

Augusta Dec 15th /65.

General

What is written on the other pages was with the expectation that you would visit Augusta; when I promised myself the satisfaction of calling on you in person. Observing by the papers that you had visited Savannah & New Orleans, we fear you may not think it material to return by this way. I am sorry that it proves so. It would have been a satisfaction to invite you to visit and inspect what is called here a "pen" for the comfort of the poor negroes who have left their former masters. They admit that they were well cared for at home, but they were told they were free — and they seemed to be enjoying the practical benefits of such liberty. About 100 men, women & children are gathered in a building in space 100 by 30 ft. — You can make your own calculation how much room that gives for each. Not a board covers the sides of the building; a lofty but tight roof, protects them from the rain & dew; the wind has free access. The divisions for each family are the filthy rags they hang about them. Of course no fires can be made in a house without chimneys. I did not discover a fire ever out of the house, and my first visit was on an icy morning. I saw the pick, and asked what provision was made for them. Was told that no person had charge of them, that

each province ~~themselves~~. They were free -

I am willing to think that your benevolent heart would bleed to witness such suffering, and still I fear it is not the most aggravated instance of the misery of these deluded people; I have heard of worse from several quarters. If it was the grand object of your people to destroy the happy relation existing between the master & slave - I say happy - I need not repeat the motive - You know it well - You have accomplished your purpose most effectually. The Negro, no longer willing to work for his master, has no longer a claim for protection and care, in any way - And the often fanatical teachings of your licensed incendiaries Keelpath & Fennell, have taught him to be insolent, where he was once respectful - You abolish slavery and tell the Negro that he is the equal of the White man, and can enjoy his liberty as well - You know all of you that that is simply a lie - You must and do know that the Negro never has, & never can attain to civilization without the influence and example of the white man. You know that in a state of slavery he has been elevated from the brute to civilization - And now that you have destroyed one of the most benevolent of God's appointed institutions that has ever existed, to gratify a fiendish impulse, you would have the world believe that it is for a holy purpose - Do you people believe in a hereafter, that there is a search of hearts that there is an eternity - a Hell - It is a pity that your philanthropy is so partial, I might have begun nearer

home. Why have you not looked into the evils attendant on your Factory system. To the coldest mining pits, some of the operatives who never see the light of the sun. Are they as well off as the most abject slave? Do they any less help the slave to enrich the capitalist? Intemperance prevents you seeing the beam in your own eye, whereas you would cast out the mote. Suppose we had sent amongst you incendiaries like Nedpath -

Phoebus, what a name

He was christened (?) in blood,

And his path is the same -

As regards your labor system, how long would you have endured such interference?

By the time you have returned to Washington, you will, I hope, have satisfied yourself with the prospect of the present state of things. It will gratify me to hear Gen Howard's private, honest opinion, whether he thinks Christianity, Civilization & the Negro have been advanced by the convulsions and new order of affairs. -

The promptings of duty influenced me to visit my former home, and to inquire into the welfare of those who were once my slaves, and who I left in comfort at my plantation. As I had heard, my plantation-building had been burned, including those at my own residence. A perfect desolation existed, where cheerfulness and industry once existed both master and slave. - A day's ride from



This place brought me on the 4th of March. I am told General that you commanded a wing of that Grand Army. It may therefore be peculiarly for me to tell you that I saw all the evidence of a relentless, revengeful savages, had burned and ravaged a peaceful happy people. All to satiate a voracious thirst. I saw through two entire days sides nothing but chimneys erect and alone, buildings burned, all burned. And you tell me to pray for ^{such} my enemies? My poor human nature revolts at the thought -

I visited Beaufort & Hilton Head where my people (175) had been forcibly carried. I left them on the 15th Jan^y well supplied for a year or two. Their houses were as comfortable as my own. With blankets and clothes such as the times could afford, in abundance - all, all, had been taken from them, and they were forced to leave their home. I found some of them in and near Beaufort, but the most of them at Hilton-Head - Some were so haggard from care & want that I did not know them. All approached me, and greeted me most kindly. They informed me that they were living in cattle huts; a contrast to their roomy wooden houses. They told me that the pay for land that had been assigned them, had not enabled them to make provision but for a few months, with some not to carry them the winter. They told me that in instances where the white Yankees had

in a measure ~~of~~ their labour they were stimulated
 more to make Cotton, with the traffick. I found them
 all anxious to return to their old homes. As most of
 them had grown up under me, and the right of property
 no longer existed between us. I claim that a dis-
 interested impulse prompted me to advance their purpose.
 Accordingly I applied to the Agent at Beaufort,
 Mr. Sudd, representing to him the circumstances
 under which these people had been removed from
 the main land - That they had been forcibly taken
 from their homes, in Tully's tax, and were obliged to
 leave their provisions, clothes, and comfortable
~~houses~~ houses. That they were now anxious to return
 with the little provisions they had made, and to prepare
 for a better crop the next year, and to occupy their
 comfortable homes, all of which had not been burnt.
 He was told I had not the means to assist them.

