THE PRESIDENT'S BUREAU.

Reasons Why it should be Continued.

The following is a Report of General Mitchell, Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in North Carolina, to General Howard.

BUREAU OF R. F. AND A. L., RALEIGH, N. C., December 5.
STATE OF N. C., RALEIGH, *Howard, Commissioner*, 1867. *Major General O. O. Howard, Commissioner, &c., Washington, D. C.*: GENERAL: At your request I have the honor to offer my opinion, as assistant commissioner for this State, regarding the expediency of continuing the bureau during the time fixed by law for its expiration, July, 1868, and as to the necessity for further legislation to protect and govern the enfranchised people in whose *status* has been so suddenly changed by our Government, and who are in consequence dependent upon it for proper laws and aid.

Having carefully considered the subject, and having made a recent trip of about five hundred miles, meeting all classes of this community, I feel I understand the true state of affairs.

In my judgment, at no period since the cessation of this section by the United States forces has the bureau been of greater advantage than at the present time; and I am convinced that necessity, reasons than ever now exist for its continuance—for the welfare of the freedmen, and a still longer time before the administration of the State's civil functions are established and in thorough practice. If the bureau has been a good thing in Maryland, New England, how much more would it be where affairs have been to a greater extent disorganized, and opposition to it more openly manifested. When the new State governments are formed upon a loyal basis it will be time to withdraw the military arm. This is one side of the picture; the other presents a different look.

A very large proportion of the white voters in this State at the late election either voted against a convention, or willfully remained away in order that their absence might obstruct the work of reconstruction. At present there is a strong political force organizing with the avowed object the sole purpose to vote down any constitution a convention may adopt, and thus defeat the reconstruction acts. This opposition is controlled and led by men who have been notoriously antagonistic to the Government for years, and no efforts are spared to effect their object. If they are successful in their designs, and it is possible they may be, if the efforts to restore the State fail, if the bureau is removed, and only a small force of United States troops be left within its limits, what, I ask, would be the fate of the enfranchised slave, who has always been considered as of less value, and who now has the right of suffrage, and exercises the privilege through the ballot-box? Certainly opposition to life and property.

The colored people in this State scarcely own land enough to stand upon. Occupying still the little slave huts made under the shadow of their masters' mansions by sufferance, and without the possession of the requirement, they are almost as much within the grasp of their old owners as in the days of slavery. The spirit of caste is rife, as a general rule, in the hands of men whose sympathies are opposed to the terms of restoration offered by the Government. The withdrawal of the bureau, erected for the protection, ameliorations and relief of this class of people from the degradation of slavery to the dignity of citizenship, is a matter of the greatest importance, and I think never should be contemplated until the colored people are able to sustain itself in the position in which the Government has placed it; and I am confident that the colored people were consulted as to their wishes and hopes, their unanimous response would be to protection be given them a little while longer.

I trust that Congress will act advisedly, and that the working and results of this enterprise may be fully represented to them, as their decision involves the future and well-being, not only of this people, but of their descendants for generations.

I am aware that the great objection to the bureau is its cherry fun from an erroneous impression, I believe, exists in that regard in the minds of the people through the country. Its cost in North Carolina last year was about eighty thousand dollars in this present fiscal year it will not exceed fifty thousand, the appropriation for school purposes excepted. I am not aware what the expenses are in the other States, but, when the vast amount of good that the nation must reap from it, and the benefits which would ultimately revert to the Government are taken into consideration, the sum is by no means exorbitant. The advantages of the bureau cannot be computed by figures.

The educational branch of the bureau would in itself be a sufficient claim for its continuance. This work, which, with the blessing of God has already been crowned with success, and has achieved most beneficial results, should not be stayed or impeded until it has been put upon a footing that forever shall be unchangeable.

The administration of justice, the badness of adjusting claims, settling petty quarrels, where blacks are parties, as matters of great importance; and the prevention of fraud, injustice and oppression brought to the notice of bureau agents and chiefs subject to a yearly grand jury of the magnitude of this branch of duty may be inferred from the fact that the number in one office of the bureau in this State six hundred cases adjudicated in four months, and in another four hundred in the same time. Again, on the docket of one county seven are charged with a crime cases awaiting trial where freedmen are to a great cases awaiting trial where freedmen are to a great cases awaiting trial where freedmen are to a great