

The Diary of a Public Man. Unpublished Passages of the Secret History of the American Civil War. Part III

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V.

THE DIARY OF A PUBLIC MAN.

UNPUBLISHED PASSAGES OF THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.

PART III.

MR. SUMNER AND MR. CAMERON.

Washington, March 3d.—I received this morning a note from —, asking me to come at once, if possible, to his house, and going there instantly, as I chanced to be free to do, I found to my surprise that he had sent for me to meet Senator Sumner, whom I found engaged in close conversation with him, and who greeted me with a warmth a little out of proportion, as I thought, to the relations between us, for I have never affected an admiration which I certainly have never felt for Mr. Sumner.

It was soon explained when I found that Senator Sumner had asked — to send for me in order that he might urge me to call at once upon Mr. Lincoln and represent to him “in the strongest language which you can command—for no language can be too strong”—the dreadful consequences to the influence and success of the new Administration which must follow his nomination of Mr. Simon Cameron to a seat in the Cabinet. Mr. Sumner’s conviction was absolute that Mr. Lincoln had bound himself by a political bargain in this case, which would itself suffice to blast his reputation as an honest man were it made known, as it would surely be ; but he treated this as a small evil in comparison with the mischief sure to be done by the presence in the Cabinet of such a person as Mr. Cameron, “reeking with the stench of a thousand political bargains worse than this.”

When he had abated a little of the vehemence of his language, I took occasion to ask why I should have been requested to inter-

vene in such a matter, and on what grounds Mr. Sumner and — had reached what seemed to me the extraordinary conclusion that I could be induced to meddle with it. Senator Sumner interrupted me by asking, somewhat more peremptorily than I quite liked, whether I needed to be informed of the true nature of this “political Judas from Pennsylvania, whom Providence had marked with the capillary sign of his character, and who might have sat to Leonardo da Vinci for the picture in the Milanese refectory.” All this made me but the more indisposed to listen to him, but I finally succeeded in ascertaining that he had sent for me on the strength of —’s assurances as to the way in which Mr. Lincoln had been kind enough to speak of me to himself. I hastened to assure them both that any good opinion which Mr. Lincoln might have of me must have been based upon my careful abstinence from precisely such interferences—“impertinent interferences,” I quietly called them—with his affairs, as the intervention to which they desired to urge me would certainly be. I told them how extremely slight my acquaintance was with the President-elect, to which — replied that Mr. Lincoln himself had cited my representations in favor of one gentleman whom he hoped to include among his advisers as having been “the most decisive endorsement” with him of that choice. I could only reiterate my surprise; and Mr. Sumner insisting upon his theme, began again with more fervor, if possible. He very soon gave me the true secret of his extreme anxiety on this point. He asked me what interest I or my friends could have in such a preponderance as the Middle States seemed destined to have in the Cabinet if Mr. Seward and Mr. Cameron were to enter it together, and in what way it could advance our wishes or purposes to allow the New England States, “the cradle and the spinal life of the Republican party,” to be “humiliated and thrust below the salt at the board which, but for them, would never have been spread”—with much more to the same general effect, but all this with an intensity and bitterness quite indescribable. — was more temperate in his expressions, but almost equally urgent with me to do what I was compelled again and again in the clearest terms to let them understand that nothing under heaven could make me do, even if I had the fullest belief that my action could in any way affect the matter, which I certainly had not. It astonished me to see how hard it was apparently for Mr. Sumner to understand that my objections to coöperating with — and himself did not in some way arise out of some relations of my own with Senator

Cameron—out of some doubt on my part as to the measure of mischief to be apprehended from Senator Cameron's political reputation, and from the nature of the appointments sure to be made and favored by him.

It was idle for me to assure him again and again that I knew perhaps as much of Pennsylvania politicians in general, and of Senator Cameron in particular, as other people, and should regret as much as he possibly could any "predominance" of Pennsylvania politicians in the new Administration. Nothing could stop him; and he insisted on telling me a succession of stories to illustrate the unscrupulousness of Mr. Cameron, one of which he declared had been told in his own presence and in a company of gentlemen by a chief agent in the transaction, who seemed to regard it, said Mr. Sumner, as a brilliant triumph of political skill, a thing to be proud of, and a decisive proof of the fitness of Senator Cameron for any office in the country.

A CURIOUS CHAPTER IN PENNSYLVANIA POLITICS.

