

APR 13 1863

Helena, Ark. April 13, '63.
Rev. Wm L. Peopes.

I now send, as desired, a report of the distribution of your clothing except a few articles reserved for warmer weather.

It may be too general, Mr. Hazard, of the San^d Board, not being very specific in speaking of your wishes.

The time & liberty I have given myself, in this instance, to select the most suitable recipients for diverse qualities in articles, from among those attracting themselves to me by a history, or peculiar circumstances, has brought interesting items to my knowledge.

I ^{have} enjoyed it, but could not stop to do so with a large stock of clothing, though I seek to be as judicious as possible in methods of each disposition; as much so as, now.

You will permit me to say, after being so close an observer of their personal habits, present degree of skill & economy, facilities for washing, sadly narrowed habitations, half of them with ground floors, without window or closet, & the mind of this locality, that only simple, durable fabric, plainly made can be of much service to them. Also that from the soldiers & government the able bodied men are comfortably clothed.

Mr. Hazard having sent your donation to this point, an outline sketch of movements for the freed people gathered here, may make my report more intelligible.

Scarcely four months have passed since any essential supply or relief was afforded the destitute or suffering at this Post, & that primarily & wholly through efforts of the Chaplains. A letter in the Boston Commonwealth

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wealth about March 1st & another quite recently give a glance at some of the difficulties, hindrances, changes in this field of labor. —

There is now a constant increase of individual numbers & almost weekly influx in large bodies attached to the army or fleet. They usually have a comfortable stock of bedding, but very limited amount of personal clothing & almost no furniture & cooking apparatus.

Whatever be the quantities of the above named articles when leaving their plantations, they are greatly reduced before landed here, then subject to further accidental losses in the transfer to quarters. These are the old, dilapidated houses in town, or tents and cabins in Ethiopia encampment, not averaging a room to a family.

All, who draw rations, not previously there, unless in service of officers, have recently been required to remove

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tation, the larger portion left at
→ St. Louis:

A colored regiment is being organized with great zeal & vigor. —

With a prefatory reference to names & families to be given in the Report, I will close this too lengthy communication. Please excuse its being so, & all omissions which render the Report different from such an one as you desired.

Very Respectfully,

M. F. Mann.

P. S. In making returns to my contributors of this clothing, I must earnestly request that no mention be made of my name by yourself, or others.

In the communications to the Commonwealth, one family of 42 slaves is named, of whom several died & a portion of the remainder returned to their master. Four more who bravely trusted freedom have since died.

The name is Simmons. —

Another family of 90 came in a gunboat, few retained on the boat, the rest landed, but the cotton was carried north. Their master came & tried to hire them, failed, one woman was going into the Massachusetts — name Woodburn.

A hero of 1812 is spoken of, name Daniel Juniper. Efforts are being made to have him photographed for Harper's Weekly, hope it can be done.

Last day of March, 65 were brought in a boat from the Yagoo Pass. Several interesting, superior women among them. Many of the husbands & sons had been forced away in the

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southern service, a few of them have since reached Helena with the returning fleet. — Principal names, Johnson, Cunningham, Parish & Fernanders. —

Jane Williamson a lame woman, & Eliza Ford, sickly, belonged to Judge Williamson. Anne Higginson who lost an entire arm in a threshing machine, has interested me much, belonged to a family near town, ~~now~~ gone north. Agnes & Nancy Roberts & Agnes McKee, belonged near town, families fled, the slaves came here for safety. They have done service in hos^l —

Three little girls in a family of Gen. Pillsbury, three miles distant, parents superior, support themselves. A family of ten Witherspoons, very interesting, belonged to Dr. W. of this state, grandson of the Dr. W.

Two weeks since were nearly all attacked with small pox, four died. One man & wife now serve at the small pox hos^l. will post

Uncle Lewis, at camp, has shown wonderful devotion to a bed ridden wife recently deceased. —

Daniel Jones, recently fled from master, twenty miles distant with hands battered terribly in pursuit after him, has hernia, is quite aged.

Uncle Isaac, very old, has same disease & a deformed hand from youth.

These, with those of the name of Preston, belonging originally to the owners of the house in which I am boarding, I just left for a barn in Iowa, complete most of names on whose the articles were bestowed.

The chintz window curtains, & lounge cover seemed to have no legitimate use, I made from them 22 sunbonnets, much needed, gave four, each, to women who were to retain one for the making.
