was called out by Governor Grover. These troops arrived near the lava bed early in January, and General Wheaton, in command, actively prepared to attack the Indians.

Late in December Governor Booth sent a dispatch to Washington, suggesting that Captain Jack's band be permitted to go back to their lands at the mouth of Lost River, and that the order for their removal to a reservation be rescinded. This, it was considered, would be accounted a victory by the Indians.

On the 17th of January about 400 troops, consisting of 250 regulars, 25 California riflemen under Capt. J. A. Fairchild, and a company of Oregon volunteers under Captain Kelly, with a few Klamath Indians, made an assault on the Indians in the lava bed, which proved disastrous to the troops. Captain Barnard, with 100 regulars, who the day previous had marched to the extreme east of Captain Jack's position, was, in conjunction with General Wheaton's forces, to attack the Indians at daylight under cover of the fire from some howitzers. A dense fog prevailed, so that neither the enemy nor the signals could be seen. The two commands were twelve miles apart and could not communicate by signal. The Indians were concealed in the rocks on a line two miles long. The fight and the firing continued all day, but it was found impossible to dislodge the Indians, who taunted the troops and told Fairchild to go home. The troops lost 40 killed and wounded, including Captain Perry, Lieuts. Kyle and Roberts, and two Oregon volunteers. The troops retreated after dark to camp near Bremer's Hill, and the following day to Lost River, to await reinforcements. The Indians captured a number of breech-loaders, several blankets and a quantity of ammunition.

General Schofield, commander of the Military Division of the Pacific, was at the Sandwich Islands, and the control of the movements of the troops devolved upon General Canby, commander of the Department of the Columbia, who ordered troops from various military posts. Three batteries of the Fourth Artillery, under command of Col. Bidle, of the First Cavalry, took the field, followed by a large detachment of recruits from San Francisco and Sacramento.

At daylight on the 25th of January the Indians made a sortie on Captain Barnard's camp at Louis Rancho, the south-east point of Tule Lake, but were repulsed and pursued after a sharp fight of three hours. Captain Jack lost one man killed and three wounded, also fifty or sixty horses.

General Wheaton made arrangements for another attack on the

Indians, his plan embracing a small fleet of gunboats to patrol the lake and shell the lava bed, but late in January he was relieved of the command, and General Allen C. Gillem, Colonel of Fifth Cavalry, assumed command of the expedition. Fairchild's men and Kelly's Oregon volunteers were disbanded and went home.

At this time the government appointed a Peace Commission, consisting of A. B. Meacham, formerly Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon; Jesse Applegate, of Oregon; and Samuel Case, an Indian Agent in Western Oregon. General Canby was directed to accompany the Commission and act as adviser and counselor. In the middle of February, the Commission sought an interview with Captain Jack, through the medium of friendly squaws. Jack was willing to have peace, but he disliked some of the Commissioners, and he desired that Messrs. Rosborough and Steele of Yreka might be sent to talk to him. Finally Mr. Rosborough was added to the Commission and Mr. Steele was requested to accompany it.

On the 27th of February three of the Modoc warriors—Shack Nasty Jim, Jack and Hawkeye Jim—came out from the lava beds to the headquarters of the Peace Commission. The Commissioners, seeing that it was impossible for them to agree among themselves or to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion with the Modocs, were waiting for the arrival of Steele and Rosborough to take part in the proceedings of the Commission. Meacham and Applegate were at sword's points. The Indians, distrustful of both, had refused to talk to either, and both General Canby and General Gillem were greatly disgusted and anxious to give over dallying with the Indians and institute active measures against them. General Canby, however, made a speech to the Modocs, telling them that as soon as Rosborough and Steele arrived, a day should be named for holding a council. Bogus Charley was left behind, to take the news to the Indians when Rosborough and Steele arrived, which happened on the 28th of February. The next day they visited the Modoc camp in the lava bed, offering peace on condition that the Indians surrender themselves to the military, to be removed to some distant reservation in Arizona, the Indian Territory, or southern California. The Commission staid all night in the Modoc camp and had a long conference the next day. Captain Jack had had enough fighting and bloodshed, didn't want any more, was not the first to shed blood, but was anxious for a lasting peace. To this all the Indians agreed, and the prospects for peace seemed flattering. Several of the chiefs expressed a desire to visit the Big Chief (President Grant) and agreed to send eight or ten braves to talk over details. Consequently a number of warriors accompanied the commissioners to General Canby's headquarters, and were told that if they accepted the terms offered they would be protected from their enemies, be removed to Angel Island, kept there till a reservation was provided for them, given food and clothing, and receive amnesty for the past.