It was to the effect that, when Mr. Cameron found his election to the Senate in grave doubt, he turned the day in his own favor by taking a pecuniary risk which eventually resulted in his making a considerable sum of money. According to Mr. Sumner's version of the affair, the person who gave the history of it in his presence, and who is certainly a prominent man in the financial circles of Philadelphia, stated that a leading member of the Legislature (I think he said a State Senator) offered to vote for Mr. Cameron, and to induce two or more of his friends to do the same thing, if he could be relieved of some local indebtedness in the place where he resided and put in the way of a livelihood elsewhere, his constituents being so hostile to Mr. Cameron that it probably would not be agreeable for him to continue among them after Mr. Cameron's election through his help to the Senate. No bribe passed; but the local legislator was appointed to a remunerative position in the way of his calling (as a lawyer, I think) in one of the great Philadelphia corporations, and removed to that city, having previously paid off his local indebtedness with a loan from Mr. Cameron on the security of some stock which he happened to hold in a small railway, at that time of no appreciable value.

The loan was never called for, but through some subsequent legislation the small railway in question was brought into a more extensive railway system, and the collateral in Mr. Cameron's hands

advanced to a value far exceeding the amount for which it had been ostensibly hypothecated. After listening to Mr. Sumner for a considerable time, I finally asked him why he did not go himself to Mr. Lincoln and depict the Senator from Pennsylvania in the dark colors in which he had represented him to us. He intimated that he had already done so, and after a little the conversation took a turn which confronted me with the painful conviction that all this indignation about Senator Cameron had its origin not so much in any real horror of the Pennsylvanian element in politics as in the belief, which I hope is well grounded, that the presence of Mr. Cameron and Mr. Seward in the Cabinet will confirm Mr. Lincoln in his disposition to pursue a conservative conciliatory policy which may bring the seceded States back into the Union, rather than a policy aimed at a complete separation of the slaveholding from the non-slaveholding region.

NO WAR FOR THE UNION, AND NO UNION.

It did not surprise me, of course, to find Mr. Sumner aiming at such a result, but the acquiescence in his views of — does both surprise and pain me. I asked them if they did not think it better, from the point of view of the negroes, for whom they seem to be so deeply concerned, that slavery should be held for eventual execution within the Union—now that events had so clearly demonstrated the incompatibility of the institution as a permanent feature of Southern society with that general peace and order which must be as essential to the South as to the North—than that slavery should be excluded from the influences of freedom in a new confederacy, organized to uphold and develop it; but I could bring neither of them to reason on the subject. Mr. Sumner grew very warm again. He was as much horrified as I could be or any man at the idea of an armed conflict between the sections. “Nothing could possibly be so horrible or so wicked or so senseless as a war”; but between a war for the Union which was not to be thought of, and “a corrupt conspiracy to preserve the Union,” he saw, he said, little choice, and he desired to see the new Administration formed “supremely in the interests of freedom.” As for the slaveholding States, let them take their curse with them if they were judicially blinded so to do. He quoted some lines, I think of Whittier, about their right to make themselves the scandal and the shame of “God’s fair universe,” as embodying his conceptions of what we ought now to recognize as the policy of freedom, and then he recurred finally to the original

theme, and once more in concert with — began about the visit they wished me to make to Mr. Lincoln. I was forced at last to tell them both explicitly that, while I fully agreed with them as to the supreme necessity of avoiding any collision or conflict between the States, and had no fear of any such catastrophe, my hope of averting it rested mainly upon my hope that Mr. Lincoln was of one mind with Mr. Seward on the subject, and would direct his efforts to a conciliatory preservation of the Union; and that neither Mr. Seward nor Mr. Cameron could possibly have less faith than myself in any "policy of freedom" which contemplated the possibility of a severed Union, or less disposition to favor such a policy. It was not at all a pleasant conversation, but it was a necessary conversation, as I am sorry to find, and it is painfully evident that the new Administration will have to contend with a Northern as well as with a Southern current of disaffection and disunion much stronger than I had allowed myself to suspect.

In the evening I saw Mr. Douglas, and, without telling him whom I had seen to bring me to such a conviction, I expressed to him my conviction that unless Mr. Seward entered the Cabinet, and entered it with some colleague upon whom he could rely for support in a conservative policy, Mr. Lincoln would be drifted out to sea, and the country with him.

