

CURTIS' COTTON CRIMES.

The Cotton Speculations as Developed in the Trials Before General McDowell.

We have several times alluded to the cotton speculations of Gen. CURTIS, an abolition General who had his Headquarters at Helena, Arkansas, last year. To steal cotton and negroes, his whole army was for the season put in requisition, and thousands of his soldiers sacrificed in the swamps and morasses in the hot and unhealthy season of the year. Many others deserted and subjected themselves to the penalties rather than be thus used to fill the pockets of their Generals and their copartners, civilians, many of them from this city, with permits in their pockets from the Treasury Department at Washington!

The old regular army officers, such as Gen. STEELE, for whose honor, honesty and soldier like deportment we can vouch, as we became well acquainted with him during the Indian troubles in Minnesota in 1857, while they felt compelled to submit to the Treasury orders at Washington, would not submit to the use being made of the army, and more especially when he discovered that Gen. CURTIS and others were partners in these speculations. He was ordered off by CURTIS, to get him out of the way, but this did not prevent him "blowing" on them, and the War Department was compelled to institute an investigation.

In the meantime General CURTIS was removed to St. Louis, where the investigation was mainly to be carried on. Among his first acts, knowing us well and knowing that we were beyond the fear of such official speculators and were ever ready to expose them to the indignant frowns of the honest portion of community, he went to work to suppress our paper in Missouri. Too guilty and cowardly to issue the orders himself he gave the work into the hands of his petty and despicable underlings, called "Governor GAMBLE'S Home Militia." They did their work well according to their plan, and to cover over the act as decently as possible, started out with pronouncing our paper "disloyal," and our subscribers "secessionists."

But this did not stop our paper and then the still brighter idea was hit upon to mob and destroy our office. This was easily got under way. There was one company of the 2d Ohio Cavalry then at Camp Chase, made up mostly of John Brownites from the Western Reserve, who had had one summer's training under the Kansas Jayhawkers, and our city was the headquarters of the CURTIS & Co. cotton speculators, and the two negro organs of this city, the *Journal* and *Fact*, ready for any dirty paragraph to facilitate the onslaught, as well as members of the secret and oath bound order of the knights of "Gum, Tath and Myrrh."

The *Fact* was rather a dependant instrument of the State House clique, but the whole tribe around the *Journal* were in some way in pay of the government, and in cahoot with the speculators. One of the Missouri hounds came on here to make the matter certain and joined the Second Ohio Cavalry and no doubt conveyed the pleasant information that *The Crisis* office must be destroyed! The result is known. They caught us from home—and it was the only time we had been out of the city at night for months, and smashed up our editorial rooms; destroying, as we have ascertained from volumes, books from our library, &c., &c., at the least one thousand dollars worth, but did not get at our types, which were in another building, nor our subscription books, which were rescued, and hence did not stop our paper a day nor an hour. Falling in this, General CURTIS renewed his labors in Missouri, and before he was found guilty and dismissed from his command, he had pretty well cleaned our paper out of the whole State of Missouri, and thus cheated our subscribers out of their papers for which they had paid in advance, but which we hope at some future day to supply.

In a mass of testimony which would fill a large volume, all going to criminate the military officers, and General CURTIS in particular, we introduce the testimony of General STEELE, now a prominent and brave officer before Vicksburg, under General GRANT. It will here be seen why General CURTIS and his cotton men were so anxious to get all Democratic papers, which had the spirit and independence to expose their corruption, out of the way!

