

At Port Townsend I saw the local agent for the Clallams, Chimu-cums, and Makahs, and ordered him to meet me in ten days at Dungeness with the Clallam Indians, they numbering about twelve hundred souls and being two-thirds of the Indians entrusted to his charge. The Makahs living on the coast and islands around Cape Flattery I intended visiting myself in the schooner I was on, as the distance was too great and the weather too rough for canoes.

I then turned towards Bellingham bay, the country of the Lummi and Samish Indians, and the location at which Colonel Fitzhugh is stationed, who has those two tribes and the Neuksacks under his charge. I was sorry to learn from Agent Fitzhugh that his Indians are perishing rapidly. The discovery of gold on Fraser and Thompson rivers has caused an immense concourse of people to gather at this station, it being the starting point to the mines. The Indians have

sold all their canoes, being tempted by the large prices, and are now destitute of the means of fishing. The money they have received has been worse than nothing; it has been the means of their getting quantities of rum. The strangers at this place if they know the law do not respect it, and so many of them being there make the efforts of the two men who are interested in the Indians of little avail; consequently they get liquor as easily as a white man can.

On the day that I left Bellingham bay Colonel Fitzhugh was called to quell a disturbance that had occurred between some miners and the Neuksack Indians at a ferry on the Lummi river. He succeeded in restoring quiet. I here quote Colonel Fitzhugh's words in his letter to me upon the subject:

“The reason of their discontent was on account of bad treatment from some Californians, who had passed through their country and threatened to exterminate them. They then took the initiative and ordered them off.

“If the whites treat the Indians properly, (which I fear they will not do,) there will be no further trouble. It may be necessary hereafter to have a detachment of soldiers placed at the crossing, with some trusty officers, to prevent the traffic in whiskey. At this time everything is going on pleasantly; my assistant, C. Vail, is there at this time.

“My Indians around me are constantly drunk, and can get as much whiskey as they want. This gold discovery is a most unfortunate event for them; and if the excitement of gold seeking is kept up any length of time it will *wipe out* every Indian in this part of the country. The government need not take the trouble to confirm the treaties made with them some four years ago, unless they do it very soon. I feel that I or any one else can be of little service to the Indians now. But what good I can do you may rely upon my accomplishing.”

After reading this I think that you, sir, must agree with me in thinking that humanity, as well as justice, makes it an imperative duty of government to adopt some plan by which the Indians can be separated from the whites. Their forbearance has been remarkable. While they had the power of crushing us like worms they treated us like brothers. We, I think, should return their kindness now that we have the power, and our duty is so plainly pointed out by their deplorable situation. My own impression is that the speediest and best way of settling all these difficulties is the ratification of the treaties. The agents will then have the means in their hands of supplying all that I now think is wanting to enable them to govern these unhappy creatures, and to lay the ground-work of civilization for their children to improve upon.

At Neah Bay, or Waadda, and its vicinity, live the Makah tribe. They are the most independent Indians in my district—they and the Quilleyutes, their near neighbors. They number about five hundred, and obtain an abundant livelihood by catching cod and halibut on the banks north and east of Cape Flattery.

On my arrival among these people, I found them eager to have their treaty concluded. They are more anxious than I supposed they would be. They ardently desire to have tools, and to learn the use of them;

and as not many years since more than half of them died with the small pox, they earnestly wish for a physician, that they may be vaccinated. These they assign as their principal reasons for wishing their treaty ratified.

It has so happened that whenever these Indians have come in contact with the whites, they have had the latter in their power. In most cases ships have been wrecked on their coast. The consequence is, that they do not appreciate our importance, and are very independent, and sometimes insolent. Four gentlemen from California, have taken claims and established a trading post and fishery at Waadda. They have been there for about nine months, and have uniformly treated the Indians well; bought all the fish and oil they could bring for sale, (these Indians catch many whales) at liberal prices, yet they refuse to let them fish on the banks.

These gentlemen also complain that the Indians carry much of their oil to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, and in return smuggle many blankets and muskets into the country. I received a letter upon the subject, a copy of which I herewith transmit. It is endorsed J. H. Jenkins' letter. I agree with Mr. Jenkins in thinking that the less our Indians have to do with our neighbors, the Hudson's Bay Company, the better for us. I called the attention of the deputy collector of customs to the fact of the smuggling.

Mr. Isaac W. Smith, special light-house agent for this Territory, addressed a letter to me while at Neah Bay, stating that one chief, who lives on Tatooch Island, where a light-house has been recently erected, has been very insolent to the keeper of the light. That he, in one or two instances, struck the keeper, and threatened to kill him, and that he also destroyed some public property. I enclose a copy of his letter, and my answer.

The light-house is a great cause of grievance to them. They profess to believe that it keeps the whales from coming as usual, and they also say that it is on their land, and that we have no right to put it there without their consent.

I very much fear that there will be trouble at this light-house, and I regret that I had not the power to arrest the insolent old chief, and put him in confinement. Mr. Smith and his men are not alarmed for their safety, but I know when an Indian's insolence cannot be checked, it very seldom stops short of murder. The light-house is so isolated, and far from assistance, that all hands might be murdered days before it was known.

I hope that the steam light-house tender, that is on her way here, may have a good effect and check these troubles. I know of no other remedies except the ratification of the treaties.