

Library of Congress

## Crusader and feminist; letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm

Publications of the Minnesota Historical Society *Edited by Theodore C. Blegen  
Superintendent of the Society*

THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY INSTITUTED 1849

Minn. hist. soc.

NARRATIVES AND DOCUMENTS Volume II

Jane Grey Swisshelm [From a photograph in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society.]

Crusader and Feminist *Letters of Mrs. JANE GREY (Cannon) SWISSHELM 1858-1865*

*Edited with an Introduction and Notes by ARTHUR J. LARSEN Head of the Newspaper  
Department, Minnesota Historical Society*

THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY *Saint Paul, 1934*

T 601 .M68 vol. 2 *Copyright, 1934, by the MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY St. Paul*

©CIA 77659 DEC 14 1934

v

### **Preface**

*The newspaper letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm, written from 1858 to 1865, are of historical interest from two points of view. They illuminate the mind of a remarkable woman of the Civil War era. As an editor in western Pennsylvania, on the Minnesota frontier, and in the national capital, Mrs. Swisshelm won wide fame in a period when it was unusual*

## Library of Congress

*for women to embark upon professional careers. She was an able and popular lecturer. During the Civil War she served as a government clerk and as a nurse to the wounded and sick soldier who were crowded into the hospitals of Washington. Her chief claim to distinction, however, rests upon her achievements as a controversialist—a flaming antislavery crusader and a dauntless champion of woman's rights. What manner of person was this editor, lecturer, war nurse, crusader, and feminist? In the letters herewith published Mrs. Swisshelm draws a self-portrait that effectively answer this question.*

*Interesting as is the author's portrayal of her own mind, the primary historical value of the letters lies in their picture of the times—the descriptions of places, the characterizations of people, the accounts of frontier travel, the comments on pioneer journalism, the reflections of public opinion, and the echoing of current, sometimes baseless, gossip. They contains a sharply etched record of what an observant and vi emotional woman saw, heard, thought, and felt as she journeyed about the young state of Minnesota and as she labored in the nation's capital in the time of Abraham Lincoln. Mrs. Swisshelm brings into she picture many of Minnesota's pioneer cities and towns, as well as old Fort Snelling in the days of the Civil and Sioux wars. She voices something of the popular psychology as to those two bloody crises. While she was in Washington she was sensitive to every wave of war feeling that washed the capital. Her letters offer, in a sense, a cinematographic view of rapidly changing scenes in a period of important happenings, with a talking accompaniment—trenchant and not infrequently ironical comments by an observer who, whatever the degree of her information, was never in doubt about her own mind.*

*The present volume was made possible by the late William B. Mitchell of St. Cloud, a nephew of Mrs. Swisshelm, who some years ago placed with the Minnesota Historical Society files of both the St. Cloud Visiter and the St. Cloud Democrat. The society is under deep obligation also to his daughters, Miss Eleanor Mitchell of St. Paul and Mrs. Leslie M. Poirier of St. Cloud, who made available for the editor a number of portraits and manuscripts and a partial file of the rare Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter. Mrs. Arthur J. Larsen has aided her husband at every stage in the editing of the volume. The task of*

## Library of Congress

*compiling the index and of seeing the book through the press has been done by Miss Mary E. Wheelhouse, with the assistance of Mrs. Larsen, both of the society's staff.*

Theodore C. Blegen Minnesota Historical Society St. Paul

vii

### **Contents**

#### INTRODUCTION I

I. CENTRAL MINNESOTA IN THE FIFTIES 33

II. THROUGH SOUTHERN MINNESOTA BY STAGE 53

III. THE EVE OF THE CIVIL WAR 84

IV. THE FIRST MINNESOTA 104

V. LECTURING IN 1862 126

VI. WAR-TIME WASHINGTON 159

VII. ECHOES OF THE SIOUX WAR 191

VIII. A UNION MEETING IN WASHINGTON 201

IX. WAR GOSSIP 211

X. HOSPITAL SERVICE 232

XI. OPINIONS AND COMMENTS 264

XII. RED MEN AND REBELS 270

## Library of Congress

XIII. THE END OF THE WAR 285

XIV. WOMEN WORKERS 307

INDEX 315

ix

### **Illustrations**

JANE GREY SWISSHELM *Frontispiece*

FACSIMILE OF THE ST. CLOUD VISITER 10

SYLVANUS B. LOWRY 18

THE ST. CLOUD DEMOCRAT OFFICE 19

OFFICERS OF THE FIRST MINNESOTA 106

ST. ANTHONY IN 1861 107

FACSIMILE OF THE ST. CLOUD DEMOCRAT 144

STEPHEN MILLER 266

SELF-PORTRAIT OF JANE GREY SWISSHELM 267

### **CRUSADER AND FEMINIST**

1

#### **Introduction**

On June 22, 1857, a small built woman in her early forties disembarked from a Mississippi Rivers steamboat at St. Paul, Minnesota, and, with her infant daughter in her arms, climber

## Library of Congress

into a stagecoach that was to bear her to St. Cloud. Few people noted her coming or recognized in this little, inoffensive-appearing person Jane Grey Swisshelm, for a decade the editor of one of the leading liberal newspapers of the country, the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter*, and a woman already known to the nation as a leader in the fight against slavery and in the movement to reform the legal status of women.

It was not as a reformer, however, that Mrs. Swisshelm came to Minnesota. The tyrannies of an unhappy marriage, endured for almost twenty years, had left her weary and ill; and it was in search of health and peace that she made the long journey from Pittsburgh to Minnesota, where, in the little frontier town of St. Cloud, some seventy miles above the Falls of St. Anthony, lived her only blood kin, a sister and her family. There she hoped to shape for herself and her child a new destiny.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul), June 23, 1857; *St. Paul Financial, Real Estate and Railroad Adviser*, June 27, 1857; *St. Cloud Visiter*, December 10, 1857.

Jane Grey Cannon was born at Pittsburgh on December 6, 1815, of Scotch-Irish parents, and was reared under the influence of a stern Scotch Covenanter theology. Made fatherless at the age of seven, she was forced to aid in eking out a slender family income by embroidering and later by painting, in both of which arts she showed considerable promise. Her formal education, acquired at a girl's boarding school, was cut short by a threat of tuberculosis, the disease from which her father and four of his children had died. Nevertheless, at fourteen she was a teacher in the public school at Wilkinsburg, a suburb of Pittsburgh. At fifteen, after a soul-searching conflict, she joined the church and was assured, to her satisfaction, that she "should be a thistle-digger in the vineyard; should be set to tasks from which other laborers shrank." Thus self-denial and adherence to a stern religious ideal were stamped upon her character when she was only a girl.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jane G. Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 37 (Chicago, 1880). Unless otherwise stated, the details of Mrs. Swisshelm's early life have been taken from this autobiography. Hereafter, until the time of her arrival in Minnesota, the volume will be cited only where quotations from it have been used. For other accounts of her life see Lester B. Shippee, "Jane Grey Swisshelm: Agitator," in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 7: 206-227

## Library of Congress

(December, 1920); S. J. Fisher, "Reminiscences of Jane Grey Swisshelm," in the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 4: 165-174 (July, 1921); and Bertha-Monica Stearns, "Reform Periodicals and Female Reformers, 1830-1860," in the *American Historical Review*, 37:689-693 (July, 1932).

When she was nineteen, James Swisshelm, a member of a leading Methodist family of Pittsburgh, fell in love with her. His persistent wooing swept her of her feet, and, in spite of her mother's belief that the proposed union was "incongruous" because of the wide religious difference between them, Jane and James were married on November 18, 1836. Swisshelm's mother, a domineering and aggressive woman, caused trouble from the start, for she determined to retain her influence over her son and relegated his bride to a minor place in the household. The religious element also played a part in promoting discord, for both mother and son tried to convert Jane to the Methodist faith and, more, to make a Methodist preacher of her. As a result of their attempt to coerce her, she left her husband within a year and returned to live with her mother. Swisshelm visited her there once or twice a week. She was still hopeful that she could make a success of her marriage, however, and when her husband bought a wagon shop in Wilkinsburg, she consented to live in a house that he built in the rear of it. He continued to live with his mother, while Jane kept house for the man he hired to run the shop. Swisshelm visited her frequently, but he gave no indication that he would leave his mother. During the months that followed, Jane resumed her long-neglected painting and devoted hours to a portrait of her husband. It was apparently during this period that she also made a portrait of herself. She became so deeply engrossed in her painting, however, that she slighted her duties as a housewife, and conscience stricken, she gave it up. It was not until many years later that she returned to her brush and palette.

In June, 1838, because the constant wife her mother-in-law was beginning to tell on Jane's health, Swisshelm took her to Louisville, Kentucky, where he went into business with an elder brother. In Louisville she received the third great impression of her life. As a child she had been deeply effected by the religion of her Presbyterian forefathers; as a young woman she had suffered disillusionment concerning marriage; now she came face to face

## Library of Congress

with slavery in some of its most heartless aspects. She saw hordes of men, to use her own emphatic phrase, “whose business it was to insult every woman who ventured on the streets without a male protector, by a stare so lascivious as could not be imagined 4 on American free soil.” and who “lived, in whole or in part, by the sale of their own children, and the labor of the mothers extorted by the lash.”<sup>3</sup> The repugnance for the institution ingrained in her by a pastor in her youth was strengthened by first-hand contact. Inherently frank, she could tolerance no subterfuge, and when, as frequently happened, she was asked for her opinion of slavery, she openly expressed her hatred of it. She so incensed her southern neighbors that they threatened to give her a coat of tar and feathers if she persisted in voicing her heretical beliefs.

### 3 Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 53.

Her husband's new business did not prosper, and Mrs. Swisshelm took it upon herself to aid in earning their livelihood. She started a school for Negroes, but was forced to give it up when threats were made to burn her house if she continued it. Finally she turned to sewing, and built up a lucrative and substantial business fitting corsets for fashionable women. All went well until the summer of 1839, when her mother became seriously ill of cancer and sent for her. Her husband, fearing that her absence would result in the ruin of the business, forbade her to go; but she followed her own inclination, and, until her mother died in January, 1840, remained with her. Then Swisshelm, who in the meantime had persistently urged her to return to Louisville, threatened to present a bill to the administrators of his mother-in-laws' estate for his wife's services as nurse. That he was legally empowered to do so filled Mrs. Swisshelm with an overwhelming sense of shame, for it seemed to reduce her to a state of vassalage. This experience was a powerful influence in shaping her attitude toward the legal rights of married women.

5

Shortly after her mother's death, Mrs. Swisshelm was engaged as a teacher in Butler Seminary at Butler, Pennsylvania, at a salary of twenty-five dollars a month. She remained there about two years, and apparently was very happy. During that time she wrote a

## Library of Congress

series of articles attacking capital punishment, which were published anonymously in a Butler newspaper. In the summer of 1842, under the pen name "Jennie Deans," she wrote stories and poems for the *Dollar Newspaper* and *Neal's Saturday Gazette* of Philadelphia. She also contributed a number of articles on slavery and woman's rights to the *Spirit of Liberty*, a Pittsburgh antislavery paper. In 1844 that paper published, under her own name, a hexameter rhyme in which she named and condemned the Methodist ministers in the vicinity who, during a conference of their church in 1840, had been responsible for the passage of the "Black Gag" rule, which forbade colored members of the church to testify in church courts against white members in any state where they were forbidden to do so in civil courts. Thereafter her contributions, in which she defended herself against the criticisms that were heaped upon her, were frequent. She also wrote in support of James G. Birney, who in 1844, as in 1840, was the Liberty party candidate for the presidency.

The *Spirit of Liberty* was suspended soon after the election, and it appeared that Pittsburgh would have to do without a liberal paper. There was, however, a strong Whig paper, the Pittsburgh *Commercial Journal*, edited by Robert M. Riddle, and Mrs. Swisshelm made it a medium for the expression of her views on slavery and woman's rights. In the fall of 1847 a new abolitionist paper, the *Albatross*, began publication, but in, too, died after a few months. Upon its suspension, Mrs. Swisshelm entered upon a new career. 6 Determined that Pittsburgh should have an abolitionist paper, she brought into existence the *Saturday Visiter*.

The first issue of the *Saturday Visiter* on December 20, 1847, created furor among newspaper men, for a woman editor was an anomaly among them. Throughout the nation, she reported, editors pounced upon this female who dared to invade their province. "Democratic roosters straightened out their necks and ran screaming with terror," she wrote. "Whig coons scampered up trees and barked furiously." But their consternation had little effect. Those who attacked her quailed before the bitter sarcasm of her replies; to



## Library of Congress

kindly editors she was grateful. Before long all recognized that Jane Grey Swisshelm was in the editorial profession to say.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 113. The reception of the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter* is described by Mrs. Swisshelm in a series of "Letters to Mrs. Brown," which appeared in the *Visiter* for January 15, 22, and 29, 1848.

As editor of the *Visiter*, Mrs. Swisshelm constantly defended the antislavery cause. During the campaign of 1848, however, she fell into disgrace with the extreme radicals, because she forsook the Birney clan and hoisted the standard of Martin Van Buren. Her purpose, she afterwards stated, was to "smash one of the great pro-slavery parties of the nation, or gain an anti-slavery balance of power to counteract the slavery vote for which both contended." Slave catching was the specific menace at Pittsburgh against which she fought. At the outset of her editorial career she became involved in a fiery dispute with a federal district judge when she attacked his decision in a fugitive-slave case. She was threatened with a suit for libel, but, holding steadfastly to her original stand, she outargued him and made him appear ridiculous. Thereafter, it was said, the judge was "more afraid of her than of the devil." For the slave catcher Mrs. Swisshelm had the utmost repugnance. "Any one," she <sup>7</sup> declared, "who for a twenty dollar fee would aid in tearing a man from his family and consign him to the condition of a brute beast ought to be held without the range of human sympathy. We would not let such a biped sleep in our barn or take a drink at our pump."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 119, 122; *Saturday Visiter*, December 25, 1847, January 8, 22, March 4, 1848; Stearns, in the *American Historical Review*, 37:690.

Mrs. Swisshelm regarded the Mexican War as a war solely for the conquest of additional lands for slaveholders. In order to be present when Congress considered the question of the final disposition of the territory acquired by the war, she went to Washington in the spring of 1850. Her impression of the capital was that it reeked with filth and corruption, and that the slaveholders were in power and "cracked their slave-whips over the heads of the doughfaces sent from the Northern States." No gossip about those who urged compromise was too infamous for her to believe, and, when a scandalous story came to

## Library of Congress

her cars concerning the private life of Daniel Webster, she repeated the tale through the columns of the *Visiter*. A storm of denunciation promptly descended upon her head. She apologized for spreading the gossip, but retained a profound conviction that it was true.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 128, 131-135; *Saturday Visiter*, April 20, May 4, 25, 1850; Stearns, in the *American Historical Review*, 37:691; *Minnesota Pioneer* (St. Paul), June 20, 1850.

The slavery issue did not occupy her whole attention during this period. Her unhappy experiences as a wife led her to agitate for reform in the legal status of married women. Pungent editorials on that topic appeared in the *Visiter*, and she afterwards prided herself upon having had some part in improving the status of the wife in Pennsylvania law. She was a strong advocate of temperance, but she believed that it was useless to attempt to reform a drunkard. She <sup>8</sup> considered it “a crime for a woman to become the mother of a drunkard's child,” and she declared that “she who fails to protect her child from the drunken fury of any man, even to the extent of taking his life on the spot, if possible, is a coward and a traitor to the highest impulses of humanity.” She was partial to woman's suffrage, but she refused to affiliate with any of the organizations working to that end. The church, too, came under her scrutiny, and she engaged in several sharp controversies with members of the Catholic clergy, thereby making many enemies and losing many subscribers, both Catholic and Protestant; for “business men did not care to be known to Catholic customers as a patron of a paper which had strenuously opposed the policy of the church.” A softer side of her character is revealed in a series of friendly “Letters to Country Girls,” which appeared regularly in her paper and which in 1853 were published in book form.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 149, 152.

In 1852 the *Saturday Visiter* united with Riddle's *Journal*, under the title *Family Journal and Visiter*. Mrs Swisshelm retained her connection with the paper, although her health, delicate since the birth of a daughter in 1851, was breaking under the double burden of editorial duties and household tasks. Moreover, although the paper had six thousand

## Library of Congress

or more subscribers, its publication was a severe drain on her slender resources. In the fall of 1856 she suffered a breakdown induced by these circumstances and the unhappiness of her home situation, and in March, 1857, she severed her connection with the paper. Surrendering also to the reality of her marital failure, she resolved that she and her husband should live their own lives, and she made plans for a separation. This her husband strenuously combated, and she had to go through a brief but sharp struggle in the courts to secure her personal property.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *St. Cloud Visitor*, December 10, 1857; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 168, 216. In 1861 Swisshelm divorced his wife on the ground of desertion.

Thoroughly disillusioned and almost heartbroken, Mrs. Swisshelm cast about for some haven; and it was only natural that she should turn to her sister in far-off Minnesota. Her sister's husband, Henry Z. Mitchell, procured a forty-acre claim for her on the shore of a little lake some twelve miles from St. Cloud, and there, with "no sound of strife ... but those of waves, winds, birds and insects," Mrs. Swisshelm hoped to find a happiness that she had failed to discover in Pennsylvania. But her dream of a vine-covered cottage by the lake soon faded in the face of grim reality. In distant Kansas free-soilers were clashing with proslavery men, and the border territory seemed about to plunge into a bloody guerrilla war. To forestall such a calamity the federal government sought to reënforce the troops already in the territory, and among other measures called away the garrison at the frontier post of Fort Ripley in Minnesota. Upon Mrs. Swisshelm's arrival in St. Cloud her sister and brother-in-law protested that it would be madness for a woman, unused to the frontier, to make her home alone in a wilderness infested with uncurbed savages, and persuaded her to live with them for the time being.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 169, 170; *St. Cloud Visitor*, December 10, 1857.

Mrs. Swisshelm could ill afford to remain idle, however, for her funds were running low. When, therefore, the owner of a defunct newspaper proposed that she revive and edit his paper, she accepted the offer on terms distinctly her own. The *Minnesota Advertiser* of St. Cloud had always been a Democratic mouthpiece, and the owner of the equipment,

## Library of Congress

10 George F. Brott, was a staunch Democrat. She insisted that the paper should express her views, however, and Brott was wise enough to see that a paper edited by the widely known Mrs. Swisshelm would bring to St. Cloud much more publicity than could any ordinary political sheet.<sup>10</sup> The first issue of the new paper appeared on December 10, 1857. Perhaps it was a sentimental whim that caused the editor to name the paper the *St. Cloud Visiter*; she even retained the quaint spelling of the *Saturday Visiter*—Samuel Johnson's dictionary was her authority—and the motto that had guided it, “Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.” Although she had only a small amount of type and a limited supply of paper and although her press was six hundred miles or more from the nearest type foundry or paper mill, she promised to issue the *Visiter* regularly.

10 *St. Cloud Visiter*, May 13, 1858.

Those who may have expected a conservative sheet from Mrs. Swisshelm were destined to be disappointed with the appearance of the first issue of the *Visiter*. It contained the creed of the paper, wherein the editor declared that “the Bible, and the Constitution of the United States are anti- slavery; and human chattledom is unconstitutional in any association professing to receive either as fundamental law.” She waxed satirical in expressing her opinion on woman's rights: “Paying taxes is as unwomanly as voting; and is a privilege which should be exclusively confined to ‘white male citizens, of this and other countries.’” St. Cloud, she said, “in despite of all we could do to prevent, will, at no distant day, be a large city; and it is our duty now, to do what we can in laying the foundations for as much of the good, and building defences against as much, as possible, of the evil attending these hoards of crippled humanity.” Her motto

Facsimile of *St. Cloud Visiter* [From a copy in the files of the Minnesota Historical Society.]

11

was the true philosophy of life, she declared; “if the path of duty lies through the deep waters, ‘go forward!’ and the irresistible right arm shall divide the waves.” Advocates of slavery found little encouragement in the new organ, for it threatened unremitting warfare

## Library of Congress

on them. It promised a stubborn fight for the rights of women; it recommended sturdy adherence to the humbler tenets of virtue; and it pledged staunch championship of the interests of St. Cloud.

This venture in Minnesota journalism was a bold undertaking, for the region, however much it needed the newspaper, was quite incapable of supporting it. The country was new and it had already received a number of serious blows to its prosperity. In March, 1857, a band of renegade Sioux Indians had scattered panic throughout the frontier by massacres at Spirit Lake, Iowa, and in southern Minnesota; during the following summer the entire western region of Minnesota had been scourged by grasshoppers; and, in the late fall of the year, the effects of the panic, which deflated] the great American boom of the fifties, reached Minnesota. Consequently, Mrs. Swisshelm somewhat ruefully confessed, the *Visiter's* list of patrons was "shorter than the roll of Gideon's army, and a large proportion of them must eat potatoes and corn meal this winter for want of money to buy flour." In the spring of 1858 she estimated that the expenses of the *Advertiser* and the *Visiter* together had amounted to \$2,500, exclusive of the original outlay of \$800 for the press and equipment. With the exception of \$300, which had been contributed by another of the St. Cloud proprietors, this entire expenditure had been borne by Brott. The total receipts of the two papers were \$462.55. Brott was worried by this constant drain on his resources, and Mrs. Swisshelm was unable to understand why he, who was only 12 one of a half dozen or more landed proprietors of St. Cloud, should bear the brunt of the expense while all reaped the benefits of the advertising that the paper gave the village.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Visiter*, December 10, 1857, March 4, 1858.

Support for the paper from the other proprietors was not readily forthcoming, however. Since the first settlement of the region, political control had rested with the Democratic party. While this situation was typical of Minnesota, the Democratic party was particularly strong in northern Minnesota chiefly because of its unusual leadership. In the person of Sylvanus B. Lowry, the region had a dictator. Before the organization of Minnesota as a territory, Lowry had settled at a point about ten miles above St. Cloud, where he

## Library of Congress

established a trading post. In 1853, when he was adjutant general of the territory, he had removed to St. Cloud and had laid out an addition to the village. Lowry was a man of ingratiating personality and winning manners, as even Mrs. Swisshelm admitted. He was a Tennessean by birth and a Democrat in principle, and as such he was tolerant of slavery. He had become wealthy in Minnesota, and he exercised great power in the matter of political patronage. Indeed, most of the federal officers of northern Minnesota owed their appointments to him. In his “imposing” home he lived in “semi-barbaric splendor” and from there dictated the political destinies of his neighbors. It was inevitable that he and Mrs. Swisshelm should clash.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Warren Upham and Rose B. Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies, 1655-1912*, 452 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 14—St. Paul, 1912); Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 171.

Mrs. Swisshelm felt that Lowry should contribute to the support of the *Visiter*, but he was not disposed to aid a paper that was antagonistic to his political party. Early in February, 1858, he suggested that she might find it advantageous to <sup>13</sup> change her political allegiance. He assured her that there was sufficient property in St. Cloud to support “two papers, or at least to sustain one *well*, and make it second to none in the Territory.”<sup>13</sup> If the suggestion was made in earnest, it is evident that Lowry had greatly underestimated the caliber of the editor or that he fatuously believed that his influence could sway her from her purpose. The result was disastrous to him.

<sup>13</sup> *Visiter*, June 24, 1858.

On February 18, 1858, Mrs. Swisshelm fired the first broadside at Lowry. In an editorial entitled “A Change and the Reasons,” she exposed the whole transaction. “Since our last issue,” she wrote, “we have concluded to make the *Visiter* an Administration organ, to support Mr. Buchanan's measures and advocate his re-election. ... Now, good friends, do not be so angry, but that if you strike you will also stop and hear us.” She then laid before her readers her reasons for supporting Buchanan. The Constitution, she declared, had become the “Magna Charta of a Southern gentleman's right to whip women, rob mothers

## Library of Congress

of their children, and sell upon the auction block the souls for whom the Lord of Glory assumed humanity and laid down his life upon the cross. ... We believe the Democratic party is likely to succeed in reducing all the poor and friendless of this country to a state of slavery." Under Buchanan's rule, she added, the country would have an excellent chance of reaching quickly "the point which shall answer to that 'good old time,' the middle of the thirteenth century, when kingcraft and priestcraft shall be triumphant, and the masses shall be provided with masters to exact their labor and furnish them with their peck of corn each week"; and she promised to labor faithfully for his reelection. The friends of the Buchanan administration, she feared, "will not all approve of our plan of aiding its measures, but we think a little reflection will teach such that there is no longer any occasion for concealment."

Lowry was angered by this onslaught, and demanded that Mrs. Swisshelm desist.<sup>14</sup> It was not her wont to give up a fight once it had begun, however, and on March 4 she followed her first attack with an editorial in the *Visiter* on the local political situation. "Follow-my-leader Democracy," she declared, "is the manifest destiny of this region, not that there is anything in the air unfavorable to freedom or individual opinions, but that the first settler here is a Southern gentleman, one who possesses in a high degree the qualities which have enabled 300,000 slaveholders to govern 25,000,000 of men, who by the Declaration of Independence ought to have been their political equals. ... Well, a majority of our people are German Catholic and no free people on earth are so trained to habits of veneration and obedience, except the small fry of northern office seekers. ... 'He manages the Dutch!' say they and but for him demagogues would have everything their own way; but——has only to speak and the Germans all wheel into line."

<sup>14</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 181.

In a fury, the Lowry forces resolved to crush this rash woman, and they selected James C. Shepley, personal attorney for Lowry, to do it. On the night of March 10 he delivered a lecture on "Woman," in which he divided women into four classes: the coquette, the flirt, the old maid, and the strong-minded woman who dabbled in politics. In each of these save



## Library of Congress

the last he found something to commend; for the woman in politics he had only scorn. The speech was gracefully delivered, and was received with loud acclaim by the 15 Lowry adherents. That night they held a celebration in honor of the victory over the meddlesome editor of the *Visiter*.

But they had reckoned without Mrs. Swisshelm, and the celebration was premature. When the next issue of the *Visiter* appeared, more than a column was devoted to a review of the speech. The editor praised Shepley's keen understanding of women, but pointed out that he had neglected one class of women, "the large, thick-skinned, coarse, sensual-featured, loud-mouthed double-fisted dames, whose entrance into a room appears to take one's breath, whose conversational tones are audible at the furthest side of the next square, whose guffahs resound across a mile wide river, and who talk with an energy which makes the saliva fly like—showers of melted pearls. ... Her triumphs consist in card-table successes, displays of cheap finery, and in catching marriageable husbands for herself and her poor relations."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Visiter*, March 18, 1858. There is an account of the celebration in Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, *Short as Any Dream*, 165-183 (New York, 1929).

The Lowry camp was thrown into consternation. In the card-playing frontier belle, Shepley believed that he saw a caricature of his wife, who was pretty and buxom and possessed a full, hearty laugh. At the premature celebration in honor of the annihilation of Mrs. Swisshelm, she had been the belle and had won at cards. Furthermore, her sister was engaged to marry Dr. Benjamin Palmer, a boarder at the Shepley home. Mrs. Swisshelm stoutly denied that it had been her intention to draw a portrait of Mrs. Shepley, and a short time later she published an editorial in which she described two women of her acquaintance who were addicted to card playing; on them, she claimed, was based her description 16 of the frontier belle. Perhaps she relented of her ruthless warfare on the Shepleys and published the later editorial in an attempt to assuage the wounds she had caused in her first fury. The damage had been done, however, and the whole community awaited new developments. On the night of March 24 three men, afterwards identified as



## Library of Congress

Shepley, Lowry, and Palmer, broke into the office of the *Visiter*. They destroyed the press, scattered some of the type in the street, and threw the rest into the Mississippi River. On a table in the wrecked room they left a curt note:

The citizens of St. Cloud have determined to abate the nuisance of which you have made the "Visiter" a striking specimen.

The[y] have decided that it is fit only for the inmates of Brothels, and you seem to have had some experience of the tastes of such persons.

You will never have the opportunity to repeat the offence in this town, without paying a more serious penalty than you do now. By order of the Committee of Vigilance<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Visiter*, May 13, June 17, 1858; Sergeant, *Short as Any Dream*, 156. The original note is in the possession of Miss Eleanor Mitchell of St. Paul, a grandniece of Mrs. Swisshelm.

Public resentment was aroused by this rude turn of affairs, and a number of the more stable business men of the town called a mass meeting for the evening of March 25. At the meeting it was voted to procure a new press, new type, and sufficient capital for Mrs. Swisshelm to carry on the publication of the *Visiter*, and resolutions were adopted severely condemning the perpetrators of the outrage. Several persons of public prominence spoke, and finally Mrs. Swisshelm, disregarding threats of bodily harm, appeared before the gathering and, in her first public address, gave her version of the whole affair. The report of the meeting was sent to all leading Republican newspapers of the territory, <sup>17</sup> and political capital was made of the event. It was copied by papers throughout the nation, and focused attention on northern Minnesota. Almost unanimously, the act of violence was condemned, and cries for "freedom of the press" were raised.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Visiter*, May 13, 1858.

In the meantime the conspirators, doubtless alarmed at the furor created by their action, were also busy. While the meeting of the Swisshelm group was in session, the Lowry cohorts assembled in a neighboring hall, where Shepley repeated his speech on "Woman."

## Library of Congress

He then took stage for St. Paul and wrote a letter, which was published in the *Pioneer and Democrat* for April 2, admitting his part in the destruction of the press and assuming full responsibility for the act. He denied that there was any political motive behind the deed, which he defended on the grounds that Mrs. Swisshelm had grossly insulted his wife and that he had reason to believe that the forthcoming issue of her paper was to contain another "libellous attack worse than the first." Brott, the owner of the plant, he said, had been absent from St. Cloud at the time, and, since there was no one to restrain Mrs. Swisshelm, he, Shepley, had resorted to a drastic method to prevent the appearance of the paper. Lowry, too, exerted his influence in Shepley's defense. In a lengthy letter published in the *Sauk Rapids Frontiersman* for April 29 he attempted to show that Mrs. Swisshelm had attacked Mrs. Shepley without cause and that that was the sole reason for the destruction of the press.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Visiter*, May 13, 1858.

In spite of the property damage, Mrs. Swisshelm had the advantage in this struggle for supremacy in St. Cloud. New equipment was rushed to her, and on May 13 the *Visiter* resumed publication. She pushed her advantage as far as

Sylvanus B. Lowry [From a photograph in the possession of the Mitchell family.]

The St. Cloud Democrat Office [From a negative in the possession of the Mitchell family.]

<sup>19</sup> Lowry quarrel. The new paper was introduced with these words: "We have pledged *our* honor that the paper we edit will discuss any subject we have a mind. ... If these fellows destroy our office again, as they now threaten to do we will go down to Hennepin County; and publish the St. Cloud *Democrat* there." The opposition was silenced. Never again did anyone seriously challenge Mrs. Swisshelm's right to publish anything in her paper that she saw fit. Until the opening of the Civil War she continued to hurl sarcasm and invective at her there major enemies.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Democrat*, August 5, 1858, May 8, 1862, December 21, 1865; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 194, 296. Mrs. Swisshelm's attitude toward Lowry changed in 1862, when he

## Library of Congress

suddenly became insane and was taken to a private sanitorium in Cincinnati. During occasional periods of lucidity he corresponded with Mrs. Swisshelm, and a friendly relationship existed between them until his death in 1865. Shepley and Palmer she never forgave.

It was to be expected that Mrs. Swisshelm would become involved in religious disputes. Early in January, 1858, she wrote an editorial condemning the promiscuous kissing that, she said, went on at church parties. In place of that "disgusting absurdity" she recommended dancing. "The most indelicate dance which we have ever seen," she declared, "is modest and virtuous when compared with promiscuous kissing." The Reverend Thomas E. Inman of the First Methodist Church of St. Cloud at once took her to task for advocating something that was "inseparable from drunkenness and quarrelling." A brisk controversy followed, and on one occasion Inman devoted an entire sermon to an attack on her, quoting alternately from the *Visiter* and the Bible. Both Inman and Mrs. Swisshelm used the Bible liberally as authority, and it was difficult to determine which presented the more convincing argument.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Visiter*, January 14, February 18, March 4, 18, 1858.

One other religious controversy here deserves mention. <sup>20</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm's religious theory could not reconcile slavery with Christianity. When, therefore, the Reverend Thomas Calhoun, a brother-in-law of Lowry, came to St. Cloud to preach gratuitously to the Presbyterians of the region, she refused to join the congregation because of his attitude towards slavery. A series of private conversations with him convinced her that he was opposed to slavery and that he contemplated emancipating his own slaves, of which he had several. While he was at St. Cloud, however, a Negro slave whom he had with him gave birth to a child, and he sent the mother and child back to Tennessee to servitude. Mrs. Swisshelm at once addressed an open letter to him in the columns of the *Democrat*, accusing him of insincerity. Calhoun, indignant at having public attention called to what he felt to be his private affairs, refused to answer; whereupon she published a second letter, in which she threatened him with criminal action on a charge of kidnapping and enslaving a child born on free soil. Calhoun still refused to be drawn into the argument,

## Library of Congress

and the charge was dropped for the time being. Several months later, as Calhoun and his wife were driving a cutter over a bridge across a ravine in St. Cloud, the horse shied and crashed through a frail protective railing, plunging the vehicle and its occupants to the frozen ground twenty-five feet below. Calhoun suffered injuries of which he died a short time later. In one of her subsequent notices of the accident, Mrs. Swisshelm made reference to the slave mother and child, whom, she asserted, he had exchanged for the very horse “which fell over the bridge with him and caused his death.” She was accused by a prominent Democrat of making political of the occurrence because of Calhoun's relationship with Lowry.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Democrat* September 30, November 11, 1858, February 24, April 7, 1859. 21

Mrs. Swisshelm had found in her first experience in public speaking—her address at the mass meeting following the destruction of her press—“the revelation of a talent hidden in a napkin.”<sup>23</sup> When, therefore, she was asked to speak at one of a series antislavery meetings in St. Anthony, she readily accepted the invitation. On November 15 and 16, 1858, she addressed packed houses in St. Anthony and Minneapolis. By special arrangement, the proceeds from the nominal admission charge were given to her to aid in financing the *Democrat*. These addresses, which brought to her the realization that from the speaking platform she could greatly enlarge her sphere of influence, began a new phase of her career. At least once during each of the next four years she toured Minnesota, giving voice to her opinions on important questions of the day. The two speeches that she gave most frequently were entitled “Woman and Politics” and “Slavery as I Have Seen It in a Slave State.” When the Civil War broke out, she added another, “Woman in the War of the Rebellion”; and after 1862 she often lectured on “The Indian Massacres of Minnesota; the Wrongs of the Poor Indian and What Should Be Done with Him.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 214. <sup>24</sup> See *post*, 33, and the *Minnesota Republican* (St. Anthony and Minneapolis), November 12, 1858.

## Library of Congress

During the intervals between trips she was busy attacking the evils of the political situation, national as well as local. The land office of the St. Cloud district, representing the stronghold of the Buchanan Democracy in northern Minnesota, drew her fire repeatedly. When Samuel L. Hays, receiver of the office, delivered a proslavery speech, she denounced him as a “free lover” as well as a proponent of slavery. When, a short time later, William A. Caruthers, register of the office, ran afoul of Mrs. Swisshelm's acrid pen, 22 he cried out bitterly against her “dirty sheet.” Her reply was characteristic: “Sure enough! So it is, and what else could it be? This sheet does occasionally *wrap (rap)* Colonel Caruthers; and how could it be clean after such a process?” She accused the local land office of speculating in land warrants and coercing voters by manipulating land sales.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Democrat*, February 24, April 21, August 11, 1859, June 14, 1860.

Mrs. Swisshelm repeatedly asserted that she was not a Republican. Nevertheless, her championship of Republican principles had become so marked by the fall of 1858 that she was recognized as a leader of the party. A defeated Democratic candidate, she reported, sneeringly remarked to his Republican opponent, “Your party is led by that little, old woman of the *Democrat!*” During the tense moments of the preëlection campaign of 1859 the situation in the state was so critical that the national Republican organization sent a battery of its best speakers to stump Minnesota for the local candidates. While Galusha A. Grow, one of these emergency speakers, was delivering his St. Cloud address, a group of Moccasin Democrats gathered in front of the lecture hall and burned an effigy of Mrs. Swisshelm as “the mother of the Republican party.” No more striking way could have been chosen to emphasize the leadership of that diminutive fighter for freedom. The event aroused her ire, and she commented editorially, “Mobbing women and burning them in effigy is suitable employment for the American Democrats, and we like to see them stick to their trade.” The following week she addressed her tormentors thus: “If you should take us, instead of a straw figure, and burn us we would talk to you all the time—talk to you, so that you would never cease to hear it the longest day of your lives.” She continued to

## Library of Congress

fight her battles for the 23 eradication of the slaveholding Democracy, and as the years progressed she had the satisfaction of seeing the Republican group grow stronger and the Moccasinites lose their power.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Democrat*, October 21, 1858, September 15, 1859; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 201.

When the campaign of 1860 loomed on the horizon, Mrs. Swisshelm announced her advocacy of William H. Seward for president and Cassius M. Clay for vice president. Her choice of Seward was based on an admiration of long standing; Clay won her support because of his championship of free speech in Kentucky. The nomination of Lincoln and Hamlin she received without noticeable enthusiasm. Lincoln's chief merit, she thought, lay in his defeat of Douglas in the debates of 1858. "Much as we regret the defeat of Seward," she said, "we are willing to admit that the nomination of Lincoln is probably the best that could have been made under the circumstances. It is one of the worst features of a Republican Government, that the men who have done the most to give tone and permanence to its institutions and whose genius commands respect and attention for it, from abroad, should be the first to suffer by its neglect." The nomination of Lincoln would, she thought, attract the vote of the laboring men of the North.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> See *post*, 57, and the *Democrat*, May 17, June 14, 1860.

Mrs. Swisshelm did not enter whole-heartedly into Lincoln's campaign, however, until late in September. When numerous Democratic newspapers in the state endeavored to show that the Republican ticket was inimical to the much desired homestead legislation, she went to the defense of Lincoln and Hamlin. Recalling the charge of coercion she had made against the administration earlier in the summer, she now declared that the sale of lands advertised to take place in October, 1860, was likewise a vote-getting scheme, <sup>24</sup> which would "drive hundreds, we fear thousands of families from their homes and turn these over to speculators." When the election was over, she sat back contentedly and announced that even Stearns County, hitherto almost solidly Democratic, was virtually "Republicanized."

## Library of Congress

In the nation at large conditions immediately assumed a serious aspect. South Carolina was threatening to withdraw from the Union. Mrs. Swisshelm thought that South Carolina would not go so far as to secede, but, she declared, "We certainly do not want to hold her as a subjugated province." When Seward, once her idol, proposed to conciliate the rebelling states, however, she turned on him in fury, and she thanked Horace Greeley for having kept him from the presidency. She did not want war, but she would not compromise with the South.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See *ante*, and the *Democrat*, September 27, October 11, November 8, 15, December 27, 1860, January 10, 1861.

On April 12, 1861, the Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter and three days later President Lincoln called on the states to contribute seventy-five thousand volunteers. Governor Alexander Ramsey hastened to offer the services of one thousand Minnesota men to aid in suppressing the rebellion. The St. Cloud military organization voted not to respond to the call, because, the members said, if they did so the frontier would be left without protection when the regular garrisons at the frontier forts were called to Washington. Mrs. Swisshelm, however, said that the real reason for the refusal was that everyone mistrusted the administration. Lincoln's policy of distributing favors to men regardless of party affiliation had not increased Democratic regard for him, she remarked, and it had certainly weakened his position with the Republicans. "An administration which has systematically disowned its friends and rewarded its enemies, <sup>25</sup> can not expect very enthusiastic support." The Republicans at St. Cloud, however, were reassured when Henry Z. Mitchell was appointed local postmaster, and by April 29 thirty men had volunteered.

Although Mrs. Swisshelm had heartily disapproved of war with the South, the capture of Fort Sumter somewhat altered her attitude. She gradually came to accept the war as inevitable and conscientiously tried to aid the administration. In particular, she directed her energies to satisfying the needs of the St. Cloud men who had enlisted in the First Minnesota. She suggested that the women of the community provide them with extra



## Library of Congress

socks, towels, blankets, soap, and work bags containing needles and thread. When no one else in St. