

5/1882 Apr 23

Hon. E. A. Arthur.

Of course you dont care - do you? - whether I am pleased, or not. But, as I always growl, when I catch you doing wrong, my own sense of justice requires it, that I should make some kind of a sound, when I catch you doing right. Therefore I must tell you that your veto of the Chinese Bill delighted me. And, what is more to the point, a great many other people also were pleased - pleased & surprised. Dont you feel flattered how awfully surprised they are, whenever you do anything good? Well, go on surprising them. But I am never surprised, because I expect it of you. If you had done otherwise, I should have been dismally disappointed. Yet, even expecting it, it put me in a very cheerful mood - so cheerful

that - what do you think? I sent for a horse & - there being no Heathen Chinese around - showed my superiority to race prejudice, by taking a colored fellow being out to drive. He never thanked me, though, & probably expects to be rewarded - such is the demoralizing effect of civil rights! But I enjoyed the drive - it was a windy, whimsical April day, the Green Mountains intensely blue, with a gleam of sunlight on one peak, a snow-cloud breaking over the next - & we went out Union Ave at a lively trot. But as "Frank" did not shy at anything, nor run away, & I did not take a wheel off of anybody's wagon, nor upset my own, turning around, it was not as exciting as it might have been. Still, after a year & a half of absolute passiveness, to have the reins in my hands again, seemed

like coming back to life. Two months ago I was so nervous I did not like to look at a horse, & when a gentleman took me out sleighing, was in misery all the while, between the impulse to, & the determination not to - cling to his arm - oh, it was dreadful! But now - it only remains for me to get on a horse, & after that almost anything will seem possible. I may even get down to Washington before your administration is over. And then & there - you being the "Jumbo" of the great American show - I should certainly go to see you. According to Washington etiquette, it would be my social & patriotic duty, wouldn't it? And I always try to do my duty. But, in this case, perhaps I won't - it might be such a frightful disillusionment. Cannot you imagine the groan of despondency with which I would exclaim: "Oh, is that the

man I have been writing to?! ~ & the
grunt of dissatisfaction with which you
would utter: "Why she wasn't a nice
little Mother Shipton, on a broomstick,
at all,

"But only Mrs Something Rogers"!?"

However, if my health is in any
way dependent on your goodness,
dout you think that there is consider-
able risk of my not recovering very
suddenly? In fact, dout you think
that there is some danger of my
having relapses & relapses, & only
getting well finally, just in time
to die of old age? Who is responsible
for that mean little trick about
"Nehemiah M. Curtis"? But why should
I ask, when I know, as well as you
do, that you are? The thing would
not have been done without your
approval. But, if the blunder was
a trick, it is equally true that the
trick was a blunder, for everyone
sees through it — & though people

may be glad to have you right on the Chinese question, they feel that the New York question strikes much nearer home. If you wish the public to believe that that blunder was really a mistake, there is only one way to do it — order your city District Attorney to rectify the mistake & continue the prosecution. But you won't do that, will you? It is of no use to say a word, is it? I can see the quiet, fixed obstinacy in your face, as if I were talking to you, instead of writing — I have hit against one of your "strong convictions." But what is it? That Gen. C. is such a dear friend, you cannot bear to have him hurt? Or is it that he is such a dexterous hand at political dirty work that you really cannot spare him? When will you learn that the President should have no such friends — that it is time for you to have done with political dirty-work?

What are you aiming at - the perpetuation of your power? I do not condemn ambition - I think the world would be better if most people had more of it. But there is ambition that is noble, + there is ambition that is vile. What is your idea of greatness? Napoleon - at St. Helena? Nero - fiddling while Rome was burning? Cyrus - entombed under the epitaph: "Oh man, I am Cyrus, who founded the Persian Empire; envy me not then the little earth which covers my remains!"

Did you ever read these lines:
"Oh may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence:

live

In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce

the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence
Urge man's search
To vaster issues.

Go to live is heaven!"

Think of them sometimes. And when you have thought of them a great deal, ask yourself if there is anything in the world that can make you happier than truly to serve your fellow men.

Yours Sincerely,

J. J. S.

[Julia J. Sand]

Saratoga, N. Y.
April, 1852.



[11,620]
(5938)