

the Secretary of War his own opinion of our actual condition, of the embarrassment under which all military operations must be conducted, and to express the hope that if the future operations of the troops in his command should fail to meet the just expectations of the Secretary, the circumstances should be considered by which their usefulness and efficiency were impaired.

He does not doubt that many persons engaged in the purchase of the products of insurrectionary districts are loyal and honorable men, but he does "know that many of the intermediary agents employed are rebels or unprincipled men, actuated only by the instincts of gain; but the licenses allowed to the first class give countenance and opportunity to a far more numerous class who follow in the track of the army, traffic in its blood, and barter the cause for which it is fighting, with all the baseness of Judas Iscariot, but without his remorse."

To what has been said by General Canby the committee desire to add the testimony of Brigadier General Gordon, a distinguished officer, who has been in service since the commencement of the war, a good part of the time on the lower Mississippi and at New Orleans, and who is now engaged on a military commission at Norfolk, investigating this subject of trade with rebellious States. He says in his testimony, that from his observation during the war, and from the best testimony in the investigation he is making at Norfolk on the subject of trade, he is of the opinion that its continuance is simply to supply the rebel army with subsistence; that it is of no earthly service to the United States, but an irreparable injury, and that it does but little if any good to the inhabitants for whose benefit, to a certain extent, it has been authorized.

These opinions of military men, which have been referred to, have been fully confirmed by the opinion of naval officers whose testimony has been had.

The committee recommend the repeal of the eighth section of the act approved July 2, 1864, which authorized the Secretary of the Treasury, with the approval of the President, to appoint agents to purchase for the United States any products of States declared to be in insurrection, with a proviso saving the rights of all parties where actual purchase and delivery of such products have been made by such agents. Congress contemplated the purchase of such products, that the same should be forwarded for markets and paid for out of the sales effected. It is obvious that a provision should be made to save the rights of the government and seller when the contract for the purchase has been consummated and delivery of the products made to the agent.

These licenses or permits given by the agents to persons not owners or sellers of such products, to enter the States in insurrection to bring out such products, are not deemed entitled to be considered as contracts of sale within the meaning of the act, are obnoxious to the mischief imputed to the traffic, and are not of a character to require especial protection.

The committee therefore recommend the passage of the accompanying bill.