

Indian War on the Pacific.

HEADQUARTERS, Department of the Pacific, }
Benecia, California, Feb. 12, 1856. }

To His Excellency Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory:—

Sir—I received your communication of the 23d December and 29th January, 1856, on the 6th inst., but too late to reply to it by the return steamer. For the information which it imparts, you have my thanks. When you know my instructions to Colonel George Wright, of the Ninth Infantry, at Vancouver, you will discover that many of your suggestions have been anticipated. In presenting, however, your plan of campaign, which is a very extended one, you should have recollected that I have neither the resources of a Territory nor the treasury of the United States at my command. Still, you may be assured that the war against the Indians will be prosecuted with all the vigor, promptness and efficiency I am master of, at the same time without wasting unnecessarily the means and resources at my disposal, by untimely and unproductive expeditions. With the additional force which recently arrived at Vancouver and at the Dalles, I think I shall be able to bring the war to a close in a few months, provided the extermination of the Indians, which I do not approve of, is not determined on, and private war prevented, and the volunteers withdrawn from the Walla-Walla country.

Whilst I was in Oregon it was reported to me that many citizens, with a due proportion of volunteers and two newspapers, advocated the extermination of the Indians. This principle has been acted on in several instances, without discriminating between enemies and friends, which has been the cause in Southern Oregon of sacrificing many innocent and worthy citizens—as in the case of Major Lupton and his party, (volunteers) who killed twenty-five Indians, eighteen of whom were women and children. These were friendly Indians, on their way to the Indian reservation, where they expected protection from the whites. This barbarous act is the cause of the present contest in the Rogue river country, and as Captain Judah, U. S. A., reports, is retaliatory of the conduct of Major Lupton.

By same mail which brought me your communication I received one, now before me, from a person whom I think incapable of misrepresentation, which informs me that the friendly Cayuses are every day menaced with death by Governor Curry's volunteers. The writer says they have despoiled these Indians—who have nobly followed the advice of Mr. Palmer, to remain faithful friends to the Americans—of their provisions. To-day, he says, these same volunteers, without discipline and without orders, are not yet satisfied with rapine and injustice, but wish to take away the small remnant of animals and provisions left.

Every day they run off the horses and cattle of the friendly Indians. These had become indignant, and will not be much longer restrained from resisting conduct so unworthy of the whites, who have made them so many promises to respect and protect them if they remained faithful friends. The writer further says if the volunteers are not arrested in their brigand actions the Indians will save themselves by flying to the homes of their relatives, the Nez Percés, who have promised them help, and then all the Indians of Oregon and Washington would join in the common defence. This information is in a great measure confirmed by a person, who, I am assured, enjoys your confidence.

I need not say, although I had previously instructed Colonel Wright to take possession of the Walla-Walla country at the earliest moment practicable, that I directed him to give protection, as soon as he could, to the friendly Cayuses from the depredations of the volunteers. It is such conduct as here complained of that irritates and greatly increases the ranks of the hostile tribes, and if the Nez Percés join in the war against us, which I hope to prevent, we shall require a much larger force than we now have in Washington and Oregon Territories to resist savage barbarity and to protect the whites.

I have recently sent to Puget's Sound two companies of the Ninth Infantry. These, with the three companies there, will give a force of nearly or quite four hundred regulars, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Casey. This force, with several ships of war in the Sound, to which will be added in a few days the United States steamer Massachusetts, it seems to me, if rightly directed, ought to be sufficient to bring to terms two hundred Indian warriors. Captain Keyes, in his last report received, says there are not two hundred in arms in that region. Lieutenant Colonel Casey has been directed to prosecute the war with the greatest vigilance and activity. The gallant Captain Swartwout, who goes in the Massachusetts, Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces in the Sound, will, I am assured, zealously, efficiently and, I trust, successfully co-operate with Colonel Casey to bring the war to a close.

In regard to the operations east of Cascade mountains, if Governor Curry's volunteers have not driven the friendly Cayuses and the Nez Percés into the ranks of the hostile tribes, and they should be withdrawn from the Walla-Walla country—I have great hopes that I shall be able to bring the Indians in that region to terms, notwithstanding the volunteers killed the chief, Pin-pin-mox-mox, scalped him, cut off his ears and hands, as reported by volunteers, and sent them to their friends in Oregon—all this, too, after he met them under a flag of truce, declaring he was for peace, that he did not wish to fight, that his people did not wish to fight "and that if any of his young men had done wrong, he would make restitution;" while at the same time he offered the volunteers cattle for food. Such conduct may have caused feelings difficult

to overcome. I trust, however, I will be able to do it.