I found that the incidents of Saturday had been communicated to him, and, as I inferred, though he did not say so, by Mr. Lincoln himself; and I was much relieved to find that he entertains no doubt of Mr. Seward's nomination, and of his confirmation. He told me that Mr. Seward yesterday received assurances to that effect from Senator Hunter, of Virginia, through —, and he agreed with me that, whatever our private opinions of the political habits and ideas of Mr. Cameron might be, it was most important that no effort should be made to displace him at this hour from the Cabinet, at the risk of seeing a man, either of the type of the Blairs, put in who will press things to a bloody contest, or of the opinion which I fear Mr. Chase represents, that the South and slavery had better be gotten rid of once for all and together. Mr. Douglas used the strongest language as to his own determination to stand by Mr. Lincoln in a temperate, resolute Union policy, and I must own that I never saw him to such good advantage. He was perfectly frank in admitting that he would regard such a policy adopted by Mr. Lincoln as a virtual vindication of his own policy during and before the Presidential election, and that he believed it would eventu-

ally destroy, if successful, the organization of the Republican party as a political power; but a man who received a million and a half of votes in a Presidential contest has a right to feel, and Mr. Douglas evidently does feel, that he speaks for a great popular force in the country. But, as I have often felt before, so I felt again this evening, that Mr. Douglas really is a patriotic American in the strong, popular sense of that phrase. He had seen Mr. Lincoln to-day, and he intimated to me that he had heard that part of the message read which touches the assertion of the invalidity of the acts of secession, and that he was entirely satisfied with it. To use his own expression, it will do for all constitutional Democrats to "brace themselves against." I repeated to him what Lord Lyons had said to me the other day, and asked him what ground Mr. Lincoln has taken on the questions raised by the seizure of Southern forts, and by the fortifications put up in Charleston against Fort Sumter. He says that since Mr. Lincoln reached Washington he has inserted in the message a distinct declaration that, while he regards it as in his duty to "hold, occupy, and possess" the property and places belonging to the Government and to collect the duties, he will not attempt to enforce the strict rights of the Government where hostility to the United States is great and universal. I then told him that Mr. Seward, some days ago, had assured me that he believed he would be able to induce Mr. Lincoln to take such a position as this, and that it would suffice, he thought, as a basis of negotiation with the seceded States, and give the people breathing-time to recover their senses at the South; and we came to the conclusion, which I was very glad to reach, that Mr. Seward's counsels must have brought Mr. Lincoln to this stand, in which I have no sort of doubt, and Mr. Douglas has none, that the great majority of the Northern people of both parties will support him.

TELEGRAPHING TO PRESIDENT DAVIS AT MONTGOMERY.

It was late when I left Mr. Douglas, but when I reached home I found — waiting for me with a most anxious face. He opened his business to me at once, which was to ask my advice as to what he should do with a message brought to him by —, one of Mr. Seward's New York men here, who desired him, in Mr. Seward's name, to have it sent to-night by telegraph to Mr. Davis at Montgomery, Alabama. — had assured him that it was expected, arrangements having been made that such a message should be sent,

and that he would do a public service by sending it. I asked if he had the message, which he produced. It bore a signature not known to me, and was a simple statement to the effect that the tone of Mr. Lincoln's inaugural message would be conciliatory. I asked — what his objection was to sending such a message, which certainly could do no one any harm and which was probably enough true, when he called my attention to the fact that it was addressed to Mr. Davis as President of the Confederate States. I laughed, and told him that I saw no harm in that any more than in addressing Mr. Davis as Pope of Rome, and that I thought he might safely do as he preferred about it, especially as he had apparently agreed with Mr. Seward's friend to send it. I asked him then why this mysterious friend came to him with such a request, upon which he said that he had known the man very well in Wall Street, and had had occasion to avail himself of his services at various times. I finally advised him to send the message, rather than make any further confidences or communication about it, and to be a little more careful hereafter as to his associates and allies. He was in a curiously perturbed state of mind, and I am afraid has been going into stock speculations again.

As to —, from whom he got his message, he told me a curious story, which helps to explain the sort of irritation which Mr. Seward's particular followers so often show about him, as well as to confirm my own not very high opinion of some of these New York men in whom he takes such an interest apparently. It appears that, before the message was handed to him, he had a long conversation with — on the subject of the President's message, and that, after trying in vain to get a definite statement about it from his New York friend, he had twitted the latter until he lost his temper so far as to admit that, when he had pressed Mr. Seward for light as to the President's message this very morning, Mr. Seward had finally put him off with the extraordinary statement that "all he had to do to insure a peaceful settlement of the whole business was to be sure and buy a lot of tickets to the inauguration ball and make it a grand success; that would satisfy the country, and lead to peace."

