CITY POINT, VA., *March 3, 1865.*

Lieutenant-Colonel MULFORD:
(Care General Ord.)

Word has been sent to me that there are in Richmond thirty-four boxes blankets, ten boxes blouses, eighteen boxes shoes, four boxes socks, two boxes shirts, and two boxes pants. Some measures I think should be taken to have these articles returned or cared for, for the benefit of future prisoners. They had probably better be returned.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

VARINA LANDING, *March 3, 1865.*

General GRANT:

General Hayes holds Judge Ould's receipt for all packages, public and private, left in Richmond. They were left subject to our order. I mentioned the matter to you, and on the understanding I had of the matter authorized the use, under supervision of our own officers there, of such articles as might be needed by our men coming into Richmond from other points, they being mostly sick and wounded. I will call on Mr. Ould to-morrow to return whatever he may now have on hand.

JNO. E. MULFORD,
Lieutenant-Colonel, &c.

WASHINGTON, *March 3, 1865.*

Lieut. Col. J. E. MULFORD:

Agree upon the 1st of March for an exchange declaration and report it to General Hoffman.

E. A. HITCHCOCK,
Major-General, &c.

HDQRS. FIRST DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF KENTUCKY,
Lexington, March 3, 1865.

Maj. G. M. BASCOM, *Assistant Adjutant-General:*

MAJOR: We have at this place quite a number of Confederate guerrillas and other prisoners awaiting trial and sentence by military commission and court-martial. As the rolls and records relating to these prisoners have been removed to Louisville, I most respectfully suggest that the prisoners be removed to that point also, the buildings and prison accommodation at Louisville being better and more suitable than those at this place. Besides, they will be more securely confined and less liable to recapture. Other prisoners when captured can be forwarded to Louisville in charge of railroad-train guard.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. H. HOBSON,
Brigadier-General.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND,
Nashville, Tenn., March 3, 1865.

Brigadier-General GRANGER,
Commanding District of Northern Alabama, Huntsville:

Inform General Roddey that I have applied for the prisoners of war belonging to his command to be sent me for exchange, and as soon as they arrive here they will be forwarded to Huntsville.

GEO. H. THOMAS,
Major-General, U. S. Volunteers, Commanding.

War of the Rebellion
Official Records
Series II Vol VIII

[MARCH 3, 1865.—For Special Orders, No. 52, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, relieving Brig. Gen. W. M. Gardner from duty as Commissary-General of Prisoners, see Series I, Vol. XLVI, Part II, p. 1279.]

MARCH 3, 1865.

Report of the joint select committee appointed to investigate the condition and treatment of prisoners of war.

[By Mr. Watson in Senate and Mr. Perkins in House.]

The duties assigned to the committee under the several resolutions of Congress designating them are—

to investigate and report upon the condition and treatment of the prisoners of war respectively held by the Confederate and United States Governments; upon the causes of their detention and the refusal to exchange, and also upon the violations by the enemy of the rules of civilized warfare in the conduct of the war.

These subjects are broad in extent and importance, and in order fully to investigate and present them the committee propose to continue their labors in obtaining evidence and deducing from it a truthful report of facts illustrative of the spirit in which the war has been conducted.

NORTHERN PUBLICATIONS.

But we deem it proper at this time to make a preliminary report, founded upon evidence recently taken, relating to the treatment of prisoners of war by both belligerents. This report is rendered specially important by reason of persistent efforts lately made by the Government of the United States, and by associations and individuals connected or co-operating with it, to asperse the honor of the Confederate authorities and to charge them with deliberate and willful cruelty to prisoners of war. Two publications have been issued at the North within the past year, and have been circulated not only in the United States but in some parts of the South, and in Europe. One of these is the report of the joint select committee of the Northern Congress on the conduct of the war, known as Report No. 67.* The other purports to be a "Narrative of the privations and sufferings of United States officers and soldiers while prisoners of war," and is issued as a report of a commission of inquiry appointed by "The U. S. Sanitary Commission."†

This body is alleged to consist of Valentine Mott, M. D., Edward Delafield, M. D., Gouverneur Morris Wilkins, esq., Ellerslie Wallace, M. D., Hon. J. J. Clarke Hare, and Rev. Treadwell Walden. Although these persons are not of sufficient public importance and weight to give authority to their publication, yet your committee have deemed it proper to notice it in connection with the Report No. 67 before mentioned, because the Sanitary Commission has been understood to have acted to a great extent under the control and by the authority of the United States Government, and because their report claims to be founded on evidence taken in solemn form.

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*Report No. 67, House of Representatives, Thirty-eighth Congress, first session.

†Printed for the U. S. Sanitary Commission by King & Baird, 607 Sansom street, Philadelphia, Pa., 1864.

THEIR SPIRIT AND INTENT.

A candid reader of these publications will not fail to discover that, whether the statements they make be true or not, their spirit is not adapted to promote a better feeling between the hostile powers. They are not intended for the humane purpose of ameliorating the condition of the unhappy prisoners held in captivity. They are designed to inflame the evil passions of the North; to keep up the war spirit among their own people; to represent the South as acting under the dominion of a spirit of cruelty, inhumanity, and interested malice, and thus to vilify her people in the eyes of all on whom these publications can work. They are justly characterized by the Hon. James M. Mason as belonging to that class of literature called the "sensational"—a style of writing prevalent for many years at the North, and which, beginning with the writers of newspaper narratives and cheap fiction, has gradually extended itself until it is now the favored mode adopted by medical professors, judges of courts, and reverend clergymen, and is even chosen as the proper style for a report by a committee of their Congress.