As soon as this war is terminated east of the Cascade mountains, I will be able to send all my disposable forces against the Indians on Rogue River and Puget's Sound. It is, however, due to truth to say, that at no time were volunteers required, or in any sense of the term necessary for the defence of the inhabitants of Oregon from the depredations and barbarities of the Indians occupying the country east of the Cascade mountains. Nor was there any circumstance to justify Governor Curry in sending his troops from Oregon to Washington Territory to make war on the Walla-Wallas, from whom the Oregonians had no danger whatever to apprehend. On this subject I would refer you to the report of the Secretary of War, dated the 3d of December, relating to the affairs of the army, in which he says:—"The Department at this distance, and in the absence of more definite information, especially in regard to the extent of the combination among the hostile tribes, cannot judge what volunteer reinforcement to the regular troops may be necessary. This is a matter which must necessarily be left to the military commander of the Department of the Pacific."

At the conclusion of your communication you say it is due to frankness that "I should state that I have determined to submit to the Department the course taken by the military authorities in disbanding the troops raised in the Territory of Washington for my relief. No effort was made, although the facts were presented both to Major General Wool and Major Rains, to send me assistance. The regular troops were all withdrawn into garrison, and I was left to make my way, the best I could, through tribes known to be hostile. It remains to be seen whether the commissioner selected by the President to make treaties with the Indians in the interior of the continent, is to be ignored and his safety left to chance."

In your frankness and determination to represent me to the Department, I trust you will be governed by truth only. Perhaps it is equally due to frankness on my part to say that your communication is the first that I have received in relation to yourself, or on any subject whatever touching the Indian war, from any civil functionary either in Washington or Oregon Territory; and I have received but one from the military, and that was from Colonel Nesmith, who requested me to furnish him two howitzers, which I refused. I have only to add that I disbanded no troops raised for your relief; and your communication gave me the first intelligence that any were raised for such a purpose.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General United States Army.

Interesting to Agriculturists.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE, }
March 31, 1856. }

Agreeable to request, herewith I furnish you with some of the principal reasons why Congress should increase the agricultural appropriations hereafter to be expended by this office, with some of the benefits to the country, which have already resulted from the appropriations made years past.

One of the prime objects of these appropriations has been the introduction of new and useful vegetable products hitherto unknown in the United States, and the increase and dissemination of those of superior qualities which had already been cultivated or otherwise known. Measures have been taken to procure from every quarter of the globe such seeds, plants, roots and cuttings as would be likely to succeed in any part of the country, and placing them in the hands of persons who were the most likely to test their adaptation to our climate and soil. As a matter of course, many of the experiments thus made unavoidably proved abortive; but in numerous cases, they were attended with the most signal success, and a single product, in the opinion of competent judges, has added millions to our resources. For instance, a variety of wheat known as the "Mediterranean," which was brought to this country a few years ago, has proved highly productive, hardy, and maturing several days earlier than other varieties, thereby escaping the ravages of insects and rust, besides being sooner ready for market.

Within the last year no less than seventeen varieties of wheat have been introduced from distant parts of the globe, and distributed in various sections of the Union, most of which promise to be attended with good success.

The "Indian millet," or "Dourah corn," of African origin, has also been introduced, and it constitutes a valuable crop in the South.

The "Japan pea," unsurpassed by all others in its yield, believed to be of Eastern origin, has been cultivated in various parts of the country with remarkable results.

The "Chinese yam," originally from China, but more recently from France, which promises to serve as an excellent substitute both for the sweet and common potato, has been sufficiently tested to prove its value in the southern as well as in the Middle States.

The "chufa," or "earth almond," a small tuberous esculent, from the south of Spain, which has naturalized itself to our soil and climate, has proved prolific in its yield when grown in light sandy soils, as well as those which are rich, and bids fair to become a valuable forage crop for cattle or swine.

At least thirty varieties of turnip seed, including the best cultivated in England, as well as on the continent of Europe, have been imported and disseminated in every State and Territory of the Union. The benefits are already apparent. Similar experiments are now being instituted with all the leading varieties of grasses, cabbages and peas of Europe, the results of which will soon be made known.

