HUNTINGDON GLOBE.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1866.

THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU.

Its Operations in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

Report of Generals Steedman and Fullerton.

The Bureau Unequivocally Condemned.

"It has been Productive of more Harm than Good."

"The System of Contracts is simply Slavery in a New Form," and is a "Practical Defeat of the Proclamation of President Lincoln."

WASHINGTON, August 9, 1866.

The following very important report from Generals Steedman and Fullerton has been made public to-day:

NEW ORLEANS, La., July 20, 1866.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War:

SIR—We have the honor to submit the following report *of our inspection of the operations of the Freedmen's Bureau in the Departments of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.* Taking up seriatim the points to which special attention is called in our order of instructions, we found, first, that the number of officers and civilians employed by or attached to the bureau in the departments above named was as follows:

Georgia.

One brigadier general (brevet major general), assistant commissioner for the State.

One major (surgeon), two captains, one second lieutenant—on staff duty.

One surgeon, one assistant surgeon—having charge of hospitals.

One major, ten captains, seven lieutenants—sub-assistant *commissioners.*

Civilian Employees.		
One superintendent schools, at monthly pay of	$150 00	
Nine contract surgeons, each "	100 00	
One special agent, "	125 00	
One agent for St. Simon's Island, "	100 00	
One clerk, "	125 00	
Four clerks, each "	100 00	
Two clerks, average "	79 16	
Seventy-seven persons employed as nurses, laundresses, ambulance-drivers, and hospital-stewards, at average pay per month, each	12 00	

In addition to the foregoing there are one hundred and seventy-seven agents of the bureau, citizens of Georgia, who were appointed by the Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau, in accordance with a resolution of the Georgia State convention, passed October 30, 1865, providing for such appointments. These agents are not paid from the bureau funds, but by fees allowed them for approving contracts, and for other official duties.

Alabama.

One major general—assistant commissioner for the State.

Three majors, one captain, five lieutenants—on staff duty.

One lieutenant colonel, six captains, two lieutenants—sub-assistant commissioners.

Civilians.		
Eleven contract surgeons, each at monthly pay of	$100 00	
One sup't of education, "	150 00	
Three civilian agents, "	150 00	
One " "	100 00	
Fourteen clerks, "	100 00	
One clerk, "	80 00	
One clerk, "	75 00	
One hospital steward, "	50 00	
Three " "	30 00	
Thirty-six hosp't nurses, average each, per month	7 83	

Mississippi.

One major general, assistant commissioner for the State.

One colonel, two majors, two captains, two lieutenants—on staff duty.

The assistant commissioner and the staff, in connection with their duty as Bureau officers, are performing military duty.

On Bureau duty only—eleven captains, ten lieutenants, sub-assistant *commissioners.*

Civilians.		
One superintendent education, at monthly pay of	$150 00	
Five clerks, each "	120 00	
Twelve " "	100 00	
One superintendent of buildings, "	125 00	
Five contract surgeons, each "	100 00	
Some clerks (stewards), each, "	68 33	
Twenty-six hospital attendants, &c., each average "	11 03	
Four carpenters, each at average "	52 50	
Three teamsters, each. "	15 00	
Four ordnance, each "	15 75	
Twelve laborers, each at average "	19 58	
Two night watchmen, each "	15 00	

Louisiana.

One brigadier general, assistant commissioner for the State.

One major (surgeon), six captains, two lieutenants—on staff duty.

One lieutenant colonel, one major, fourteen captains, sixteen first lieutenants, six second lieutenants, sub-assistant commissioners.

One chaplain, one lieutenant, on temporary duty.

Civilians.		
Seven contract surgeons, each at monthly pay of	$100 00	
Two clerks, " "	125 00	
Two clerks, " "	112 00	
Five clerks, " "	110 00	
Eight clerks (average), " "	76 80	
Seven clerks " "	65 00	
One sup't plantation dep't, " "	150 00	
Two school directs, " "	125 00	
One wagonmaster, " "	75 00	
Six artificers, " "	55 00	
Twenty teamsters, laborers, messengers, and porters, at average pay each per month,	22 85	
Thirty-two nurses, cooks, and in hospital, at average pay each per month,	9 78	

Texas.