Of late there was another motive, and General BURMAN, who we presume never saw a copy of our paper, was urged to stop *The Crisis* at once, as it was terribly "disloyal" and dangerous to the morale of the army! A new and very different set of cotton operators had been formed in this city, and included high attaches of the Government among its numbers, and we had given intimations that they were a treasonable set of men, carrying goods contraband of war to the Rebels, by way of Matamoras and through Texas. All the other papers of this city were silent, or could be silenced, and some were their apologists, and their only danger was in *The Crisis*. To suppress that was therefore a dire necessity, for an exposure was sure death to the "loyal" speculation of furnishing the Confederates

with arms and ammunition by "loyal" citizens of Columbus to shoot our boys who had been so patriotically urged into the army by these very same men who were now about to make "piles of money," in furnishing the enemy the necessary implements to shoot them! This was all "loyal" on their part, but on the part of *The Crisis* in exposing them, why that was the *ranked treason*! This is a very pretty picture of "loyalty," but the men engaged are "big Government bugs" and will, of course, escape in some shape or other. One fact for a "loyalist" paper was peculiar! At a moment, when a general exposure and punishment seemed inevitable, their special "organ" here—the *Ohio State Journal*—turned state's evidence, and admitted—poor, innocent, conscience-stricken fellow—that he had known for "three weeks" that an agent of JEFF. DAVIS was here, tempting, like the serpent tempted one in the garden of Eden, with profits so large that some of our citizens, the *Journal's* friends, "ate of the forbidden fruit." But more of this at another time.

Some men well known in Columbus figure in this testimony of Major General STEELE, favorably or unfavorably, the reader must be the judge. General CURTIS did not stop at cotton alone, as his appetite for other people's property was sharpened, but he dipped into *horses*, *buggies*, and one of the witnesses testifies into pianos, also, if not silver-ware, knives, forks, plate and household furniture generally, and *negroes* in particular. The poor negro is made to cover a world of sin:

The Military Court of Inquiry.

Correspondence of the St. Louis Republican.

MEMPHIS, TENN., MAY 13.

After examining witnesses at Milliken's Bend, Lake Providence and Helena, the Court of Inquiry returned to this city on board the steamer Champion, and resumed its investigation here on Friday last. A large number of witnesses have been examined, and some of the testimony is highly important when taken in connection with the evidence of certain officers who were before the Court at St. Louis. As soon as the investigation closes here I will send you a full report of all the evidence. Below I give you the testimony of Gen. Steele and Capt. Padlock, who were examined at Milliken's Bend, May 4th.

TESTIMONY OF MAJOR GEN. STEELE.

Major General F. Steele, being called and duly sworn, testified as follows:

