REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE SOUTH

By Carl Schurz

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**MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
COMMUNICATING,**

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate of the 12th instant, information in relation to the States of the Union lately in rebellion, accompanied by a report of Carl Schurz on the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana; also a report of Lieutenant General Grant, on the same subject.

DECEMBER 19, 1865.—Read and ordered to be printed, with the reports of Carl Schurz and Lieutenant General Grant.

To the Senate of the United States:

In reply to the resolution adopted by the Senate on the 12th instant, I have the honor to state, that the rebellion waged by a portion of the people against the properly constituted authorities of the government of the United States has been suppressed; that the United States are in possession of every State in which the insurrection existed; and that, as far as could be done, the courts of the United States have been restored, post offices re-established, and steps taken to put into effective operation the revenue laws of the country.

As the result of the measures instituted by the Executive, with the view of inducing a resumption of the functions of the States comprehended in the inquiry of the Senate, the people in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee, have reorganized their respective State governments, and "are yielding obedience to the laws and government of the United States," with more willingness and greater promptitude than, under the circumstances, could reasonably have been anticipated. The proposed amendment to the Constitution, providing for the abolition of slavery forever within the limits of the country, has been ratified by each one of those States, with the exception of Mississippi, from which no official information has yet been received; and in nearly all of them measures have been adopted or are now pending to confer upon freedmen rights and privileges which are essential to their comfort, protection, and security. In Florida and Texas the people are making commendable progress in restoring their State governments, and no doubt is entertained that they will at an early period be in a condition to resume all of their practical relations with the federal government.

In "that portion of the Union lately in rebellion" the aspect of affairs is more promising than, in view of all the circumstances, could well have been expected. The people throughout the entire south evince a laudable desire to renew their allegiance to the government, and to repair the devastations of war by a prompt and cheerful return to peaceful pursuits. An abiding faith is entertained that their actions will conform to their professions, and that, in acknowledging the supremacy of the Constitution and the laws of the United States, their loyalty will be unreservedly given to the government, whose leniency they cannot fail to appreciate, and whose fostering care will soon restore them to a condition of prosperity. It is true, that in some of the States the demoralizing effects of war are to be seen in occasional disorders, but these are local in character, not frequent in occurrence, and are rapidly disappearing as the authority of civil law is extended and sustained. Perplexing questions were naturally to be expected from the great and sudden change in the relations between the two races, but systems are gradually developing themselves under which the freedman will receive the protection to which he is justly entitled, and, by means of his labor, make himself a useful and independent member of the community in which he has his home. From all the information in my possession, and from that which I have recently derived from the most reliable authority, I am induced to cherish the belief that sectional animosity is surely and rapidly merging itself into a spirit of nationality, and that representation, connected with a properly adjusted system of taxation, will result in a harmonious restoration of the relations of the States to the national Union.

The report of Carl Schurz is herewith transmitted, as requested by the Senate. No reports from the honorable John Covode have been received by the President. The attention of the Senate is invited to the accompanying report of Lieutenant General Grant, who recently made a tour of inspection through several of the States whose inhabitants participated in the rebellion.

ANDREW JOHNSON

Washington, D.C., *December* 18, 1865.

REPORT OF CARL SCHURZ ON THE STATES OF SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA, ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, AND LOUISIANA.

Sir: When you did me the honor of selecting me for a mission to the States lately in rebellion, for the purpose of inquiring into the existing condition of things, of laying before you whatever information of importance I might gather, and of suggesting to you such measures as my observations would lead me to believe advisable, I accepted the trust with a profound sense of the responsibility connected with the performance of the task. The views I entertained at the time, I had communicated to you in frequent letters and conversations. I would not have accepted the mission, had I not felt that whatever preconceived opinions I might carry with me to the south, I should be ready to abandon or modify, as my perception of facts and circumstances might command their abandonment or modification. You informed me that your "policy of reconstruction" was merely experimental, and that you would change it if the experiment did not lead to satisfactory results. To aid you in forming your conclusions upon this point I understood to be the object of my mission, and this understanding was in perfect accordance with the written instructions I received through the Secretary of War.

These instructions confined my mission to the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and the department of the Gulf. I informed you, before leaving the north, that I could not well devote more than three months to the duties imposed upon me, and that space of time proved sufficient for me to visit all the States above enumerated, except Texas. I

landed at Hilton Head, South Carolina, on July 15, visited Beaufort, Charleston, Orangeburg, and Columbia, returned to Charleston and Hilton Head; thence I went to Savannah, traversed the State of Georgia, visiting Augusta, Atlanta, Macon, Milledgeville, and Columbus; went through Alabama, by way of Opelika, Montgomery, Selma, and Demopolis, and through Mississippi, by way of Meridian, Jackson, and Vicksburg; then descended the Mississippi to New Orleans, touching at Natchez; from New Orleans I visited Mobile, Alabama, and the Teche country, in Louisiana, and then spent again some days at Natchez and Vicksburg, on my way to the north. These are the outlines of my journey.

Before laying the results of my observations before you, it is proper that I should state the *modus operandi* by which I obtained information and formed my conclusions. Wherever I went I sought interviews with persons who might be presumed to represent the opinions, or to have influence upon the conduct, of their neighbors; I had thus frequent meetings with individuals belonging to the different classes of society from the highest to the lowest; in the cities as well as on the roads and steamboats I had many opportunities to converse not only with inhabitants of the adjacent country, but with persons coming from districts which I was not able to visit; and finally I compared the impressions thus received with the experience of the military and civil officers of the government stationed in that country, as well as of other reliable Union men to whom a longer residence on the spot and a more varied intercourse with the people had given better facilities of local observation than my circumstances permitted me to enjoy. When practicable I procured statements of their views and experience in writing as well as copies of official or private reports they had received from their subordinates or other persons. It was not expected of me that I should take formal testimony, and, indeed, such an operation would have required more time than I was able to devote to it.

My facilities for obtaining information were not equally extensive in the different States I visited. As they naturally depended somewhat upon the time the military had had to occupy and explore the country, as well as upon the progressive development of things generally, they improved from day to day as I went on, and were best in the States I visited last. It is owing to this circumstance that I cannot give as detailed an account of the condition of things in South Carolina and Georgia as I am able to give with regard to Louisiana and Mississippi.

Instead of describing the experiences of my journey in chronological order, which would lead to endless repetitions and a confused mingling of the different subjects under consideration, I propose to arrange my observations under different heads according to the subject matter. It is true, not all that can be said of the people of one State will apply with equal force to the people of another; but it will be easy to make the necessary distinctions when in the course of this report they become of any importance. I beg to be understood when using, for the sake of brevity, the term "the southern people," as meaning only the people of the States I have visited.

CONDITION OF THINGS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE WAR.

In the development of the popular spirit in the south since the close of the war two well-marked periods can be distinguished. The first commences with the sudden collapse of the confederacy and the dispersion of its armies, and the second with the first proclamation indicating the "reconstruction policy" of the government. Of the first period I can state the characteristic features only from the accounts I received, partly from Unionists who were then living in the south, partly from persons that had participated in the rebellion. When the news of Lee's and Johnston's surrenders burst upon the southern country the general consternation was extreme. People held their breath, indulging in the wildest apprehensions as to what was now to

come. Men who had occupied positions under the confederate government, or were otherwise compromised in the rebellion, run before the federal columns as they advanced and spread out to occupy the country, from village to village, from plantation to plantation, hardly knowing whether they wanted to escape or not. Others remained at their homes yielding themselves up to their fate. Prominent Unionists told me that persons who for four years had scorned to recognize them on the street approached them with smiling faces and both hands extended. Men of standing in the political world expressed serious doubts as to whether the rebel States would ever again occupy their position as States in the Union, or be governed as conquered provinces. The public mind was so despondent that if readmission at some future time under whatever conditions had been promised, it would then have been looked upon as a favor. The most uncompromising rebels prepared for leaving the country. The masses remained in a state of fearful expectancy.

This applies especially to those parts of the country which were within immediate reach of our armies or had previously been touched by the war. Where Union soldiers had never been seen and none were near, people were at first hardly aware of the magnitude of the catastrophe, and strove to continue in their old ways of living.

Such was, according to the accounts I received, the character of that first period. The worst apprehensions were gradually relieved as day after day went by without bringing the disasters and inflictions which had been vaguely anticipated, until at last the appearance of the North Carolina proclamation substituted new hopes for them. The development of this second period I was called upon to observe on the spot, and it forms the main subject of this report.

RETURNING LOYALTY.

It is a well-known fact that in the States south of Tennessee and North Carolina the number of white Unionists who during the war actively aided the government, or at least openly professed their attachment to the cause of the Union, was very small. In none of those States were they strong enough to exercise any decisive influence upon the action of the people, not even in Louisiana, unless vigorously supported by the power of the general government. But the white people at large being, under certain conditions, charged with taking the preliminaries of "reconstruction" into their hands, the success of the experiment depends upon the spirit and attitude of those who either attached themselves to the secession cause from the beginning, or, entertaining originally opposite views, at least followed its fortunes from the time that their States had declared their separation from the Union.

The first southern men of this class with whom I came into contact immediately after my arrival in South Carolina expressed their sentiments almost literally in the following language: "We acknowledge ourselves beaten, and we are ready to submit to the results of the war. The war has practically decided that no State shall secede and that the slaves are emancipated. We cannot be expected at once to give up our principles and convictions of right, but we accept facts as they are, and desire to be reinstated as soon as possible in the enjoyment and exercise of our political rights." This declaration was repeated to me hundreds of times in every State I visited, with some variations of language, according to the different ways of thinking or the frankness or reserve of the different speakers. Some said nothing of adhering to their old principles and convictions of right; others still argued against the constitutionality of coercion and of the emancipation proclamation; others expressed their determination to become good citizens, in strong language, and urged with equal emphasis the necessity of their home institutions being at once left to their own control; others would go so far as to say they were glad that the war was ended, and they

had never had any confidence in the confederacy; others protested that they had been opposed to secession until their States went out, and then yielded to the current of events; some would give me to understand that they had always been good Union men at heart, and rejoiced that the war had terminated in favor of the national cause, but in most cases such a sentiment was expressed only in a whisper; others again would grumblingly insist upon the restoration of their "rights," as if they had done no wrong, and indicated plainly that they would submit only to what they could not resist and as long as they could not resist it. Such were the definitions of "returning loyalty" I received from the mouths of a large number of individuals intelligent enough to appreciate the meaning of the expressions they used. I found a great many whose manner of speaking showed that they did not understand the circumstances under which they lived, and had no settled opinions at all except on matters immediately touching their nearest interests.

Upon the ground of these declarations, and other evidence gathered in the course of my observations, I may group the southern people into four classes, each of which exercises an influence upon the development of things in that section:

1. Those who, although having yielded submission to the national government only when obliged to do so, have a clear perception of the irreversible changes produced by the war, and honestly endeavor to accommodate themselves to the new order of things. Many of them are not free from traditional prejudice but open to conviction, and may be expected to act in good faith whatever they do. This class is composed, in its majority, of persons of mature age—planters, merchants, and professional men; some of them are active in the reconstruction movement, but boldness and energy are, with a few individual exceptions, not among their distinguishing qualities.

2. Those whose principal object is to have the States without delay restored to their position and influence in the Union and the people of the States to the absolute control of their home concerns. They are ready, in order to attain that object, to make any ostensible concession that will not prevent them from arranging things to suit their taste as soon as that object is attained. This class comprises a considerable number, probably a large majority, of the professional politicians who are extremely active in the reconstruction movement. They are loud in their praise of the President's reconstruction policy, and clamorous for the withdrawal of the federal troops and the abolition of the Freedmen's Bureau.