One brigadier general, assistant commissioner for the State.

One lieutenant colonel, two majors, one captain, one lieutenant—staff duty.

Two colonels, one major, ten captains, four first lieutenants, three second lieutenants, sub-assistant commissioners.

Civilians.		
One contract surgeon, at pay per month,	$100 00	
One sup't of schools, "	208 33	
Two clerks, each, "	125 00	
Three clerks, each "	72 00	
One printer, "	125 00	

The number of persons to whom rations have been issued in each of the subdivisions of the bureau since the 1st of December, 1865, and up to the 1st of April last, was as follows:

Georgia.

Freedmen.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	942	843	1785
January,	1043	562	1605
February,	1159	511	1670
March,	1359	555	1919
White Refugees.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	201	171	372
January,	112	12	124
February,	20	3	13
March,	108	4	112

Alabama.

Freedmen.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	1236	1186	2422
January,	1157	1263	2420
February,	1283	1276	2559
March,	2733	2769	5518
White Refugees.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	1149	1439	2588
January,	1983	3272	5255
February,	4650	8403	13,053
March,	6561	11,464	17,115

Mississippi.

Freedmen.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	266	284	570
January,	405	290	696
February,	524	408	932
March,	315	250	565
White Refugees.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	20		20
January,	18	25	43
February,	22	43	65
March,	22	96	118

Louisiana.

Freedmen.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	714	307	1021
January,	845	347	1192
February,	622	336	1158
March,	1020	368	1388
White Refugees.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	29	22	51
January,	9	15	24
February,	7	13	20
March,	5	5	10

Texas.

Freedmen.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	29	3	32
January,	57	10	67
February,	77	15	92
March,	31	14	45
White Refugees.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
December,	11	4	15
January,	4	0	4
February,	3	4	7
March,	0	0	0

NECESSITY FOR RELIEF.

The necessity for the relief furnished will not extend beyond the present season except in northern Georgia and Alabama, where probably a limited amount of assistance may be requisite for some time longer, unless these States are able to make provision for their own poor. Much, however, depends in all of the States herein mentioned upon the success of this year's provision crop.

DISPOSITION OF THE CITIZENS.

But little or no encouragement has been given to the operations of the bureau by the citizens of any of these States, except Alabama and Georgia, in which the assistant commissioners, Generals Tillson and Swayne, have removed much of the prejudice against the bureau by wisely securing the co-operation of the civil authorities.

RETRENCHMENT AND REFORM.

A great reduction in the expenses of the Bureau; and a reform which would render it far less objectionable than it is now, would be effected by the discontinuance of all paid employes not in the military service of the government. This would reduce the expenses for clerks, contract surgeons, hospital stewards, &c., the following amounts:

Georgia,	$34,684	per annum.
Alabama,	39,312	" "
Mississippi,	30,276	" "
Louisiana,	55,934	" "
Texas,	10,396	" "
Total,	165,052	"

All the labor performed by these employes, except perhaps the occasional services of a contract surgeon, might be discharged by details from the troops. In previous reports we have recommended the mustering of the duties of the bureau and the military. We would again respectfully urge this amalgamation, and that one set of officers should be required to perform the joint duties, thus avoiding the expense of maintaining two establishments.

EFFECT OF THE BUREAU UPON THE HABITS OF THE FREEDMEN.

We have previously stated our opinion as to the effect of the operation of the bureau on the habits of the freedmen and their disposition to labor and support themselves, and we have seen nothing in our subsequent investigations to induce us to change the views expressed on the subject in past reports. It is so apparent that a people compelled to labor for a livelihood must be industrious by the hope or implied promise of support in idleness, and we deem it unnecessary to present further argument on this point.

We proceed now to speak more in detail of the administration of the bureau in the several States we have visited.

Georgia.