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Nothing can better illustrate the truth of this view than the "Report No. 67" and its appendages. It is accompanied by eight pictures or photographs, alleged to represent U. S. prisoners of war, returned from Richmond, in a sad state of emaciation and suffering. Concerning these cases, your committee will have other remarks, to be presently submitted. They are only alluded to now to show that this report does really belong to the "sensational" class of literature, and that, "prima facie," it is open to the same criticism to which the yellow-covered novels, the "narratives of noted highwaymen," and the "awful beacons" of the Northern bookstalls should be subjected.

The intent and spirit of this report may be gathered from the following extract:

> The evidence proves, beyond all manner of doubt, a determination on the part of the rebel authorities, deliberately and persistently practiced for a long time past, to subject those of our soldiers who have been so unfortunate as to fall in their hands to a system of treatment which has resulted in reducing many of those who have survived and been permitted to return to us to a condition, both physically and mentally, which no language we can use can adequately describe.—Report, p. [1].

And they give also a letter from Edwin M. Stanton, the Northern Secretary of War, from which the following is an extract:

> The enormity of the crime committed by the rebels toward our prisoners for the last several months is not known or realized by our people, and cannot but fill with horror the civilized world when the facts are fully revealed. There appears to have been a deliberate system of savage and barbarous treatment and starvation, the result of which will be that few (if any) of the prisoners that have been in their hands during the past winter will ever again be in a condition to render any service or even to enjoy life.—Report, p. 4.

And the Sanitary Commission, in their pamphlet, after picturing many scenes of privation and suffering, and bringing many charges of cruelty against the Confederate authorities, declare as follows:

> The conclusion is unavoidable, therefore, that these privations and sufferings have been designedly inflicted by the military and other authorities of the rebel Government, and could not have been due to causes which such authorities could not control.—P. 95.

TRUTH TO BE SOUGHT.

After examining these publications your committee approached the subject with an earnest desire to ascertain the truth. If their investigation should result in ascertaining that these charges (or any of them) were true, the committee desired, as far as might be in their power and as far as they could influence the Congress, to remove the evils complained of and to conform to the most humane spirit of civilization; and if these charges were unfounded and false, they deemed it a sacred duty, without delay, to present to the Confederate Congress and people and to the public eye of the enlightened world, a vindication of their country, and to relieve her authorities from the injurious slanders brought against her by her enemies. With these views we have taken a considerable amount of testimony bearing on the subject. We have sought to obtain witnesses whose position or duties made them familiar with the facts testified to, and whose characters entitled them to full credit. We have not hesitated to examine Northern prisoners of war upon points and experience specially within their knowledge. We now present the testimony taken by us, and submit a report of facts and inferences fairly deducible from the evidence, from the admissions of our enemies, and from public records of undoubted authority.

FACTS AS TO SICK AND WOUNDED PRISONERS.

First in order, your committee will notice the charge, contained both in "Report No. 67" and in the "sanitary" publication, founded on the appearance and condition of the sick prisoners sent from Richmond to Annapolis and Baltimore about the last of April, 1864. These are the men, some of whom form the subjects of the photographs with which the U. S. Congressional committee have adorned their report. The disingenuous attempt is made in both these publications to produce the impression that these sick and emaciated men were fair representatives of the general state of the prisoners held by the South, and that all their prisoners were being rapidly reduced to the same state, by starvation and cruelty, and by neglect, ill-treatment, and denial of proper food, stimulants, and medicines in the Confederate hospitals. Your committee take pleasure in saying that not only is this charge proved to be wholly false, but the evidence ascertains facts as to the Confederate hospitals, in which Northern prisoners of war are treated, highly creditable to the authorities which established them, and to the surgeons and their aids who have so humanely conducted them. The facts are simply these:

The Federal authorities, in violation of the cartel, having for a long time refused exchange of prisoners, finally consented to a partial exchange of the sick and wounded on both sides. Accordingly, a number of such prisoners were sent from the hospitals in Richmond. General directions had been given that none should be sent except those who might be expected to endure the removal and passage with safety to their lives; but in some cases the surgeons were induced to depart from this rule by the entreaties of some officers and men in the last stages of emaciation, suffering not only with excessive debility, but with "nostalgia," or homesickness, whose cases were regarded as desperate, and who could not live if they remained, and might possibly improve if carried home. Thus it happened that some very sick and emaciated men were carried to Annapolis, but their illness was not the result of ill-treatment or neglect. Such cases might be found in any large hospital, North or South. They might even be found in private families, where the sufferer would be surrounded by every comfort that love could bestow. Yet these are the cases which, with hideous violation of decency, the Northern committee have paraded in pictures and photographs. They have taken their own sick and enfeebled soldiers;

have stripped them naked; have exposed them before a daguerreian apparatus; have pictured every shrunken limb and muscle—and all for the purpose, not of relieving their sufferings, but of bringing a false and slanderous charge against the South.

CONFEDERATE SICK AND WOUNDED—THEIR CONDITION WHEN RETURNED.

The evidence is overwhelming that the illness of these prisoners was not the result of ill-treatment or neglect. The testimony of Surgeons Semple and Spence, of Assistant Surgeons Tinsley, Marriott, and Miller, and of the Federal prisoners, E. P. Dalrymple, George Henry Brown, and Freeman B. Teague, ascertains this to the satisfaction of every candid mind. But in refuting this charge your committee are compelled by the evidence to bring a counter-charge against the Northern authorities, which they fear will not be so easily refuted. In exchange, a number of Confederate sick and wounded prisoners have been at various times delivered at Richmond and at Savannah. The mortality among these on the passage and their condition when delivered were so deplorable as to justify the charge that they had been treated with inhuman neglect by the Northern authorities.

