



Oct. 2, 1861.

Your aid is asked in accomplishing the object of the appeal below. It is known that the rebel army is largely supplied with clothing, arms, saddles, and even food and ammunition, by forced and voluntary contributions from the deluded people of the South. It is not right that the army of the nation should be required in the least to depend upon such ill-assorted, uncertain, and hazardous supplies. But whenever it can be safely encouraged, aided, and strengthened at all, by voluntary gifts direct from the people, it is fitting and right that such gifts should be cheerfully and generously offered. It is hoped that the response to this invitation will prove that the heart of the people is with the army in its defence of our nationality. There is not a man, woman, or child who cannot do something to testify of a loyal disposition. There are thousands who are not fit to enter the field, who cannot offer pecuniary aid, who yet are influenced by as patriotic an impulse as those who are in arms. A little concert of action, and moderate contributions from those who have a superfluity, will afford to such an opportunity of serving their country as truly and as effectually as if they subjected themselves to the hardships and privations and dangers of the campaign. Zeal, and skill, and success in this field of duty as truly testify of patriotism as ardor and sagacity and victory on the field of battle. It is not to be concealed that the occasion is one demanding the most earnest exertion of every patriot. Every ounce that can be added to the weight of the national forces, morally or physically, is wanted.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW. OLMSTED, *Sec'y.*

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The Sanitary Commission is doing a work of great humanity, and of direct practical value to the nation, in this time of its trial. It is entitled to the gratitude and the confidence of the people, and I trust it will be generously supported. There is no agency through which voluntary offerings of patriotism can be more effectively made.

**A. LINCOLN.**

WINFIELD SCOTT.

WASHINGTON, *September 30, 1861.*

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## TO THE LOYAL WOMEN OF AMERICA.

TREASURY BUILDING, *Washington, October 1, 1861.*

### COUNTRYWOMEN :

You are called upon to help take care of our sick and wounded soldiers and sailors.

It is true that government undertakes their care, but all experience, in every other country as well as our own, shows that government alone cannot completely provide for the humane treatment of those for whom the duty of providing, as well as possible, is acknowledged. Even at this period of the war, and with a much smaller proportion of sick and wounded than is to be expected, there is much suffering, and dear lives are daily lost because government cannot put the right thing, in the right place, at the right time. No other government has ever provided as well for its soldiers, so soon after the breaking out of a war of this magnitude, and yet it remains true

that there is much suffering, and that death unnecessarily occurs from the imperfectness of the government arrangements. This is partly owing to the ignorance, partly to the indolence, and partly to the inhumanity and knavery of various agents of government, as well as to the organic defects of the system. But humanity to the sick must, to a certain extent, be sacrificed, under government, to the purpose of securing the utmost possible strength and efficiency to the military force.

Whatever aid is to be given from without, must still be administered systematically, and in perfect subordination to the general system of administration of the government. To hold its agents in any degree responsible for the duties with which they are charged, government must protect them from the interference of irresponsible persons.

Hence, an intermediate agency becomes necessary, which, without taking any of the duties of the regular agents of government out of their hands, can, nevertheless, offer to them means of administering to the wants of the sick and wounded much beyond what could be obtained within the arbitrary limits of supply established by government, and in strict accordance with the regulations necessary for maintaining a proper accountability to it.

The Sanitary Commission, a volunteer and unpaid bureau of the War Department of the government, constitutes such an agency.

Under its present organization, every camp and military hospital, from the Atlantic to the Plains, is regularly visited, its wants ascertained, and whenever it is right, proper, and broadly merciful, supplied directly by the Commission to the extent of its ability. For the means of maintaining this organization, and of exercising, through it, a direct influence upon the officers and men favorably to a prudent guard against the dangers of disease to which they are subject, which is its first and principal object, the Commission is wholly dependent upon voluntary contributions to its treasury. For the means of administering to the needs of the sick and wounded, the Commission relies upon gift-offerings of their own handiwork from the loyal women of the land. It receives not one dollar from government.

A large proportion of the gifts of the people to the army hitherto have been wasted, or worse than wasted, because directed without knowledge or discrimination. It is only through the Commission that such gifts can reach the army with a reasonable assurance that they will be received where they will do the most good and the least harm.

The Sanitary Commission has established its right to claim the confidence of the nation. The Secretary of War and Major General McClellan have both recently acknowledged, in the warmest terms, the advantages which have already resulted from its labors, and the discretion and skill with which they have been directed. Its advice has been freely taken, and, in several important particulars, acted upon, favorably to the health of the army, by the government. There has scarcely been a company of volunteers in the field, with regard to which some special defect, error, or negligence, endangering health, has not been pointed out by its agents, and its removal or abatement effected. There has not been a single instance in which its services or advice, offered through all its various agencies, have been repulsed; not a single complaint has been received of its embarrassing any officer in his duty, or of its interfering with discipline in the slightest degree. Its labors have, to this time, been chiefly directed to induce precautions against a certain class of diseases which have scourged almost every modern European army, which decimated our army in Mexico, and which, at one time, rendered nearly half of one of our armies in the war of 1812 unfit for service. It is a ground for national gratitude that our present armies have passed through the most trying season of the year wonderfully escaping this danger. That there are grander causes for this than the labors of the Commission cannot be doubted, but that, among human agencies, a large share of credit for it should be given to those labors, it is neither arrogant nor unreasonable to assert. In this assurance, what contribution that has hitherto been made to the treasury or the store of the Commission is not received back again ten fold in value?