The Bureau in Georgia, under the management of the present able and efficient assistant commissioner, Brevet Major General Tillson, 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. Notwithstanding this fact, we have found that agents of the Bureau have taken cases out of the hands of the civil authorities, and have tried and disposed of them in a manner never contemplated by the laws of the State. For instance, the chief judge of the Freedmen's Court at Savannah sentenced two negroes to thirty days' labor on the chain-gang, on the charge of horse-stealing, to which they pleaded guilty. A white man committing the same offense would have been liable, under the State laws, to be sentenced to the penitentiary, or even to death, at the discretion of the jury. In cases previously disposed of in this same court, one freedman, for assaulting with a knife with intent to kill, was fined twenty dollars, and another freedman, for a similar offense, was sent to prison for five months, when, by the laws of Georgia, the punishment prescribed for the crime is imprisonment in the penitentiary for not less than two nor more than ten years. Decisions such as these must of necessity create among the white people a feeling of contempt for the freedmen's courts, and of ill-will towards the United States government, which permits such an unjust interference with the laws of the State. In the freedmen's court at Macon, presided over by Captain Louis J. Lambert, more serious irregularities have occurred. A Mr. M. J. Morgan and his son, a Mr. Boulton, and a Mr. Stasnel Berwick were tried in this court for cruelty to a freedman; were convicted, and were fined in the aggregate $350. The fines imposed upon the two Morgans, amounting to $300, were reported by the agent, but no account was rendered of the remaining $250. Captain Lambert, in a written explanation herewith forwarded (marked A), states that the money and papers in this case were stolen from his office, and that he made up his report from memory. It does not appear, however, that Captain Lambert made any official mention of the burglary until after this discrepancy was discovered by us. We found that Captain Lambert's records, as a rule, were very loosely kept, and that his predecessor, who had collected thousands of dollars, had left no record or evidence behind him of the disposition made of the money received. A similar absence of records prevented our making a thorough investigation in other offices in the State.

The freedmen of Georgia, when we went through the State, were generally at work, and wherever their wages were remunerative and regularly paid them, were contented and doing well.

Alabama.

In this State Major General Swayne, the assistant commissioner, has pursued a discreet, liberal, and enlightened policy in administering the affairs of the Bureau, labouring 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 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 following-named officers and agents of the Bureau in Alabama are engaged in such duty:

Captain and Brevet Colonel C. Cadell, jr., assistant adjutant general.

G. A. Harmont, local agent at Montgomery.

J. F. McCoy, agent at headquarters, late chief quartermaster of the bureau.

C. W. Buckley, superintendent of education.

S. S. Gardner, late agent at Selma.

Our attention was called to the alleged misconduct of the agent at Greenville in selling government rations, but as General Swayne himself had undertaken to investigate the matter, we did not inquire into the case.

We found the freedmen, in Alabama working well on the plantations, but the heavy rains had swollen the streams out of their banks, doing immense damage to the crops, and some apprehensions were felt that the freedmen who were working on shares would lose their labor and would not be able to make subsistence for themselves and families.

Mississippi.

The merging of the Bureau with the Military Department of this State has placed the control of freedmen's affairs in the hands of Major Thomas A. Wood, the department commander. General Wood has greatly improved upon the administration of his predecessor, Colonel Samuel Thomas, whose policy was not calculated to produce harmony between the races. There is still, notwithstanding the change of policy introduced by General Wood, more than ordinary feeling existing between whites and blacks in Mississippi than we found elsewhere. There are, however, causes operating in certain localities in this State beyond the control of any policy the bureau might adopt, producing antagonism and bloodshed. This is the case at Grenada, where an organized band of desperadoes have for some time past held the town in terror, and in April last murdered Lieutenant Blanding, an agent of the Freedmen's Bureau. The perpetrators of these outrages have been subjected to outrage by this gang, strongly condemned the crime, and sought to have the delinquents brought to justice.

At Meridian, in the same State, a condition of things nearly as bad appears to prevail. The bureau officer there, Major J. Enox, of the Veteran Reserve corps, was fired upon in the night a few months ago, for what reason we were unable to learn, as he seemed to be an excellent officer and on good terms with the people generally. These were the only cases of outrage on officers of the bureau. In other districts the agents were well protected.

