

LETTER FROM AN ARMY CHAPLAIN.

The following is an extract from the letter of an army chaplain, dated camp near Russelville, Alabama, August 22, 1862:—

"Here, as much as any place in the South, the rich planters abound, and slavery has struck its fangs into the vitals of the black man. You see among the enslaved every hue of color, from the fairest skin, blue eyes, light hair, to the jet black, under the crushing heel of that despotism that would make slaves of us all. Up to the time of the Confiscation act of Congress, we were wont to see our commanders driving from our camps any blacks that came to or within our lines. Oh, how I have felt when I have seen these poor creatures thus driven back into slavery! But, thank God, it is different now, and the men, women and children are flocking to our camps.

The men are employed as cooks, teamsters, &c. We are not guarding rebel property as formerly, and paying four or five prices for some of the necessaries, such as milk, butter, eggs, vegetables, &c., &c., but get them at reasonable prices. Had the Confiscation bill been passed last January, and carried into effect, I believe the South would by this time have been subjugated, as they could not have raised produce to subsist themselves or their armies. Their producers would, thousands of them, have been free. There is nothing that the government has done that has so weakened the rebellion as the act of confiscation. It is attacking its very vitals. The slave owners are running their slaves south of our lines. But they have a liking for freedom, and therefore the stampede to our lines. Almost every day since we have been in the mountains, men are fleeing to our lines to avoid the rebel conscription. Some fifty have come in within the last week. A party of four came in last night, and say there are a hundred and twenty-five on their way to our lines, who wish to enter our army. The poor are loyal to our government without an exception, save the miserable scum of towns and cities, who are the employed tools of the rich to do every evil work. The tales of suffering related by the refugees are affecting. Some of them have come over one hundred miles, and avoided roads, keeping in the woods and by-places, subsisting on fruit and green corn, and travelling only at night. The South is under a reign of terror. May God give us victories until there shall not be left a rebel to lift his hydra head, or wag his tongue against our government!"

Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

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