

The exceedingly competent surgeons detailed to examining duty there (by order of Clendenin, assistant medical director, and at my request), Dr. J. C. Elliott, One hundredth U. S. Colored Infantry, had rejected for disability about one-fourth of these men recruited. The number of agents registered with me is 237; this is a meager showing. I attribute it to—

First. The disinclination of General Sherman to aid a system which enabled men to avoid personal military service, a disinclination common to ninety-nine of every hundred of the officers and soldiers of his army.

Second. The scarcity of material.

Third. The difficulty of obtaining transportation from the front to this point of men enrolled. The system (if I may be permitted to criticise a measure passed by Congress) has this radical defect: The inequality of the bounties offered; consequent to this are bounty jumping, trafficking among agents, unfair measures in recruiting.

I believe desertions to have been induced by the system. I know that the honor of several officers has been compromised by it. Of the agents were men who cared nothing for the negro, had no interest in colored troops, and were only interested in making money for themselves, for very few of the many dollars of the bounties ever found their way into the recruits' pockets; the agents fattened upon them.

Practically, however, the system here is at an end, General Webster, General Sherman's chief of staff, declining to grant any more passes to agents going South or substitute brokers going North.

#### THE PROSPECTS IN GEORGIA.

I regard the prospects for recruiting in Georgia favorable. When our army resumes the offensive and penetrates into the Empire State of the South, the horde of negroes driven before Hood's army will be reached and made available. Some 5,000 laborers are wanted for the staff department in the field of General Sherman's armies, but when these are obtained (as I understand General Sherman's assurance and those of his subordinates) we shall be permitted to recruit.

Pursuant to authority given me last spring to recruit in Georgia and Northern Alabama, I kept till near the fall of Atlanta an agent in the front. Not so many negroes came into Sherman's army as were needed to supply the natural decrease of teamsters, &c.

#### THE PROSPECTS IN TENNESSEE.

I do not think it advisable after the regiments now authorized here are completed to begin others. There can still be recruiting here, but not in such numbers as to warrant the formation of new regiments.

My plan for such recruiting, and it is sanctioned by Brig. Gen. A. Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee, is:

First. To have all colored recruiting in this State placed under the control of one person. As it is, there are recruiting parties from the old regiments of whose whereabouts, operations, and success I know nothing, unless they stumble into some place where I have parties recruiting for the new regiments.

Second. To have all recruits obtained sent to the general rendezvous here for examination, enlistment, and some drill before they are sent to the commands for which they are enlisted.

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