

PROTECTION OF CITIZENS OF MONTANA.

MEMORIAL

OF THE

LEGISLATURE OF MONTANA TERRITORY,

IN RELATION TO

The protection of citizens of Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties.

FEBRUARY 24, 1874.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

Your memorialists, the legislative council and house of representatives composing the legislative assembly of the Territory of Montana, would respectfully represent, that the citizens of said Territory, residing in counties of Deer Lodge and Missoula, live in constant jeopardy from the bands of roving Indians infesting and traversing that country. Your memorialists would further represent that the Flat-Head Indians (of the Bitter Root Valley) have for a long time claimed that region; and while the same has to a great extent been occupied by white settlers engaged in the various pursuits of agriculture and the mechanical trades, the said Indians persist in their determination to inhabit and control the said country. Notwithstanding the said country has been surveyed by surveyors of the United States, and to a great extent duly pre-empted by white settlers, the said Indians declare that they will not leave the land unless forcibly removed.

Your memorialists would further represent that, by reason of the topography of the country, numerous tribes of Indians, in their travels to and from the buffalo-grounds, must necessarily pass through the cañon of the Hell-Gate Valley in said counties, among which may be enumerated the Nez Percés, Cayuses, Cœur d'Alenes, Klikitats, Yakimas, Walla-Wallas, Spokanes, Colvilles, Pend d'Oreilles, Kootenays, Kettle Indians, and also stragglers from the Modoc tribe, many of whom are regardless of the rights of white settlers, frequently plundering their property, driving off their horses, killing and stealing their cattle, wherefore frequent collisions of the said tribes with the settlers are the consequence; and the country is in danger of an Indian war at any time.

Your memorialists would further represent that the clandestine sale of spirituous liquors to the said Indians by lawless white persons and

half-breeds, arousing all their bad passions, is an additional source of alarm to the settlers, who are defenceless, except such as their own unorganized means and strength can furnish.

Wherefore your memorialists would pray that a military post, consisting of at least five hundred cavalry soldiers, be established at or near the Hell-Gate Ronde, at the confluence of the Bitter Root and Hell-Gate Rivers, and to take such other measures as may insure the safety of the citizens of the counties aforesaid; and your petitioners will ever pray.

G. W. STAPLETON,
President of the Council.

JOHN H. ROGERS,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Approved February 5, 1874.

B. F. POTTS,
Governor.

A true copy.
Attest:

A. M. S. CARPENTER,
Chief Clerk of the Council.

○