

Washington 1st January 1853.

My dear General,

I know you have my best wishes so constantly, that it is hardly worth while to use a conventional form to reiterate them.

My wishes are for your being in the Cabinet, the directing agent of Genl Pierce's administration. This, however, cannot be done without some fight here in Washington, & from the enclosed scraps you will see that I have stripped to the combat.

It is necessary ~~to~~ besides, to state that you have some opposition to encounter (here in Washington) and that you must have a cabinet fixed upon before Genl Pierce comes down here, if his purpose shall not be shaken. You will see from my letters in the prints what general arguments are made use of against any member from New England; but the sum total of the aversion concerned to this; no one wants to be eclipsed by you.

As to Jefferson Davis, the very mention of his name causes the bristling up of such men as Cass, Gwin, Clements Downs, Cobb, Foote, and a host of others.

He assured that such a nomination, unheeded of as the thing may be, stands a chance of a rejection in the Senate.

There are those who say that the administration would, in such a case, start with a minority in one or the other ^{House} of not in both Houses. I have slightly taken ground

in all my letters against promoting the here-
 search to the place of patriarch. This would be
 unchurching orthodoxy, and destroy the vivifying
 principle of Paul Pierce's popularity. Jeff Davis
 is the representative idea of secession, and Froot
 & Cobb will raise such a howl that its echo
 will be heard even in the mountains of Vermont.
 If Paul Pierce, however, wants to manufacture
 Cobb into a Presidential candidate, that would
 be the way to do it. The Whig party are now
 more plastic lymph and would at once join an
 opposition in the Democratic party, with a view
 of breaking us down.

George W. Dallas is strongly pressed, and
 taken all in all, would make an unexceptionable
 Secretary of State who would faithfully execute what
 perhaps might be planned by others. He has in-
 finitely more courage than any man in Pennsylvania.
 Buchanan, Campbell, Jones, Black, and the whole crew
 of Mr Buchanan's toadies would not answer at
 all. They would simply land the Keystone into the
 federal ranks.

But it is all important that Sen should be
 here, and that must be definitely arranged in
Boston. It must be a fait accompli when Mr
 Pierce arrives here, and received as such by the
 press. One half the opposition is confined to preven-
 ting measures, not to raise a hue & cry against
 them, post factum.

I do not think that the bulk of the Southern letters are anything but Conservatives. They are not progressive; they are not for territorial extension, and for no new acquisitions. Besides, I sh^d like to know what use this fresh, bounding republic has of doctrinaires? This most practical government in the hands of doctrinaires, ~~would be like a~~ body walking on crutches. True statesmanship anywhere consists in knowing and appreciating the value of the moment, and not in fitting a particular case to a general theory. Goethe is right when he says:—

„Gran, lieber Freund, ist alle Theorie
 „ Und grüß dem Lebens goldenen Baum!“

It is the doctrinaires who have ruined France, the great mass of the population of any country, prefer the least spark of real life — even Louis Napoleon — to a whole volume of rusty theorems and abstract propositions. At regular Greek doctrinaire games, to this day, use the Macedonian phalanx against a battery of howitzers. What has the Duke of Broglie, (le chef de la doctrine) done for France? He is a man of fair ability, irreproachable rectitude, dark complexion, agreeable manners, and a gentleman very much like Mr Sumner.

Excuse my frankness; but where respect is so unbounded as mine for you, a jest comes in as a licentia poetica. Believe me, devotedly, your friend

Wm. Claiborne

Francis Grund

[FRANCIS J. GRUND]