Q. State, if you please, everything you know, and as fully as you can, concerning the connection of any officer in the military service of the United States in any manner, either directly or indirectly, with the traffic in cotton on the Mississippi river, or its tributaries during this war. A. I cannot say I know anything of my own observation; however, I have good reason to believe that certain officers in the military service of the United States have been interested in cotton speculations; I can mention the names of some who have been interested in this traffic, if I have been rightly informed; it is my opinion that Major General Samuel R. Curtis has been largely interested by way of partnership, or through his agents, in cotton speculations; my reasons for believing so are as follows: I was generally believed by officers, and everybody else at Helena, that Gen. Curtis was interested in this traffic; I was told by Gen. C. E. Hovey, late Brigadier General, that Gen. Curtis was interested in this business; two ladies at Helena told me the same thing; Mrs. Craig, who had cotton to sell herself, told me that Gen. Curtis was interested with—I think she said—Smith & Northrup; Mrs. Matt. Ward also told me Gen. Curtis was interested; Col. Moore, of Helena, and Mr. Coolidge, of the same place, told me that he was interested; I was several times in Gen. Curtis' office—certainly twice—and I saw his table covered with money—greenbacks and gold; he was busy with persons in the office, and all of them were talking about cotton—the lot of cotton and that lot of cotton; I also saw a note, written by General Curtis, to negro Sam, about cotton; I have heard other people, citizens and officers, speak of transactions of this sort. The name of these people I do not now recollect, but I know them by sight; I was once in General Curtis' office when the subject of cotton speculation was introduced; some members of General Curtis' staff were present—I think Major McKimney and Captain Noble; I denounced the cotton speculations on the part of officers, and said it was demoralizing to the service, and that any officer commanding an army who engaged in it, degraded his position—that if an officer wished to enter into competition with Jews and speculators, he ought to resign his commission in the army first; Captain Noble remarked: "I told the General so in the first place." I know of certain cotton having been hauled away by what was called the Jerome Fillow; I was told by Colonel Bussey, who had placed a guard over said cotton, that it was hauled away by General Curtis' teams of white mules; they were known throughout the army; what was done with it, I don't know; but Colonel Bussey told me himself, and Mr. Fillow also confirmed it. C. E. Hovey, late Brigadier General, was generally understood, was directly or indirectly engaged in the cotton trade; indeed, he never denied it, but he told me that he had never purchased a bale of cotton himself. I heard General Hovey say that his Adjutant, an honest person interested with him, purchased a lot of cotton; if I mistake not, on the Matt. Ward plantation; that this cotton was paid for and hauled to the river at Old Town; that while lying there General Curtis "stole it from him," to use his own expression. General Hovey made no secret of being interested in cotton. He talked about it in the presence of officers, and said that whatever he did was done honestly and fairly. And I believe that nobody, who knows General Hovey, will doubt his statement. I received a telegraphic communication from the Commander-in-chief of the army, Gen. Halleck, while I was in command of the army at Helena, directing me to seize all the cotton which might be found in the possession of officers or soldiers. I told General Hovey the first time I saw him after that, that I had received such a communication. He was then in command of a detachment at Old Town. I have been told, and believe it to be true, that he (Hovey) had nothing more to do with cotton from that time. Lieut. Murdock, of the Fifteenth Ohio Battery, as I was informed by himself and by others, had permission from Gen. Curtis to pick and bale cotton on a certain plantation. I think this was called the Johnson plantation. He purchased the necessary supplies, on that permit, for the carrying on of this operation, and got permission from Gen. Curtis to take these supplies to the plantation. While he was carrying on his operation, he was arrested by General Curtis, confined to the limits of his camp, and the cotton, which he had partly