3. The incorrigibles, who still indulge in the swagger which was so customary before and during the war, and still hope for a time when the southern confederacy will achieve its independence. This class consists mostly of young men, and comprises the loiterers of the towns and the idlers of the country. They persecute Union men and negroes whenever they can do so with impunity, insist clamorously upon their "rights," and are extremely impatient of the presence of the federal soldiers. A good many of them have taken the oaths of allegiance and amnesty, and associated themselves with the second class in their political operations. This element is by no means unimportant; it is strong in numbers, deals in brave talk, addresses itself directly and incessantly to the passions and prejudices of the masses, and commands the admiration of the women.

4. The multitude of people who have no definite ideas about the circumstances under which they live and about the course they have to follow; whose intellects are weak, but whose prejudices and impulses are strong, and who are apt to be carried along by those who know how to appeal to the latter.

Much depends upon the relative strength and influence of these classes. In the course of this report you will find statements of facts which may furnish a basis for an estimate. But

whatever their differences may be, on one point they are agreed: further resistance to the power of the national government is useless, and submission to its authority a matter of necessity. It is true, the right of secession in theory is still believed in by most of those who formerly believed in it; some are still entertaining a vague hope of seeing it realized at some future time, but all give it up as a practical impossibility for the present. All movements in favor of separation from the Union have, therefore, been practically abandoned, and resistance to our military forces, on that score, has ceased. The demonstrations of hostility to the troops and other agents of the government, which are still occurring in some localities, and of which I shall speak hereafter, spring from another class of motives. This kind of loyalty, however, which is produced by the irresistible pressure of force, and consists merely in the non-commission of acts of rebellion, is of a negative character, and might, as such, hardly be considered independent of circumstances and contingencies.

OATH-TAKING.

A demonstration of "returning loyalty" of a more positive character is the taking of the oaths of allegiance and amnesty prescribed by the general government. At first the number of persons who availed themselves of the opportunities offered for abjuring their adhesion to the cause of the rebellion was not very large, but it increased considerably when the obtaining of a pardon and the right of voting were made dependent upon the previous performance of that act. Persons falling under any of the exceptions of the amnesty proclamation made haste to avert the impending danger; and politicians used every means of persuasion to induce people to swell the number of voters by clearing themselves of all disabilities. The great argument that this was necessary to the end of reconstructing their State governments, and of regaining the control of their home affairs and their influence in the Union, was copiously enlarged upon in the letters and speeches of prominent individuals, which are before the country and need no further comment. In some cases the taking of the oath was publicly recommended in newspapers and addresses with sneering remarks, and I have listened to many private conversations in which it was treated with contempt and ridicule. While it was not generally looked upon in the State I visited as a very serious matter, except as to the benefits and privileges it confers, I have no doubt that a great many persons took it fully conscious of the obligations it imposes, and honestly intending to fulfil them.

The aggregate number of those who thus had qualified themselves for voting previous to the election for the State conventions was not as large as might have been expected. The vote obtained at these elections was generally reported as very light—in some localities surprisingly so. It would, perhaps, be worth while for the government to order up reports about the number of oaths administered by the officers authorized to do so, previous to the elections for the State conventions; such reports would serve to indicate how large a proportion of the people participated in the reconstruction movement at that time, and to what extent the masses were represented in the conventions.

Of those who have not yet taken the oath of allegiance, most belong to the class of indifferent people who "do not care one way or the other." There are still some individuals who find the oath to be a confession of defeat and a declaration of submission too humiliating and too repugnant to their feelings. It is to be expected that the former will gradually overcome their apathy, and the latter their sensitiveness, and that, at a not remote day, all will have qualified themselves, in point of form, to resume the right of citizenship. On the whole, it may be said that the value of the oaths taken in the southern States is neither above nor below the value of the

political oaths taken in other countries. A historical examination of the subject of political oaths will lead to the conclusion that they can be very serviceable in certain emergencies and for certain objects, but that they have never insured the stability of a government, and never improved the morals of a people.

FEELING TOWARDS THE SOLDIERS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH.

A more substantial evidence of "returning loyalty" would be a favorable change of feeling with regard to the government's friends and agents, and the people of the loyal States generally. I mentioned above that all organized attacks upon our military forces stationed in the south have ceased; but there are still localities where it is unsafe for a man wearing the federal uniform or known as an officer of the government to be abroad outside of the immediate reach of our garrisons. The shooting of single soldiers and government couriers was not unfrequently reported while I was in the south, and even as late as the middle of September, Major Miller, assistant adjutant general of the commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama, while on an inspecting tour in the southern counties of that State, found it difficult to prevent a collision between the menacing populace and his escort. His wagon-master was brutally murdered while remaining but a short distance behind the command. The murders of agents of the Freedmen's Bureau have been noticed in the public papers. These, and similar occurrences, however, may be looked upon as isolated cases, and ought to be charged, perhaps, only to the account of the lawless persons who committed them.

But no instance has come to my notice in which the people of a city or a rural district cordially fraternized with the army. Here and there the soldiers were welcomed as protectors against apprehended dangers; but general exhibitions of cordiality on the part of the population I have not heard of. There are, indeed, honorable individual exceptions to this rule. Many persons, mostly belonging to the first of the four classes above enumerated, are honestly striving to soften down the bitter feelings and traditional antipathies of their neighbors; others, who are acting more upon motives of policy than inclination, maintain pleasant relations with the officers of the government. But, upon the whole, the soldier of the Union is still looked upon as a stranger, an intruder—as the "Yankee," "the enemy." It would be superfluous to enumerate instances of insult offered to our soldiers, and even to officers high in command; the existence and intensity of this aversion is too well known to those who have served or are now serving in the south to require proof. In this matter the exceptions were, when I was there, not numerous enough to affect the rule. In the documents accompanying this report you will find allusions confirming this statement. I would invite special attention to the letter of General Kirby Smith, (accompanying document No. 9.)

This feeling of aversion and resentment with regard to our soldiers may, perhaps, be called natural. The animosities inflamed by a four years' war, and its distressing incidents, cannot be easily overcome. But they extend beyond the limits of the army, to the people of the north. I have read in southern papers bitter complaints about the unfriendly spirit exhibited by the northern people—complaints not unfrequently flavored with an admixture of vigorous vituperation. But, as far as my experience goes, the "unfriendly spirit" exhibited in the north is all mildness and affection compared with the popular temper which in the south vents itself in a variety of ways and on all possible occasions. No observing northern man can come into contact with the different classes composing southern society without noticing it. He may be received in social circles with great politeness, even with apparent cordiality; but soon he will become aware that, although he may be esteemed as a man, he is detested as a "Yankee," and, as the

conversation becomes a little more confidential and throws off ordinary restraint, he is not unfrequently told so; the word "Yankee" still signifies to them those traits of character which the southern press has been so long in the habit of attributing to the northern people; and whenever they look around them upon the traces of the war, they see in them, not the consequences of their own folly, but the evidences of "Yankee wickedness." In making these general statements, I beg to be understood as always excluding the individual exceptions above mentioned.

It is by no means surprising that prejudices and resentments, which for years were so assiduously cultivated and so violently inflamed, should not have been turned into affection by a defeat; nor are they likely to disappear as long as the southern people continue to brood over their losses and misfortunes. They will gradually subside when those who entertain them cut resolutely loose from the past and embark in a career of new activity on a common field with those whom they have so long considered their enemies. Of this I shall say more in another part of this report. But while we are certainly inclined to put upon such things the most charitable construction, it remains nevertheless true, that as long as these feelings exist in their present strength, they will hinder the growth of that reliable kind of loyalty which springs from the heart and clings to the country in good and evil fortune.

SITUATION OF UNIONISTS.

It would have been a promising indication of returning loyalty if the old, consistent, uncompromising Unionists of the south, and those northern men who during the war settled down there to contribute to the prosperity of the country with their capital and enterprise, had received that measure of consideration to which their identification with the new order of things entitled them. It would seem natural that the victory of the national cause should have given those who during the struggle had remained the firm friends of the Union, a higher standing in society and an enlarged political influence. This appears to have been the case during that "first period" of anxious uncertainty when known Unionists were looked up to as men whose protection and favor might be of high value. At least it appears to have been so in some individual instances. But the close of that "first period" changed the aspect of things.

It struck me soon after my arrival in the south that the known Unionists—I mean those who during the war had been to a certain extent identified with the national cause—were not in communion with the leading social and political circles; and the further my observations extended the clearer it became to me that their existence in the south was of a rather precarious nature. Already in Charleston my attention was called to the current talk among the people, that, when they had the control of things once more in their own hands and were no longer restrained by the presence of "Yankee" soldiers, men of Dr. Mackey's stamp would not be permitted to live there. At first I did not attach much importance to such reports; but as I proceeded through the country, I heard the same thing so frequently repeated, at so many different places, and by so many different persons, that I could no longer look upon the apprehensions expressed to me by Unionists as entirely groundless. I found the same opinion entertained by most of our military commanders. Even Governor Sharkey, in the course of a conversation I had with him in the presence of Major General Osterhaus, admitted that, if our troops were then withdrawn, the lives of northern men in Mississippi would not be safe. To show that such anticipations were not extravagant, I would refer to the letter addressed to me by General Osterhaus. (Accompanying document No. 10.) He states that he was compelled to withdraw the garrison from Attala county, Mississippi, the regiment to which that garrison belonged being mustered out, and that when the troops had been taken away, four murders occurred, two of white Union men, and two of

negroes. (He informed me subsequently that the perpetrators were in custody.) He goes on to say: "There is no doubt whatever that the state of affairs would be intolerable for all Union men, all recent immigrants from the north, and all negroes, the moment the protection of the United States troops were withdrawn." General Osterhaus informed me of another murder of a Union man by a gang of lawless persons, in Jackson, about the end of June. General Slocum, in his order prohibiting the organization of the State militia in Mississippi, speaks of the "outrages committed against northern men, government couriers, and negroes." (Accompanying document No. 12.) He communicated to me an official report from Lieutenant Colonel Yorke, commanding at Port Gibson, to General Davidson, pointing in the same direction. General Canby stated to me that he was obliged to disband and prohibit certain patrol organizations in Louisiana because they indulged in the gratification of private vengeance. Lieutenant Hickney, assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, at Shreveport, Louisiana, in a report addressed to Assistant Commissioner Conway, says: "The life of a northern man who is true to his country and the spirit and genius of its institutions, and frankly enunciates his principles, is not secure where there is not a military force to protect him." (Accompanying document No. 32.) Mr. William King, a citizen of Georgia, well known in that State, stated to me in conversation: "There are a great many bad characters in the country, who would make it for some time unsafe for known Union people and northerners who may settle down here to live in this country without the protection of the military." The affair of Scottsborough, in the military district of northern Alabama, where a sheriff arrested and attempted to bring to trial for murder Union soldiers who had served against the guerillas in that part of the country, an attempt which was frustrated only by the prompt interference of the district commander, has become generally known through the newspapers. (Accompanying document No. 19.) It is not improbable that many cases similar to those above mentioned have occurred in other parts of the south without coming to the notice of the authorities.

It is true these are mere isolated cases, for which it would be wrong to hold anybody responsible who was not connected with them; but it is also true that the apprehensions so widely spread among the Unionists and northern men were based upon the spirit exhibited by the people among whom they lived. I found a good many thinking of removing themselves and their families to the northern States, and if our troops should be soon withdrawn the exodus will probably become quite extensive unless things meanwhile change for the better.