On the 4th of March, Steele, and Frank Riddle, Secretary of the Commission, returned to the Modoc Camp with the Indians to explain the terms of peace and arrange for a final grand council, but a change appeared to have come over the Indians in Captain Jack's camp. They had washed the white paint, the sign of peace, from their faces, did not appear to be longing for peace, but to be thirsting for more blood and plunder. Evidences of a treacherous plot were apparent, and it was believed that only Steele's presence of mind and unfaltering demeanor and Scar-faced Charley's fidelity prevented its execution. The interview was stormy. Captain Jack said that was his country and he would not give it up. He didn't want to fight nor to be sent away off. He would not go to Fairchild's to meet the Commissioners; they must come to his camp if they wanted talk. Seonchin talked violently in the same strain. When Steele left, the Indians were very angry towards the whites, and no one but Scar-faced Charley shook hands with him. The general opinion was that peace was a failure and a battle must follow.

On the 6th the Indians sent word by the squaw Mary that they would accept the terms offered by Steele, but they were angry at the last

interview because they thought their young men must be given up to be hanged if they surrendered. The commissioners sent word that the surrender would be accepted by General Canby, and went home, except Meacham. On the 9th wagons were sent out to bring in the Modocs who had agreed to surrender, but the Indians failed to appear and the wagons returned empty.

The commissioners gave up hope of peace and telegraphed to Washington. They were instructed to "continue negotiations as long as there is a hope of peace," but they went home in disgust. Additional recruits were sent from Redding, and preparations were made for an apparently inevitable fight.

On the 13th Meacham received a dispatch from Washington, directing him to remain, as a new Peace Commission had been ordered, consisting of himself, Superintendent Odenele, Judge Rosborough, and Gen. Canby. Rev. Dr. Thomas of San Francisco, and Mr. Dyer, Indian Agent at Yainox, were subsequently appointed on the commission.

A few conferences were held with the Modocs, resulting in nothing satisfactory. On the 6th of April arrangements were made for a final conference before the movement of the troops on the lava bed, preparations for which had been going on for several days. Both sides feared treachery, and the meeting was deferred from day to day. At length the Indians professed to be reassured that the whites meant no treachery, and a meeting followed on the 11th, resulting in the murdering of Gen. Canby and Dr. Thomas, and the wounding of Mr. Meacham.

It is believed that the Modocs thought they could whip the United States Government, and that by killing the principal officers of the command operating against them the soldiers would scatter and leave, as the Indians generally do when their chiefs are killed. Various other theories are indulged in as to the cause of the outrage, one of which, says the Sacramento Union, is that it was inspired by white men, who sought to inflame the Indians to desperate overt acts, in order to exasperate the Government to inaugurate a policy of extermination; and another is that this treachery by the Modoc chiefs is in retaliation for a similar wrong which they complain as having been done to them by white men some twenty years ago. One Ben. Wright, it is stated, in 1852, inveigled into his camp of white volunteers some thirty Modoc warriors unarmed, under the offer of a treaty of peace with that tribe, which was then at war with the whites and had just murdered a number of emigrants on Tule Lake. When the thirty Modocs came into his camp unarmed, it is said they were set upon by Wright's volunteers, and all slain. This was base treachery, if the statement be true, and the Modocs do not appear to have forgotten or forgiven it, for Captain Jack and Seonchin both recently alluded to it with some bitterness in their talks with the Peace Commissioners.

Jesse Applegate, the "Sage of the Yoncolla," an early pioneer, thus describes, in the Oregon Bulletin, Captain Jack's stronghold in the lava bed—

The word "Pedregal," like the word "Canyon," has been introduced into our language from the Spanish as designating a feature of the topography more clearly and tersely than any word or phrase in our language. As by the word canyon the idea of a ravine between walls of rock is immediately conveyed to the mind, so by the word pedregal we understand an irregular volcanic surface of basalt, trachyte, etc., more or less broken into upheavals from below, and cracked and fissured in the process of cooling. I first saw the term in Lieutenant Ripley's work on the Mexican war; it has since been everywhere adopted by the Corps of Engineers, and occurs frequently in the explorations for a Pacific railroad, ordered by Jeff. Davis, Secretary of War in 1855.