At Columbus, Major Smith, of the Veteran Reserve corps (the agent stationed there), made some remarkable statements to us, which, perhaps, may show the way in which the reports of agents of the bureau are sometimes concocted. He at first said that the people of the district were well disposed towards the freedmen, were doing well, and were kindly treated by all, except the poorer classes of whites, from whom alone they required protection. In a very few minutes afterwards he asserted that outrages on freedmen had been committed by two-thirds of the planters in the neighborhood. When pressed to state specifically the names of the outrages and by whom committed, he mentioned three only, all of which had been committed on the same plantation by the overseer, and all of which had been remedied by the planter himself as soon as his attention was called to them. On investigation we found the statements of this officer as to the ill treatment of negroes grossly exaggerated, and learned that the agent himself had on one occasion advised a planter with whom he was dining to "club" any negro who refused to work.

Aside from the places of which we have spoken as being infested by bad men we found the negroes in Mississippi working industriously, and as a rule 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 proving their contracts or marrying them he seized and retained 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 in 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.

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,	22,431 90
From poll tax,	40,954 11
From Corps d'Afrique tax,	23,000 00
From fines,	673 10
Total,	$233,446 47

Leaving a deficit of $60,057 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 employes about its headquarters alone, amount to not less than $40,320 a year, exclusive of the 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—which is hereto appended, marked "B"—stated that in September, 1865, Captain Pease, the school superintendent, reported officially that there were schools in operation and in flourishing condition, when, in fact, there were two. It was also sworn to before us that the books and records, which would have shown this report to be inaccurate, were destroyed in Captain Pease's office and others substituted. We can see no object for the fabrication of this false report, unless it was to account for payments made to persons who were not engaged in teaching. On examining the pay-roll No. 2, for the month of August, 1865, we found that after it had been certified and approved, names had been added, and the totals erased and changed on every page. We found also a discrepancy of several hundred dollars between the pay-rolls for this month and the labor roll No. 15.

From the sworn testimony, also hereto appended, 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 offenses, 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.

Major General Absalom Baird is the Assistant Commissioner for Louisiana, and was also military commander of the Department when we visited it. He has undoubtedly improved upon the administration of Mr. Conway.

Texas.

The facilities for traveling in Texas being so limited, and the State so large, we found it impossible to make such an investigation as would enable us to report fully upon the condition of affairs in that department. The headquarters of the bureau are located at Galveston, and a few agents are stationed in the most accessible and populous parts of the State. As to the condition of affairs in the interior, we were unable to obtain accurate information, either from the agents of the bureau or from any other sources. We visited Richmond and Houston, where we met several of the agents from other districts, who were there in attendance on a court-martial.

At Richmond, Captain Sloan, the agent of the Bureau, is engaged in planting, in connection with his former clerk, Captain Forter, and an ex-officer of the rebel army, Captain Mitchell. Captain Sloan denied, under oath, that he was or ever had been interested in the plantation of Messrs. Forter and Mitchell, but Major Pearson, commandant of the troops at that post, and Dr. Boyd, post surgeon, both subsequently swore before us that Captain Sloan had told them repeatedly he was interested in the farm, and had mentioned to them the amount he expected to realize by it. Complaints were made to us by other persons that Captain Sloan had employed the power of the Bureau to take negroes from their plantations and place them on his own. We append the testimony taken in this case, marked "C."

Amongst the agents we met at Houston was Lieutenant C. F. Hardenbrook, 1st V. R. C., agent at Beaumont, Jefferson county, who stated to us that the freedmen were *doing well in his district, and that the disposition* of the people was very fair. Most of the freedmen were engaged in herding stock, and were paid from ten to fifteen dollars a month, in coin. He subsequently mentioned that he had recently arrested Dr. Houston, a citizen in his district, on the report of a freedman that the doctor had said he did not regard his parole but, finding it was impossible to obtain evidence against his prisoner, he had been obliged to release him. This officer reported to us other actions of his own equally absurd as this, satisfying us that he was utterly incompetent for his position.

