THE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE "WO- MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELP
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THE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE "WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA FOR THE RELIEF OF THE FREEDMEN."

It is due to those who have aided us in our efforts to relieve the sufferings of the destitute Freedmen, that they should receive a statement of the appropriation of our funds and labor.

Soon after our Annual Report of Fourth month last, letters were received from some of our friends who were engaged as volunteer teachers and nurses in the contraband camp at Washington, stating that great suffering existed among the Hospital patients there, and asking for clothing and food suitable for the sick. A box containing 348 garments was immediately forwarded, and we were assured "its contents were most welcome."

Fifth month fourteenth, a letter was received from Lucy Chase, Portsmouth, Virginia, acknowledging the receipt of a box containing 376 garments, some garden seeds and a few second hand books. "Its capacity," she says, "is almost unmeasured, as is our gratitude. All the negroes now employed here work well, and are very happy. My sister and I are located upon a farm near Portsmouth, and I design organizing schools upon all the farms, and keeping them alive by putting advanced scholars in charge of them, and visiting them frequently."

Early in the spring of 1863 a special contribution enabled us to purchase a choice collection of school-books, slates, pencils, cards, pictures, writing materials, &c., for the schools under the care of Gayner and Eliza Heacock, at Port Royal. The former writes "we feel very thankful to you for your kindness in sending us such a large box of books; we stood much in need of them. Since their arrival each child has had a book, and their chance for improvement is much greater. The small books and cards delight them very much. They are given as rewards for good behaviour."

A second appeal for clothing for the contraband camp at Washington also met with a prompt response.

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We were satisfied that the appropriation was not only an encouragement to those who are nobly and disinterestedly giving their time and strength to this great work, but a relief to some who in their extremity ask aid until the avenues are opened for their self-dependence.

During the summer, when the necessity for clothing was less urgent, and our members mostly absent from the city, the business was entrusted to the Executive Committee.

In the Tenth month, information was received that a large number of Freedmen in Henry county, Iowa, were in great destitution. Though many of them were reported to be "intelligent and quick to learn, yet the strongest and most helpful had gone into the battle-field," and the women could not obtain work to meet the commonest demands of life. Two hundred and sixty-five garments were sent to their relief, and we learned that they arrived in time to clothe and comfort many suffering families.

Eliza Yeates attended one of our meetings and gave an interesting account of her labors among the Freed people near Fortress Monroe and Yorktown, and made an earnest appeal on their behalf. Four hundred and thirty garments were sent to Yorktown, subject to her disposal. Letters were received from Col. R. M. West, Williamsburgh, Va., and from John A. Slade, Gloucester, Va., representing the forlorn condition of the Freedmen in those settlements, and soliciting bedding and clothing for women and children. Boxes containing respectively 203 and 195 garments were accordingly sent, and their receipt gratefully acknowledged.

Reports were constantly reaching us, through the public journals and other sources, of terrible suffering and distress existing among the Freed blacks at the South. The able-bodied men among them had been driven farther South, or forced into the service of the contending armies which had devastated a large portion of that country, while the aged and infirm, the women and children, were left almost without the means of subsistence, shelter or clothing. They escaped from the abandoned plantations, in many instances only a single garment covering their shivering forms, and travelled across rivers and through unknown forests to reach the Union lines. During the journey many of them died from hunger and exposure. Although the General Government had to some extent provided for those who sought its protection, yet all accounts agreed, that unless aid was extended from other sources in this time of extremity, thousands more would inevitably perish before they could be placed in a position, to secure by their own labor the necessaries of life. The Freedmen in the camps in the Mississippi valley alone, numbered over fifty thousand, many of whom were subjected to painful privations. From actual observation by some of the members of our Society, and from frequent correspondence with Friends and others who had gone among them to relieve their physical wants and elevate their condition, we were impressed with the fact that every day increased the number of sufferers, and the necessity for more active and efficient measures for their relief.

At this juncture, the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, then recently organized, appropriated to our use five hundred dollars to be expended in material, the value of which was to be returned to them in clothing. This appropriation which was followed by others to the amount of $1 500, induced us to ask the aid of our friends in the country, in making up garments, and so general was the interest manifested that the demand for work was for a time greater than could be supplied.

Sewing circles were formed at Germantown, Bristol, Falsington, Newtown, Attleboro', Darby, Byberry, Doe Run, Dolington, Upper Dublin, Newtown Square, Little Britain, New Garden, Buckingham, Kennett Square, Wrightstown, Yardleyville, West Grove, Fishing Creek, Makefield, Wrightstown, Pineville, Solebury, Pa. Upper Greenwich, Woodbury, Trenton, Moorestown, Westfield, Crosswicks, Lambertville, Mount Holly, N. J., Wilmington, Del., and at the Green St. House of Industry, and the Germantown Employment Society, by whose co-operation we have been greatly assisted and encouraged. Part of the clothing returned to the Pennsylvania Freedman's Relief Association, was sent to the sick sufferers at Newbern, N. C., whose clothes and bedding had been burned after their recovery from the small-pox, and a part to the valley of the Mississippi. From a letter of Elkanah Beard to the editor of "Friends Review," dated Vicksburg, First month 8th, 1864, we learn "That the majority of these people are poorly housed, or not sheltered at all, from the cold rains and winds which are incident to this latitude at this season of the year, and several in a week past have frozen to death, and others were so chilled that they are not likely to survive long. The few clothes that they could carry, in their hurried march from the plantations, are such as, if better could be had, should be thrown aside as entirely useless.