ASPECT OF THE POLITICAL FIELD.

The status of this class of Unionists in the political field corresponds with what I have said above. In this respect I have observed practical results more closely in Mississippi than in any other State. I had already left South Carolina and Georgia when the elections for the State conventions took place. Of Alabama, I saw only Mobile after the election. In Louisiana, a convention, a legislature, and a State government had already been elected, during and under the influence of the war, and I left before the nominating party conventions were held; but I was in Mississippi immediately after the adjournment of the State convention, and while the canvass preparatory to the election of the legislature and of the State and county officers was going on. Events have since sufficiently developed themselves in the other States to permit us to judge how far Mississippi can be regarded as a representative of the rest. Besides, I found the general spirit animating the people to be essentially the same in all the States above mentioned.

The election for the State convention in Mississippi was, according to the accounts I have received, not preceded by a very vigorous and searching canvass of the views and principles of

the candidates. As I stated before, the vote was very far from being full, and in most cases the members were elected not upon strictly defined party issues, but upon their individual merits as to character, intelligence, and standing in society. Only in a few places the contest between rival candidates was somewhat animated. It was probably the same in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.

The Mississippi convention was, in its majority, composed of men belonging to the first two of the four classes above mentioned. There were several Union men in it of the inoffensive, compromising kind—men who had been opposed to secession in the beginning, and had abstained from taking a prominent part in the rebellion unless obliged to do so, but who had, at least, readily acquiesced in what was going on. But there was, as far as I have been able to ascertain, only one man there who, like the Unionists of East Tennessee, had offered active resistance to the rebel authorities. This was Mr. Crawford, of Jones county; he was elected by the poor people of that region, his old followers, as their acknowledged leader, and his may justly be looked upon as an exceptional case. How he looked upon his situation appears from a speech he delivered in that convention, and especially from the amended version of it placed into my hands by a trustworthy gentleman of my acquaintance who had listened to its delivery. (Accompanying document No. 13.) But several instances have come to my knowledge, in which Union men of a sterner cast than those described as acquiescing compromisers were defeated in the election, and, aside from Mr. Crawford's case, none in which they succeeded.

The impulses by which voters were actuated in making their choice appeared more clearly in the canvass for State officers, Congressmen, and members of the legislature, when the antecedents and political views of candidates were more closely scrutinized and a warmer contest took place. The population of those places in the south which have been longest in the possession of our armies is generally the most accommodating as to the new order of things; at least the better elements are there in greater relative strength. A Union meeting at Vicksburg may, therefore, be produced as a not unfavorable exponent of Mississippi Unionism. Among the documents attached to this report you will find three speeches delivered before such a meeting—one by Mr. Richard Cooper, candidate for the attorney generalship of the State; one by Hon. Sylvanus Evans, candidate for Congress; and one by Colonel Partridge, candidate for a seat in the legislature. (Accompanying document No. 14.) The speakers represented themselves as Union men, and I have learned nothing about them that would cast suspicion upon the sincerity of their declarations as far as they go; but all there qualified their Unionism by the same important statement. Mr. Cooper: "In 1850 I opposed an attempt to break up the United States government, and in 1860 I did the same. I travelled in Alabama and Mississippi to oppose the measure. (Applause.) But after the State did secede, I did all in my power to sustain it." (Heavy applause.) Mr. Evans: "In 1861 I was a delegate from Lauderdale county to the State convention, then and in 1860 being opposed to the act of secession, and fought against it with all my powers. But when the State had seceded, I went with it as a matter of duty, and I sustained it until the day of the surrender with all my body and heart and mind." (Great applause.) Colonel Partridge: "He was a Union man before the war and a soldier in the war. He had performed his duty as a private and an officer on the battle-field and on the staff."

These speeches, fair specimens of a majority of those delivered by the better class of politicians before the better class of audiences, furnish an indication of the kind of Unionism which, by candidates, is considered palatable to the people of that region. And candidates are generally good judges as to what style of argument is best calculated to captivate the popular mind. In some isolated localities there may be some chance of success for a candidate who,

proclaiming himself a Union man, is not able to add, "but after the State had seceded I did all in my power to sustain it," although such localities are certainly scarce and difficult to find.

It is not so difficult to find places in which a different style of argument is considered most serviceable. Your attention is respectfully invited to a card addressed to the voters of the sixth judicial district of Mississippi by Mr. John T. Hogan, candidate for the office of district attorney. (Accompanying document No. 15.) When, at the commencement of the war, Kentucky resolved to remain in the Union, Mr. Hogan, so he informs the constituency, was a citizen of Kentucky; because Kentucky refused to leave the Union Mr. Hogan left Kentucky. He went to Mississippi, joined the rebel army, and was wounded in battle; and because he left his native State to fight against the Union, "therefore," Mr. Hogan tells his Mississippian constituency, "he cannot feel that he is an alien in their midst, and, with something of confidence in the result, appeals to them for their suffrages." Such is Mr. Hogan's estimate of the loyalty of the sixth judicial district of Mississippi.

A candidate relying for success upon nothing but his identification with the rebellion might be considered as an extreme case. But, in fact, Mr. Hogan only speaks out bluntly what other candidates wrap up in lengthy qualifications. It is needless to accumulate specimens. I am sure no Mississippian will deny that if a candidate there based his claims upon the ground of his having left Mississippi when the State seceded, in order to fight for the Union, his pretensions would be treated as a piece of impudence. I feel warranted in saying that Unionism absolutely untinctured by any connexion with, or at least acquiescence in the rebellion, would have but little chance of political preferment anywhere, unless favored by very extraordinary circumstances; while men who, during the war, followed the example of the Union leaders of East Tennessee, would in most places have to depend upon the protection of our military forces for safety, while nowhere within the range of my observation would they, under present circumstances, be considered eligible to any position of trust, honor, or influence, unless it be in the county of Jones, as long as the bayonets of the United States are still there.

The tendency of which in the preceding remarks I have endeavored to indicate the character and direction, appeared to prevail in all the States that came under my observation with equal force, some isolated localities excepted. None of the provisional governments adopted the policy followed by the late "military government" of Tennessee: to select in every locality the most reliable and most capable Union men for the purpose of placing into their hands the positions of official influence. Those who had held the local offices before and during the rebellion were generally reappointed, and hardly any discrimination made. If such wholesale re-appointments were the only thing that could be done in a hurry, it may be asked whether the hurry was necessary. Even in Louisiana, where a State government was organized during the war and under the influence of the sentiments which radiated from the camps and headquarters of the Union army, and where there is a Union element far stronger than in any other of the States I visited, even there, men who have aided the rebellion by word and act are crowding into places of trust and power. Governor Wells, when he was elected lieutenant governor of Louisiana, was looked upon and voted for as a thorough Unionist; but hardly had he the patronage of the State government in his hands, when he was carried along by the seemingly irresistible current. Even members of the "Conservative Union party," and friends of Governor Wells, expressed their dissatisfaction with the remarkable "liberality" with which he placed men into official positions who had hardly returned from the rebel army, or some other place where they had taken refuge to avoid living under the flag of the United States. The apprehension was natural that such elements would soon obtain a power and influence which the governor would not be able to control even

if he wished. Taking these things into consideration, the re-nomination of Governor Wells for the governorship can certainly not be called a victory of that Union sentiment to which he owed his first election. While I was in New Orleans an occurrence took place which may be quoted as an illustration of the sweep of what I might call the *reactionary movement*. When General Shepley was military governor of Louisiana, under General Butler's regime, a school board was appointed for the purpose of reorganizing the public schools of New Orleans. A corps of loyal teachers was appointed, and the education of the children was conducted with a view to make them loyal citizens. The national airs were frequently sung in the schools, and other exercises introduced, calculated to impregnate the youthful minds of the pupils with affection for their country. It appears that this feature of the public schools was distasteful to that class of people with whose feelings they did not accord.

Mr. H. Kennedy, acting mayor of New Orleans, early in September last, disbanded the school board which so far had conducted the educational affairs of the city, and appointed a new one. The composition of this new school board was such as to induce General Canby to suspend its functions until he could inquire into the loyalty of its members. The report of the officer intrusted with the investigation is among the documents annexed hereto. (Accompanying document No. 16.) It shows that a large majority of the members had sympathized with the rebellion, and aided the confederate government in a variety of ways. But as no evidence was elicited proving the members legally incapable of holding office, General Canby considered himself obliged to remove the prohibition, and the new school board entered upon its functions.

Without offering any comment of my own, I annex an editorial taken from the "New Orleans Times," of September 12, evidently written in defence of the measure. (Accompanying document No. 17.) Its real substance, stripped of all circumlocutions, can be expressed in a few words: "The schools of New Orleans have been institutions so intensely and demonstratively loyal as to become unpopular with those of our fellow-citizens to whom such demonstrations are distasteful, and they must be brought back under 'popular control' so as to make them cease to be obnoxious in that particular." It was generally understood, when the new school board was appointed, that a Mr. Rodgers was to be made superintendent of public schools. In Major Lowell's report to General Canby (Accompanying document No. 16) this Mr. Rodgers figures as follows: "Mr. Rodgers, the candidate for the position of superintendent of public schools, held the same office at the commencement of the war. His conduct at that time was imbued with extreme bitterness and hate towards the United States, and, in his capacity as superintendent, he introduced the 'Bonnie Blue Flag' and other rebel songs into the exercises of the schools under his charge. In histories and other books where the initials 'U.S.' occurred he had the same erased, and 'C.S.' substituted. He used all means in his power to imbue the minds of the youth intrusted to his care with hate and malignity towards the Union. He has just returned from the late confederacy, where he has resided during the war. At the time he left the city to join the army he left his property in the care of one Finley, who claims to be a British subject, but held the position of sergeant in a confederate regiment of militia." No sooner was the above-mentioned prohibition by General Canby removed when Mr. Rodgers was actually appointed, and he now presides over the educational interests of New Orleans. There is something like system in such proceedings.

Similar occurrences, such as the filling with rebel officers of professorships in the Military Institute of Louisiana, where formerly General Sherman held a position, have already become known to the country, and it is unnecessary to go into further details. Many cases of this

description are not of much importance in themselves, but serve as significant indications of the tendency of things in the south.

It is easily understood that, under such circumstances, Unionists of the consistent, uncompromising kind do not play an enviable part. It is a sad fact that the victory of the national arms has, to a great extent, resulted in something like a political ostracism of the most loyal men in that part of the country. More than once have I heard some of them complain of having been taunted by late rebels with their ill fortune; and it is, indeed, melancholy for them to reflect that, if they had yielded to the current of public sentiment in the rebel States instead of resisting it, their present situation and prospects would be much more pleasing. Nor is such a reflection calculated to encourage them, or others, to follow a similar course if similar emergencies should again arise.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

While the generosity and toleration shown by the government to the people lately in rebellion has not met with a corresponding generosity shown by those people to the government's friends, it has brought forth some results which, if properly developed, will become of value. It has facilitated the re-establishment of the forms of civil government, and led many of those who had been active in the rebellion to take part in the act of bringing back the States to their constitutional relations; and if nothing else were necessary than the mere putting in operation of the mere machinery of government in point of form, and not also the acceptance of the results of the war and their development in point of spirit, these results, although as yet incomplete, might be called a satisfactory advance in the right direction. There is, at present, no danger of another insurrection against the authority of the United States on a large scale, and the people are willing to reconstruct their State governments, and to send their senators and representatives to Congress.

