

[1882 Apr]

Hon. Genl. Arthur.



What a peaceful time you must have had when I was not able to read the papers at all! But there is not much rest for the wicked - (which of us is that?) - so I have to trouble you again. There is something more weighing on my mind - that Mason. Please don't pardon him. For a nation to murder its prisoners, is even more barbarous than to exclude foreigners! Justice & the honor of the country require that that man should be punished. To pardon him, would be giving direct encouragement to Lynch law. There is too much of that in some of the states already - we do not want it introduced in the Capital. Besides, his deed was worse than any lynching. It was his duty

to have defended G. had any danger assailed him - then to turn murderer & attack a perfectly defenseless victim, was as low, cowardly & contemptible an act as could well have been thought of. This wide-spread sympathy for M. - which may have a touch of political trickery underlying it - is a piece of rotten sentimentality. The more severely it is rebuked, the better for the formation of a more healthy public opinion. And yet there are reasons, I can see plainly, why you might feel tempted to grant the pardon. The pressure for it is very strong - a petition over a mile long, with upwards of 350 000 signatures - to give it, would not cost you an effort - no immediate, practical, tangible results would follow - &, at the stroke of a pen, you would

make yourself popular with 350 000 fools. But would it not be a good opportunity to stand by the right, purely for the sake of right? Of course some hateful things would be said about you - but would it not be better to endure opprobrium for doing your duty, than for failing in it? And justice comes at last. It is not enough for you simply not to pardon him - try to make these idiots understand why they ought not to want him pardoned - that his conduct was outrageous, that, if it were in time of war, he ought unquestionably to be shot, that, as it is, his sentence is merciful, not harsh. You might also mention that the country at large was not before aware quite how many hundred thousand fools it contained. But you would not dare to say that,

would you? You people who live
down among the mud & wolves
of political strife, have to be po-
lite. But we little white lambs,
up on the roof, can say anything
we choose, can't we?

Yours Sincerely,

J. J. S.

Saratoga N.Y.

[Julia J. Sand]

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