Having heard unfavorable reports from the Brenham district, we examined the agent, Captain S. A. Craig, 17th Veteran Reserve corps, whom we also met at Houston. He stated that his predecessor, Lieutenant Arnold of the 12th Illinois cavalry, had lost no records, and had left nothing in the office but a list of contracts and a file of orders, and he could give us no information of his official acts. We are satisfied that most of the complaints made against Captain Craig are groundless.

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. Captain Sloan, the bureau officer at Richmond before alluded to, while at Galveston, out of his district, arrested a respectable citizen and put him in prison on the plea that he wanted him as a witness in a case which he only knew from rumor would be brought before him.

Ten of the thirty-five agents in this State are citizen planters. One of them, Colonel McCunnaghee, 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, with his still unpardoned.

We heard many rumors with respect to General Gregory himself being engaged in planting, but on investigation we concluded that these statements were unfounded. While we believe General Gregory to have been honest in his administration, we think his extreme views and policy produced ill feeling and bitterness between the whites and blacks.

So far as we saw or were able to gather 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.

Brevet Major General J. B. Kiddoo is the present Assistant Commissioner for Texas.

Summary

In pursuing this investigation, which has now extended over four months, we have found extreme difficulty concerning the interpretation of 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 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 they have been partially self-supporting, and in Texas they are entirely so. In some localities the bureau officers interfere arbitrarily between the planter and the freedman in favor of the freedmen; in other localities the bureau is used as a means of coercing the freedmen in favor of the planters. The character 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 they exceed $200,000; in a third the expenses are not more than fifty thousand. In some States the expenses have been met by taxes levied and collected from the people, in others the States the cost is entirely borne by the United States treasury.

We found it impossible to investigate the accounts of the bureau quartermasters, for the reason that when the funds were received from taxes, rents, and sales of abandoned property, there were no means of ascertaining the amounts received, except from the personal statement of the officers themselves. A quartermaster in the army, drawing his funds from the treasury, rendered has the amount charged up to him and is obliged to account for it in his return; but the looseness of the administration of the quartermaster's department of the bureau, and the absence of all check upon the officers, give no security except the personal honesty of the men themselves. We examined the accounts of Brevet Brigadier General Whittlesey, Bureau Quartermaster of the Department of the Mississippi, who satisfied us that he had honestly administered the affairs of his department, and had accounted for all of the money received by him; but whether his predecessor, who collected a large amount from taxes, rents, and sales, paid over to General Whittlesey all the money in his hands belonging to the bureau, we were unable to determine. We do not make this statement to reflect upon this officer, against whom there were no charges, but to illustrate the looseness of the system.

The official report of Colonel Reno, United States army, Provost Marshal General of the bureau for Louisiana—a copy of which is herewith appended, marked "D"—shows a deficit of upwards of seven thousand dollars in the accounts of the officers who were entrusted by the commander of the forces in Louisiana, which deficit Colonel Reno says he is unable to explain in consequence of the loose manner in which the books were kept. The deficit in the accounts of Lieutenant Foster, who, Colonel Reno believes, appropriated to his own use the largest amount of the debt, belonging to the bureau, we were unable to determine. We do not make this statement to reflect upon this officer, against whom there were no charges, but to illustrate the looseness of the system.

We are of 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 towards restoring order and harmony, and inducing the people to look upon the question of the cultivation of their plantations by employing the freedmen. Before the close of 1865 there was an entire revolution in the sentiment 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 cheaper and 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 created discord and bitterness between the races, and in many localities, it has been productive, in the aggregate, of more harm than good. It has created discord and bitterness between the races, and in many localities it has been productive of the most serious evils. In some localities the officers of the bureau have made the freedmen believe that the property of their former masters belongs to them, and that the government is bound to support them in idleness, and we deem it unnecessary to present further argument on this point.

We proceed now to speak more in detail of the administration of the bureau in the several States we have visited.

Georgia.