But as to the moral value of these results, we must not indulge in any delusions. There are two principal points to which I beg to call your attention. In the first place, the rapid return to power and influence of so many of those who but recently were engaged in a bitter war against the Union, has had one effect which was certainly not originally contemplated by the government. Treason does, under existing circumstances, not appear odious in the south. The people are not impressed with any sense of its criminality. And, secondly, there is, as yet, among the southern people an *utter absence of national feeling*. I made it a business, while in the south, to watch the symptoms of "returning loyalty" as they appeared not only in private conversation, but in the public press and in the speeches delivered and the resolutions passed at Union meetings. Hardly ever was there an expression of hearty attachment to the great republic, or an appeal to the impulses of patriotism; but whenever submission to the national authority was declared and advocated, it was almost uniformly placed upon two principal grounds: That, under present circumstances, the southern people could "do no better;" and then that submission was the only means by which they could rid themselves of the federal soldiers and obtain once more control of their own affairs. Some of the speakers may have been inspired by higher motives, but upon these two arguments they had principally to rely whenever they wanted to make an impression upon the popular mind. If any exception is to be made to this rule it is Louisiana, in whose metropolis a different spirit was cultivated for some time; but even there, the return in mass of those who followed the fortunes of the confederate flag during the war does not appear to have a favorable influence upon the growth of that sentiment. (See Gen. Canby's letter, accompanying document No. 8.) While admitting that, at present, we have perhaps no right to

expect anything better than this submission—loyalty which springs from necessity and calculation—I do not consider it safe for the government to base expectations upon it, which the manner in which it manifests itself does not justify.

The reorganization of civil government is relieving the military, to a great extent, of its police duties and judicial functions; but at the time I left the south it was still very far from showing a satisfactory efficiency in the maintenance of order and security.—In many districts robbing and plundering was going on with perfect impunity; the roads were infested by bands of highwaymen; numerous assaults occurred, and several stage lines were considered unsafe. The statements of Major General Woods, Brigadier General Kilby Smith and Colonel Gilchrist, (accompanying documents Nos. 11, 9 and 18,) give a terrible picture of the state of things in the localities they refer to. It is stated that civil officers are either unwilling or unable to enforce the laws; that one man does not dare to testify against another for fear of being murdered, and that the better elements of society are kept down by lawless characters under a system of terrorism. From my own observation I know that these things are not confined to the districts mentioned in the documents above referred to. Both the governors of Alabama and Mississippi complained of it in official proclamations. Cotton, horse and cattle stealing was going on in all the States I visited on an extensive scale. Such a state of demoralization would call for extraordinary measures in any country, and it is difficult to conceive how, in the face of the inefficiency of the civil authorities, the removal of the troops can be thought of.

In speaking above of the improbability of an insurrectionary movement on a large scale, I did not mean to say that I considered resistance in detail to the execution of the laws of Congress and the measures of the government impossible. Of all subjects connected with the negro question I shall speak in another part of this report. But there is another matter claiming the attention and foresight of the government. It is well known that the levying of taxes for the payment of the interest on our national debt is, and will continue to be, very unpopular in the south. It is true, no striking demonstrations have as yet been made of any decided unwillingness on the part of the people to contribute to the discharge of our national obligations. But most of the conversations I had with southerners upon this subject led me to apprehend that they, politicians and people, are rather inclined to ask money of the government as compensation for their emancipated slaves, for the rebuilding of the levees on the Mississippi, and various kinds of damage done by our armies for military purposes, than, as the current expression is, to "help paying the expenses of the whipping they have received." In fact, there are abundant indications in newspaper articles, public speeches, and electioneering documents of candidates, which render it eminently probable that on the claim of compensation for their emancipated slaves the southern States, as soon as readmitted to representation in Congress, will be almost a unit. In the Mississippi convention the idea was broached by Mr. Potter, in an elaborate speech, to have the late slave States relieved from taxation "for years to come," in consideration of "debt due them" for the emancipated slaves; and this plea I have frequently heard advocated in private conversations. I need not go into details as to the efforts made in some of the southern States in favor of the assumption by those States of their debts contracted during the rebellion. It may be assumed with certainty that those who want to have the southern people, poor as they are, taxed for the payment of rebel debts, do not mean to have them taxed for the purpose of meeting our national obligations. But whatever devices may be resorted to, present indications justify the apprehension that the enforcement of our revenue laws will meet with a refractory spirit, and may require sterner measures than the mere sending of revenue officers into that part of the country.

I have annexed to this report numerous letters addressed to me by gentlemen whose views on the loyalty of the southern people and kindred topics, formed as they are upon an extended observation and long experience, are entitled to consideration. (Letter of General Gillmore, accompanying document No. 1; letter of Dr. Mackey, No. 2; letter of Mr. Sawyer, No. 3; letter of General Hatch, No. 4; letter of Mr. Pilsbury, No. 5; statement of General Steedman, No. 6; letter of General Croxton, No. 7; letter of General Canby, No. 8; letter of General Kirby Smith, No. 9, &c.) In these papers a variety of opinions is expressed, some to a certain extent sanguine, others based upon a less favorable experience. I offer them to you, without exception, as they came to me. Many of the gentlemen who wrote them have never been in any way connected with party politics, and their utterances may be looked upon as coming from unbiassed and impartial observers.

THE NEGRO QUESTION—FIRST ASPECTS.

The principal cause of that want of national spirit which has existed in the south so long, and at last gave birth to the rebellion, was, that the southern people cherished, cultivated, idolized their peculiar interests and institutions in preference to those which they had in common with the rest of the American people. Hence the importance of the negro question as an integral part of the question of union in general, and the question of reconstruction in particular.

When the war came to a close, the labor system of the south was already much disturbed. During the progress of military operations large numbers of slaves had left their masters and followed the columns of our armies; others had taken refuge in our camps; many thousands had enlisted in the service of the national government. Extensive settlements of negroes had been formed along the seaboard and the banks of the Mississippi, under the supervision of army officers and treasury agents, and the government was feeding the colored refugees, who could not be advantageously employed, in the so-called contraband camps. Many slaves had also been removed by their masters, as our armies penetrated the country, either to Texas or to the interior of Georgia and Alabama. Thus a considerable portion of the laboring force had been withdrawn from its former employments. But a majority of the slaves remained on the plantations to which they belonged, especially in those parts of the country which were not touched by the war, and where, consequently, the emancipation proclamation was not enforced by the military power. Although not ignorant of the stake they had in the result of the contest, the patient bondmen waited quietly for the development of things. But as soon as the struggle was finally decided, and our forces were scattered about in detachments to occupy the country, the so far unmoved masses began to stir. The report went among them that their liberation was no longer a mere contingency, but a fixed fact. Large numbers of colored people left the plantations; many flocked to our military posts and camps to obtain the certainty of their freedom, and others walked away merely for the purpose of leaving the places on which they had been held in slavery, and because they could now go with impunity. Still others, and their number was by no means inconsiderable, remained with their former masters and continued their work on the field, but under new and as yet unsettled conditions, and under the agitating influence of a feeling of restlessness. In some localities, however, where our troops had not yet penetrated and where no military post was within reach, planters endeavored and partially succeeded in maintaining between themselves and the negroes the relation of master and slave, partly by concealing from them the great changes that had taken place, and partly by terrorizing them into submission to their behests. But aside from these exceptions, the country found itself thrown into that confusion which is naturally inseparable from a change so great and so sudden. The white people were afraid of the

negroes, and the negroes did not trust the white people; the military power of the national government stood there, and was looked up to, as the protector of both.

Upon this power devolved the task to bring order into that chaos. But the order to be introduced was a new order, of which neither the late masters nor the late slaves had an adequate conception. All the elements of society being afloat, the difficulties were immense. The military officers and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau, to whom the negroes applied for advice and guidance, either procured them such employment as could be found, or persuaded them to return to their plantations and to continue in the cultivation of the crops, promising them that their liberty, rights, and interests should be protected. Upon the planters they urged the necessity of making fair and equitable contracts with the freedmen, admonishing them to treat their laborers as free men ought to be treated. These efforts met with such success as the difficulties surrounding the problem permitted to expect. Large numbers of negroes went back to the fields, according to the advice they had received, but considerable accumulations still remained in and around the towns and along the seaboard, where there was no adequate amount of profitable employment for them. The making and approving of contracts progressed as rapidly as the small number of officers engaged in that line of duty made it possible, but not rapidly in proportion to the vast amount of work to be accomplished. The business experience of many of the officers was but limited; here and there experiments were tried which had to be given up. In numerous cases contracts were made and then broken, either by the employers or the laborers, and the officers in charge were overwhelmed with complaints from both sides. While many planters wanted to have the laborers who had left them back on their plantations, others drove those that had remained away, and thus increased the number of the unemployed. Moreover, the great change had burst upon the country in the midst of the agricultural labor season when the crops that were in the ground required steady work to make them produce a satisfactory yield, and the interruption of labor, which could not but be very extensive, caused considerable damage. In one word, the efforts made could not prevent or remedy, in so short a time, the serious disorders which are always connected with a period of precipitous transition, and which, although natural, are exceedingly embarrassing to those who have to deal with them.

The solution of the social problem in the south, if left to the free action of the southern people, will depend upon two things: 1, upon the ideas entertained by the whites, the "ruling class," of the problem, and the manner in which they act upon their ideas; and 2, upon the capacity and conduct of the colored people.

OPTIONS OF THE WHITES.

That the result of the free labor experiment made under circumstances so extremely unfavorable should at once be a perfect success, no reasonable person would expect. Nevertheless, a large majority of the southern men with whom I came into contact announced their opinions with so positive an assurance as to produce the impression that their minds were fully made up. In at least nineteen cases of twenty the reply I received to my inquiry about their views on the new system was uniformly this: "You cannot make the negro work, without physical compulsion." I heard this hundreds of times, heard it wherever I went, heard it in nearly the same words from so many different persons, that at last I came to the conclusion that this is the prevailing sentiment among the southern people. There are exceptions to this rule, but, as far as my information extends, far from enough to affect the rule. In the accompanying documents you will find an abundance of proof in support of this statement. There is hardly a paper relative

to the negro question annexed to this report which does not, in some direct or indirect way, corroborate it.

Unfortunately the disorders necessarily growing out of the transition state continually furnished food for argument. I found but few people who were willing to make due allowance for the adverse influence of exceptional circumstances. By a large majority of those I came in contact with, and they mostly belonged to the more intelligent class, every irregularity that occurred was directly charged against the system of free labor. If negroes walked away from the plantations, it was conclusive proof of the incorrigible instability of the negro, and the impracticability of free negro labor. If some individual negroes violated the terms of their contract, it proved unanswerably that no negro had, or ever would have, a just conception of the binding force of a contract, and that this system of free negro labor was bound to be a failure. If some negroes shirked, or did not perform their task with sufficient alacrity, it was produced as irrefutable evidence to show that physical compulsion was actually indispensable to make the negro work. If negroes, idlers or refugees crawling about the towns, applied to the authorities for subsistence, it was quoted as incontestably establishing the point that the negro was too improvident to take care of himself, and must necessarily be consigned to the care of a master. I heard a Georgia planter argue most seriously that one of his negroes had shown himself certainly unfit for freedom because he impudently refused to submit to a whipping. I frequently went into an argument with those putting forth such general assertions, quoting instances in which negro laborers were working faithfully, and to the entire satisfaction of their employers, as the employers themselves had informed me. In a majority of cases the reply was that we northern people did not understand the negro, but that they (the southerners) did; that as to the particular instances I quoted I was probably mistaken; that I had not closely investigated the cases, or had been deceived by my informants; that they *knew* the negro would not work without compulsion, and that nobody could make them believe he would. Arguments like these naturally finished such discussions. It frequently struck me that persons who conversed about every other subject calmly and sensibly would lose their temper as soon as the negro question was touched.