I really could not stand this, but burst into a fit of laughter, which seemed to annoy — more than it amused him. He grew quite hot as to Mr. Seward's levity and indifference to the interests of his "friends," protesting that it was nothing less than an outrage on the part of Mr. Seward to put off in this way a man

of wealth and influence who was devoted to him, and who had a great material interest at stake in learning whether we were to have war with the seceded States or not, as he was a large owner of steamers which the Government would need to charter if there was to be a war or even a large warlike demonstration. I lost my patience a little with this, and told — promptly that, if these were the motives of his New York friend, Mr. Seward deserved credit for putting him off with a recommendation to buy ball-tickets, but he came back at me triumphantly with the dispatch to Montgomery which his New York friend had secured at the end of a second visit to Mr. Seward, as a decisive sign of the peaceful prospect before us, and which he finally took away, saying that he would send it.

THE MILITARY INAUGURATION OF MR. LINCOLN.

Washington, March 4th.—I am sure we must attribute to the mischievous influence of the Blairs the deplorable display of perfectly unnecessary, and worse than unnecessary, military force which marred the inauguration to-day, and jarred so scandalously upon the tone of the inaugural. Nothing could have been more ill-advised or more ostentatious than the way in which the troops were thrust everywhere upon the public attention, even to the roofs of the houses on Pennsylvania Avenue, on which little squads of sharpshooters were absurdly stationed. I never expected to experience such a sense of mortification and shame in my own country as I felt to-day, in entering the Capitol through hedges of marines armed to the teeth. —, of Massachusetts, who felt as I did—indeed, I have yet to find a man who did not—recalled to me, as we sat in the Senate-chamber, the story of old Josiah Quincy, the President of Harvard College, who, having occasion to visit the Boston court-house during one of the fugitive-slave excitements in that city, found the way barred by an iron chain. The sentinels on duty recognized him, and stooped to raise the chain, that he might pass in, but the old man indignantly refused, and turned away, declaring that he would never pass into a Massachusetts court-house by the favor of armed men or under a chain. It is really amazing that General Scott should have consented to preside over such a pestilent and foolish parade of force at this time, and I can only attribute his doing so to the agitation in which he is kept by the constant pressure upon him from Virginia, of which I heard only too much to-day from —, who returned yesterday from Rich-

mond. Fortunately, all passed off well, but it is appalling to think of the mischief which might have been done by a single evil-disposed person to-day. A blank cartridge fired from a window on Pennsylvania Avenue might have disconcerted all our hopes, and thrown the whole country into inextricable confusion.

That nothing of the sort was done, or even so much as attempted, is the most conclusive evidence that could be asked of the groundlessness of the rumors and old women's tales on the strength of which General Scott has been led into this great mistake. Even without this the atmosphere of the day would have been depressing enough. It has been one of our disagreeable, clear, windy, Washington spring days. The arrangements within the Capitol were awkward, and very ill attended to. No one was at his ease. Neither Mr. Buchanan nor Mr. Lincoln appeared to advantage. Poor Chief-Justice Taney could hardly speak plainly, in his uncontrollable agitation.

HOW MR. DOUGLAS STOOD BY THE NEW PRESIDENT.

I must, however, except Senator Douglas, whose conduct can not be overpraised. I saw him for a moment in the morning, when he told me that he meant to put himself as prominently forward in the ceremonies as he properly could, and to leave no doubt on any one's mind of his determination to stand by the new Administration in the performance of its first great duty to maintain the Union. I watched him carefully. He made his way not without difficulty—for there was literally no sort of order in the arrangements—to the front of the throng directly beside Mr. Lincoln, when he prepared to read the address. A miserable little rickety table had been provided for the President, on which he could hardly find room for his hat, and Senator Douglas, reaching forward, took it with a smile and held it during the delivery of the address. It was a trifling act, but a symbolical one, and not to be forgotten, and it attracted much attention all around me.

THE BEARING OF MR. LINCOLN HIMSELF.

Mr. Lincoln was pale and very nervous, and did not read his address very well, which is not much to be wondered at under all the circumstances. His spectacles troubled him, his position was crowded and uncomfortable, and, in short, nothing had been done which ought to have been done to render the performance of this

great duty either dignified in its effect or, physically speaking, easy for the President.