Among the forage crops, it may be mentioned that the Chinese sugar cane (Sor ho Suere) a new gramineous plant, of Chinese origin, but more recently from France, has been introduced, and has proved itself well adapted to the geographical range of Indian corn. The amount of fodder which it will produce to the acre is estimated to be twenty-five tons, the stalks of which are filled with a rich saccharine juice, the whole plant being devoured with avidity by cattle, horses and swine. It is of easy cultivation, being similar to that of maize or broom corn; and if the seeds are sown early in May, in the Middle States, two crops of fodder can be raised from the same roots in the season—one about the first of August, and the other in October.

Another valuable forage crop, the "German millet" (Mohr de Hongrie) has been introduced from France, which is very productive, of quick growth, resists drought, and flourishes well on dry soils.

Among the cuttings of fruit trees and vines which have been introduced, may be mentioned the "Prune d'Agen," the "Prune Sainte Catherine," and the "Vigne Corinth." The two former have been grafted on the common plum in all the States north of Pennsylvania, and on the mountainous districts of that State, Maryland and Virginia. From the success which has attended this experiment, there is every reason to hope that there will soon be produced sufficient dried prunes in those regions to supply the wants of the whole Union. Among the seeds of indigenous growth, which have been selected and distributed, in reference to their superior qualities, as well as to their probable adaptability to certain parallels and localities, and which have proved highly productive, there may be noted several varieties of Indian corn.

Among these are the "Improved King Philip," or "brown corn," obtained from an island in a lake in New Hampshire, which was extensively distributed in all the States north of New Jersey, and the mountainous districts of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. The result has been that it matured in less than ninety days from the time of planting, (about the middle of June) and yielded, in one instance, 134 bushels of shelled corn to the acre. Another superior variety, from New Mexico, the "New Mexican White Flint," has been distributed, which appears to be adapted to the entire corn region south of Massachusetts. For culinary use, either green or dry, its quality of excellence is unsurpassed.

Among the products which it has been proposed to introduce from abroad, with a view of making special experiments, to be conducted by agricultural societies, or by individuals, in the several States and Territories of the Union, may be named considerable quantities of all the best varieties of wheat and of other cereals of the globe. In addition to these there might be imported the seeds, roots or cuttings of all the principal economical plants and trees known, and experimented upon in a similar manner.

In connection with this subject I would suggest the expediency of Congress making the annual appropriations for the purpose of agriculture sufficiently early in the session to order most of the seeds to be grown the approaching season, so that they may be received in time for distribution by the first of January or before. For it has been found by experience that when large orders for seeds have been made after the month of April or May, it was impracticable for the seedsmen to furnish an adequate supply without procuring them from various sources, and this too often, requiring several months. Hence most of the seeds would arrive too late for the Southern and middle sections of the Union; or if they were attempted to be kept over till the next fall, they would be either devoured by vermin or insects or rendered worthless by age.

Another feature connected with these appropriations which appears to need simplification or reform, is some more feasible and equitable plan of disposing seeds than has been adopted heretofore.

I would, therefore suggest that, instead of distributing them promiscuously through members of Congress, societies or individuals, who may apply directly for them at the Patent office, suitable arrangements be made by said members for them to be sent, in bundles not exceeding four pounds weight, franked by the Commissioner of Patents, to the State, Territorial and county agricultural societies, or the Secretaries of States or Territories or County Clerks, where there are no such societies, to be distributed, by mail or otherwise, to proper individuals residing in each State, Territory or county, for trial or special experiment, with a request that each recipient shall report the result for the use of the Patent Office.

To insure the free and speedy transport of each small packet of cuttings or seeds, an appropriate stamp might be placed upon it, bearing the imprint of the name of the member of Congress or Territorial delegate in whose district or Territory any such society may be located, or in which any Secretary of State or Territory, or county clerk may reside.

The apportionment of the packets sent to the State societies might bear a stamp containing the name of the Senators or each of the States respectively. This change can only be effected by an amendment in the postal law, and necessarily would come before the Committee on Post Offices.

Very respect'y, your ob't ser't,

D. J. BROWNE,
Hon. David P. Holloway, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives United States.

Destruction of Pompeii.