More than sixty thousand articles have been received by the Commission from their patriotic countrywomen. It is not known that one sent to them has failed to reach its destination, nor has one been received that cannot be accounted for. It is confidently believed that there has not been of late a single case of serious illness in the army of the Potomac, nor wherever the organization of the Commission has been completely extended, in which some of these articles have not administered to the relief of suffering.

The experience of the Commission has so well acquainted it with the earnest desire of the women of the North to be allowed to work in the national cause, that it is deemed unnecessary to do more than announce that there is a real and immediate occasion for their best exertions, and to indicate convenient arrangements for the end in view.

It is, therefore, suggested that societies be at once formed in every neighborhood where they are not already established, and that existing societies of suitable organization, as Dorcas Societies, Sewing Societies, Reading Clubs, and Sociables, devote themselves, for a time, to the sacred service of their country; that energetic and respectable committees be appointed to call from house to house and store to store, to obtain contributions in materials suitable to be made up, or money for the purchase of such materials; that collections be made in churches and schools and factories and shops, for the same purpose; that contribution boxes be placed in post offices, newspaper offices, railroad and telegraph offices, public houses, steamboats and ferry boats, and in all other suitable places, labelled "FOR OUR SICK AND WOUNDED;" and that all loyal women meet at such convenient times and places as may be agreed upon in each neighborhood or social circle, to work upon the materials which shall be so procured.

Every woman in the country can, at the least, knit a pair of woollen stockings, or, if not, can purchase them. In each town let there be concert on this subject, taking care that three or four sizes are provided. Fix upon a place for receiving, and a date when a package shall be transmitted, and send it as soon as possible to the most convenient of the depots of the Commission.

#### DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES MOST WANTED.

BLANKETS for single beds;

QUILTS, of cheap material, about seven feet long by fifty inches wide;

KNIT WOOLLEN SOCKS;

WOOLLEN or CANTON FLANNEL BED-GOWNS, WRAPPERS, UNDERSHIRTS, and DRAWERS;

SMALL HAIR and FEATHER PILLOWS and CUSHIONS FOR WOUNDED LIMBS;

SLIPPERS.

Delicacies for the sick—such as farina, arrow-root, corn-starch, cocoa, condensed milk, and nicely dried fruit—can be advantageously distributed by the Commission. Jellies should be carefully prepared to avoid fermentation, and most securely packed. Many articles of clothing have been injured, in packages heretofore sent the Commission, by the breaking of jars and bottles. Over every vessel containing jelly, strew white sugar to the depth of half an inch, and paste stout paper (not brandied) over the mouth. Jellies sent in stone bottles arrive in the best condition, and there is no difficulty in removing the contents for use. Every bottle, &c., containing jelly should be labelled. Aromatic spirits and waters; light easy chairs for convalescents; nicely made splints for wounded limbs; chequer and backgammon boards, and like articles for the amusement of wounded men; books, for desultory reading, and magazines, especially if illustrated, will be useful.

All articles should be closely packed in wooden boxes, or in very strongly wrapped bales, and clearly directed. On the top of the contents of each box, under the cover, a list of what it contains should be placed; a duplicate of this list should be sent by mail. Arrangements for free transportation should be made, or freight paid in advance. (The express companies will generally convey goods for this purpose, at a reduction on the usual rates.) Packages may be directed and sent, as is most economical, from any point, to any of the addresses below.—("For the U. S. Sanitary Commission:")

Office of the Woman's Central Relief Association, Cooper Union, No. 10, Third Avenue, New York;

Care of Samuel and William Welsh, No. 218 South Delaware Avenue, Philadelphia;

Care of Dr. S. G. Howe, 20 Broomfield street, Boston;

Care of Dr. W. H. Mussey, Cincinnati;

Care of Dr. C. D. Griswold, Wheeling, Virginia;

Care of F. L. Olmsted, 211 F street, Washington, D. C.

Acknowledgments will be made to all those who forward parcels, and a final report to the Secretary of War will be published, recording the names of all contributors, so far as they shall be known to the Commission.

HENRY W. BELLOWS, D. D., *President.*

PROF. A. D. BACHE, L. L. D.

GEORGE T. STRONG.

FRED. LAW OLMSTED.

GEORGE W. CULLUM, U. S. A.

ALEXANDER E. SHIRAS, U. S. A.

ROBERT C. WOOD, M. D., U. S. A.,

WILLIAM H. VAN BUREN, M. D.

Prof. WOLCOTT GIBBS, M. D.

ELISHA HARRIS, M. D.

SAMUEL G. HOWE, M. D.

CORNELIUS R. AGNEW, M. D.

J. S. NEWBERRY, M. D.

HORACE BINNEY, JR.

Rt. Rev. THOS. M. CLARK, D. D.

*Commissioners under authority of the Secretary of War.*

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“The troops in the field need blankets. The supply in the country is exhausted. Men spring to arms faster than the mills can manufacture, and large quantities ordered from abroad have not yet arrived.

“To relieve pressing necessities, contributions are invited from the surplus stores of families.

“The regulation army blanket weighs five pounds, but good, sound woollen blankets weighing not less than four pounds will be gladly received at the offices of the United States Quartermasters in the principal towns of the loyal States, and applied to the use of the troops.

“To such as have blankets which they can spare, but cannot afford to give, the full market value of suitable blankets, delivered as above, will be paid.

“M. C. MEIGS,

*Quartermaster General United States.*

“NEW YORK, Oct. 1, 1861.”

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Every blanket or quilt sent to the Sanitary Commission is equivalent in value to the nation to a blanket supplied as above requested by the Quartermaster General. The hospitals must be provided for as well as the camps.

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,

*Secretary.*

WASHINGTON, October 2d, 1861.