EFFECTS OF SUCH OPINIONS, AND GENERAL TREATMENT OF THE NEGRO.

A belief, conviction, or prejudice, or whatever you may call it, so widely spread and apparently so deeply rooted as this, that the negro will not work without physical compulsion, is certainly calculated to have a very serious influence upon the conduct of the people entertaining it. It naturally produced a desire to preserve slavery in its original form as much and as long as possible—and you may, perhaps, remember the admission made by one of the provisional governors, over two months after the close of the war, that the people of his State still indulged in a lingering hope slavery might yet be preserved—or to introduce into the new system that element of physical compulsion which would make the negro work. Efforts were, indeed, made to hold the negro in his old state of subjection, especially in such localities where our military forces had not yet penetrated, or where the country was not garrisoned in detail. Here and there planters succeeded for a limited period to keep their former slaves in ignorance, or at least doubt, about their new rights; but the main agency employed for that purpose was force and intimidation. In many instances negroes who walked away from the plantations, or were found upon the roads, were shot or otherwise severely punished, which was calculated to produce the impression among those remaining with their masters that an attempt to escape from slavery would result in certain destruction. A large proportion of the many acts of violence committed is

undoubtedly attributable to this motive. The documents attached to this report abound in testimony to this effect. For the sake of illustration I will give some instances:

Brigadier General Fessenden reported to Major General Gillmore from Winnsboro, South Carolina, July 19, as follows: "The spirit of the people, especially in those districts not subject to the salutary influence of General Sherman's army, is that of concealed and, in some instances, of open hostility, though there are some who strive with honorable good faith to promote a thorough reconciliation between the government and their people. A spirit of bitterness and persecution manifests itself towards the negroes. They are shot and abused outside the immediate protection of our forces *by men who announce their determination to take the law into their own hands, in defiance of our authority*. To protect the negro and punish these still rebellious individuals it will be necessary to have this country pretty thickly settled with soldiers." I received similar verbal reports from other parts of South Carolina. To show the hopes still indulged in by some, I may mention that one of the sub-district commanders, as he himself informed me, knew planters within the limits of his command who had made contracts with their former slaves *avowedly* for the object of keeping them together on their plantations, so that they might have them near at hand, and thus more easily reduce them to their former condition, when, after the restoration of the civil power, the "unconstitutional emancipation proclamation" would be set aside.

Cases in which negroes were kept on the plantations, either by ruse or violence, were frequent enough in South Carolina and Georgia to call forth from General Saxton a circular threatening planters who persisted in this practice with loss of their property, and from Major General Steedman, commander of the department of Georgia, an order bearing upon the same subject. At Atlanta, Georgia, I had an opportunity to examine some cases of the nature above described myself. While I was there, 9th and 10th of August, several negroes came into town with bullet and buckshot wounds in their bodies. From their statements, which, however, were only corroborating information previously received, it appeared that the reckless and restless characters of that region had combined to keep the negroes where they belonged. Several freedmen were shot in the attempt to escape, others succeeded in eluding the vigilance of their persecutors; large numbers, terrified by what they saw and heard, quietly remained under the restraint imposed upon them, waiting for better opportunities. The commander of the sub-district and post informed me that bands of guerillas were prowling about within a few miles of the city, making it dangerous for soldiers and freedmen to show themselves outside of the immediate reach of the garrison, and that but a few days previous to my arrival a small squad of men he had sent out to serve an order upon a planter, concerning the treatment of freedmen, had been driven back by an armed band of over twenty men, headed by an individual in the uniform of a rebel officer.

As our troops in Georgia were at that time mostly concentrated at a number of central points, and not scattered over the State in small detachments, but little information was obtained of what was going on in the interior of the country. A similar system was followed in Alabama, but enough has become known to indicate the condition of things in localities not immediately under the eye of the military. In that State the efforts made to hold the negro in a state of subjection appear to have been of a particularly atrocious nature. Rumors to that effect which reached me at Montgomery induced me to make inquiries at the post hospital. The records of that institution showed a number of rather startling cases which had occurred immediately after the close of the war, and some of a more recent date; all of which proved that negroes leaving the plantations, and found on the roads, were exposed to the savagest treatment. An extract from the

records of the hospital is appended, (accompanying document No. 20;) also a statement signed by the provost marshal at Selma, Alabama, Major J.P. Houston, (accompanying document No. 21.) He says: "There have come to my notice officially twelve cases, in which I am morally certain the trials have not been had yet, that negroes were killed by whites. In a majority of cases the provocation consisted in the negroes' trying to come to town or to return to the plantation after having been sent away. The cases above enumerated, I am convinced, are but a small part of those that have actually been perpetrated." In a report to General Swayne, assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, in Alabama, communicated to me by the general, Captain Poillon, agent of the bureau at Mobile, says of the condition of things in the southwestern part of the State, July 29: "There are regular patrols posted on the rivers, who board some of the boats; after the boats leave they hang, shoot, or drown the victims they may find on them, and all those found on the roads or coming down the rivers are almost invariably murdered. The bewildered and terrified freedmen know not what to do—to leave is death; to remain is to suffer the increased burden imposed upon them by the cruel taskmaster, whose only interest is their labor, wrung from them by every device an inhuman ingenuity can devise; hence the lash and murder is resorted to to intimidate those whom fear of an awful death alone cause to remain, while patrols, negro dogs and spies, disguised as Yankees, keep constant guard over these unfortunate people." In a letter addressed to myself, September 9, Captain Poillon says: "Organized patrols, with negro hounds, keep guard over the thoroughfares; bands of lawless robbers traverse the country, and the unfortunate who attempts to escape, or he who returns for his wife or child, is waylaid or pursued with hounds, and shot or hung." (Accompanying document No. 22.)

In Mississippi I received information of a similar character. I would respectfully invite your attention to two letters—one by Colonel Hayne, 1st Texas cavalry, and one by Colonel Brinkerhoff—giving interesting descriptions of the condition of the freedmen, and the spirit of the whites shortly after the close of the war. (Accompanying documents Nos. 23 and 24.) Lieutenant Colonel P.J. Yorke, post commander at port Gibson, Mississippi, reported to General Davidson, on August 26, that a "county patrol" had been organized by citizens of his sub-district, which, for reasons given, he had been obliged to disband; one of these reasons was, in his own language, that: "The company was formed out of what they called picked men, *i.e.*, those only who had been actually engaged in the war, and were known as strong disunionists. The negroes in the sections of country these men controlled were kept in the most abject slavery, and treated in every way contrary to the requirements of General Orders No. 129, from the War Department." (Accompanying document No. 25.) As late as September 29, Captain J.H. Weber, agent of the Freedmen's Bureau, reported to Colonel Thomas, assistant commissioner of the bureau, in the State of Mississippi, as follows: "In many cases negroes who left their homes during the war, and have been within our military lines, and having provided homes here for their families, going back to get their wives and children, have been driven off, and told that they could not have them. In several cases guards have been sent to aid people in getting their families; in many others it has been impracticable, as the distance was too great. In portions of the northern part of this district the colored people are kept in slavery still. The white people tell them that they were free during the war, but the war is now over, and they must go to work again as before. The reports from sub-commissioners nearest that locality show that the blacks are in a much worse state than ever before, the able-bodied being kept at work under the lash, and the young and infirm driven off to care for themselves. As to protection from the civil authorities, there is no such thing outside of this city." (Accompanying document No. 26.)

The conviction, however, that slavery in the old form cannot be maintained has forced itself upon the minds of many of those who ardently desired its preservation. But while the necessity of a new system was recognized as far as the right of property in the individual negro is concerned, many attempts were made to introduce into that new system the element of physical compulsion, which, as above stated, is so generally considered indispensable. This was done by simply adhering, as to the treatment of the laborers, as much as possible to the traditions of the old system, even where the relations between employers and laborers had been fixed by contract. The practice of corporal punishment was still continued to a great extent, although, perhaps, not in so regular a manner as it was practiced in times gone by. It is hardly necessary to quote any documentary evidence on this point; the papers appended to this report are full of testimony corroborating the statement. The habit is so inveterate with a great many persons as to render, on the least provocation, the impulse to whip a negro almost irresistible. It will continue to be so until the southern people will have learned, so as never to forget it, that a black man has rights which a white man is bound to respect.

Here I will insert some remarks on the general treatment of the blacks as a class, from the whites as a class. It is not on the plantations and at the hands of the planters themselves that the negroes have to suffer the greatest hardships. Not only the former slaveholders, but the non-slaveholding whites, who, even previous to the war, seemed to be more ardent in their pro-slavery feelings than the planters themselves, are possessed by a singularly bitter and vindictive feeling against the colored race since the negro has ceased to be property. The pecuniary value which the individual negro formerly represented having disappeared, the maiming and killing of colored men seems to be looked upon by many as one of those venial offences which must be forgiven to the outraged feelings of a wronged and robbed people. Besides, the services rendered by the negro to the national cause during the war, which make him an object of special interest to the loyal people, make him an object of particular vindictiveness to those whose hearts were set upon the success of the rebellion. The number of murders and assaults perpetrated upon negroes is very great; we can form only an approximative estimate of what is going on in those parts of the south which are not closely garrisoned, and from which no regular reports are received, by what occurs under the very eyes of our military authorities. As to my personal experience, I will only mention that during my two days sojourn at Atlanta, one negro was stabbed with fatal effect on the street, and three were poisoned, one of whom died. While I was at Montgomery, one negro was cut across the throat evidently with intent to kill, and another was shot, but both escaped with their lives. Several papers attached to this report give an account of the number of capital cases that occurred at certain places during a certain period of time. It is a sad fact that the perpetration of those acts is not confined to that class of people which might be called the rabble. Several "gentlemen of standing" have been tried before military commissions for such offences.

These statements are naturally not intended to apply to all the individuals composing the southern people. There are certainly many planters who, before the rebellion, treated their slaves with kindness, and who now continue to treat them as free laborers in the same manner. There are now undoubtedly many plantations in the south on which the relations between employers and employees are based upon mutual good will. There are certainly many people there who entertain the best wishes for the welfare of the negro race, and who not only never participated in any acts of violence, but who heartily disapprove them. I have no doubt, a large majority can, *as to actual participation*—not, however, as to the bitter spirit—I offer a good plea of not guilty. But however large or small a number of people may be guilty of complicity in such acts of persecution, those who are opposed to them have certainly not shown themselves strong enough

to restrain those who perpetrate or favor them. So far, the *spirit of persecution* has shown itself so strong as to make the protection of the freedman by the military arm of the government in many localities necessary—in almost all, desirable. It must not be forgotten that in a community a majority of whose members is peaceably disposed, but not willing or not able to enforce peace and order, a comparatively small number of bold and lawless men can determine the character of the whole. The rebellion itself, in some of the southern States, furnished a striking illustration of this truth.

GENERAL IDEAS AND SCHEMES OF WHITES CONCERNING THE FREEDMEN.