The stronghold of the Modoc Indians is a pedregal of the most extensive and elaborate description; it occupies, with but few intervals, 100 square miles.

If you can, imagine a smooth, solid sheet of granite ten miles square and 500 feet thick covering countless miles of gunpowder scattered at irregular intervals under it; that these mines are exploded simultaneously, rendering the whole field into rectangular masses from the size of a match box to that of a church, heaping these masses high in some places and leaving deep chasms in others. Following the explosion, the whole thing is placed in one of Vulcan's crucibles and heated up to a point when the whole begins to fuse and run together, and then suffered to cool.

The roughness of the upper surface remains as the explosion left it, while all below is honeycombed by the cracks and crevices caused by the cooling of the melted rock.

An Indian can, from the top of one of these stone pyramids, shoot a man without exposing even a square inch of himself. He can, with due haste, load and shoot a common muzzle-loading rifle ten times before a man can scramble over the rocks and elude him between the skin and the

slayer. If at this terrible expense of life a force dislodges him from his cover, he has only to drop into and follow some subterranean passage with which he is familiar, to gain another ambush from whence it will cost ten more lives to dislodge him; and so on ad infinitum.

## AN INDIAN WAR.

AN Indian war is a part of the regular sensational newspaper talk every Spring and Summer. The miserable Modoc business, culminating in the late treacherous murders and the escape of the band into the mountains, stimulates this kind of talk just now. It is presumed that an extensive war will result, with the north-western tribes and bands, from this Modoc difficulty. All the Indians in that region appear to know of and understand the matter. Kansas papers represent that the Arapahoes and Cheyennes are preparing for a fighting campaign. The old chiefs who have visited Washington advise peace, but the young men are restive, and spoiling for a fight, being eager to go on the war path, in discordant accordance with the proverb—"old men for counsel and young men for war." The government is reinforcing the forts and the papers think "there is every prospect of Indian trouble on the frontier this Spring," which may or may not be merely singing the old annual song. As President Grant is credited with having determined on the extermination of the Modocs, as "an act of justice" and not of revenge, it may be fairly concluded that a lengthy Indian war in Oregon and parts adjacent is very likely.

But the Modoc extermination even, will not go on without protest. After the news of the Canby massacre was received in Washington, a meeting was held in the Congregational church in that city, for the purpose of upholding the Indian policy of President Grant, at which General Howard spoke of his experience with whites and Indians in Florida, Arizona, and New Mexico. He believed that the Indians could be saved from extermination only by placing them under the law for protection and punishment, the same as the whites and the blacks. Mr. Smith, late agent in Minnesota, strongly advocated a fair trial of the present humane policy, arguing that the Indian had been heretofore treated with cruelty and injustice by government and people alike, that the agents and employes sent among them have never, until now, been representatives of benevolence or Christianity, and that never till now have the promises sanctified by treaty been kept, or the money voted by Congress applied honestly to their benefit. Commissioner Smith gave a glowing picture of the Indians on his own agency, reclaimed in a short time by truth and justice from the war to the cow path, and raising the thatch on a comfortable cottage in lieu of lifting the hair of the settler. He gave a brief statement of the cause of the Modoc troubles, the band being removed from a genial, fruitful country to a bleak and barren mountain reservation, and the pittance of \$17,000 promised them discoverable only by the vouchers filed in the Treasury Department to show the pretended manner of its disbursement. Frederick Douglas attributed the Florida war to the determination of the Georgia slave owners to break up, at any sacrifice of blood, treasure and humanity, the refuge and safe asylum which the negro slave found among the Indians. The gist of the arguments is represented to be that "the Modoc massacre was the natural outcome of the governing policy and prevailing treatment of the Indian from the settlement of the colonies to the present time, and that, in giving up Captain Jack and his band to the popular vengeance, as they are willing to do, the Christian people of the country have the right to insist that the cry for blood shall not be permitted to follow those who are now unoffending, and whom the President, General Howard and the Peace Commissioners are endeavoring to put to a better use than settling them up as targets for the soldier and the settler."

