



New York.

Aug 28<sup>th</sup> 1852

Well, are you sufficiently refreshed now, to be found fault with? Or have you, since we parted, lived in such a whirlpool of adulation, that you will not tolerate a lecture?— not even from a poor little woman, who has always been the youngest of her family, who, consequently, if she lives to be fifty, will always be treated like a child— who would have no comfort in life, if she could not occasionally scold some very big man! But I am glad you went to Newport— instead of Long Branch. The latter is a vulgar hole— at Newport, even the worldliness is cleaner. And have you had a delightful time? It sounded so in the newspapers— & I hoped it was true, in spite of their untruthfulness. If on

your arrival, the air braced you up. I am sure you have had much enjoyment — if not, I am afraid you have been terribly tired sometimes. But I have not envied the people who have been entertaining you — I have admired their disinterestedness! If you had been visiting me, I would gladly have killed the fatted cat (the only animal we at present possess!) & cooked it myself, if necessary, but as to inviting the neighbors to dine with you — to take you away from me — I would do nothing of the kind. On the contrary, as soon as you are rived, I would have pinned a pair of large, beautiful, white wings to your shoulders — so that no one catching a glimpse of you, could by any possibility recognize you — & then I would have kept you all to myself — treating you very nicely one day & quite horribly the next, so that you would find

variety enough to make your stay interesting. But, unfortunately, my villa is not yet built, & our immediate cat is painfully thin, so I cannot press you to come. Of course you would — you have plenty of time & no press of engagements. I am so sorry to disappoint you! And now, after all this adulation — you see it does not "come natural to me," but I am trying to be good, because you are the President — may I say what I think?

It is just this, that you were wrong in what you said to me, the other night, about your Attorney General. It may be his place to investigate cases for you, to give you the chief points & to express his opinion — but it is not his place to decide whom you are & are not to pardon. You cannot make him the Keeper of your conscience. And it is cowardly in you to try to shirk responsibility in that manner.

Besides you do not succeed in the attempt, for the public accepts no such arrangement. It is useless for you to try to hide behind your Attorney General, because you are the bigger man. If things go wrong he may hide behind you, but in any case, if there are blows to fall, they will fall upon your head. So meet what lies before you like a man & have no dodging. In a pardon case, what you ought most to consider is the effect on the community. There are crimes, shocking in themselves, which you might pardon, with little fear of their being imitated, the temptation to them being very limited. But this is not true of embezzlement. The temptation lies before almost every man, woman & child in a civilized community - too many succumb to it - it is the sin of the age. It is a sort of

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moral epidemic, which ought to be checked with the severest measures. You said there were many things worse — you would have been nearer the truth, if you had said that there were few. Recall the details of some prominent cases — the low vices that this stealing was done to gratify — the heart-breaking disgrace brought on many an honorable family — the victims, doomed in a moment to a life of penury that one man for a year or two might riot in luxury. Is there anything in this that awakens your sympathy for the culprit? It seems to me that there is scarcely indignation strong enough to meet his deserts. His sin is one of the blackest dishonor. It poisons the moral atmosphere of any community that will tolerate it. It rots the very foundations of society. An embezzler ought not to be pardoned

under any circumstances whatever. In fact, would it not be well if you waived the pardoning privilege altogether? Is it not something behind the intellect of the age? Is there any good reason why one man should have the power to reverse the decision of a court? If you renounce the power, no one can rebuke you for it. But if you use it, the responsibility rests with you & you alone.

Another thing that I wish to speak to you about is the political assessment going on at present. It is a disgrace to the Republican party - & one for which you are responsible. Never in the history of our country has the thing been done with such insolent effrontery as now, & you have given the people to understand for what else can they understand by that force, you & your Cabinet hemming & hawing over that claptop letter from "A. Thomas"? - that it is done with your approbation. It is a stain on your Administration - one which money cannot cover, nor tears wash away, nor time wear out. Only your own hand can remove it. The nobodies who ply the work will be forgotten, but your name will be remembered, & if this thing continues, the dishonor of it will continue yours forever. Looking at the matter from a national standpoint, it is so self-evident that the United States Government was not intended for the support of any party or faction, that it would be absurd to argue on the subject. The question is simply whether you intend to do your duty to the whole country, or to sacrifice the good of the country for the benefit of a small clique

of your personal followers. That clique may try to deafen your ears to the voice of the people, but beware how you let it succeed. The "steal" is only a little different in form from that of Dorsey. The natural question of the public is: "What fraud does the Republican party intend to perpetrate at the coming elections, that it needs so much money?" And the best part of the Republican party resents that question — it will not go halves in any fraud. You will break the party before you force it. You are popular, your finest qualities are fully appreciated, but there are some things which the American people will not stand even from a prime favourite. Show that you intend to run the United States Government for the benefit of a faction, & the people, regardless of party,

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will sweep you & your "machine"<sup>4</sup> out of the political arena as so much broken rubbish. But will you bring things to such an issue? I cannot believe it. In spite of what you have said, I still have faith that your nobler nature will assert itself. You have dulled your own perceptions, by associating too much with men who worship success from the lowest, vulgarest standpoint — who have no political morality. Stand apart from them & you will see clearly. Whenever you stand alone, your conduct is far more to your credit. It is your so-called friends who drag you down. Be independent, forget the trifles of today, think of life as a whole, of what you owe to the country, of your own honor — can you waver then as to your duty? It requires great moral courage to correct our own

errors - especially when they are so public that the correction must be public also - but I believe you are capable of great moral courage on great occasions.

Are you angry with me for speaking to you so plainly? Must I tell you again that I am your true friend in so doing? Sometimes I ponder regretfully on your visit. It was rather my habit to sit in that arm-chair, just where I sat beside you - now, when I sit there, & glance up at the vacant sofa, I - would you smile, if I said I missed you? Well, it is almost that - I wish you back - I feel that we so nearly missed each other in that one meeting.

You staid, they said, about an hour, but I do not remember very distinctly anything that you said - except one word. I remember you, your voice, your manner,

the change of your expression, as you spoke - I think I liked it best when you looked at me. But that one word - can you guess it? It was that inexorable "no," at parting when I asked if you had forgiven some of the harsh things I had said. I did not believe you meant it - yet there was nothing in the shake of your hand that contradicted the word or the tone. Do you really feel towards me so coldly, so distrustfully? It pains me to think it. But if it is so, it is. Will we ever meet again? Is there any chance that, before you return to Washington & I go to Saratoga, we will be in the city simultaneously? If so - but you could not spare time for another visit, could you?

Yours Sincerely,

[Julia L. Sand] J. L. S.

P. S. If you ever do want to write to me, & at the same time don't want



to, you might compromise by sending  
the letter to J. J. Sewall Esq. No such person  
exists, but people write to him occa-  
sionally & I kindly attend to his cor-  
respondence. But I begin to believe  
you are too afraid of me to write  
under any circumstances!

