

NEGROES AS SOLDIERS. A correspondent of the *New York Times*, who writes from Lake Providence, Feb. 25, describes a complete stampede of negroes, old and young, from the Bayou Macon region, and says that the remaining slaves are a source of more anxiety to the rebels than even the Yankees. Speaking of the fighting qualities of the negroes, the correspondent says:

"When the idea of arming and organizing them as soldiers was first suggested, I doubted if they possessed sufficient intelligence and pride to make good soldiers, and doubted if they had the moral courage to fight. I have now been with the various armies of the Southwest nearly a year. I have had good opportunities for observation, and have endeavored to form an opinion of the average intelligence of the slave population, unprejudiced by the color of their skins, and I think that no man whose perception is not obscured by prejudice, could fail to arrive at the conclusion that at least two thirds of the men slaves would make brave and effective soldiers."

An officer, known by the *Commercial Advertiser* to have been pro slavery in sentiment before he entered the army, thus writes to his friends in New York:—

CAMP KEARNEY, February 25.

We are in camp again, all quiet so far, and none the better for the expedition to Plaquemine. * * I see that a negro regiment at Port Royal has fought well, and I think the idea of employing them as soldiers will gain favor with the powers that be. I am told that the negro battery here puts Sherman's to its trumps to beat it. Depend upon it negro regiments with white commissioned officers, would prove very efficient, and several of them could be raised hereabouts without difficulty. There are a few now.

Some of the negroes are far more desirous of improving themselves than the whites are, and while there are many in this regiment who cannot read or write, and have no disposition to learn, you cannot find a negro without a spelling book in his hand. I asked my boy if he wanted to learn to read, and if you had seen the look of delight he gave, you would not think him to be without ambition to learn.