The great crowd in the grounds behaved very well, but manifested little or no enthusiasm, and at one point in the speech Mr. Lincoln was thrown completely off his balance for a moment by a crash not far in front of him among the people, followed by something which for an instant looked like a struggle. I was not undisturbed myself, nor were those who were immediately about me; but it appeared directly that nothing more serious had happened than the fall from a breaking bough of a spectator who had clambered up into one of the trees.

Mr. Lincoln's agitation was remarked, and I have no doubt must have been caused by the impressions which the alarmists have been trying so sedulously to make on his mind, and which the exaggerated preparations of General Scott to-day are but too likely to have deepened.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS, AND THE EFFECT OF IT.

The address has disappointed every one, I think. There was too much argumentative discussion of the question at issue, as was to have been expected from a man whose whole career has been that of an advocate in his private affairs, and of a candidate in public affairs, and who has had absolutely no experience of an executive kind, but this in the actual state of the country is perhaps an advantage. The more we reason and argue over the situation, the better chance there will be of our emerging from it without a collision.

I listened attentively for the passages about which Mr. Douglas had spoken to me, and I observed that, when he uttered what I suppose to be the language referred to by Mr. Douglas, Mr. Lincoln raised his voice and distinctly emphasized the declaration that he must take, hold, possess, and occupy the property and places belonging to the United States. This was unmistakable, and he paused for a moment after closing the sentence as if to allow it to be fully taken in and comprehended by his audience.

In spite of myself, my conversation with Lord Lyons and his remarks on this point would recur to my mind, and, notwithstanding the encouraging account given me by Mr. Douglas of the spirit and intent of Mr. Lincoln himself, this passage of his speech made an uncomfortable impression upon me, which I find it difficult even now to shake off. There is probably no good reason for this, as no one else with whom I have spoken to-day seems to have been

affected by the passage of the speech as I myself was, and I am conscious to-night that I have been in a morbid and uneasy mood during the whole day. Mr. Lincoln was visibly affected at the close of his speech, and threw a tone of strange but genuine pathos into a quaint, queerly constructed but not unpoetical passage with which he concluded it, not calculated to reassure those who, like myself, rely more upon common sense and cool statesmanship than upon sentiment for the safe conduct of public affairs.

Upon the public here generally the speech seems to have produced little effect, but the general impression evidently is that it prefigures a conciliatory and patient policy; and, so far, the day has been a gain for the country. I anticipate little from it at the far South, but much in the border States, and especially in Virginia, which just now undoubtedly holds the key of the situation.

AN INTERESTING MARYLAND VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

On my way back from the Capitol, I met —, of Maryland, who walked with me as far as Willard's. He spoke of the inaugural very contemptuously, and with evident irritation, I thought, and what he said strengthened my own feeling that it will be of use in allaying the excitement which his friends are trying so hard to foment, not only in Virginia, but in his own State. He makes no secret of his own desire to see Maryland and Virginia carry Washington out of the Union with them. When I suggested that other States had spent a good deal of money in Washington, and that there was a good deal of public property here which had been called into existence and value by the United States, and not by Maryland or Virginia, he advanced the singular doctrine that the soil belonged to these States, and that everything put upon it must go to them when they resumed their dominion over the soil. "The public buildings and the navy-yard here," he said, "belong to Virginia and Maryland just as much as the public buildings and the forts at Charleston belong to South Carolina." He did not relish my reply, I thought, which was to the effect that I agreed with him entirely as to the parity of the claims in both cases, and saw no more reason why the property of the United States at Washington should belong to Maryland and Virginia than why the property of the United States at Charleston should belong to South Carolina. He was very bitter about the presence of Senator Douglas at the side of Mr. Lincoln, and generally seemed to think that the day had not been a good one for the disruptionists. I hope he

is right, and, in spite of my own forebodings, I think he is. The Blairs were alluded to in our conversation, and he thundered at them as traitors to their own people. He said they were execrated in Maryland, and that no man of them would dare to enter the doors of the Maryland Club, and assured me that, only a few weeks ago, the neighbors of old Mr. Blair had sent him word that "a tree had been picked out for him in the woods." Much as I dislike the Blairs, and dread their influence on the new Administration, I felt constrained to tell — that, in my judgment, the amiable neighbors of Mr. Blair could do nothing more likely to make his son the next President of the United States than to execute the atrocious threat implied in such a message ; and so we parted. This effervescence of local sympathy, in and about Washington, with the secessionist plans and leaders, is most unfortunate, for it gives color to the inflammatory representations of men like Mr. Montgomery Blair, and supplies them with excuses for persuading General Scott into a course of military displays and demonstrations, to which his own unparalleled vanity alone would sufficiently incline him without such help.