The younger Pliny says that about one in the afternoon his mother called the attention of his uncle who was at Misenum, across the bay, to a cloud that overhung the plain of Naples, in shape like a huge pine-tree shooting up to a great height and extending out in branches. The singular as-

pect of the cloud, which seemed to be composed of earth and cinder, excited curiosity, and he embarked in a boat to cross the bay and examine into it. As he approached the coast, the red-hot cinders and stones fell into the boat, and he was obliged to retreat. He proceeded to Stabie on the coast, where he went to pass the night with his friend Pomponianus, and retired to rest and fell asleep. The court, in the course of the night, being almost filled with stones and ashes, he was awakened, and with Pomponianus and the rest of the company consulted "whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, which now shook from side to side with frequent and violent concussions, or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, tho' light indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened destruction. In this distress they resolved upon the fields as the less dangerous. They went out having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins as their sole defence against the storm of stones that fell around them. Here the sulphurous flames appear to have burst around them, and Pliny fell dead, probably suffocated by the noxious vapors.

In a second letter, the younger Pliny gives a more full account of the phenomena attending the eruption, and his graphic description cannot fail to be interesting to every reader even at the present day.

"There had been, for many days before, some shocks of an earthquake, which the less surprised us, as they are extremely frequent in Campania; but they were so particularly violent that night, that they not only shook everything about us, but seemed indeed to threaten total destruction. Tho' it was now morning, the light was exceedingly faint and languid; the buildings all around us tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet as the place was narrow and confined, there was no remaining there without danger; we therefore resolved to quit the town. The people followed us in the utmost consternation; and as to a mind distracted with terror, every suggestion seems more prudent than its own, they pressed in great crowds about us in our way out. Having got to a convenient distance from the houses, we stood still in the midst of a dangerous and dreadful scene. The chariots which we had ordered to be drawn out were so agitated backwards and forwards, though upon the most level ground, that we could not keep them steady, even by supporting them with large stones. The sea seemed to roll back upon itself, and to be driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth. It is certain, at least, that the shore was considerably enlarged, and that several sea animals were left upon it. On the other side, a black and dreadful cloud, bursting with an igneous serpent vapor, darting out a long train of fire, resembling flashes of lightning, but much larger. Soon the cloud seemed to descend and cover the whole ocean, as if entirely hid the island of Caprea and the promontory of Misenum. My mother strongly conjured me to make my escape, which, as I was young, I might easily do; as for herself, she said, her age and corpulency rendered all attempts of that sort impossible. However, she would willingly meet death if she could have the satisfaction of seeing that she was not the occasion of mine. But I absolutely refused to leave her, and taking her hand, I led her on; she complied with great reluctance and not without many reproaches to herself for retarding my flight. The ashes now began to fall upon us though in no great quantity. I turned my head and observed behind us a thick smoke which came rolling after us like a torrent. I proposed while we had light, to turn out of the high road, lest she should be pressed to death in the dark by the crowd which followed us. We had scarce stepped out of the path when darkness overspread us, not like that of a cloudy night, or when there is no moon but of a room when it is shut up and all the lights are extinct. Nothing was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children and the cries of the men; some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family; some wishing to die from the very fear of dying; some lifting their hands to the gods; but the greater part imagining that the last and eternal night was come which was to destroy the gods and the world together. At length a glimmering light appeared, which we imagined to be rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames, as in truth it was, than the return of day. However, the fire fell at a distance from us. Then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a heavy shower of ashes rained on us, which we were obliged every now and then to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in the heap.

At last this dreadful darkness was dissipated by degrees like a cloud of smoke, the real day returned, and even the sun appeared, though very faintly, as when an eclipse is coming on. Every object that presented itself to our eyes, which were exceedingly weakened, seemed changed, being covered over with white ashes as with a deep snow. We returned to Misenum, where we refreshed ourselves as well as we could, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear, tho' indeed with a much larger share of the latter, for the earthquake still continued, while several enthusiasts ran up and down, heightening their own and their friends' calamities by terrible predictions."

This description relates to Misenum or Raia some 12 or 15 miles distant from Vesuvius and the cities which were buried at the time, but it may give some idea of the consternation which overtook the inhabitants of those cities, and the dismay with which they made their escape. Probably very few of the people lost their lives, and they even had time to secure and carry with them their treasure, but the horrors of their flight the imagination alone can picture. Our conceptions of the scene were greatly assisted by standing upon the spot and walking through the streets and houses which they had occupied, and which they were called so hastily to leave. Such scenery may again occur. A vast population now