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THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU A NUISANCE.

Official Report of Generals Steadman and Fullerton. The Bureau Rotten Throughout, and a Curse to Both Whites and Negroes.

The Commissioners, Maj. General Steadman and Brigadier General Fullerton, appointed by the War Department to investigate the condition and working of the Freedmen's Bureau, made, on Thursday, the final report of their labors. The report is long and very interesting, giving a full account of the inspections made in the States of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. We give some condensed extracts from the report:

GEORGIA.

The Bureau in Georgia, under the management of the present able and efficient assistant commissioner, Brevet Major General Tilson, has been honestly administered, and has accomplished all the good of which the system is capable. It has been assisted by the Governor, by the Judges of the Supreme Court, by the civil authorities, and to some extent by the citizens. The amended laws of Georgia are fully as liberal as those of any Northern State, and place the negro in all respects on a perfect equality with the white man as to his civil rights.

ALABAMA.

In this State Major General Wager Swayne, the assistant commissioner, has pursued a discreet and enlightened policy in administering the affairs of the Bureau, laboring on all occasions to secure the co-operation of the civil authorities and to obtain from the judicial machinery of the State a recognition of the rights essential to the security and well being of the freed people. This policy of General Swayne has produced a much more kindly feeling towards the bureau than exists where its agents have assumed to exercise judicial powers.

Though the administration at headquarters has been satisfactory, subordinate agents have been guilty of considerable irregularities. The names of several engaged in planting are given.

MISSISSIPPI—HEAVY STEALING.

The control of the freedmen's affairs in this State is in the hands of Major General Wood. With the exception of some localities, the negroes are working industriously, and as a rule are kindly treated and doing well. In this, as in others we have visited, the officers of the bureau formerly imposed and collected fines, and many kept no records. We found a marked instance of this kind at Grenada, where a former agent of the bureau, Chaplain Livermore, did a thriving business in the way of collecting fines, selling rations and Government horses and mules. This officer seems not only to have collected fines ranging from fifty cents to five dollars, from the freedmen for marrying them, but also attempted to exact fees from resident white ministers for giving them permission to marry freedmen.

In cases where the negroes were unable to pay the sum demanded of them for approving their contracts or marrying them, the chaplain levied on their personal property, in one case seizing a negro's empty wallet and jack knife for a balance of fifty cents. This close driving is probably to be accounted for by the fact that Chaplain Livermore openly expressed his intention to return to Illinois with ten thousand dollars in his pocket. After he had been removed from his post he offered a military officer fifty dollars for his influence to retain him in his position. Chaplain Livermore left no official papers behind to show the disposition he had made of the funds received. A large amount of money was also collected by the first two agents at Columbus in the shape of fees and fines, and so far as we could learn no account was ever rendered of it. This class of officers have lately been mustered out, or have disappeared. Under the present administration the agents exercise no judicial powers.

LOUISIANA—WHOLESALE FLUNDERING.

The bureau in this department is more in need of retrenchment and reform than

in any other State we have visited. More money has been collected, and more money has been squandered in Louisiana than in any other three Southern States. The expenses of the bureau, as accounted for for the fiscal year ending the 1st of June, 1866, were over three hundred thousand dollars. To meet this expenditure there were collected in taxes and rents the following amounts:

For school purposes,	\$96,387 36
From rents,	92,431 90
From poll tax,	40,956 11
From Corps d' Afrique tax,	23,000 00
From fines,	673 10
Total.	\$253,448 47

Leaving a deficit of \$60,957 33 to be paid out of the national treasury. These expenses are in addition to the transportation, rations and quartermaster's supplies furnished by the government. It is difficult to determine to what use the vast amount of property held by the bureau has been applied. At the very lowest estimate, the property taken possession of as confiscated or abandoned amounted in value to ten millions of dollars, and the rents returned as above mentioned are less than one per cent. on the entire value.

The expenditures of the bureau, under the present administration, for agents, civilian clerks and employees about its headquarters alone, amount to not less than \$40,236 a year, exclusive of the pay of staff officers and orderlies in the military service.