Assistant Surgeon Tinsley testifies:

I have seen many of our prisoners returned from the North who were nothing but skin and bones. They were as emaciated as a man could be to retain life, and the photographs (appended to Report No. 67) would not be exaggerated representations of our returned prisoners to whom I thus allude. I saw 250 of our sick brought in on litters from the steamer at Rocketts. Thirteen dead bodies were brought off the steamer the same night. At least thirty died in one night after they were received.

Surgeon Spence testifies:

I was at Savannah and saw rather over 3,000 prisoners received. The list showed that a large number had died on the passage from Baltimore to Savannah. The number sent from the Federal prisons was 3,500, and out of that number they delivered only 3,028, to the best of my recollection. Captain Hatch can give you the exact number. Thus about 472 died on the passage. I was told that 67 dead bodies had been taken from one train of cars between Elmira and Baltimore. After being received at Savannah they had the best attention possible, yet many died in a few days. In carrying out the exchange of disabled, sick, and wounded men, we delivered at Savannah and Charleston about 11,000 Federal prisoners, and their physical condition compared most favorably with those we received in exchange, although of course the worst cases among the Confederates had been removed by death during the passage.

Richard H. Dibrell, a merchant of Richmond and a member of the "Ambulance Committee," whose labors in mitigating the sufferings of the wounded have been acknowledged both by Confederate and Northern men, thus testifies concerning our sick and wounded soldiers at Savannah returned from Northern prisons and hospitals:

I have never seen a set of men in worse condition. They were so enfeebled and emaciated that we lifted them like little children. Many of them were like living skeletons. Indeed, there was one poor boy, about seventeen years old, who presented the most distressing and deplorable appearance I ever saw. He was nothing but skin and bone, and besides this he was literally eaten up with vermin. He died in the hospital in a few days after being removed thither, notwithstanding the kindest treatment and the use of the most judicious nourishment. Our men were in so reduced a condition that on more than one trip up on the short passage of ten miles from the transports to the city as many as five died. The clothing of the privates was in a wretched state of tatters and filth. The mortality on the passage from Maryland was very great as well as that on the passage from the prisons to the port from which they started. I cannot state the exact number, but I think I heard that 3,500 were started, and we only received about 3,027. I have looked at the photographs appended to Report No. 67 of the committee of the Federal Congress, and do not hesitate to declare that several of our men were worse cases of emaciation and sickness than any represented in these photographs.

The testimony of Mr. Dibrell is confirmed by that of Andrew Johnston, also a merchant of Richmond, and a member of the "Ambulance Committee."

Thus it appears that the sick and wounded Federal prisoners at Annapolis, whose condition has been made a subject of outcry and of widespread complaint by the Northern Congress, were not in a worse state than were the Confederate prisoners returned from Northern hospitals and prisons, of which the humanity and superior management are made subjects of special boasting by the U. S. Sanitary Commission.

CONFEDERATE HOSPITALS FOR PRISONERS.

In connection with this subject your committee take pleasure in reporting the facts ascertained by their investigations concerning the Confederate hospitals for sick and wounded Federal prisoners. They have made personal examination, and have taken evidence specially in relation to "Hospital No. 21," in Richmond, because this has been made the subject of distinct charge in the publication last mentioned. It has been shown not only by the evidence of the surgeons and their assistants, but by that of Federal prisoners, that the treatment of the Northern prisoners in these hospitals has been everything that humanity could dictate; that their wards have been well ventilated and clean; their food the best that could be procured for them, and, in fact, that no distinction has been made between their treatment and that of our own sick and wounded men. Moreover, it is proved that it has been the constant practice to supply to the patients out of the hospital funds such articles as milk, butter, eggs, tea, and other delicacies when they were required by the condition of the patient. This is proved by the testimony of E. P. Dalrymple, of New York; George Henry Brown, of Pennsylvania, and Freeman B. Teague, of New Hampshire, whose depositions accompany this report.

CONTRAST.

This humane and considerate usage was not adopted in the U. S. hospital on Johnson's Island, where Confederate sick and wounded officers were treated. Col. J. H. Holman thus testifies:

The Federal authorities did not furnish to the sick prisoners the nutriment and other articles which were prescribed by their own surgeons. All they would do was to permit the prisoners to buy the nutriment or stimulants needed, and if they had no money they could not get them. I know this, for I was in the hospital sick myself, and I had to buy myself such articles as eggs, milk, flour, chickens, and butter after their doctors had prescribed them. And I know this was generally the case, for we had to get up a fund among ourselves for this purpose to aid those who were not well supplied with money.

This statement is confirmed by the testimony of Actg. Asst. Surg. John J. Miller, who was at Johnson's Island for more than eight months. When it is remembered that such articles as eggs, milk, and butter were very scarce and high-priced in Richmond and plentiful and cheap at the North, the contrast thus presented may well put to shame the Sanitary Commission and dissipate the self-complacency with which they have boasted of the superior humanity in the Northern prisons and hospitals.

CHARGE OF ROBBING PRISONERS.

Your committee now proceed to notice other charges in these publications. It is said that their prisoners were habitually stripped of blankets and other property on being captured. What pillage may

have been committed on the battle-field after the excitement of combat your committee cannot know. But they feel well assured that such pillage was never encouraged by the Confederate generals, and bore no comparison to the wholesale robbery and destitution to which the Federal armies have abandoned themselves in possessing parts of our territory. It is certain that after the prisoners were brought to the Libby and other prisons in Richmond no such pillage was permitted. Only articles which came properly under the head of munitions of war were taken from them.

