UNITED STATES SANITARY COMMISSION

From U. S. Sanitary Bulletin.

PAID AND UNPAID AGENTS.

BY REV. J. A. ANDERSON. The other day, a prominent and influential agent of the Christian Commission expressed himself to the effect that the agents of the Sanitary Commission, in being hired, only felt called upon to work so many hours per day, and at a slow gate per hour; while the agents of the Christian Commission work for nothing save love for the soldier, and, by consequence, infused more soul and vim into their labors than do the paid men of the Sanitary Commission. The idea was, that because Sanitary agents receive a scanty compensation, they cannot be expected to and enlarge the circulation of the paper. labor with such a purity of benevolence, nor with such an enduring celerity, as do agents who receive no compensation.

It is somewhat singular that when any given objection against the Sanitary Commission reaches us from one section of the country, it is speedily heard of from many and distant sections-which suggests to us that somebody takes pains to spread the objection; and as this allegation is coming up from different quarters, it deserves a moment's attention.

The qualifications of an agent are found in his heart, mind, and body—not in his purse; and are neither lessened by his acceptance of a stipend, nor increased by his rejection of a remaining. To this list we have added two stipend. The question of compensation has nothing to do with his fitness as an agent; neither is he by the reception of pay debarred, in the most remote degree, from acting upon the broadest principles of humanity, nor from being impelled by the truest motives of strongpulsing charity. If it be asserted that no genuine benevolence can be exercised except by agents who are unpaid, then it instantly follows that the noble bands of Christian ministers, who are confessedly among the most effective and brilliant philanthropic instrumentalities of the age, are devoid of that benevolence; for, though as a class worse paid than men of the same abilities in the other professions, yet all of them receive pay, and are enabled by that pay to devote themselves to the grand work of the glorious Emanuel. But does any one affirm that because thereof, their charity and humaneness cannot be as pure and throbbing as if they received no pay? The best of books declares the laborer to be worthy of his hire; and the common experience of mankind confirms the declaration. There is a vast difference between laboring for money under the guise of benevolence; and laboring for benevolence, though money enough be received with which to defray ordinary personal expenses. If it be intended to allege that the agents of the Sanitary Commission work simply for money, or chiefly for money, and not chiefly from true motives of humanity; then, we simply and emphatically declare the allegation to be false in fact, and unjust to scores of men who have resigned ample incomes, and continue to reject offers of revenues double the amount of those which they receive from the Commission. Or, if it be intended to affirm, that because they receive pay they will not or do not work as heartily as those who are unpaid; it is only necessary to say, that the sufferings of mangled Americans, or the totterings of emaciated veterans, thrill through a kind heart irrespective of the pocket which walks about with that heart; and that our agents are selected with special reference to their benevolence, energy, and endurance, and that persons who do not, on trial, display these qualifies, are discharged, is known to all who know anything

The assumption that an agent who is paid does not work so vigorously or with such laudable spirit as does one who is unpaid. affects scores of pastors who go to the front as volunteer agents of the Sanitary or Christian Commission quite as much as it does our permanent agents who ... paid; for each of these volunteers receives compensation, if not from one of the Commissions, from the congregation which, in granting him a leave of absence, continues the payment of his salary during that leave. The question of compensation simply narrows itself down to the organization through whom the payment shall be made, for in both cases the common charity of the country is the banker who furnishes the means; and the difference between the two methods is, that in the one case the charity of the country empowers the Commission to pay the agent directly for doing army work, while in the other case it empowers a congregation to pay a minister for his pastoral work, and the congregation loans his services to the Commission.

about the matter.

In the first case you can procure trained. disciplined, and skilled laborers-men who know what is to be done, how to do it, and who will not shrink from either manual labor or tedious routine; in the other case you must rely upon the efforts of gentlemen, who, in most instances, are compelled to return to their congregations just about the time they become familiar with army life and acquire fitness for army work, and who will do manual labor or perform menial services only at their own option

As to the preference which business men would give to these two systems there can be no doubt, for it is a law of political economy that trained workmen and the permanent assignment of the same men to the same thing, is true and large economy; while, from what has been said above, it is evident that no excellence accrues to the motives of unpaid agents because of their being unpaid, which does not equally accrue to paid agents in spite

of their being paid.
But enough with abstract reasonings upon a point which is clear to all, and agreed upon by all disinterested persons. We not only affirm, but know that facts will substantiate the affirmation, that the agents of the Sanitary Commission are as warm-hearted, as keenly alive to suffering, as quick-witted in affording relief, as patient, energetic, and cheerful in the performance of unromantic duty, and as enduring and courageous under field hardships, as are the agents of the Christian ommission or any other organization. And, furthermore, we are beset with the general impression that this, and scores of other rumors which are swept through communities, will, upon thorough investigation, be found to have received their first announcement by friends of organizations which are jealous of or antagonistic to, the Sanitary Commission.

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