In “Spying on the South,” you read about Mary Richards, a young black woman who was a Union spy in Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War. After the Union victory, Richards gave talks in New York City describing her adventures.

Curiously, Richards used different names during the lectures, as if she were still undercover. In September 1865, the Brooklyn Daily Eagle reported on a talk by “Miss Richmonia R. St. Pierre” at a church. In it, she described visiting Union prisoners with Elizabeth Van Lew. Read an edited excerpt from the talk, written by an unknown reporter. Then answer the questions.

**Brooklyn Daily Eagle**
Monday, September 25, 1865

Miss St. Pierre has been in the secret service of the government; an announcement sufficient to account for the dense crowd which filled the church and assembled round the entrance to it unable to find admission. . . .

For two years she saw the progress of the Confederacy with almost a broken heart. . . . After McClellan’s seven days fight, the Southerners took pains to bring their own wounded into Richmond with all possible dispatch, and at the expiration of a week they brought in the wounded Unionists; they brought them in on common wagons and pitched them on the sidewalks. They did that for three successive days. (Groans) They brought them in and threw them down. This she had seen (groans) with her own eyes. (Groans.) If a person were to speak to these prisoners or to hand them a glass of water, it was Castle Thunder for them.

One of two Union women in Richmond was a delicate Southern lady, rich, well-known in the Confederacy, and who resided in a splendid white mansion in that city. This lady disguised herself as a beggar and visited these prisoners in company with the speaker. “Why, cousin John,” they would say, addressing one of the prisoners, the Confederate guard looking on meanwhile; or “Why, Mr. So and So, how came you to get in the Union army? I am ashamed of you!” . . .

In concluding, she advised all those who could to go South as missionaries among the freed people; not to talk sympathy so much, but to do something for their colored brethren and sisters. . . . She was half afraid that Northern abolitionists would do nothing more than talk, and that the colored race would not obtain justice. . . . “Do us justice,” she said in conclusion. . . . “Or I say—Look out, look out! Else an insurrection worse than anything that has yet taken place will be the result.” After a few more words she sat down.

1. **Questions**

   1. How does the reporter describe what “Miss St. Pierre” had been doing during the war?
   2. How did Richards contrast the treatment of wounded Confederate soldiers in Richmond with that of wounded Union prisoners?
   3. How was Elizabeth Van Lew able to speak with prisoners even as authorities tried to prevent it?
   4. What details does the reporter use to help readers feel like they were present at the lecture?
   5. When Richards says “Do us justice,” who was she talking about? What did she fear might happen, and what did she think would take place if justice didn't come?