

PORT ROYAL NEGROES.

REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT AGENT.

Mr. Edward J. Pierce, government agent at Port Royal, has made a communication to the Secretary of the Treasury, in which he describes the condition of the inhabitants and plantations in the region abandoned by the rebels on the coast of South Carolina and Georgia.

Portions of his report are as follows:

"In these there are one hundred and fifty-five plantations voluntarily abandoned by their owners. There are a number of others, under the protection of our arm. He states that there are now on these islands about eight thousand persons— negroes, former slaves, and persons who have come to the coast, and planters. But there are some thousands of these people about Hilton Head and Beaufort, many of whom have escaped from the mainland; and there are ten thousand negroes on Hilton Head and several thousand more on South Carolina and under our protection, whose numbers is constantly increasing by accessions from the mainland.

He says that the rebels, after a long stay at Hilton Head, left, carrying

"a quantity of horses, mules, and cattle, and, after a day or two, were joined by a party of negroes, who had been captured by the rebels, hidden in the swamps, and were sent to the coast, and joined the rebel pickets, joyfully entered our camp at Hilton Head.

The worthy note agent reports that they are here by the tens of thousands, and that our army began its occupation, and could not have been excluded, except by violent transportation. A small proportion of them are negroes, who have been serving the pickets of the enemy, and our own, something easily done in an extensive country with whose woods and tracks they are familiar.

That is to say, they were the inhabitants of this region, forming eighty-two and eight-tenths of its total population, and remained while the rebel portion remained.

Mr. Pierce gives an interesting account of the manner in which the plantations were "abandoned." The planter, in order to save his property, would sell it to an overseer, who very frequently had several plantations in charge, and visited them in turn, being actually worked under the superintendence of the overseer, who, when called upon to take his hands off, would turn them to the hands of his overseer, and looked to their due performance, and punished those guilty of offences. The drivers were also used, and were frequently flogged, and the overseer, standing the dispersion of other laborers, the drivers quitted him.

The arrival since our last report were the L. M. Kenton from St. Louis, and Kenton from Louisville.

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