Some of the planters with whom I had occasion to converse expressed their determination to adopt the course which best accords with the spirit of free labor, to make the negro work by offering him fair inducements, to stimulate his ambition, and to extend to him those means of intellectual and moral improvement which are best calculated to make him an intelligent, reliable and efficient free laborer and a good and useful citizen. Those who expressed such ideas were almost invariably professed Union men, and far above the average in point of mental ability and culture. I found a very few instances of original secessionists also manifesting a willingness to give the free-labor experiment a fair trial. I can represent the sentiments of this small class in no better way than by quoting the language used by an Alabama judge in a conversation with me. "I am one of the most thoroughly whipped men in the south," said he; "I am a genuine old secessionist, and I believe now, as I always did, we had the constitutional right to secede. But the war has settled that matter, and it is all over now. As to this thing of free negro labor, I do not believe in it, but I will give it a fair trial. I have a plantation and am going to make contracts with my hands, and then I want a real Yankee to run the machine for me; not one of your New Yorkers or Pennsylvanians, but the genuine article from Massachusetts or Vermont—one who can not only farm, but sing psalms and pray, and teach school—a real abolitionist, who believes in the thing just as I don't believe in it. If he does not succeed, I shall consider it proof conclusive that you are wrong and I am right."

I regret to say that views and intentions so reasonable I found confined to a small minority. Aside from the assumption that the negro will not work without physical compulsion, there appears to be another popular notion prevalent in the south, which stands as no less serious an obstacle in the way of a successful solution of the problem. It is that the negro exists for the special object of raising cotton, rice and sugar *for the whites*, and that it is illegitimate for him to indulge, like other people, in the pursuit of his own happiness in his own way. Although it is admitted that he has ceased to be the property of a master, it is not admitted that he has a right to become his own master. As Colonel Thomas, assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in Mississippi, in a letter addressed to me, very pungently expresses it: "The whites esteem the blacks their property by natural right, and, however much they may admit that the relations of masters and slaves have been destroyed by the war and by the President's emancipation proclamation, they still have an ingrained feeling that the blacks at large belong to the whites at large, and whenever opportunity serves, they treat the colored people just as their profit, caprice or passion may dictate." (Accompanying document No. 27.) An ingrained feeling like this is apt to bring forth that sort of class legislation which produces laws to govern one class with no other view than to benefit another. This tendency can be distinctly traced in the various schemes for regulating labor which here and there see the light.

Immediately after the emancipation of the slaves, when the general confusion was most perplexing, the prevalent desire among the whites seemed to be, if they could not retain their

negroes as slaves, to get rid of them entirely. Wild speculations were indulged in, how to remove the colored population at once and to import white laborers to fill its place; how to obtain a sufficient supply of coolies, &c., &c. Even at the present moment the removal of the freedmen is strongly advocated by those who have the traditional horror of a free negro, and in some sections, especially where the soil is more adapted to the cultivation of cereals than the raising of the staples, planters appear to be inclined to drive the negroes away, at least from their plantations. I was informed by a prominent South Carolinian in July, that the planters in certain localities in the northwestern part of his State had been on the point of doing so, but better counsel had been made to prevail upon them; and Colonel Robinson, 97th United States Colored Infantry, who had been sent out to several counties in southern Alabama to administer the amnesty oath, reported a general disposition among the planters of that region to "set the colored people who had cultivated their crops during the summer, adrift as soon as the crops would be secured, and not to permit the negro to remain upon any footing of equality with the white man in that country." (Accompanying document No. 28.) The disposition to drive away all the negroes from the plantations was undoubtedly confined to a few districts; and as far as the scheme of wholesale deportation is concerned, practical men became aware, that if they wanted to have any labor done, it would have been bad policy to move away the laborers they now have before others were there to fill their places. All these devices promising at best only distant relief, and free negro labor being the only thing in immediate prospect, many ingenious heads set about to solve the problem, how to make free labor compulsory by permanent regulations.

Shortly after the close of the war some South Carolina planters tried to solve this problem by introducing into the contracts provisions leaving only a small share of the crops to the freedmen, subject to all sorts of constructive charges, and then binding them to work off the indebtedness they might incur. It being to a great extent in the power of the employer to keep the laborer in debt to him, the employer might thus obtain a permanent hold upon the person of the laborer. It was something like the system of peonage existing in Mexico. When these contracts were submitted to the military authorities for ratification, General Hatch, commanding at Charleston, at once issued an order prohibiting such arrangements. I had an opportunity to examine one of these contracts, and found it drawn up with much care, and evidently with a knowledge of the full bearings of the provisions so inserted.

Appended to this report is a memorandum of a conversation I had with Mr. W. King, of Georgia, a gentleman of good political sentiments and undoubtedly benevolent intentions. He recommends a kind of guardianship to be exercised by the employer over the freedman. He is a fair representative, not of the completely unprejudiced, but of the more liberal-minded class of planters, and his sayings show in what direction even those who are not actuated by any spirit of bitterness against the negro, seek a way out of their perplexities. (Accompanying document No. 29.)

I annex also two documents submitted to Mr. Benjamin F. Flanders, special treasury agent at New Orleans, who then had the management of freedmen's affairs in Louisiana, in November and December, 1864. They are not of a recent date, but may be taken as true representations of the ideas and sentiments entertained by large numbers to-day. The first (accompanying document No. 30) contains "suggestions on the wants of planters before embarking their capital in the cultivation of staple crops," and was submitted by a committee to a meeting of planters at New Orleans, November 21, 1864. It speaks for itself. The others (accompanying document No. 31) is a letter addressed to Mr. Flanders by Mr. T. Gibson, a Louisiana planter, who is well known in New Orleans as professing much affection for the

negro. It commences with the assertion that he "has no prejudices to overcome, and would do the black all the good in his power," and winds up with a postscript strongly insisting upon the necessity of corporal punishment, the "great desideratum in obtaining labor from free blacks being *its enforcement*."

MUNICIPAL REGULATIONS.

The motives and spirit bringing forth such ideas found a still clearer expression in some attempted municipal regulations. In no State within the range of my observation had, at the time of my visit, so much progress been made in the reorganization of local government as in Louisiana. In most of the parishes the parish authorities had exercised their functions for some time; in others the organization was less complete. Governor Wells informed me that he had filled the parish offices with men recommended to him by the people of the parishes, and it is fair to assume that in most cases the appointees represented the views and sentiments of the ruling class. Some of the local authorities so appointed furnished us an indication of the principles upon which they thought it best to regulate free labor within their jurisdiction.

Mr. W.B. Stickney, agent of the Freedmen's Bureau at Shreveport, Louisiana, reported to the assistant commissioner of the bureau in Louisiana as follows: "August 1.—The following is a literal copy of a document brought to this office by a colored man, which is conclusive evidence that there are those who still claim the negro as their property:

"'This boy Calvin has permit to hire to whom he pleases, but I shall hold him as my property until set free by Congress. July 7, 1865. (Signed.) E.V. TULLY.'"

The spirit of the above also made its appearance in another form, in the action of the police board of the parish of Bossier, which was an attempt to revive at once the old slave laws, and to prevent the freedmen from obtaining employment (away) from their former masters. The gist of the enactment alluded to is contained in the paragraph directing the officers on patrol duty "to arrest and take up all idle and vagrant persons running at large without employment and carry them before the proper authorities, to be dealt with as the law directs." A regulation like this certainly would make it difficult for freedmen to leave their former masters for the purpose of seeking employment elsewhere. The matter was submitted to Brevet Major General Hawkins, commanding western district of Louisiana, who issued an order prohibiting the parish police forces from arresting freedmen unless for positive offence against the law.

Clearer and more significant was the ordnance passed by the police board of the town of Opelousas, Louisiana. (Accompanying document No. 34.) It deserves careful perusal. Among a number of regulations applying exclusively to the negro, and depriving him of all liberty of locomotion, the following striking provisions are found:

Section 3. No negro or freedman shall be permitted to rent or keep a house within the limits of the town under any circumstances, and any one thus offending shall be ejected and compelled to find an employer or leave the town within twenty-four hours. The lessor or furnisher of the house leased or kept as above shall pay a fine of ten dollars for each offence.

Section 4. No negro or freedman shall reside within the limits of the town of Opelousas who is not in the regular service of some white person or former owner.

Section 8. No freedman shall sell, barter or exchange, any articles of merchandise or traffic within the limits of Opelousas without permission in writing from his employer, or the mayor, or president of the board.

This ordinance was at first approved by a lieutenant colonel of the United States forces having local command there, and it is worthy of note that thereupon the infection spread at once,

and similar ordinances were entertained by the police boards of the town of Franklin and of the parish of St. Landry. (Accompanying document No. 35). The parish ordinance of St. Landry differs from the town ordinances of Opelousas and Franklin in several points, and wherever there is any difference, it is in the direction of greater severity. It imposes heavier fines and penalties throughout, and provides, in addition, for a system of corporal punishment. It is also ordained "that the aforesaid penalties shall be *summarily enforced*, and that it shall be the duty of the *captain or chief of patrol* to see that the aforesaid ordinances are promptly executed." While the town ordinances provide that a negro who does not find an employer shall be compelled to leave the town, the parish or county ordinance knows nothing of letting the negro go, but simply *compels* him to find an employer. Finally, it is ordained "that it shall be the duty of every *citizen* to act as a police officer for the detection of offences and the apprehension of offenders, who shall be immediately handed over to the proper captain or chief of patrol."

It is true, an "organization of free labor" upon this plan would not be exactly the re-establishment of slavery in its old form, but as for the practical working of the system with regard to the welfare of the freedman, the difference would only be for the worse. The negro is not only not permitted to be idle, but he is positively prohibited from working or carrying on a business for himself; he is *compelled* to be in the "regular service" of a white man, and if he has no employer he is *compelled* to find one. It requires only a simple understanding among the employers, and the negro is just as much bound to his employer "for better and for worse" as he was when slavery existed in the old form. If he should attempt to leave his employer on account of non-payment of wages or bad treatment he is *compelled* to find another one; and if no other will take him he will be *compelled* to return to him from whom he wanted to escape. The employers, under such circumstances, are naturally at liberty to arrange the matter of compensation according to their tastes, for the negro will be compelled to be in the regular service of an employer, whether he receives wages or not. The negro may be permitted by his employer "to hire his own time," for in the spirit and intent of the ordinance his time never properly belongs to him. But even the old system of slavery was more liberal in this respect, for such "permission to hire his own time" "shall never extend over seven days at any one time." (Sec. 4.) The sections providing for the "*summary*" enforcement of the penalties and placing their infliction into the hands of the "chief of patrol"—which, by the way, throws some light upon the objects for which the militia is to be reorganized—place the freedmen under a sort of permanent martial law, while the provision investing every white man with the power and authority of a police officer as against every black man subjects them to the control even of those individuals who in other communities are thought hardly fit to control themselves. On the whole, this piece of legislation is a striking embodiment of the idea that although the former owner has lost his individual right of property in the former slave, "the blacks at large belong to the whites at large."

Such was the "organization of free labor" ordained by officials appointed by Governor Wells, and these ordinances were passed while both the emancipation proclamation and a provision in the new constitution of Louisiana abolishing slavery in that State forever were recognized as being in full force. It is needless to say that as soon as these proceedings came to the knowledge of the Freedmen's Bureau and the department commander they were promptly overruled. But Governor Wells did not remove the police boards that had thus attempted to revive slavery in a new form.