SHOOTING PRISONERS.

The next charge noticed is that the guards around the Libby Prison were in the habit of recklessly and inhumanly shooting at the prisoners upon the most frivolous pretexts, and that the Confederate officers, so far from forbidding this rather encouraged it, and made it a subject of sportive remark. This charge is wholly false and baseless. The rules and regulations appended to the deposition of Maj. Thomas P. Turner expressly provide, "Nor shall any prisoner be fired upon by a sentinel or other person, except in case of revolt or attempted escape." Five or six cases have occurred in which prisoners have been fired on and killed or hurt; but every case has been made the subject of careful investigation and report, as will appear by the evidence. As a proper comment on this charge, your committee report that the practice of firing on our prisoners by the guards in the Northern prisons appears to have been indulged in to a most brutal and atrocious extent. See the depositions of C. C. Herrington, William F. Gordon, jr., J. B. McCreary, Dr. Thomas P. Holloway, and John P. Fennell. At Fort Delaware a cruel regulation as to the use of the "sinks" was made the pretext for firing on and murdering several of our men and officers, among them Lieutenant-Colonel Jones, who was lame, and was shot down by the sentinel while helpless and feeble and while seeking to explain his condition. Yet this sentinel was not only not punished, but was promoted for his act. At Camp Douglas as many as eighteen of our men are reported to have been shot in a single month. These facts may well produce a conviction in the candid observer that it is the North and not the South that is open to the charge of deliberately and willfully destroying the lives of the prisoners held by her.

MEANS FOR SECURING CLEANLINESS.

The next charge is that the Libby and Belle Isle prisoners were habitually kept in a filthy condition, and that the officers and men confined there were prevented from keeping themselves sufficiently clean to avoid vermin and similar discomforts. The evidence clearly contradicts this charge. It is proved by the depositions of Major Turner, Lieutenant Bossieux, Reverend Doctor McCabe, and others, that the prisons were kept constantly and systematically policed and cleansed; that in the Libby there was an ample supply of water conducted to each floor by the city pipes, and that the prisoners were not only not restricted in its use, but urged to keep themselves clean. At Belle Isle, for a brief season (about three weeks), in consequence of a sudden increase in the number of prisoners, the police was interrupted, but it was soon restored, and ample means for washing both themselves and their clothes were at all times furnished to the prisoners. It is

doubtless true that, notwithstanding these facilities, many of the prisoners were lousy and filthy, but it was the result of their own habits and not of neglect in the discipline or arrangements of the prison. Many of the prisoners were captured and brought in while in this condition. The Federal General Neal Dow well expressed their character and habits. When he came to distribute clothing among them he was met by profane abuse, and he said to the Confederate officer in charge, "You have here the scrapings and rakings of Europe." That such men should be filthy in their habits might be expected.

CHARGE OF WITHHOLDING AND PILLAGING BOXES.

We next notice the charge that the boxes of provisions and clothing sent to the prisoners from the North were not delivered to them, and were habitually robbed and plundered by permission of the Confederate authorities. The evidence satisfies your committee that this charge is in all substantial points untrue. For a period of about one month there was a stoppage in the delivery of boxes, caused by a report that the Federal authorities were forbidding the delivery of similar supplies to our prisoners; but the boxes were put in a warehouse and were afterward delivered. For some time no search was made of boxes from the Sanitary Committee intended for the prisoners' hospitals, but a letter was intercepted advising that money should be sent in these boxes, "as they were never searched," which money was to be used in bribing the guards and thus releasing the prisoners. After this it was deemed necessary to search every box, which necessarily produced some delay. Your committee are satisfied that if these boxes or their contents were robbed the prison officials are not responsible therefor. Beyond doubt robberies were often committed by prisoners themselves, to whom the contents were delivered for distribution to their owners. Notwithstanding all this alleged pillage, the supplies seem to have been sufficient to keep the quarters of the prisoners so well furnished that they frequently presented, in the language of a witness, "the appearance of a large grocery store."

THE FEDERAL COLONEL SANDERSON'S TESTIMONY.

In connection with this point your committee refer to the testimony of a Federal officer, Col. James M. Sanderson, whose letter is annexed to the deposition of Major Turner. He testifies to the full delivery of the clothing and supplies from the North, and to the humanity and kindness of the Confederate officers, especially mentioning Lieutenant Bossieux, commanding on Belle Isle. His letter was addressed to the president of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, and was beyond doubt received by them, having been forwarded by the regular flag of truce. Yet the scrupulous and honest gentlemen composing that commission have not found it convenient for their purposes to insert this letter in their publication. Had they been really searching for the truth this letter would have aided them in finding it.

MINE UNDER THE LIBBY PRISON.

Your committee proceed next to notice the allegation that the Confederate authorities had prepared a mine under the Libby Prison, and placed in it a quantity of gunpowder for the purpose of blowing up the buildings, with their inmates, in case of an attempt to rescue them.

