

Headquarters First Army Corps
158 F Street
Washington, D.C. March 10, 1865

My dear Friend

After four days travel via Harrisburg I reached this city of magnificent distances and deep mud holes.

Very fortunately the printers are yet ready so that I shall be able to look after the majority without fear of neglecting any duties. I shall leave no "stone unturned" to get it.

I enclose a communication of Major Genl Grover (a regular Army officer) which I must say I was quite surprised to see, as I have never spoken to him of ever wishing to be assigned to him, owing to the fact that he is very particular officer and I did not think that I would suit him. He is a perfect soldier as well as a thoroughbred gentleman and [h]is reputation as of the best. I would have made application had I thought it would have been agreeable to him to have me. As it is, I do not know what to do, as I have not yet thought it over, though I am certain of one thing, ie that I will not go to Savannah unless they promote me. This going to hot climates and working hard to bring order out of chaos and filling a Let Col or Maj places on a Capt rank is—in the vernacular—"played out." I know that in Savannah the AAG office is upside down and consequently the other staff [] are and when such is the case, the Gov't loses thousands of dollars, when it should save. And on that acc't do I consider the application of Genl Grover a compliment in every sense of the word. And it is another assurance to me that my efforts to do my duty to the best of my ability have at last been appreciated by the General officers of the 19th Army Corps. For everyone now that Grover has made application have either directly or indirectly requested to have me ordered to duty with them and I know that Maj Genl Emory has written a very strong letter within a week urging that I be assigned to his command, which is very gratifying as it shows that he is willing to have me, though "these fellows who don't drink get most damnable drunk sometimes," as you may recollect my telling you of that remark of his when I refused to take a drink with him in La.

Has your Bro Theo heard of or rather seen Col Bliss yet? I called on Benj Franklin Chief of Police at Phila and I must say that it is wonderfull the way that he is enlisting men—averaging 60 and 70 daily—all done by advertising continually. If he was in N.Y. City I could get a Coly of a Regt from Genl H much more readily than I can the Maj & AAG. Is there no idea in your League of raising a "Union League Brigade." I should think it feasible, for the reason "plenty of good officers" would come forward and agree to furnish 40-60 and 100 men each according to the rank that they expect, as while they are recruiting the men, they get the pay of an officer, and their expenses as recruiting officers etc. If not successful they lose nothing.

A great deal of disgust is expressed here about Vice President Johnson's disgracefull conduct on the 4th. It seems to me that there ought to be some way of punishing persons holding his and similar positions for such conduct.

I am on the track of the “Old Major” or rather I intend [] the case up sufficiently for Col Baker to get interested in it. I am more determined on the matter as I know they will if an opportunity offers—try and bribe any officer, who will assist them in getting out of the entanglement and they are able to do it, as they have “Loads of money” if they can find one who will be their dupe.

With best wishes for yourself and family

I remain

Very sincerely

Oliver Matthews

P.S. Lt Taylor before was asking me this morning what company—oil—is the best in N.Y. as he wishes to strike it if he can. Whichever do you think is the best?

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I send this to your house as it will reach NY when your office is closed.

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