"There are many hundreds of women and children who are barefoot, with nothing but cotton clothes, which have been worn for months, and from their extreme poverty are the victims of fell disease, and in their emaciated condition cry not only to the friends of suffering humanity for help, but daily on the bended knee, ask the Father forgiveness for their many transgressions, and that He would put it in the hearts of those who have plenty, to lend a helping hand in this their hour of need and greatest calamity. I can say from personal ob-

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servation, that hundreds have died from exposure which they could in nowise avoid.

"Could you see the mothers and orphans, who are reduced almost to a skeleton, stare you in the face and say, as I have heard many, "Massa, I'se goin to die; got nuffin fit for me sick to eat; no close only dese I got on; no way to hab fire in my tent, and comes to see if you han't sumpin for poor me," then I believe your sympathies would be sufficiently aroused to meet the emergency that hundreds of cases are now demanding.

"Truly they are objects of pity that should engage the charity and benevolence of all Christians and true philanthropists."

Walter T. Carpenter writing from Nashville, Tenn., under date Third month 18, 1864, says, "There are at present within our lines, who are considered as contrabands, some sixteen thousand, mostly collected at Gallatin, Clarksville, Nashville, Murfreesboro, Pulaski and Huntsville. A forward movement of our long line of front would throw a vast increase upon us. A letter from Gen. Whipple a few days since, states that many who take refuge within our lines in the vicinity of Chattanooga are so positively destitute, that they cannot send them forward without supplying them with clothing. George Stokes who has charge of a small camp of contrabands at Huntsville, Alabama, in a letter just received, says, they come in without a change of clothes, and without beds or covering of any kind. Any one will see at a glance, that for every hundred coming in, a large amount of goods will be required to keep them comfortable, even in moderate weather until they can provide for themselves. The goods most needed are bedding, of which all require some, even in summer, and clothes for women and children. The able-bodied men are all taken into the service of the Government, and the others are mostly supplied from the cast off clothes of the soldiers. * * * Their quiet, orderly deportment is most satisfactory, and the absence of revenge, or a spirit of retaliation towards those who have oppressed and in some cases, brutally maltreated them, is a most lovely trait in their character."

Besides aiding us in making up clothing, our friends in the country have liberally contributed to our treasury, by which we have been enabled to meet the demands from time to time addressed to us.

Second month eighth, a second large box containing 259 garments was sent to Mount Pleasant, Iowa, and one to Point Comfort, of 243 garments, both of which were acknowledged.

The "Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen," organized in the early part of the Second month, with a view not only to relieve their physical wants, but to labor for their mental and moral elevation, and the recognition of their just rights, appropriated to us $1,800, which was expended in material, and the value returned to them in clothing.

Under date of third month 7th, H. T. Norris of Baltimore, writes, "Numbers of destitute women and children who have been bound by the galling chains of slavery are now seeking shelter among us. There are hundreds of such refugees scattered over our city." A box containing 389 garments was promptly sent to her address, and in reply she states that, "many stricken hearts have been made glad by its contents. Almost every day I clothe from it some who have fled from personal suffering, the recital of which would be too harrowing to detail."

In compliance with a request from camp Todd, Va., a box containing 126 garments and a quantity of dried fruit was sent to that locality on the 2d inst. In many cases, after patients are discharged from the Hospital their entire want of appetite prevents their regaining strength, and a little dried fruit is a grateful and necessary stimulus.

The fact having been communicated to us that one of the Hospitals at Alexandria was in need of clothing, a box containing 243 garments was forwarded to meet that demand on the 13th inst., and about the same time a similar request from Fortress Monroe induced us to send 267 garments for distribution in that district.

During the past year 13,212 garments have been made and packed in 41 boxes; 18 of which were sent to the "Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association," 5 to "Friend's Association for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen," and the remainder were distributed by our own Association.

We gratefully acknowledge the kindness of our friend Alfred H. Love, for his liberal contributions, and for the varied assistance which he has generously and untiringly rendered us. Donations in money, goods and clothing have been contributed by the citizens of our own State, and by those of N. York, N. Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana and Iowa, and by nearly all the sewing circles that have co-operated with us.

Since our last Report a shadow has rested over us in the removal by death of our corresponding Secretary and beloved fellow-member, Anna Wharton. The remembrance of her warm sympathy for the people of color, and her untiring zeal in relieving their sufferings and advocating their cause, will long be as a reminder, not to withhold the little that each can do. Though the condition of her health prevented a regular attendance at our meetings, yet in her the poor colored refugee found a friend, and in her dwelling a temporary shelter. The acknowledgment may in truth be made that, "though dead she yet speaketh."

Thankful for the aid and monetary encourage-

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ment which has enabled us to hand forth to those "who are ready to perish," we would remind our friends that the occasion still exists for active and persistent effort, and we trust their hearts will continue to respond to the claims of justice and brotherhood. Most of us have been abundantly blessed with the good things of this life, and let us not refuse to give of this abundance, lest the language be applicable to us "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me."

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