The answer to the reasonable request that he would
 afford me the use of Flats for the removal, was, that
 he had none, and did not consider himself respon-
 sible to aid in their removal although he had granted
 it to others. Baffled at this point, I hastened to
 Hilton-Head, and applied to Capt. Monroe at that
 Port to grant me transportation by Steamer on the way
 to remove those suffering people; representing that a
 Steamer might go and return in two days. The answer
 was even more repulsive than the other. In perfect
 indifference I was obliged to leave the people to fight their

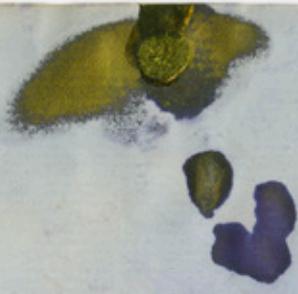
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run battles with their [redacted]. Arrived
at Savannah I represented the matter to
Col. Sickles for his opinion, relating to him [redacted]
the circumstances of their removal. He sustained
the other officials in their decision. Consequently
I now appeal to you, the highest authority, to fulfil
the assurance you have made to the Freedmen that
you are their best friend.

At Beaufort I found the negroes all quite
civil, and all greeting the arrival of their old masters;
but none of them were willing to contract for work the next
year, at least not before the 1st Jan^y, when, or before, they were
expecting some event. All were more desirous to plant
their own crop, and as they chose. They seemed quite to
expect that lands were to be allotted to them. They
had phantoms of 10 & 40 acre in their conceptions. The
Order of the 19th Oct. Circular No. 8 had not been promul-
gated to them. Many of our Planters willing & anxiously
waiting, under all the discouraging circumstances to embark
under the new order of things, are repulsed at every point.

No labourers are to be had; and no security that if
contracts are made, that labour will be enforced. And
so it is wherever I have seen a head from. Our country
is paralyzed, and our people disheartened - desperate.

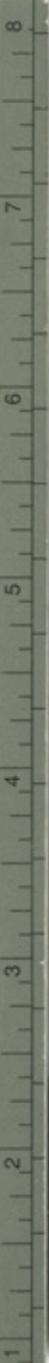
If the planters are not prepared for actual work by the
1st Jan^y, it will be a hopeless attempt for any but a very
small crop. The scandal has having burned every
house on the plantations. The earth remains only because

BUREAU R. F. & A. T.
REC'D
DEC 20
1955
WASHINGTON



Merrill

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They could not destroy ~~the~~ consume that also.
 More Hellish friends were made any Country;
 and all for that envious hatred, for reason that
 we were superior. — Now that the deed is done, we can
 discover that there is a desire on the part of those in
 authority to shift the responsibility of those furnished
 on their old Masters, who can ill afford to support them
 although the feeling is strong to do so. — I submitted
 to Mr. Judd the following question — Suppose as an extreme
 alternative, a planter, for want of means to be able to support
 the freedmen, is obliged to engage with them for the hire
 of his his land, to take a certain amount of the product,
 and that when the period arrives to be paid, more
 than the quantity agreed on has been made: How am I
 to be paid? Take what you can find, was the answer.
 What! take all? He will starve. Yes take all, he
 will then learn that he must work. It gave me an
 opening for remarks, but I repaired.

From what I observed while at Beaufort, I am
 induced to think that Mr. Judd, with the shop-keepers
 generally in the Town, are most thrifty Cotton-dealers
 and I am credibly informed that the freedmen are
 duped and cheated in every possible manner and all
 by Northern traders. But that the carcass is nearly
 consumed and the vultures are about to leave.

In its place I omitted to give you the

8

evidences how many people had suffered. Will it surprise to tell you in 2 months from the 15th Jan 15th of mine had died, and I can tell you of an instance of much greater mortality on the Ogeechee river Geo., where on a formerly well conducted plantation 15-8 Negroes had died ^{in 8 months} out of 340, and that in ¹⁵ months. I think Gen. that I am not far from the truth when I say that they are a doomed people. Thank God he has not made us the instruments of such cruelties with the hypocrisy attendant. In his omnipotence he has ordained that a people should be trained for such a work: We thank him that our portion with that unfortunate race is evidence that we were unsuited for such a purpose.

I am informed that there are instances where you have addressed the Freedmen and given them advice - that should be stamped stampendaries have followed in your track, to undo your work. Can you doubt the motive of such men? It is no wonder that you advise the continuance of the Bureau, when such officials are the assistants.

I need not repeat to you how completely private as well as public property has been destroyed. But I will point to the impishable wounds of earth which have been inflicted for the defence of our beloved country. They can never be leveled with my consent. Let them remain as memorials, confirming history and tradition - That when "Slavery was killed

9
There liberty was tried & now now
rooted and nourished by thousands
of our Masters - flourish. Although it has uprooted
the ground where the Laurel once grew & bloomed,
in its turn it will again yield to the laurel emblem
And may that period be not far distant.

If you will take the trouble to read what I
have written; I trust General that you will make
me some acknowledgement, if it is only in two lines.
I have the kindest feelings towards you because I
believe that you are sincere & honest, but possibly,
excuse me for the freedom of the expression.

But if I am in any way persecuted for
this effusion - you may be certain that no one
will more cheerfully suffer and even die for a cause
than I shall. Even Stephen in all his Glory
eclipse me -

I have the honor to be

Yours respectfully

Wm Howard

of South Carolina

Augusta Stearns
Stamford 15th 1860

William Heyman

Wm South Carolina

Emancipation reform. But
opinion with reference
to the political question
of the day, and the state
of the people.