The opposition to the negro's controlling his own labor, carrying on business independently on his own account—in one word, working for his own benefit—showed itself in

a variety of ways. Here and there municipal regulations were gotten up heavily taxing or otherwise impeding those trades and employments in which colored people are most likely to engage. As an illustration, I annex an ordinance passed by the common council of Vicksburg, (accompanying document No. 36,) together with a letter from Colonel Thomas, in which he says: "You will see by the city ordinance that a drayman, or hackman, must file a bond of five hundred dollars, in addition to paying for his license. The mayor requires that the bondsmen must be freeholders. The laws of this State do not, and never did, allow a negro to own land or hold property; the white citizens refuse to sign any bonds for the freedmen. The white citizens and authorities say that it is for their interest to drive out all independent negro labor; that the freedmen must hire to white men if they want to do this kind of work." I found several instances of a similar character in the course of my observations, of which I neglected to procure the documentary evidence.

It may be said that these are mere isolated cases; and so they are. But they are the local outcroppings of a spirit which I found to prevail everywhere. If there is any difference, it is in the degree of its intensity and the impatience or boldness with which it manifests itself. Of the agencies which so far restrained it from venturing more general demonstrations I shall speak in another part of this report.

EDUCATION OF THE FREEDMEN.

It would seem that all those who sincerely desire to make the freedman a freeman in the true sense of the word, must also be in favor of so educating him as to make him clearly understand and appreciate the position he is to occupy in life, with all its rights and corresponding duties, and to impart to him all the knowledge necessary for enabling him to become an intelligent co-operator in the general movements of society. As popular education is the true ground upon which the efficiency and the successes of free-labor society grow, no man who rejects the former can be accounted a consistent friend of the latter. It is also evident that the education of the negro, to become general and effective after the full restoration of local government in the south, must be protected and promoted as an integral part of the educational systems of the States.

I made it a special point in most of the conversations I had with southern men to inquire into their views with regard to this subject. I found, indeed, some gentlemen of thought and liberal ideas who readily acknowledged the necessity of providing for the education of the colored people, and who declared themselves willing to co-operate to that end to the extent of their influence. Some planters thought of establishing schools on their estates, and others would have been glad to see measures taken to that effect by the people of the neighborhoods in which they lived. But whenever I asked the question whether it might be hoped that the legislatures of their States or their county authorities would make provisions for negro education, I never received an affirmative, and only in two or three instances feebly encouraging answers. At last I was forced to the conclusion that, aside from a small number of honorable exceptions, the popular prejudice is almost as bitterly set against the negro's having the advantage of education as it was when the negro was a slave. There may be an improvement in that respect, but it would prove only how universal the prejudice was in former days. Hundreds of times I heard the old assertion repeated, that "learning will spoil the nigger for work," and that "negro education will be the ruin of the south." Another most singular notion still holds a potent sway over the minds of the masses—it is, that the elevation of the blacks will be the degradation of the whites. They do not understand yet that the continual contact with an ignorant and degraded population must

necessarily lower the mental and moral tone of the other classes of society. This they might have learned from actual experience, as we in the north have been taught, also by actual experience, that the education of the lower orders is the only reliable basis of the civilization as well as of the prosperity of a people.

The consequence of the prejudice prevailing in the southern States is that colored schools can be established and carried on with safety only under the protection of our military forces, and that where the latter are withdrawn the former have to go with them. There may be a few localities forming exceptions, but their number is certainly very small. I annex a few papers bearing upon this subject. One is a letter addressed to me by Chaplain Joseph Warren, superintendent of education under the Freedmen's Bureau in Mississippi. (Accompanying document No. 37.) The long and extensive experience of the writer gives the views he expresses more than ordinary weight. After describing the general spirit of opposition to the education of the negroes exhibited in Mississippi, and enumerating the reasons assigned for it, he says: "In view of these things I have no doubt but that, if our protection be withdrawn, negro education will be hindered in every possible way, including obstructions by fraud and violence. I have not the smallest expectation that, with the State authorities in full power, a northern citizen would be protected in the exercise of his constitutional right to teach and preach to the colored people, and shall look for a renewal of the fearful scenes in which northerners were whipped, tarred and feathered, warned off, and murdered, before the war." The letter gives many details in support of this conclusion, and is in every respect worth perusing.

In the letter of General Kirby Smith (Accompanying document No. 9) occurs the following statement referring to the condition of things in Mobile, Alabama: "Threats were made to destroy all school-houses in which colored children were taught, and in two instances they were fired. The same threats were made against all churches in which colored people assembled to worship, and one of them burned. Continued threats of assassination were made against the colored preachers, and one of them is now under special guard by order of Major General Woods."

While I was in Louisiana General Canby received a petition, signed by a number of prominent citizens of New Orleans, praying him "to annul Order No. 38, which authorizes a board of officers to levy a tax on the taxpayers of the parish of Orleans to defray the expense of educating the freedmen." The reasons given for making this request are as follows: "Most of those who have lost their slaves by the rebellion, and whose lands are in the course of confiscation, being thus deprived of the means of raising corn for their hungry children, have not anything left wherewith to pay such a tax. The order in question, they consider, violates that sacred principle which requires taxation to be equal throughout the United States. *If the freedmen are to be educated at public expense, let it be done from the treasury of the United States*." (Accompanying document No. 38.) Many of the signers of this petition, who wanted to be relieved of the school tax on the ground of poverty, were counted among the wealthy men of New Orleans, and they forgot to state that the free colored element of Louisiana, which represents a capital of at least thirteen millions and pays a not inconsiderable proportion of the taxes, contributes at the same time for the support of the schools for whites, from which their children are excluded. I would also invite attention to some statements concerning this matter contained in the memorandum of my conversation with Mr. King, of Georgia. (Accompanying document No. 29.)

While travelling in the south I found in the newspapers an account of an interview between General Howard and some gentlemen from Mississippi, in which a Dr. Murdoch, from

Columbus, Mississippi, figured somewhat conspicuously. He was reported to have described public sentiment in Mississippi as quite loyal, and especially in favor of giving the colored race a good education. I inquired at the Freedmen's Bureau whether anything was known there of a feeling so favorable to negro education among Dr. Murdoch's neighbors. The information I received is contained in a letter from the assistant commissioner, Colonel Thomas. (Accompanying document No. 39.) It appears that the feeling of Dr. Murdoch's neighbors at Columbus was not only not in favor of negro education, but that, according to the report of the agent of the Freedmen's Bureau at that place, "the citizens of the town are so prejudiced against the negroes that they are opposed to all efforts being made for their education or elevation;" that "the people will not give rooms or allow the children of their hired freedmen to attend the schools," and that the citizens of the place have written a letter to the officers, saying "that they would respectfully ask that no freedmen's schools be established under the auspices of the bureau, as it would tend to disturb the present labor system, and take from the fields labor that is so necessary to restore the wealth of the State." It seems Dr. Murdoch's neighbors do not form an exception to the general rule. In this connexion I may add that several instances have come to my notice of statements about the condition of things in the late rebel States, being set afloat by southerners visiting the north, which would not bear close investigation. The reason, probably, is that gentlemen are attributing their own good intentions to the rest of their people with too great a liberality.

Having thus given my experience and impressions with regard to the spirit actuating the southern people concerning the freedman and the free-labor problem, and before inquiring into their prospective action, I beg leave to submit a few remarks on the conduct of the negro.

THE FREEDMAN.

The first southern men with whom I came into contact after my arrival at Charleston designated the general conduct of the emancipated slaves as surprisingly good. Some went even so far as to call it admirable. The connexion in which they used these laudatory terms was this: A great many colored people while in slavery had undoubtedly suffered much hardship and submitted to great wrongs, partly inseparably connected with the condition of servitude, and partly aggravated by the individual wilfulness and cruelty of their masters and overseers. They were suddenly set free; and not only that: their masters but a short time ago almost omnipotent on their domains, found themselves, after their defeat in the war, all at once face to face with their former slaves as a conquered and powerless class. Never was the temptation to indulge in acts of vengeance for wrongs suffered more strongly presented than to the colored people of the south; but no instance of such individual revenge was then on record, nor have I since heard of any case of violence that could be traced to such motives. The transition of the southern negro from slavery to freedom was untarnished by any deeds of blood, and the apprehension so extensively entertained and so pathetically declaimed upon by many, that the sudden and general emancipation of the slaves would at once result in "all the horrors of St. Domingo," proved utterly groundless. This was the first impression I received after my arrival in the south, and I received it from the mouths of late slaveholders. Nor do I think the praise was unjustly bestowed. In this respect the emancipated slaves of the south can challenge comparison with any race long held in servitude and suddenly set free. As to the dangers of the future, I shall speak of them in another connexion.

But at that point the unqualified praise stopped and the complaints began: the negroes would not work; they left their plantations and went wandering from place to place, stealing by

the way; they preferred a life of idleness and vagrancy to that of honest and industrious labor; they either did not show any willingness to enter into contracts, or, if they did, showed a stronger disposition to break them than to keep them; they were becoming insubordinate and insolent to their former owners; they indulged in extravagant ideas about their rights and relied upon the government to support them without work; in one word, they had no conception of the rights freedom gave, and of the obligations freedom imposed upon them. These complaints I heard repeated with endless variations wherever I went. Nor were they made without some show of reason. I will review them one after another.

Unwillingness to work.—That there are among the negroes a good many constitutionally lazy individuals is certainly true. The propensity to idleness seems to be rather strongly developed in the south generally, without being confined to any particular race. It is also true that the alacrity negroes put into their work depends in a majority of cases upon certain combinations of circumstances. It is asserted that the negroes have a prejudice against working in the cultivation of cotton, rice, and sugar. Although this prejudice, probably arising from the fact that the cotton, rice, and sugar fields remind the former slave of the worst experiences of his past life, exists to some extent, it has not made the freedmen now on the plantations unwilling to cultivate such crops as the planters may have seen fit to raise. A few cases of refusal may have occurred. But there is another fact of which I have become satisfied in the course of my observations, and which is of great significance: while most of the old slaveholders complain of the laziness and instability of their negro laborers, the northern men engaged in planting, with whom I have come into contact, almost uniformly speak of their negro laborers with satisfaction, and these northern men almost exclusively devote themselves to the cultivation of cotton. A good many southern planters, in view of the fact, expressed to me their intention to engage northern men for the management of their plantations. This circumstance would seem to prove that under certain conditions the negro may be expected to work well. There are two reasons by which it may be explained: first, that a northern man knows from actual experience what free labor is, and understands its management, which the late slaveholder, still clinging to the traditions of the old system, does not; and then, that the negro has more confidence in a northern man than in his former master. When a northern man discovers among his laboring force an individual that does not do his duty, his first impulse is to discharge him, and he acts accordingly. When a late slaveholder discovers such an individual among his laborers, his first impulse is to whip him, and he is very apt to suit the act to the impulse. Ill treatment is a doubtful encouragement for free laborers, and it proves more apt to drive those that are still at work away than to make the plantation attractive to others. But if the reasons above stated are sufficient to explain why the negroes work better for northern than for southern men, it will follow that a general improvement will take place as soon as the latter fulfil the same conditions—that is, as soon as southern men learn what free labor is and how to manage it in accordance with its principles, and as soon as they succeed in gaining the confidence of the colored people.

In the reports of officers of the Freedmen's Bureau, among the documents annexed to this, you will find frequent repetitions of the statement that the negro generally works well where he is decently treated and well compensated. Nor do the officers of the Freedmen's Bureau alone think and say so. Southern men, who were experimenting in the right direction, expressed to me their opinion to the same effect. Some of them told me that the negroes on their plantations worked "as well as ever," or even "far better than they had expected." It is true the number of planters who made that admission was small, but it nearly corresponded with the number of those who, according to their own statements, gave free negro labor a perfectly fair trial, while

all those who prefaced everything they said with the assertion that "the negro will not work without physical compulsion," could find no end to their complaints. There are undoubtedly negroes who will not do well under the best circumstances, just as there are others who will do well under the worst.