A large proportion of the money expended on the freedmen schools, under the administration of the Rev. T. W. Conway, the late assistant commissioner, we are satisfied was squandered. Mr. Matthew Whilden, formerly chief clerk in the school department—in evidence before us—stated that in September, 1865, Captain Pease, the school superintendent, reported officially that there were forty schools in operation and in a flourishing condition, when, in fact, there were but two.

From the sworn testimony it will be seen that Captain Morse, appointed provost marshal of the bureau by Mr. Conway, made the provost marshal's office a slave pen, arresting freedmen and selling them to planters at five dollars a head, and sharing the proceeds with his special policemen who made the arrests. This officer further collected a large amount of money from freedmen and white persons arrested by him for various offences, and his books only show receipts from this source amounting to \$675.10.

The bureau is cultivating a large plantation in this State, for which it pays ten to fifteen thousand dollars a year as rent. We can scarcely imagine the excuse for renting land on account of the United States, when the government, through each Congress, is giving away millions of acres of public lands to corporations.

TEXAS—EACH AGENT AN ABSOLUTE MONARCH.

All the bureau agents in Texas exercise judicial powers in both civil and criminal cases, and in the discharge of these arbitrary and dangerous functions, frequently arrest and imprison respectable citizens upon mere rumor.

Ten of the thirty-five agents in this State are citizen planters. One of them, Col. McConnaghe, agent in Thornton county, was formerly a Colonel in the rebel army, and was appointed an agent of the bureau by General Gregory, then assistant commissioner for the State, while still unparoled.

So far as we saw, or were able to get information in Texas, the freedmen were working well and the crops were promising. The wages paid—all the payments being made in specie—were better than in any other department.

SUMMARY.

In pursuing this investigation, which has now extended over four months, we have found extreme difficulty in complying with that portion of our instructions which requires us to report upon the operations of the bureau and its mode of administration. The bureau has no settled mode of administration. There is an entire absence of

system or uniformity in its constitution. In one State its officers exercise judicial powers, in an adjoining State all cases are referred to the civil authorities; while in a third State the bureau officers collect the cases and turn them over to the military provost courts to dispose of. In some departments the officers of the bureau have attempted to regulate the rate of wages; one form of contract between employer and employed is prescribed in one State, while in another a different form is adopted. In Louisiana the expenses of the freedmen's schools have been wholly paid by the government; in the other States the schools are partially self supporting, and in Texas they are entirely so. In some localities the bureau officers interfere arbitrarily between the planters and the freedmen in favor of the freedmen; in other localities the bureau is used as a means of coercing the freedmen in favor of the planter. The expenditure of the bureau varies as much as its mode of administration. In one State the expenses are over three hundred thousand dollars a year; in another State, with an equal population, the expenses are not more than fifty thousand. In some States the expenses have been met by taxes levied on and collected from the people; in other States the cost is entirely borne by the United States Treasury.

The official report of Colonel Reno, United States army Provost Marshal General of the Bureau of Louisiana, shows a deficit of upwards of seven thousand dollars in the accounts of the officers who were engaged in the collecting of taxes in New Orleans, which deficit Col. Reno says he is unable to explain in consequence of the loose manner in which the books were kept.

We are of the opinion that at the close of the war, and for some time after the cessation of hostilities, the Freedmen's Bureau did good. The people of the South, having at first no faith in the negroes working under a free labor system, were desirous of getting rid of them, and during the summer of 1865 judicious bureau and military officers did much toward restoring order and harmony, and inducing the people of the South to resume the cultivation of their plantations by employing the freedmen. Before the close of 1865 there was an entire revolution in the sentiments of the people of the South with regard to negro labor. A feeling of kindness sprang up towards the freedman, resulting, perhaps, mainly from the conviction, that his labor was desirable, profitable and the only labor to be had.

