

Head Qrs  
Carrolton La March 7 1863

My dear sir

I embrace a few leisure moments to send you a line.

I cannot say that I write with that degree of pleasure I should wish to, for the reason that I have nothing in the way of good news why they are so slow I cannot ever surmise, there has not been a thing done here in the way of gaining even a step toward the solution of this great war's end! Though tonight I am more encouraged than usual as there is over 12,000 on the way up the river, but as I think you will hear which way they went I will not put it in black and white, we are surrounded by thousands of the basest traitors and we cannot be too discreet.

I like General Banks very much though I think he is too much of a gentleman for these villainous traitors. It needs a man like Butler here one who can use the iron heel with its most crushing effect. Genl Butler was severe and in some cases undoubtedly did wrong but who under such circumstances could always do right. I allude more particularly to his management of the city affairs, of course excluding the speculations of his carried on in his brother's name, if not actual dishonest transactions or more politely and politically spoken his peculations etc.

New Orleans is decidedly immoral place, never in my life have I seen such open disregard of decency of the [ ] and of the common proprieties of society. If this is a specimen of Parisian morals, deliver me from them.

The secessionists are very much encouraged here and feel confident that will regain the place—how is the question? By a general uprising is their answer, and there is no reason to doubt that they are drilling and meeting in secret. I can stand a straightforward fight but when it comes to shaking the hand of friendship with one hand and using the dagger with the other, then it is that I wish to consider myself out.

I must of course to be in the fashion speak of my duty. I am well though I am in the 15 hours a day on the average. I have [ ] Corps Zouaves for officers. I have several clerks besides three mounted orderlies for my own use and a telegraph officer is attached to this officer. The Genl is not enjoying good health and I am happy to say I am. So I think at least I try to do that which is right and leave the management of all the business to me. I do not say this with conceit but with that kind of pride which I think I am entitled to have, i.e. to feel that I am at least trusted fully in every particular.

Gen Banks [ ] Negro policy will be a failure. I am tired of his plan of trying to coax our enemies to come back. Genl Banks issues a circular wherein he orders—or rather requests that all Chaplains and officers use their influence even to induce slaves to return to their masters, the masters are to have their services, but are not to make any contract to pay them anything for their services, but will give them clothes and three dollars per month, who will give them three dollars #3 per month not the planters no they will work them not pay them. I enclose you a copy of the circular issued by Genl Banks, I cannot find the order I wished to send you.

I long for the time when I shall be in some city where I am looked at as a friend not as enemy, and looked at as I have often have been by the school children for being true to my country. The Ladies (?) when we pass turn their heads away and see something in the shop window very interesting, very suddenly and draw in their "calicos" very disdainfully. I thank them for that though as to [ ] a great deal of women.

I send you occasionally a N.O. paper, the "Era" also a sesesh N.O paper the Picayune printed on southern paper.

Very Respectfully

Oliver Matthews  
Let A.A.A. G.

Care Gen Dow  
New Orleans