THE CONFEDERATE COMMISSIONERS COMING.

On reaching home I found a letter from Mr. Forsyth, telling me that he will be in Washington shortly, as a Commissioner from the Confederate States with others, and intimating his own earnest wish to secure an amicable adjustment of the separation, which he insists upon as irreparable at least for the present. I shall be very glad to see him, for he is a man of unusual sense, and I do not believe he can have persuaded himself into the practicability of the fantastic schemes represented in this wild confederacy. I hope his colleagues may be as able men as himself, for, though I do not see how they are to be in any way officially recognized, their presence here, if they will hear and talk reason, may be very beneficial just now.

ONE OF THE PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES OF SECESSION.

Just after dinner I was called out by a card from Mr. Guthrie, introducing to me a man from his own State, who wished to see me on "business important, not to himself only." I found him a tall, quiet, intelligent-looking Kentuckian, who had an interest in a mail-route in the Southwest and in the Northern connections with it, and who was very anxious to get at some way of saving his

interest, by inducing the "Confederate Government" at Montgomery to make terms with him such as the Government had made. The man seemed an honest, worthy fellow, very much in earnest. He had copied out, on a slip of paper, Mr. Lincoln's allusion to his intended purpose of maintaining the mails, and I found that what he wished me to do was, to tell him whether I thought Mr. Seward or Mr. Lincoln would give him a kind of authority to take a contract for carrying the mails for the Government at Montgomery, on the same terms on which he held a contract with the Government here, so that there might be no interruption in the mail service. I assured him that I could not give him any light as to what Mr. Seward or Mr. Lincoln would or would not do, but that I would with pleasure give him a note to Mr. Seward, stating who had sent him to me, and what he wanted. This I did, and he went away expressing much gratitude. The incident struck me as but a beginning and inkling of the infinite vexations, annoyances, and calamities which this senseless and insufferable explosion of political passions and follies is destined to inflict upon the industrious people of this country and of all sections. What is most to be feared is the exasperating effect on the people generally of these things, and my own letters from home bear witness daily to the working of this dangerous leaven among classes not commonly too attentive to political affairs.

THE INAUGURATION BALL.

I walked around for half an hour this evening to the inauguration ball, thinking as I went of poor ——'s amazement and wrath at Mr. Seward's extraordinary proposition that the success of this entertainment would settle the question in favor of peace. It was a rash assertion on Mr. Seward's part, for never was there a more pitiable failure. The military nonsense of the day has doubtless had something to do with it; for ——, whom I met just after entering the great tawdry ballroom, assured me that the town was full of stories about a company of Virginia horsemen assembled beyond the Long Bridge with intent to dash into Washington, surround the ballroom, and carry off the new President a captive by the blaze of the burning edifice! The place was not half full, and such an assemblage of strange costumes, male and female, was never before seen, I am sure, in this city. Very few people of any consideration were there. The President looked exhausted and uncomfortable, and most ungainly in his dress, and Mrs. Lincoln, all in blue, with

a feather in her hair, and a highly-flushed face, was anything but an ornamental figure in the scene. Mr. Douglas was there, very civil and attentive to Mrs. Lincoln, with whom, as a matter of politeness, I exchanged a few observations of a commonplace sort. I had no opportunity of more than half a dozen words with Mr. Douglas, but I was glad to find that he was satisfied with the address and with the general outlook, though he agreed with me that the military part of the business had been shockingly and stupidly overdone. He was concerned too, I was surprised to find, about the nomination of Mr. Seward to-morrow, and gave me to understand that both the Blairs and Mr. Sumner have been at work to-day against it still. I promised to see — in the morning, before the meeting of the Senate, on the subject. —, of New York, who walked out of the absurd place with me, and accompanied me part of the way home, tells me that the real reason of Mr. Seward's anxiety for the success of this entertainment is, that the whole affair is a speculation gotten up by some followers of his in New York, and that he has been personally entreated by a New York politician who is very faithful to him, a Mr. Wakeman, to interest himself in its success!

Certainly Mr. Seward is one of the most perplexing men alive. I can not doubt his personal integrity or his patriotism, but he does certainly contrive to surround himself with the most objectionable people, and to countenance the strangest and the most questionable operations imaginable.