After ascertaining all the facts bearing on this subject your committee believe that what was done under the circumstances will meet a verdict of approval from all whose prejudices do not blind them to the truth. The state of things was unprecedented in history, and must be judged of according to the motives at work and the result accomplished. A large body of Northern raiders, under one Colonel Dahlgren, was approaching Richmond. It was ascertained, by the reports of prisoners captured from them and other evidence, that their design was to enter the city, to set fire to the buildings, public and private, for which purpose turpentine balls in great number had been prepared; to murder the President of the Confederate States and other prominent men; to release the prisoners of war, then numbering 5,000 or 6,000; to put arms into their hands, and to turn over the city to indiscriminate pillage, rape, and slaughter. At the same time a plot was discovered among the prisoners to co-operate in this scheme, and a large number of knives and slung shots (made by putting stones into woolen stockings) were detected in places of concealment about their quarters. To defeat a plan so diabolical, assuredly the sternest means were justified. If it would have been right to put to death any one prisoner attempting to escape under such circumstances, it seems logically certain that it would have been equally right to put to death any number making such attempt. But in truth the means adopted were those of humanity and prevention rather than of execution. The Confederate authorities felt able to meet and repulse Dahlgren and his raiders if they could prevent the escape of the prisoners.

The real object was to save their lives as well as those of our citizens. The guard force at the prisons was small, and all the local troops in and around Richmond were needed to meet the threatened attack. Had the prisoners escaped, the women and children of the city, as well as their homes, would have been at the mercy of 5,000 outlaws. Humanity required that the most summary measures should be used to deter them from any attempt at escape.

A mine was prepared under the Libby Prison; a sufficient quantity of gunpowder was put into it, and pains were taken to inform the prisoners that any attempt at escape made by them would be effectually defeated. The plan succeeded perfectly. The prisoners were awed and kept quiet. Dahlgren and his party were defeated and scattered. The danger passed away, and in a few weeks the gunpowder was removed. Such are the facts. Your committee do not hesitate to make them known, feeling assured that the conscience of the enlightened world and the great law of self preservation will justify all that was done by our country and her officers.

CHARGE OF INTENTIONAL STARVATION AND CRUELTY.

We now proceed to notice, under one head, the last and gravest charge made in these publications. They assert that the Northern prisoners in the hands of the Confederate authorities have been starved, frozen, inhumanly punished, often confined in foul and loathsome quarters, deprived of fresh air and exercise, and neglected and maltreated in sickness—and that all this was done upon a deliberate, willful, and long-conceived plan of the Confederate Government and officers, for the purpose of destroying the lives of these prisoners, or of rendering them forever incapable of military service. This charge accuses the Southern Government of a crime so horrible and unnatural that it could never have been made except by those ready to blacken with slander

men whom they have long injured and hated. Your committee feel bound to reply to it calmly but emphatically. They pronounce it false in fact and design; false in the basis on which it assumes to rest, and false in its estimate of the motives which have controlled the Southern authorities.

HUMANE POLICY OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT.

At an early period in the present contest the Confederate Government recognized their obligation to treat prisoners of war with humanity and consideration. Before any laws were passed on the subject the Executive Department provided such prisoners as fell into their hands with proper quarters and barracks to shelter them, and with rations the same in quantity and quality as those furnished to the Confederate soldiers who guarded these prisoners. They also showed an earnest wish to mitigate the sad condition of prisoners of war by a system of fair and prompt exchange; and the Confederate Congress co-operated in these humane views. By their act, approved on the 21st day of May, 1861, they provided that—

> all prisoners of war taken, whether on land or at sea, during the pending hostilities with the United States shall be transferred by the captors from time to time, and as often as convenient to the Department of War; and it shall be the duty of the Secretary of War, with the approval of the President, to issue such instructions to the Quartermaster-General and his subordinates as shall provide for the safe custody and sustenance of prisoners of war; and the rations furnished prisoners of war shall be the same in quantity and quality as those furnished to enlisted men in the Army of the Confederacy.

Such were the declared purpose and policy of the Confederate Government toward prisoners of war; and amid all the privations and losses to which their enemies have subjected them they have sought to carry them into effect.

RATIONS AND GENERAL TREATMENT.

Our investigations for this preliminary report have been confined chiefly to the rations and treatment of the prisoners of war at the Libby and other prisons in Richmond and on Belle Isle. This we have done because the publications to which we have alluded refer chiefly to them, and because the Report No. 67 of the Northern Congress plainly intimates the belief that the treatment in and around Richmond was worse than it was farther South. That report says:

> It will be observed from the testimony that all the witnesses who testify upon that point state that the treatment they received while confined at Columbia, S. C., Dalton, Ga., and other places, was far more humane than that they received at Richmond, where the authorities of the so-called Confederacy were congregated.—Report, p. 3.

The evidence proves that the rations furnished to prisoners of war in Richmond and on Belle Isle have been never less than those furnished to the Confederate soldiers who guarded them, and have at some seasons been larger in quantity and better in quality than those furnished to Confederate troops in the field. This has been because until February, 1864, the Quartermaster's Department furnished the prisoners, and often had provisions or funds when the Commissary Department was not so well provided. Once, and only once, for a few weeks the prisoners were without meat, but a larger quantity of bread and vegetable food was in consequence supplied to them. How often the gallant men composing the Confederate Army have been

without meat, for even longer intervals, your committee do not deem it necessary to say. Not less than sixteen ounces of bread and four ounces of bacon, or six ounces of beef, together with beans and soup, have been furnished per day to the prisoners. During most of the time the quantity of meat furnished to them has been greater than these amounts; and even in times of the greatest scarcity they have received as much as the Southern soldiers who guarded them. The scarcity of meat and of breadstuffs in the South in certain places has been the result of the savage policy of our enemies in burning barns filled with wheat or corn, destroying agricultural implements, and driving off or wantonly butchering hogs and cattle. Yet amid all these privations we have given to their prisoners the rations above mentioned. It is well known that this quantity of food is sufficient to keep in health a man who does not labor hard. All the learned disquisitions of Dr. Ellerslie Wallace on the subject of starvation might have been spared, for they are all founded on a false basis. It will be observed that few (if any) of the witnesses examined by the Sanitary Commission speak with any accuracy of the quantity (in weight) of the food actually furnished to them. Their statements are merely conjectural and comparative, and cannot weigh against the positive testimony of those who superintended the delivery of large quantities of food, cooked and distributed according to a fixed ratio, for the number of men to be fed.

