

## WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMISSION.

One of the Secretaries, now near Petersburg, Va., in a recent letter writes;

"We next visited the station at the hospital of the ninth army corps. Mr. Shearer, who has for a long time been the efficient agent at this station, was just about leaving, with the general regret of those who had been connected with him. Rev. Mr. Stowe, of New Bedford, succeeds him. Here we met quite a large number of delegates, who were, nevertheless, unequal to the work to be done. We had a very pleasant conference with the delegates and six or eight neighboring chaplains, and were gratified to find that they were working so harmoniously together. The Commission is evidently fulfilling its legitimate function, which, so far as efforts for the spiritual good of the soldiers is concerned, is to supplement the work of the chaplains where there are any, and to supply the deficiency where there are none.

On our second day, which was the Sabbath, we held two religious meetings. In the forenoon a congregation of sixteen hundred colored men, from the brigades of Colonels Seigfreid and Thomas, the former of whom was present, were addressed from the steps of the Gurley House by Mr. Stuart and others. It was a suggestive and inspiring sight to see these two brigades of negroes addressed from the porch of a slave holder, who is now a surgeon in the rebel army.

"Such is the demand for religious papers in the army that we are unable with all our resources to supply it. As we were passing along the road men would come to us for reading matter, because they saw our wagon labelled "Christian Commission." The confidence felt in the Commission is illustrated by the fact that a soldier put a note for \$100 into the hands of a delegate, who was a stranger to himself, for collection in a distant State. The badge of the Commission was to him a sufficient guarantee of integrity.

"At various points a precious religious interest prevails, and numbers are daily consecrating themselves to Christ. In a crowded meeting which we attended at this place, twelve soldiers arose to signify their desire for salvation. Where else in our country can a more inviting or more promising field of labor be found than in the army?

"The fear has been extensively entertained and frequently expressed that great depravation of morals would result from the disbanding of our army and the return of the soldiers to their homes. I have shared such apprehensions myself, but I share them no longer. I believe, from all the evidence I have obtained on the subject, that nearly or quite as large a proportion of the army as of the civilians at home are Christians, a larger proportion of the unconverted are seeking religion, and the unconverted are more susceptible to religious influences. One delegate remarked that you would sometimes scarcely hear an oath in a whole day in the hospital in which he labored. On inquiry we learned from those who were returning home at the close of their three years' service, that even the unconverted among them were more serious than when they enlisted. A captain who stood by acknowledged that he had used profane language before entering the army, but had left it off through the influence of his wife. How many of our noble soldiers fresh from the homes and hearts of the people have been restrained from vice and strengthened in virtuous purposes by the letters, the influence, the prayers of loved ones at home and the efforts of good men in the army, is known only to the all-seeing One."

[We cannot do too much for our brave soldiers who are doing so much for us. By their heroic, self-sacrificing efforts, they are keeping back the deluge of war from our homes, and are defending the glorious government which God has given this nation in answer to the prayers and sacrifices of our godly forefathers. Is there one who does not wish to do something to cheer and comfort these, our country's heroes, who are suffering for us? This all can do. Through the Christian Commission, all can minister both to their souls and bodies. Any money sent to the *Recorder* office for this purpose, from the smallest mite to the largest sum, shall be at once put into the treasury of the Christian Commission. In remitting subscriptions for the *Recorder*, cannot many put in an extra quarter or half dollar to be devoted to this object?

The claims of the defenders of our country and of the sacred principles upon which our Government is founded are strong and urgent. Care for the soldiers is the duty of the present hour.

Eds.]