

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Greensborough, April 20, 1865.

General JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON,
Commanding, &c. :

GENERAL: In your first note of yesterday in reply to mine alleging that certain property of the State had been seized by Confederate troops, &c., you say, "You will oblige me greatly by enumerating the State property seized by Confederate troops, and also by giving any information of circumstances that you may have." It is impossible particularly to comply with your request. Maj. James Sloan, chief State quartermaster at this post, reports that he had on hand on the arrival of the troops at this place 243 bales of blankets, cloth, and ready-made clothing, averaging, respectively, 100 blankets and 500 yards of cloth to the bale, and also 4,000 pairs of pants, 600 jackets, and a small quantity of leather. Of this amount there was issued to the troops 16,028 yards cloth, 4,458 pairs pants, 2,000 pairs socks, 1,143 jackets. Nearly all the remainder—certainly much over half of the whole—was violently seized or issued miscellaneously under the threats of the mob, to avoid seizure. At the same time the books, papers, and private property of the quartermaster were stolen and destroyed. A small quantity of blankets and home-made cloth yet remains on hand. Captain Oliver, quartermaster at Graham, N. C., reports that he delivered, under pressure of the mob of soldiers, 6,300 pairs of pants, 7,000 pounds leather, 21 bales blankets (100 to the bale), 10 coils of rope, and 2,000 yards of jeans cloth. There was actually taken by the mob 5,000 pounds leather and 3,000 yards cloth, in which the citizens participated. In addition to these statements of my quartermaster, I myself saw the conclusion of the sacking of a train at McLean's Station yesterday morning by soldiers laden with blankets and leather. The cars had just been emptied as I got there, and the roadside and the woods were crowded with soldiers staggering under heavy loads of the plunder. It seemed to be an understood and permitted matter, as officers of nearly all grades were standing quietly around. The hardship complained of in all this, general, is that there remains no one to make reparation to the State. Whilst the arrears of pay due the soldiers from the Confederacy would justify the delivery to them of any stores belonging to the Confederate States, it is peculiarly hard on North Carolina alone to be thus compelled to pay off the soldiers of all the other States. The debt contracted in Europe by the purchase of these supplies will, of course, be shared by none of the other States, and in this respect the voluntary issues amount in reality to a mere gift. North Carolina having done five times over more than any other State for the clothing of the Confederate Army, I think I can appeal the more strongly to you to protect her against plunder and pillage. In all this I have made no reference to a system of the most complete and outrageous robbery of private citizens now going on to a most distressing extent, and which I do not know that it is in your power to prevent. When all this is considered I am sure that you will pardon me for urging upon you the adoption of the most stringent measures in your power for the protection of my State and people against the lawless license of an army about to be disbanded.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. B. VANCE.