The Bureau in Georgia, under the management of the present able and efficient assistant commissioner, Brevet Major General Tillson, 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. Notwithstanding this fact, we have found that agents of the Bureau have taken cases out of the hands of the civil authorities, and have tried and disposed of them in a manner never contemplated by the laws of the State. For instance, the chief judge of the Freedmen's Court at Savannah sentenced two negroes to thirty days' labor on the chain-gang, on the charge of horse-stealing, to which they pleaded guilty. A white man committing the same offense would have been liable, under the State laws, to be sentenced to the penitentiary, or even to death, at the discretion of the jury. In cases previously disposed of in this same court, one freedman, for assaulting with a knife with intent to kill, was fined twenty dollars, and another freedman, for a similar offense, was sent to prison for five months, when, by the laws of Georgia, the punishment prescribed for the crime is imprisonment in the penitentiary for not less than two nor more than ten years. Decisions such as these must of necessity create among the white people a feeling of contempt for the freedmen's courts, and of ill-will towards the United States government, which permits such an unjust interference with the laws of the State. In the freedmen's court at Macon, presided over by Captain Louis J. Lambert, more serious irregularities have occurred. A Mr. M. J. Morgan and his son, a Mr. Boulton, and a Mr. Stasnel Berwick were tried in this court for cruelty to a freedman; were convicted, and were fined in the aggregate $350. The fines imposed upon the two Morgans, amounting to $300, were reported by the agent, but no account was rendered of the remaining $250. Captain Lambert, in a written explanation herewith forwarded (marked A), states that the money and papers in this case were stolen from his office, and that he made up his report from memory. It does not appear, however, that Captain Lambert made any official mention of the burglary until after this discrepancy was discovered by us. We found that Captain Lambert's records, as a rule, were very loosely kept, and that his predecessor, who had collected thousands of dollars, had left no record or evidence behind him of the disposition made of the money received. A similar absence of records prevented our making a thorough investigation in other offices in the State.

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G. A. Harmont, local agent at Montgomery.

J. F. McCoy, agent at headquarters, late chief quartermaster of the bureau.

C. W. Buckley, superintendent of education.

S. S. Gardner, late agent at Selma.

Our attention was called to the alleged misconduct of the agent at Greenville in selling government rations, but as General Swayne himself had undertaken to investigate the matter, we did not inquire into the case.

We found the freedmen, in Alabama working well on the plantations, but the heavy rains had swollen the streams out of their banks, doing immense damage to the crops, and some apprehensions were felt that the freedmen who were working on shares would lose their labor and would not be able to make subsistence for themselves and families.

Mississippi.

The merging of the Bureau with the Military Department of this State has placed the control of freedmen's affairs in the hands of Major Thomas A. Wood, the department commander. General Wood has greatly improved upon the administration of his predecessor, Colonel Samuel Thomas, whose policy was not calculated to produce harmony between the races. There is still, notwithstanding the change of policy introduced by General Wood, more than ordinary feeling existing between whites and blacks in Mississippi than we found elsewhere. There are, however, causes operating in certain localities in this State beyond the control of any policy the bureau might adopt, producing antagonism and bloodshed. This is the case at Grenada, where an organized band of desperadoes have for some time past held the town in terror, and in April last murdered Lieutenant Blanding, an agent of the Freedmen's Bureau. The perpetrators of these outrages themselves have been subjected to outrage by this gang, strongly condemned the crime, and sought to have the delinquents brought to justice.

At Meridian, in the same State, a condition of things nearly as bad appears to prevail. The bureau officer there, Major J. Enox, of the Veteran Reserve corps, was fired upon in the night a few months ago, for what reason we were unable to learn, as he seemed to be an excellent officer and on good terms with the people generally. These were the only cases of outrage on officers of the bureau. In other districts the agents were well protected.

At Columbus, Major Smith, of the Veteran Reserve corps (the agent stationed there), made some remarkable statements to us, which, perhaps, may show the way in which the reports of agents of the bureau are sometimes concocted. He at first said that the people of the district were well disposed towards the freedmen, were doing well, and were kindly treated by all, except the poorer classes of whites, from whom alone they required protection. In a very few minutes afterwards he asserted that outrages on freedmen had been committed by two-thirds of the planters in the neighborhood. When pressed to state specifically the names of the outrages and by whom committed, he mentioned three only, all of which had been committed on the same plantation by the overseer, and all of which had been remedied by the planter himself as soon as his attention was called to them. On investigation we found the statements of this officer as to the ill treatment of negroes grossly exaggerated, and learned that the agent himself had on one occasion advised a planter with whom he was dining to "club" any negro who refused to work.