FALSEHOODS PUBLISHED AS TO PRISONERS FREEZING ON BELLE ISLE.

The statements of the Sanitary Commission as to prisoners freezing to death on Belle Isle are absurdly false. According to the statement, it was common, during a cold spell in winter, to see several prisoners frozen to death every morning in the places in which they had slept. This picture, if correct, might well excite our horror; but, unhappily for its sensational power, it is but a clumsy daub, founded on the fancy of the painter. The facts are, that tents were furnished sufficient to shelter all the prisoners; that the Confederate commandant and soldiers on the island were lodged in similar tents; that a fire was furnished in each of them; that the prisoners fared as well as their guards, and that only one of them was ever frozen to death, and he was frozen by the cruelty of his own fellow-prisoners, who thrust him out of the tent in a freezing night because he was infested with vermin. The proof as to the healthiness of the prisoners on Belle Isle and the small amount of mortality is remarkable, and presents a fit comment on the lugubrious pictures drawn by the Sanitary Commission, either from their own fancies or from the fictions put forth by their false witnesses. Lieutenant Bossieux proves that from the establishment of the prison camp on Belle Isle in June, 1862, to the 10th of February, 1865, more than 20,000 prisoners had been at various times there received, and yet that the whole number of deaths during this time was only 161. And this is confirmed by the Federal Colonel Sanderson, who states that the average number of deaths per month on Belle Isle was "from two to five; more frequently the lesser number." The sick were promptly removed from the island to the hospitals in the city.

CHARACTER OF THE NORTHERN WITNESSES.

Doubtless the Sanitary Commission have been to some extent led astray by their own witnesses, whose character has been portrayed by

General Neal Dow, and also by the editor of the New York Times, who in his issue of January 6, 1865, describes the material for recruiting the Federal armies as—

> wretched vagabonds, of depraved morals, decrepit in body, without courage, self-respect, or conscience. They are dirty, disorderly, thievish, and incapable.

CRUELTY TO CONFEDERATE PRISONERS AT THE NORTH.

In reviewing the charges of cruelty, harshness, and starvation to prisoners made by the North, your committee have taken testimony as to the treatment of our own officers and soldiers in the hands of the enemy. It gives us no pleasure to be compelled to speak of suffering inflicted upon our gallant men, but the self laudatory style in which the Sanitary Commission have spoken of their prisons makes it proper that the truth should be presented. Your committee gladly acknowledge that in many cases our prisoners experienced kind and considerate treatment; but we are equally assured that in nearly all the prison stations of the North—at Point Lookout, Fort McHenry, Fort Delaware, Johnson's Island, Elmira, Camp Chase, Camp Douglas, Alton, Camp Morton, the Ohio penitentiary, and the prisons of Saint Louis, Mo.—our men have suffered from insufficient food, and have been subjected to ignominious, cruel, and barbarous practices, of which there is no parallel in anything that has occurred in the South. The witnesses who were at Point Lookout, Fort Delaware, Camp Morton, and Camp Douglas testify that they have often seen our men picking up the scraps and refuse thrown out from the kitchens with which to appease their hunger. Doctor Herrington proves that at Fort Delaware unwholesome bread and water produced diarrhea in numberless cases among our prisoners, and that—

> their sufferings were greatly aggravated by the regulation of the camp, which forbade more than twenty men at a time at night to go to the sinks. I have seen as many as 500 men in a row waiting their time. The consequence was that they were obliged to use the places where they were. This produced great want of cleanliness and aggravated the disease.

Our men were compelled to labor in unloading Federal vessels and in putting up buildings for Federal officers, and if they refused were driven to the work with clubs.

The treatment of Brig. Gen. J. H. Morgan and his officers was brutal and ignominious in the extreme. It will be found stated in the depositions of Capt. M. D. Logan, Lieut. W. P. Crow, Lieut. Col. James B. McCreary, and Capt. B. A. Tracy that they were put in the Ohio penitentiary and compelled to submit to the treatment of felons. Their beards were shaved and their hair was cut close to the head. They were confined in convicts' cells and forbidden to speak to each other. For attempts to escape and for other offenses of a very light character they were subjected to the horrible punishment of the dungeon. In midwinter, with the atmosphere many degrees below zero, without blanket or overcoat, they were confined in a cell without fire or light, with a fetid and poisonous air to breathe—and here they were kept until life was nearly extinct. Their condition on coming out was so deplorable as to draw tears from their comrades. The blood was oozing from their hands and faces. The treatment in the Saint Louis prisons was equally barbarous. Capt. William H. Sebring testifies:

> Two of us, A. C. Grimes and myself, were carried out into the open air in the prison yard on the 25th of December, 1863, and handcuffed to a post. Here we were kept all night in sleet, snow, and cold. We were relieved in the daytime, but again brought to the post and handcuffed to it in the evening—and thus we were kept all

night until the 2d of January, 1864. I was badly frost-bitten and my health was much impaired. This cruel infliction was done by order of Captain Byrne, commandant of prisons in Saint Louis. He was barbarous and insulting to the last degree.