The necessity of the bureau then ceased. Since then, while it has been beneficial in some localities, it has been productive, in the aggregate, of more harm than good. It has occasioned and will perpetuate discord as long as it exists, though administered by the purest and wisest men of the nation. The freedmen regard its presence as evidence that they would be unsafe without it, and the white people consider it an imputation upon the official action of all their courts and magistrates, as well as upon the private conduct of their citizens. Both races are thus made suspicious and bitter by an agency which, in the present reorganized condition of civil government and society in the Southern States, is powerless to advance the interests of either.

SPEECH OF GOVERNOR ORR.

Special Despatch to the National Intelligencer.

Philadelphia, August 13.—A meeting was held to night at the National Guards' Hall by the Democrats. After the adoption of resolutions expressive of the principles of those present, Governor James L. Orr, of South Carolina, was introduced and spoke substantially as follows:

FELLOW CITIZENS: I esteem myself fortunate upon the present occasion with being honored with an invitation to address you on the opening of your campaign in this State. Ten years ago I stood before you with the late lamented Douglas, when we then gave to you our opinions of the principles of the Democratic party. I would to God that he again stood before you, since the great changes which have occurred. A gulf has yawned; but now that gulf has been closed, and we have come here to form a

union between the conservative men of the North and of the South. I will merely glance at a few points to show you that the professions made by the people of the South since they have laid down their arms are honest and wholesouled. The war began on the part of the South, through the people believing they had the right to secede. You did not agree to that. War resulted; the South was conquered, and the interpretation you gave to the Constitution has been established firmly as the legal one. That decision was pronounced on the field of battle by the highest tribunal, and the decree is incontrovertible. The nationality of our Government has been established. The South has surrendered the principles she believed, and is willing to accept your interpretation. No man would reopen the dreadful contest to see whether the decision was the right one, but all are willing to abide by it forever. By this war the people of the South have, to a very large extent, been stripped of their property. Their banks are gone and their credit gone. In many localities the great stand point of civil law has been lost. Thus, the people of the South have far more need of a stable government than you have, and it is mad folly to charge that they will not fulfil their oaths to support this Government. Although your public debt has been contracted in defeating a section of country from which I come, yet I would feel that any repudiation of the debt would be a dishonor to my own integrity. This is my Government; it too is my children's and grand children's Government. As a participant in the rebellion I am now for this Government, and its honor is my honor. I desire it to stand before all the nations of the earth in all the glory, and pride, and prosperity of a great nation of the world. Fellow citizens, we have been knocking at the door for eight long months, asking Congress that the best, the intellectual, and leading men of the South shall be admitted into Congress to represent us there. If we are not to be trusted now, when are we to be trusted? Is it just or right that we should be excluded from these privileges? No, for the right of representation is regarded as one of the most sacred rights in this country. Is it just and fair or generous that we should be excluded from legislation while taxes are imposed upon us without our consent? I am a delegate from South Carolina to the Convention, and I hope they will be successful in forming a party to stand against the mad policy of the Radicals in Congress. When the Convention adjourns and sends forth the results of its deliberations, I trust that all right-minded men will be able to agree to their deeds.

Further addresses by Montgomery Bair and others were greeted with applause. After which the meeting adjourned.

"BUMMING."—The Goldsboro' News says that a company of Federal cavalry, passing through Wayne and Greene counties, a few days since, committed acts of vandalism only equaled by the worst done by Sherman's army. Among the chief sufferers was a Mrs. Gardner, who not only had much property destroyed, but one of the plunderers struck her with a sword. It is to be hoped that the military authorities will at once take the necessary steps for the punishment of the guilty wretches. We had hoped that, with the termination of the war, there would be an end to "bumming."

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.—Gov. Worth has received from Washington, land scrip to the amount of 190,080 acres to go towards the establishment of an Agricultural College in this State. Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia are the only Southern States which have availed themselves of this act of Congress—passed July 2, 1862, and which provides that the land be selected from any of the public lands of the United States at \$1 25 per acre.

The planting cotton in Illinois is thus far a success. Accounts from that State say that the crops are promising. One planter has two hundred acres of cotton under cultivation.