Aside from the places of which we have spoken as being infested by bad men we found the negroes in Mississippi working industriously, and as a rule 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 proving their contracts or marrying them he seized and retained 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 in 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.

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,	22,431 90
From poll tax,	40,954 11
From Corps d'Afrique tax,	23,000 00
From fines,	673 10
Total,	$233,446 47

Leaving a deficit of $60,057 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 employes about its headquarters alone, amount to not less than $40,320 a year, exclusive of the 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—which is hereto appended, marked "B"—stated that in September, 1865, Captain Pease, the school superintendent, reported officially that there were schools in operation and in flourishing condition, when, in fact, there were two. It was also sworn to before us that the books and records, which would have shown this report to be inaccurate, were destroyed in Captain Pease's office and others substituted. We can see no object for the fabrication of this false report, unless it was to account for payments made to persons who were not engaged in teaching. On examining the pay-roll No. 2, for the month of August, 1865, we found that after it had been certified and approved, names had been added, and the totals erased and changed on every page. We found also a discrepancy of several hundred dollars between the pay-rolls for this month and the labor roll No. 15.

From the sworn testimony, also hereto appended, 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 offenses, 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.

Major General Absalom Baird is the Assistant Commissioner for Louisiana, and was also military commander of the Department when we visited it. He has undoubtedly improved upon the administration of Mr. Conway.

Texas.

The facilities for traveling in Texas being so limited, and the State so large, we found it impossible to make such an investigation as would enable us to report fully upon the condition of affairs in that department. The headquarters of the bureau are located at Galveston, and a few agents are stationed in the most accessible and populous parts of the State. As to the condition of affairs in the interior, we were unable to obtain accurate information, either from the agents of the bureau or from any other sources. We visited Richmond and Houston, where we met several of the agents from other districts, who were there in attendance on a court-martial.

At Richmond, Captain Sloan, the agent of the Bureau, is engaged in planting, in connection with his former clerk, Captain Forter, and an ex-officer of the rebel army, Captain Mitchell. Captain Sloan denied, under oath, that he was or ever had been interested in the plantation of Messrs. Forter and Mitchell, but Major Pearson, commandant of the troops at that post, and Dr. Boyd, post surgeon, both subsequently swore before us that Captain Sloan had told them repeatedly he was interested in the farm, and had mentioned to them the amount he expected to realize by it. Complaints were made to us by other persons that Captain Sloan had employed the power of the Bureau to take negroes from their plantations and place them on his own. We append the testimony taken in this case, marked "C."

Amongst the agents we met at Houston was Lieutenant C. F. Hardenbrook, 1st V. R. C., agent at Beaumont, Jefferson county, who stated to us that the freedmen were *doing well in his district, and that the disposition* of the people was very fair. Most of the freedmen were engaged in herding stock, and were paid from ten to fifteen dollars a month, in coin. He subsequently mentioned that he had recently arrested Dr. Houston, a citizen in his district, on the report of a freedman that the doctor had said he did not regard his parole but, finding it was impossible to obtain evidence against his prisoner, he had been obliged to release him. This officer reported to us other actions of his own equally absurd as this, satisfying us that he was utterly incompetent for his position.

Having heard unfavorable reports from the Brenham district, we examined the agent, Captain S. A. Craig, 17th Veteran Reserve corps, whom we also met at Houston. He stated that his predecessor, Lieutenant Arnold of the 12th Illinois cavalry, had lost no records, and had left nothing in the office but a list of contracts and a file of orders, and he could give us no information of his official acts. We are satisfied that most of the complaints made against Captain Craig are groundless.

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. Captain Sloan, the bureau officer at Richmond before alluded to, while at Galveston, out of his district, arrested a respectable