



Smithsonian Institution

Freedmen's Bureau

Registers and Letters Received by the Commissioner, Letters Received, Entered in Register 6, E, May–Aug. 1866

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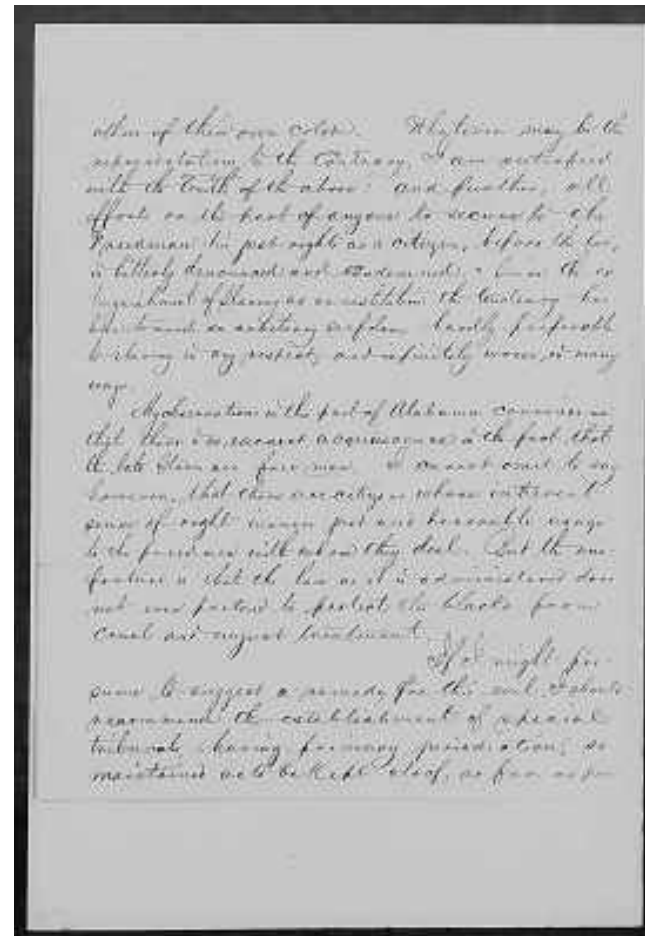
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other of their own color. Whatever may be the representation to the contrary, I am satisfied with the truth of the above: and further, all efforts on the part of anyone to secure to the Freedmen his just rights as a citizen, before the law, is bitterly denounced and condemned. Since the extinguishment of slavery as an institution the tendency has been towards an arbitrary serfdom, hardly preferable to slavery in any respect, and infinitely worse in many ways.

My observations in this part of Alabama convince me that there is no earnest acquiescence in the fact that the late slaves are free men. I cannot omit to say however, that there are citizens whose inherent sense of right insures just and honorable usage to the freedmen with whom they deal. But the misfortune is that the law as it is administered does not even pretend to protect the blacks from cruel and unjust treatment.

If I might presume to suggest a remedy for the evil, I should recommend the establishment of special tribunals, having primary jurisdiction, so maintained as to be kept aloof, as far as possible



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