prepared for the market, was taken by other parties, who were said to have been authorized by General Curtis. Dr. Barnes (late of the army)—I think of the Eleventh Wisconsin—told me that he knew about this transaction. I have been told by officers that Capt. Beardslee, of the 13th Illinois infantry, had in his possession several orders directing him to cross the Mississippi river at Helena and guard certain lots of cotton, which orders he had executed, staying with this cotton night and day until it was taken to the Mississippi river and put on board a steamboat and shipped North. I did not see the orders, but was told they came from headquarters at Helena. I think about the month of July last, 1862. I did not understand whether they came from the headquarters of the post or the headquarters of the army of the South-west. The headquarters of the post were commanded by Gen. Washburne, and the headquarters of the army of the South-west by Gen. Curtis. I do not think of any other persons whom I can name as authority for the conclusions to which I have been brought in regard to cotton speculations. Q. In reference to the connection of General Curtis with the subject of traffic in cotton, it is understood that all you know of your own knowledge is, what you saw in his office on the occasion which you have stated? A. His note to the negro Sam and any connection which he may have had by reason of his staff train drawing cotton into Helena. That is all I know of my own personal observation. Q. Can you now state the purport of this note to the negro Sam? A. As near as I recollect, it contained directions to Sam in regard to picking and baling cotton on the Johnson plantation. I am not absolutely certain what; the note, however, can be obtained. Dr. Barnes has the note, and a copy of it, he told me, he had sent to the War Department. Q. What is Captain Noble, or where is he? A. He is now a Major in one of the cavalry regiments—Third Iowa cavalry. He was Judge Advocate of General Curtis' staff at one time. Q. Have you any reason to believe that General Curtis had any connection with the cotton which was drawn in his staff trains? A. What I have stated is all I know of my own knowledge of any connection General Curtis had with this cotton. Q. Where were you last summer personally? A. At Helena. Q. During what months? A. We arrived there on the 13th of July, or about that time. Q. Did you arrive in company with General Curtis? A. I arrived a day or two previous. I think he arrived the next day after I did. Q. Did you know anything in relation to the Jerome Fillow cotton other than you have testified here, or anything in reference to the General Fillow cotton? A. Nothing except from rumor. Q. What do you recollect concerning a lot of cotton claimed by one Grant, taken at Coldwater, which was brought to Helena, amounting to some three hundred and odd bales, marked C. B. A.? A. I received a letter from some one in Mississippi, whose name I do not now recollect, telling me that a certain lot of cotton marked C. B. A., and another lot belonging to private citizens, had been taken away from Mississippi and brought up to Helena in a steamboat. I think he stated in a letter that soldiers were employed as a guard to this cotton, and that it was hauled in to the river by government teams. I immediately gave orders that Capt. Winslow, then Chief Quartermaster at Helena, should seize this cotton, and hold it subject to the orders of the government. Capt. Winslow reported that he had received my orders in the premises. About that time I received orders from Gen. Curtis to proceed to Pilot Knob with a part of the forces at Helena. I went on board of the wharfbark, where Capt. Winslow had his quarters; for the purpose of taking a steamer to Cairo. Hon. Jno. S. Phelps, provisional Governor of Arkansas, and myself, were going to Cairo on business connected with this order for me to go to Pilot Knob. I saw Capt. Winslow on board the wharfbark; he asked me what would be done with the lot of cotton in question. I replied