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Copy

HEAD QUARTERS,
 Department of South Carolina, Ga. & Fla.

Charleston, S. C. February 24th 1863.

Gentlemen,

In the absence of the Commanding General in Savannah, I feel it my duty to invoke your aid in a matter vital to the defence of your City.

Despite repeated requisitions made on the State authorities during the past sixty days for at least 2,500 negroes to work on the fortifications for the defence of the harbor, and the several land-approaches to the City, there are now not more than four hundred & fifty hands available to the Engineers. A law was passed by the Legislature, as you are aware, early in the session, giving the Governor the power to impress a certain proportion of the slaves of the planters, accompanied, however, with certain provisos, that the Secy of War could not accept. Two weeks ago the law was modified, to remove, as I understand the objections of the War Department. Under the act, an agent to superintend the collection of these negroes was provided for. That agent as I am officially informed, has not been selected by his Excellency Gen. Banks until now, and only had an interview with me last night, the object of which was merely to state that there were in the Act, even as modified, certain ruling features that must deprive it of any very efficient operation. Of that indeed I am now fully satisfied inasmuch as the construction placed upon it by the State authorities must lead to delay, and a loss of time immeasurably pre-

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precious, which cannot be afforded at this juncture.

Col. Shannon, the agent in question, distinctly informed me that as yet, no arrangement whatsoever had been made by the State authorities to collect our negroes! that it remained as yet for him to appoint sub-agents; to distribute those agents to districts; to organize a plan of operations; and to provide for the assessment of the value of the negroes furnished. The time that must be required for all this will evidently deprive us of the labor essential for the completion of the defences of Charleston, within the time at which an attack seems inevitable: that is, negroes manifestly will be furnished too late under the system as yet to be inaugurated at this late day by Gov. Bouham.

In view of the exigency I am induced to address to you, as gentlemen of large interests, and of well-known public spirit, this plain exposition of affairs to invoke your influence with your fellow-citizens at this supreme crisis, and to call for your assistance in devising some means for providing the necessary amount of labour required.

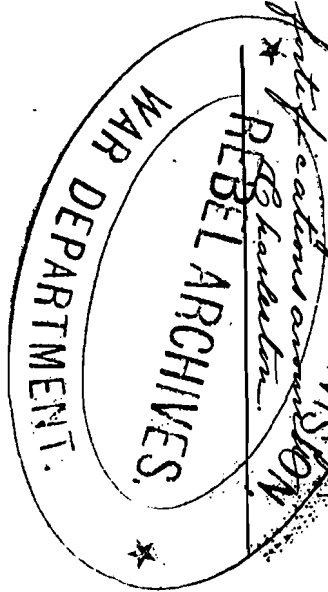
Three thousand laborers, with spades and shovels, should now be vigorously employed on the several works designed for the proper defence of Charleston. Had they been furnished when called for the work would have been completed before this.

Respectfully your Obedt Servt.
 (Sgd) Thomas Jordan
 Chief of Staff.

To

Hon A. G. Magrath, Hon Charles Macbeth,
Messrs G. A. Trenholm, J. K. Lass, H. L. Gourdin, C. M. Furman,
Daniel Ravenel, Thos. D. Hagner.

Official, A. Wemyss Fielder.
A. A. Genl.



~~RECORDS~~
Hagner, regarding the name of the
to purchase the ~~RECORDS~~ for the
of the cabinet and ~~STATION~~
* ~~REBEL ARCHIVES~~

Mr. G. O. Dyer & Co. Printers
Charleston February 20th. 1868
Thomas Jordan
Brig Genl.
Chief of Staff.
To Messrs. A. G. Magrath & Charles
Macbeth, Messrs Furman, Lass,
Gourdin, Trenholm, Ravenel &