OUR PRISONERS PUT INTO CAMPS INFECTED WITH SMALLPOX.

But even a greater inhumanity than any we have mentioned was perpetrated upon our prisoners at Camp Douglas and Camp Chase. It is proved by the testimony of Thomas P. Holloway, John P. Fennell, H. H. Barlow, H. C. Barton, C. D. Bracken, and J. S. Barlow that our prisoners in large numbers were put into "condemned camps," where smallpox was prevailing, and speedily contracted this loathsome disease, and that as many as forty new cases often appeared daily among them. Even the Federal officers who guarded them to the camp protested against this unnatural atrocity; yet it was done. The men who contracted the disease were removed to a hospital about a mile off, but the plague was already introduced and continued to prevail. For a period of more than twelve months the disease was constantly in the camp; yet our prisoners during all this time were continually brought to it and subjected to certain infection. Neither do we find evidences of amendment on the part of our enemies, notwithstanding the boasts of the Sanitary Commission. At Nashville prisoners recently captured from General Hood's army, even when sick and wounded, have been cruelly deprived of all nourishment suited to their condition; and other prisoners from the same army have been carried into the infected Camps Douglas and Chase.

Many of the soldiers of General Hood's army were frost-bitten by being kept day and night in an exposed condition before they were put into Camp Douglas. Their sufferings are truthfully depicted in the evidence. At Alton and Camp Morton the same inhuman practice of putting our prisoners into camps infected by smallpox prevailed. It was equivalent to murdering many of them by the torture of a contagious disease. The insufficient rations at Camp Morton forced our men to appease their hunger by pounding up and boiling bones, picking up scraps of meat and cabbage from the hospital slop-tubs, and even eating rats and dogs. The depositions of William Ayres and J. Chambers Brent prove these privations.

BARBAROUS PUNISHMENTS.

The punishments often inflicted on our men for slight offenses have been shameful and barbarous. They have been compelled to ride a plank only four inches wide, called "Morgan's horse;" to sit down with their naked bodies in the snow for ten or fifteen minutes, and have been subjected to the ignominy of stripes from the belts of their guards. The pretext has been used that many of their acts of cruelty have been by way of retaliation. But no evidence has been found to prove such acts on the part of the Confederate authorities. It is remarkable that in the case of Colonel Streight and his officers they were subjected only to the ordinary confinement of prisoners of war. No special punishment was used except for specific offenses, and then the greatest infliction was to confine Colonel Streight for a few weeks in a basement room of the Libby Prison, with a window, a plank floor, a stove, a fire, and plenty of fuel.

We do not deem it necessary to dwell further on these subjects. Enough has been proved to show that great privations and sufferings have been borne by the prisoners on both sides.

WHY HAVE NOT PRISONERS OF WAR BEEN EXCHANGED?

But the question forces itself upon us, Why have these sufferings been so long continued? Why have not the prisoners of war been exchanged, and thus some of the darkest pages of history spared to the world? In the answer to this question must be found the test of responsibility for all the sufferings, sickness, and heart-broken sorrow that have visited more than eighty thousand prisoners within the past two years. On this question your committee can only say that the Confederate authorities have always desired a prompt and fair exchange of prisoners. Even before the establishment of a cartel they urged such exchange, but could never effect it by agreement until the large preponderance of prisoners in our hands made it the interest of the Federal authorities to consent to the cartel of July 22, 1862. The ninth article of that agreement expressly provided that in case any misunderstanding should arise it should not interrupt the release of prisoners on parole, but should be made the subject of friendly explanation. Soon after this cartel was established the policy of the enemy in seducing negro slaves from their masters, arming them and putting white officers over them to lead them against us, gave rise to a few cases in which questions of crime under the internal laws of the Southern States appeared. Whether men who encouraged insurrection and murder could be held entitled to the privileges of prisoners of war under the cartel was a grave question. But these cases were few in number, and ought never to have interrupted the general exchange. We were always ready and anxious to carry out the cartel in its true meaning, and it is certain that the ninth article required that the prisoners on both sides should be released, and that the few cases as to which misunderstanding occurred should be left for final decision. Doubtless if the preponderance of prisoners had continued with us exchanges would have continued. But the fortunes of war threw the larger number into the hands of our enemies. Then they refused further exchanges, and for twenty-two months this policy has continued. Our commissioner of exchange has made constant efforts to renew them. In August, 1864, he consented to a proposition which had been repeatedly made, to exchange officer for officer and man for man, leaving the surplus in captivity. Though this was a departure from the cartel, our anxiety for the exchange induced us to consent. Yet the Federal authorities repudiated their previous offer, and refused even this partial compliance with the cartel. Secretary Stanton, who has unjustly charged the Confederate authorities with inhumanity, is open to the charge of having done all in his power to prevent a fair exchange, and thus to prolong the sufferings of which he speaks; and very recently, in a letter over his signature, Benjamin F. Butler has declared that in April, 1864, the Federal Lieutenant-General Grant forbade him "*to deliver to the rebels a single able-bodied man;*" and moreover, General Butler acknowledges that in answer to Colonel Ould's letter consenting to the exchange, officer for officer and man for man, he wrote a reply,

not diplomatically but obtrusively and demonstratively, *not for the purpose of furthering exchange* of prisoners, but for the purpose of preventing and stopping the exchange, and *furnishing a ground on which we could fairly stand.*

These facts abundantly show that the responsibility of refusing to exchange prisoners of war rests with the Government of the United States and the people who have sustained that Government; and every sigh of captivity, every groan of suffering, every heart broken by hope

deferred among these 80,000 prisoners, will accuse them in the judgment of the just.