In another part of this report I have already set forth the exceptional difficulties weighing upon the free-labor experiment in the south during this period of transition. The sudden leap from slavery to freedom is an exciting event in a man's life, and somewhat calculated to disturb his equanimity for a moment. People are on such occasions disposed to indulge themselves a little. It would have shown much more wisdom in the negroes if all of them had quietly gone to work again the next day. But it is not reasonable to expect the negroes to possess more wisdom than other races would exhibit under the same circumstances. Besides, the willingness to work depends, with whites as well as blacks, somewhat upon the nature of the inducements held out, and the unsatisfactory regulation of the matter of wages has certainly something to do with the instability of negro labor which is complained of. Northern men engaged in planting almost uniformly pay wages in money, while southern planters, almost uniformly, have contracted with their laborers for a share in the crop. In many instances the shares are allotted between employers and laborers with great fairness; but in others the share promised to the laborers is so small as to leave them in the end very little or nothing. Moreover, the crops in the south looked generally very unpromising from the beginning, which naturally reduced the value falling to the lot of the laborer. I have heard a good many freedmen complain that, taking all things into consideration, they really did not know what they were working for except food, which in many instances was bad and scanty; and such complaints were frequently well founded. In a large number of cases the planters were not to blame for this; they had no available pecuniary means, and in many localities found it difficult to procure provisions. But these unfavorable circumstances, combined with the want of confidence in northern men, were well calculated to have an influence upon the conduct of the negro as a laborer.

I have heard it said that money is no inducement which will make a negro work. It is certain that many of them, immediately after emancipation, had but a crude conception of the value of money and the uses it can be put to. It may, however, be stated as the general rule, that whenever they are at liberty to choose between wages in money and a share in the crop, they will choose the former and work better. Many cases of negroes engaged in little industrial pursuits came to my notice, in which they showed considerable aptness not only for gaining money, but also for saving and judiciously employing it. Some were even surprisingly successful. I visited some of the plantations divided up among freedmen and cultivated by them independently without the supervision of white men. In some instances I found very good crops and indications of general thrift and good management; in others the corn and cotton crops were in a neglected and unpromising state. The excuse made was in most cases that they had obtained possession of the ground too late in the season, and that, until the regular crops could be harvested, they were obliged to devote much of their time to the raising and sale of vegetables, watermelons, &c., for the purpose of making a living in the meantime.

On the whole I feel warranted in making the following statement: Many freedmen—not single individuals, but whole "plantation gangs"—are working well; others do not. The difference in their efficiency coincides in a great measure with a certain difference in the conditions under which they live. The conclusion lies near, that if the conditions under which they work well become general, their efficiency as free laborers will become general also, aside

from individual exceptions. Certain it is, that by far the larger portion of the work done in the south is done by freedmen.

Vagrancy.—Large numbers of colored people left the plantations as soon as they became aware that they could do so with impunity. That they could so leave their former masters was for them the first test of the reality of their freedom. A great many flocked to the military posts and towns to obtain from the "Yankees" reliable information as to their new rights. Others were afraid lest by staying on the plantations where they had been held as slaves they might again endanger their freedom. Still others went to the cities, thinking that there the sweets of liberty could best be enjoyed. In some places they crowded together in large numbers, causing serious inconvenience. But a great many, probably a very large majority, remained on the plantations and made contracts with their former masters. The military authorities, and especially the agents of the Freedmen's Bureau, succeeded by continued exertions in returning most of those who were adrift to the plantations, or in finding other employment for them. After the first rush was over the number of vagrants grew visibly less.

It may be said that where the Freedmen's Bureau is best organized there is least vagrancy among the negroes. Here and there they show considerable restlessness, partly owing to local, partly to general causes. Among the former, bad treatment is probably the most prominent; among the latter, a feeling of distrust, uneasiness, anxiety about their future, which arises from their present unsettled condition. It is true, some are going from place to place because they are fond of it. The statistics of the Freedmen's Bureau show that the whole number of colored people supported by the government since the close of the war was remarkably small and continually decreasing. This seems to show that the southern negro, when thrown out of his accustomed employment, possesses considerable ability to support himself. It is possible, however, that in consequence of short crops, the destitution of the country, and other disturbing influences, there may be more restlessness among the negroes next winter than there is at present. Where the results of this year's labor were very unsatisfactory, there will be a floating about of the population when the contracts of this year expire. It is to be expected, however, that the Freedmen's Bureau will be able to remedy evils of that kind. Other emancipatory movements, for instance the abolition of serfdom in Russia, have resulted in little or no vagrancy; but it must not be forgotten that the emancipated serfs were speedily endowed with the ownership of land, which gave them a permanent moral and material interest in the soil upon which they lived. A similar measure would do more to stop negro vagrancy in the south than the severest penal laws. In every country the number of vagrants stands in proportion to the number of people who have no permanent local interests, unless augmented by exceptional cases, such as war or famine.

Contracts.—Freedmen frequently show great disinclination to make contracts with their former masters. They are afraid lest in signing a paper they sign away their freedom, and in this respect they are distrustful of most southern men. It generally requires personal assurances from a United States officer to make them feel safe. But the advice of such an officer is almost uniformly followed. In this manner an immense number of contracts has been made, and it is daily increasing. A northern man has no difficulty in making contracts, and but little in enforcing them. The complaints of southern men that the contracts are not well observed by the freedmen are in many instances well founded. The same can be said of the complaints of freedmen with regard to the planters. The negro, fresh from slavery, has naturally but a crude idea of the binding force of a written agreement, and it is galling to many of the planters to stand in such relations as a contract establishes to those who formerly were their slaves. I was, however, informed by officers of the Freedmen's Bureau, and by planters also, that things were improving in that

respect. Contracts will be more readily entered into and more strictly kept as soon as the intimate relations between labor and compensation are better understood and appreciated on both sides.

Insolence and insubordination.—The new spirit which emancipation has awakened in the colored people has undoubtedly developed itself in some individuals, especially young men, to an offensive degree. Hence cases of insolence on the part of freedmen occur. But such occurrences are comparatively rare. On the whole, the conduct of the colored people is far more submissive than anybody had a right to expect. The acts of violence perpetrated by freedmen against white persons do not stand in any proportion to those committed by whites against negroes. Every such occurrence is sure to be noticed in the southern papers and we have heard of but very few.

When Southern people speak of the insolence of the negro, they generally mean something which persons who never lived under the system of slavery are not apt to appreciate. It is but very rarely what would be called insolence among equals. But, as an old planter said to me, "our people cannot realize yet that the negro is free." A negro is called insolent whenever his conduct varies in any manner from what a southern man was accustomed to when slavery existed.

The complaints made about the insubordination of the negro laborers on plantations have to be taken with the same allowance. There have been, no doubt, many cases in which freedmen showed a refractory spirit, where orders were disobeyed, and instructions disregarded. There have been some instances of positive resistance. But when inquiring into particulars, I found not unfrequently that the employer had adhered too strictly to his old way of doing things. I hardly heard any such complaints from Northern men. I have heard planters complain very earnestly of the insubordinate spirit of their colored laborers because they remonstrated against the practice of corporeal punishment. This was looked upon as a symptom of an impending insurrection. A great many things are regarded in the old slave States as acts of insubordination on the part of the laborer which, in the free States, would be taken as perfectly natural and harmless. The fact is, a good many planters are at present more nervously jealous of their authority than before, while the freedmen are not always inclined to forget that they are free men.

Extravagant notions.—In many localities I found an impression prevailing among the negroes that some great change was going to take place about Christmas. Feeling uneasy in their present condition, they indulged in the expectation that government intended to make some further provision for their future welfare, especially by ordering distributions of land among them. To counteract this expectation, which had a tendency to interfere seriously with the making of contracts for the next season, it was considered necessary to send military officers, and especially agents of the Freedmen's Bureau, among them, who, by administering sound advice and spreading correct information, would induce them to suit their conduct to their actual circumstances. While in the south I heard of many instances in which this measure had the desired effect, and it is to be expected that the effect was uniformly good wherever judicious officers were so employed.

Impressions like the above are very apt to spread among the negroes, for the reason that they ardently desire to become freeholders. In the independent possession of landed property they see the consummation of their deliverance. However mistaken their notions may be in other respects, it must be admitted that this instinct is correct.

Relations between the two races.—There are whites in the south who profess great kindness for the negro. Many of them are, no doubt, sincere in what they say. But as to the feelings of the masses, it is hardly necessary to add anything to what I have already stated. I have

heard it asserted that the negroes also cherish feelings of hostility to the whites. Taking this as a general assertion, I am satisfied that it is incorrect. The negroes do not trust their late masters because they do not feel their freedom sufficiently assured. Many of them may harbor feelings of resentment towards those who now ill-treat and persecute them, but as they practiced no revenge after their emancipation for wrongs suffered while in slavery, so their present resentments are likely to cease as soon as the persecution ceases. If the persecution and the denial of their rights as freemen continue, the resentments growing out of them will continue and spread. The negro is constitutionally docile and eminently good-natured. Instances of the most touching attachment of freedmen to their old masters and mistresses have come to my notice. To a white man whom they believe to be sincerely their friend they cling with greater affection even than to one of their own race. By some northern speculators their confidence has been sadly abused. Nevertheless, the trust they place in persons coming from the north, or in any way connected with the government, is most childlike and unbounded. There may be individual exceptions, but I am sure they are not numerous. Those who enjoy their confidence enjoy also their affection. Centuries of slavery have not been sufficient to make them the enemies of the white race. If in the future a feeling of mutual hostility should develop itself between the races, it will probably not be the fault of those who have shown such an inexhaustible patience under the most adverse and trying circumstances.

In some places that I visited I found apprehensions entertained by whites of impending negro insurrections. Whenever our military commanders found it expedient to subject the statements made to that effect by whites to close investigation, they uniformly found them unwarranted by fact. In many instances there were just reasons for supposing that such apprehensions were industriously spread for the purpose of serving as an excuse for further persecution. In the papers annexed to this report you will find testimony supporting this statement. The negro is easily led; he is always inclined to follow the advice of those he trusts. I do, therefore, not consider a negro insurrection probable as long as the freedmen are under the direct protection of the government, and may hope to see their grievances redressed without resorting to the extreme means of self-protection. There would, perhaps, be danger of insurrections if the government should withdraw its protection from them, and if, against an attempt on the part of the whites to reduce them to something like their former condition, they should find themselves thrown back upon their own resources. Of this contingency I shall speak below.

Education.—That the negroes should have come out of slavery as an ignorant class is not surprising when we consider that it was a penal offence to teach them while they were in slavery; but their eager desire to learn, and the alacrity and success with which they avail themselves of every facility offered to them in that respect, has become a matter of notoriety. The statistics of the Freedmen's Bureau show to what extent such facilities have been offered and what results have been attained. As far as my information goes, these results are most encouraging for the future.

PROSPECTIVE—THE REACTIONARY TENDENCY.

I stated above that, in my opinion, the solution of the social problem in the south did not depend upon the capacity and conduct of the negro alone, but in the same measure upon the ideas and feelings entertained and acted upon by the whites. What their ideas and feelings were while under my observation, and how they affected the contact of the two races, I have already set forth. The question arises, what policy will be adopted by the "ruling class" when all restraint