that I supposed it would be sold for the benefit of the Government. Judge Baker, of St. Louis, was present and heard this conversation. While I was absent at Cairo, Brig. General Eugene Carr, being in command of the post at Helena, Captain Winslow, for some cause better known to himself than to me, released this cotton. He had no authority from me to release it. Q. Were there any of your staff officers left behind at Helena, who had any instructions in connection with this subject, and to take any action in relation to it? A. Two of my staff officers were left at Helena, but they had no instructions in regard to this cotton, or any other cotton. Q. Did they ever report to you having taken any part in this matter? A. Capt. Padlock informed me that Captain Winslow had released this cotton, and came to him telling him he had authority from me to release it, and asked for permission to ship it up the river, which Captain Padlock reluctantly gave him, as he informed me. Q. Did you ever see personally any of the claimants of this cotton? N. Y. A. I don't know who claimed the cotton. Q. Did Dr. O'Reilly ever speak to you concerning this cotton? A. Never, to my recollection. I don't think he ever spoke to me on the subject. Q. Do you know of any connection he had with it? A. I do not. Q. Or of any part he had in obtaining its release? A. I know nothing at all except by rumor. I would like to state here that there was a letter addressed to me by a party at Memphis, but it was not received until after I left. I left on the 28th of the month, and this was received on the 30th; and it was published in all the papers as being a letter addressed to me, although I never saw it until I saw it in the papers first addressed to me. After I left Helena I never took command again, and never saw the records again, and the first I saw of this letter was in the papers. The purport of this letter was in regard to this lot of cotton. Q. Who was it from? A. I don't remember. It was certified by one of General Curtis' clerks who was left—that this letter was received on a certain day—the 30th of September. Q. Did General Hovey, so far as you know, or believe, have any connection with this cotton? A. I don't believe he did. Q. Did he have any interest in it as far as you know? A. I don't believe he had any interest in it. He told me he had none. I talked with him about this cotton. I have confidence in what he said to me. Q. Have you any knowledge or recollection of a lot of cotton taken from Wisconsin and McNeill's plantations, somewhere between the 29th of July and the 1st part of August, and brought to Helena, which cotton was taken under General Hovey's command, and shipped on the City of Alton to Helena, and said to have been sent to the Quartermaster at that point? A. I don't recollect anything about that lot of cotton or any such lot of cotton. If I heard of it I have forgotten it. The names are not familiar to me, with any cotton transaction. Q. Did General Hovey ever admit to you that he had trafficked or traded, or been interested in cotton? A. He admitted to me that he had been interested in cotton through an agent. He, at all events, has admitted to me that he had been interested in cotton. Q. Did you understand when it was that he lost this cotton through General Curtis taking it away, or "stealing it," as he expressed it? A. I think it was in the month of August, 1862. I am not positive as to the date. Q. What, if anything, do you know of a party of negroes taken from McGee's plantation, said to have been taken in pursuance of your order, and which were afterwards returned to that plantation on the steamer Itasca, sometime in August or July of last year? A. I have been told that certain negroes were taken from McGee's plantation for fatigue purposes, with the promise to Mr. McGee, who claimed their services, that they should be returned if they desired it. Q. What connection, if any, as far as you know or believe, had General Hovey with this transaction? A. I know nothing of this transaction except from