## THE MODOC PEACE COMMISSIONERS.

THE first Peace Commission to the Modocs in the current difficulty presented the following terms through Mr. Steele—

First—To surrender to General Canby and receive full amnesty for the past.

Second—To be removed to Angel Island, where they are to be fed with soldiers' allowance and clothed until a new home can be provided for them and they are able to support themselves in it.

Third—To be furnished by General Canby with transportation for their women and children to the Island, and thence to their new home, perhaps in Arizona.

Fourth—General Canby is of the opinion that he can promise that Jack and some of his head men should go to visit the President, and that the President will permit them to select for themselves a new home in a warmer climate.

These conditions the Indians failed to accept. The following is the report of Jesse Applegate, one of the second commission, as it appears in the New York Herald—

HEAD QUARTERS PEACE COMMISSION, FAIRCHILD'S RANCH, CAL., March, 1873.  
Hon. H. B. CLUM, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs:—

SIR—The Commission appointed to examine into the causes and bring to a conclusion the Modoc war, having concluded its labors, submit the following as its final report, to wit:—

First—The causes leading to war were the dissatisfaction of Captain Jack's band of Modocs with the provisions and execution of the treaty of October 14, 1864, and the refusal to abide thereby. To what extent the wrongs justified resistance, the Commission, having no power judicially to investigate, cannot say.

Second—The immediate cause of hostilities was resistance by the Indians to military coercion.

Third—Unconditional surrender of the Indians and the trial and punishment of the guilty by the civil authorities would have been more satisfactory to the whites and a better example to the Indians than more lenient conditions.

Fourth—Terms of surrender were offered the Indians to save the further effusion of blood and secure a permanent peace by the removal of the whole tribe out of the country—a result scarcely to be hoped for by continued hostilities.

Fifth—The terms agreed to by the Commission were suggested and must be carried into effect by the military. A commission to negotiate a peace was therefore unnecessary.

Sixth—A commission to inquire into the causes of the war should be composed of men wholly disinterested in the findings of the commission directly or indirectly, and clothed with full power to investigate.

Seventh—Some of the personnel of this commission being obnoxious to the Indians, it was a hindrance to negotiations. Having no power to administer oaths nor send for persons and papers, and the official acts of the chairman to be revised, its finding must have been imperfect and unsatisfactory in regard to the cause of the war. We therefore consider the commission an expensive blunder.

JESSE APPLGATE.

UTAH MATTERS.—The Washington correspondence, dated April 11, of the New York Herald, has the following:—

JUDGE MCKEAN, OF UTAH, AND THE MINERS.—The Attorney General has received a copy of the opinion of Judge McKean, of Utah, in the case of Haskins vs. Wall et al., in which he says that rather than the mining interests should suffer he will hear the case, even though the jury, by United States and Territorial law, is illegally empanelled. The action of Judge McKean will be the subject of further examination at the Department of Justice.

WHEN?—The New York Herald asks, "When will Christians unite under one fold?" Not while the Herald prospers.

COUNTRY MISSIONARY APPOINTMENTS.—Sunday, April 27th:

WEST JORDAN, Elders Anson Call and N. T. Porter.

BOUNTIFUL, L. D. Young and S. W. Sears.

FARMINGTON, R. F. Neslen and C. R. Savage.

BIG COTTONWOOD (Brinton's), S. W. Woolley and Jacob Gibson.

TAYLORSVILLE (Bennion's), Geo. Teasdale, and D. McKenzie.

DRAPERVILLE, Milo Andrus and David Candland.

SOUTH COTTONWOOD (Rollin's), W. G. Young and Thos. Harris.

We trust the missionaries will be punctual in filling the above appointments, or if unable to do so, to report in time that other arrangements may be made.

Saints from adjoining wards and districts are cordially invited to attend.

Bishops will please announce that these meetings commence punctually at 10 a. m. and 2 p. m.

L. D. YOUNG.  
(P. O. Box 124)

It seems that the Congregational Church at Norwich, Vermont, really did "arrest" their pastor for playing blindman's-buff and croquet. The council which was called to consider the case, reported that the charges were of too trivial a character to demand any notice. They also advised against the resignation of the pastor, and counseled the accusing members of the congregation "not to attempt to bind their notions on unessential points upon the consciences of others."