With regard to the prison stations at Andersonville, Salisbury, and other places south of Richmond, your committee have not made extended examination, for reasons which have already been stated. We are satisfied that privation, suffering, and mortality, to an extent much to be regretted, did prevail among the prisoners there, but they were not the result of neglect, still less of design, on the part of the Confederate Government. Haste in preparation; crowded quarters, prepared only for a smaller number; want of transportation, and scarcity of food, have all resulted from the pressure of the war and the barbarous manner in which it has been conducted by our enemies. Upon these subjects your committee propose to take further evidence and to report more fully hereafter.

But even now enough is known to vindicate the South, and to furnish an overwhelming answer to all complaints on the part of the United States Government or people that their prisoners were stinted in food or supplies. Their own savage warfare has wrought all the evil. They have blockaded our ports; have excluded from us food, clothing, and medicines; have even declared medicines contraband of war, and have repeatedly destroyed the contents of drug stores and the supplies of private physicians in the country; have ravaged our country, burned our houses, and destroyed growing crops and farming implements. One of their officers (General Sheridan) has boasted in his official report that in the Shenandoah Valley alone he burned 2,000 barns filled with wheat and corn; that he burned all the mills in the whole tract of country, destroyed all the factories of cloth, and killed or drove off every animal, even to the poultry, that could contribute to human sustenance. These desolations have been repeated again and again in different parts of the South. Thousands of our families have been driven from their homes as helpless and destitute refugees. Our enemies have destroyed the railroads and other means of transportation by which food could be supplied from abundant districts to those without it. While thus desolating our country, in violation of the usages of civilized warfare, they have refused to exchange prisoners; have forced us to keep 50,000 of their men in captivity, and yet have attempted to attribute to us the sufferings and privations caused by their own acts. We cannot doubt that in the view of civilization we shall stand acquitted, while they must be condemned.

In concluding this preliminary report we will notice the strange perversity of interpretation which has induced the Sanitary Commission to affix as a motto to their pamphlet the words of the compassionate Redeemer of mankind:

> For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

We have yet to learn on what principle the Federal mercenaries, sent with arms in their hands to destroy the lives of our people, to waste our land, burn our houses and barns, and drive us from our homes, can be regarded by us as the followers of the meek and lowly Redeemer, so as to claim the benefit of his words. Yet even these mercenaries when taken captive by us have been treated with proper humanity. The cruelties inflicted on our prisoners at the North may well justify us in applying to the Sanitary Commission the stern words of the Divine Teacher:

> Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

We believe that there are many thousands of just, honorable, and humane people in the United States upon whom this subject, thus presented, will not be lost; that they will do all they can to mitigate the horrors of war, to complete the exchange of prisoners, now happily in progress, and to prevent the recurrence of such sufferings as have been narrated; and we repeat the words of the Confederate Congress in their manifesto of the 14th of June, 1864:

> We commit our cause to the enlightened judgment of the world; to the sober reflections of our adversaries themselves, and to the solemn and righteous arbitrament of Heaven.*

Statement of Robert Ould, agent of exchange, before the [Congressional] committee.

No interruption in the regular delivery of prisoners occurred before Friday, the 24th of February. On that day I carried a number of Federal prisoners to Boulware's Wharf, and had transportation sufficient to bring back 2,000 of our prisoners. I met Colonel Mulford at Boulware's, but received no Confederate prisoners, there being none at Varina, otherwise called Aiken's Landing. He stated that none were coming up the river, and I accordingly agreed to be at Boulware's Wharf on the following day (Saturday, the 25th) with steam-boat transportation for 2,000. I made the necessary arrangements. On proceeding to Rocketts, however, on the morning of the 25th, I was there informed by all the captains of the boats that it was impossible to go down in consequence of the freshet. At my earnest solicitation the captain of the small steamer Townes consented to take the medical officer of my bureau, Surgeon Brock. I instructed him to represent the case to the Federal agent and to the prisoners who, I felt sure, would be at Boulware's, giving them the option of marching to Richmond or returning to Varina and remaining there until the steam-boats could come down. I remained to make arrangements in this sudden emergency for receiving and providing for them. I telegraphed and sent messengers to General Custis Lee, requesting the necessary guard and such facilities of transportation as he could furnish. I also directed the Ambulance Committee to do everything in their power. General Lee furnished the guards and contributed everything he could. The Ambulance Committee were active and faithful in their efforts.

On Sunday (the 26th) the river was still too high for the steam-boats, but the captain of the Allison intimated that there was some chance of his going down the next day. I therefore thought it more expedient to wait until Monday morning. On Sunday night, however, Captain Gifford reported to me that the river was rising again and that he could not go down on Monday. I accordingly telegraphed that night to General Custis Lee, informing him of the facts and requesting him to notify Colonel Mulford that my medical officer would meet him at Boulware's 10.30 a. m. Monday morning to make arrangements for the speedy delivery of our prisoners. Doctor Brock had to wait until 3 p. m. for Colonel Mulford, and arranged for the marching of the men on Tuesday. I instructed Doctor Brock to inform Colonel Mulford that I would come down with the steam-boats, if possible, but if not able to do so I would make every arrangement I could for helping the prisoners to Richmond, if they concluded to attempt the march. The prisoners did so elect, with a full knowledge of the facts, and every possible facility of guards,

*The evidence referred to in this report is not found