hearsay. General Hovey has spoken to me about it himself. Q. What did he ever say to you as far as he himself was concerned, concerning this transaction? A. He told me what I have just stated, that the negroes were taken for fatigue purposes, with the promise to the owner that they should be returned if they desired it. Q. Did he admit that he had any connection with it in any manner, shape or form? A. Well, that was what he told me, I inferred that he was in command of the party, that took them. I inferred it although I don't know that he told me so. Q. What did you understand from his own admissions of his co-soldiers, if he had any, with returning these negroes? A. I understood him that he was on board the boat which took them back at the time of their being returned, but that he did not know that the negroes were on board. I am not certain that General Hovey was on board. Q. Did you ever learn that the return of these negroes was in any way made as a consideration for cotton from that plantation? A. I believe that to be a slander. I heard of it, but believe it to be a slander. I might state that some parties came to me, and asked permission of me for certain negroes to go on board the boat to McGee's plantation; that I said I would give no such permission, but that if the negroes wished to go I had no objection, but that they should not be taken against their consent. Q. Did you understand that there was any objection on the part of the negroes to returning to McGee's plantation? A. I did not. I never heard anything further of it until I saw it in the papers that General Hovey had traded them for cotton. Q. Do you know whether Lieutenant Murdock received the permit that you have referred to from General Curtis? A. Lieutenant Murdock submitted some papers to me. I think there was a permit from him to collect this cotton. I won't be positive about it. I heard so much about it, and saw so many papers about it, that I really don't know whether he showed me the permit, but I am quite certain I saw the permit, from Gen. Curtis. He made a written complaint to me on the subject after Gen. Curtis left. Gen. Curtis left him still in arrest, confined to his camp, and he made a written complaint to me on the subject. He thought he had been treated with injustice, and made the statement to me, in order that I should release him. Q. What do you recollect of a lot of cotton on the Minnehaha on November 30th, coming in charge of the gunboat Bragg, and which you directed to be released? A. I never directed any cotton to be released on the Minnehaha, or any other boat. I recollect what you refer to however. The Captain of the Minnehaha (his name is White) came to me at my headquarters at Helena, I think, in the latter part of October, 1862, and told me that his boat had been seized by one of the gunboats, and that Captain Bishop was going to take his boat to Memphis in arrest. He wished me to render him some assistance in getting it released. I told him I had nothing to do with it; the boat had been seized by the navy. He then asked me if I would give him a letter to Captain Bishop, requesting that he might be permitted to go by himself to Memphis, where he would report himself in arrest with his boat. I told him I knew of Captain Bishop, and would give him such a letter as I thought would be proper. I did give him a letter to Captain Bishop, saying that Captain White was a very good sort of a man, (I think those were the very words I used), and that if he was consistent with his duty and power, he would grant Captain White the favor which he asked. That is all the connection I had with the Minnehaha and with the lot of cotton in question. Q. Do you know if General Hovey had any instructions from the War Department, to take cotton on Government account, or did you ever give him any instructions yourself, or transmit him such instructions from your superiors? A. No sir. I don't know that he had any such instructions. He told me he had understood that instructions had been received, I think from the Treasury Department, calling upon officers to render all the facilities proper for getting the cotton out of the country. Q. For what purpose did you understand Lieutenant Beardslee was guarding this cotton—on public or private account? A. It was not stated whether it was public or private account. The inference was that it was shipped on private account. It was spoken of as though it was a private matter, because it was shipped from the other side of the river by steamboats North. Q. What, if anything, do you know of any officer in the military service of the United States having been engaged, or in any way whatever concerned, in any other species of traffic besides that of cotton in the Mississippi Valley during the war? A. I do not recollect of any instance. I know in general terms that officers did buy horses and mules and sent them North, but I suppose this was simply for their own use, what we usually understood by trade. I don't know of officers having been engaged in any other traffic. Q. What if anything, do you know of officers having converted to their own use property taken from the inhabitants of the country through which the army marched? A. I know some instances where officers did take property from the people and convert it to their own use; I was informed on that point the Doc and Regimental Quartermaster of the Eleventh Wisconsin infantry, which was then in my division, had put horses and mules on board of steamboats and shipped them North; I gave orders to have the horses and mules taken off the boat and taken possession of by the Division Quartermaster of my division; Dr. Strong was the surgeon, and I think the name of the Quartermaster was Moore or Myers. Q. Did they take them off? A. There is no doubt about their having put these animals on board, because I saw them arrested, and they apologized to me for doing so, saying it was a common thing. They said General Curtis had done the same thing as Captain Fuller, and the Quartermaster, and my Waggonmaster; Thomas Bakley could testify to the fact that the Doc and Bakley took the horses and mules off the boat. Q. Do you recollect any other instance of this character, such as the seizure of sewing machines, buggies, books, carriages or silver plate? A. I know of horses and carriages having been taken; I don't know of anything else of my own knowledge, except some cattle that we captured that were shipped North. Shortly after General Curtis left Helena, Lieut. Guyley, Gen. Curtis' Staff Quartermaster, who was left behind, came to me and said that he had received orders from Gen. Curtis to ship a new buggy that was at Castle Hindman, the headquarters of the army, and asked me for a permit to ship this buggy. I told him to go to Capt. Padlock, who would give him a permit to ship the buggy North. The next day Major Walker, I think, of the First Kansas Cavalry, came to me and complained that Lieut. Guyley had shipped a buggy North which he (Walker) had borrowed from a gentleman to carry a sick officer in. I told him it was shipped by Gen. Curtis' order. He (Walker) said he was responsible for the buggy. I know that there were two captured horses kept in Gen. Curtis' stable. One of them was a gray stallion, a very fast pacer, which was called Gen. Curtis' horse, and which Gen. Curtis rode himself. He was captured from some Doctor in the neighborhood of Batesville. There was another gray horse—a pacer or racker. It was said to have belonged to Col. Harris, of the rebel army, who was killed on this horse at Shiloh, and the horse sent to his widow at Clarendon, Ark. The horse was taken out of the stable at Harris' plantation, while General Curtis' headquarters were at that place. This horse was ridden by Major Curtis, generally. I give this statement concerning the disposition of the horse having been sent to Harris' widow as common report, but not of my own knowledge. Q. Are the other statements made in this connection of your own knowledge, and if not how did you come in possession of these facts? A. Major

Curtis told me himself that that horse had belonged to Colonel Harris, and that he was killed on him at Shiloh—or words to that effect. Q. How in reference to the other horse, the one told me he was a captured horse, one day when that Gen. Curtis said he was going to have him appraised. Q. Do you know whether or not his appraisement was ever made? A. I don't know. Q. Or whether the horse was ever accounted for to the Government? A. I don't know that it was. I never heard that it was. Q. Do you know what became of the horse? A. Gen. Curtis had him the last I heard. I heard this indirectly talked about in the army. Q. Did you ever hear that these horses were not accounted for to the Government? A. I heard insinuations to that effect, but no report that I rely upon. I know of numerous other instances in my own mind of carriages and horses having been appropriated, but I cannot swear to them positively. Q. You are to be understood that these carriages and horses were appropriated without orders from competent authority. A. Yes sir; taken from the people in the country and appropriated to private use. Q. Do you know anything of a lot of silver plate having been taken or appropriated to the private use of any officer? A. I know nothing about that. Q. What do you know of permits having been given by any military officer to trade in cotton? A. General Curtis gave permits to trade in cotton; I gave permits myself to trade in cotton; the Board of Trade also gave permits. Q. Have you any record of the permits you gave? A. I don't know that there was any record kept of them. I never gave any officer or soldier a permit to trade in cotton. Q. Can you state to what extent permits were given by you, or to whom, and at what time, and the circumstances connected with the granting of such permits? A. I gave orders to my staff officers to give permits to such citizens as came with good testimonials to purchase cotton. No one without testimonials from some responsible person could get permits. I did not give the permits granted in my name. Some were granted by my staff officers under my general directions. Q. Were any restrictions imposed in your directions to your staff officers to grant these permits other than that they should be given as persons who would bring sufficient testimonials as to their character? A. It was stated in the permits that they were not to purchase anything of persons in the military service of the United States, or negroes. Q. Was there any limit as to the amount of cotton, the place, or the person from whom they should buy it? A. No sir. I was understood, within the limits of my own command. I might state here that I was opposed to the entire business of cotton, but it had been sanctioned by General Curtis, and orders came from the commanding officer to facilitate the getting out of cotton. Q. Whence did these orders come? A. From General Curtis was in command. Q. From whom? A. From the War Department; it was generally understood. This thing had been initiated by General Curtis, and went on with it as I found it, except that I prohibited the purchase of cotton from military persons and negroes. General Curtis gave permits to officers to purchase cotton. He gave a permit to an officer of my staff to purchase cotton—Capt. Hutchison. He came to my Adjutant General and spoke to him on the subject, and I told him that no officer on my staff should purchase a pound of cotton with my consent, and he did not believe. Q. Did you see the permit given to your staff officer? A. I did not. Here is the Adjutant General present now, and he probably saw it. Q. What, if anything, do you know of any officer in the military service of the United States having used himself or permitted the use of the Government transportation or other public property for private purposes? A. When they had been at Helena about ten days, Judge Baker of St. Louis came to Helena and asked to let him have some teams to haul in cotton which he had purchased three or four miles out of town. This was the first that I heard of the cotton speculation. I replied to Judge Baker that I would not take the responsibility of allowing Government transportation to be used for such a purpose, although the exercise would be of service to the mules, as they had had no exercise for days. He then wanted me to go with him and introduce him to General Curtis. I introduced him to General Curtis, and told the General that Judge Baker had made a contract for some cotton teams to haul in, as it was the only place where he could get for securing the cotton. I told him that the teams were doing nothing, and that the exercise would be of service to them. General Curtis told me to let Judge Baker have them. I did so. Q. Did Baker ever make any conditions for the use of the teams? A. Not to my knowledge. Soon after that I saw Government transportation hauling cotton from almost every direction. I had frequent applications to be allowed the transportation of my headquarters to be used for this purpose, but I invariably refused. I am now by whose permission this transportation was used, and I am not aware that any transportation belonging to my division was ever used except this single instance. I know that some regulations regard to the transportation of private property on chartered transports, returning up the river without load. I never changed any regulation in this respect made by Gen. Curtis while I was in command. I can't speak of any particular instance in which Government transports were used in this way. Q. Do you know of any case where any captured in battle have been converted to private use? A. I do not recollect of any instance. Q. Do you know of any case where any officer in the military service of the United States has received any compensation, benefit, gratuity, interest or claim, in any way, direct or indirect, on account of the official act of said officer? A. I do not know of any of my own knowledge. Q. Have you stated fully everything you know concerning this matter under investigation? A. Everything which occurred to me at this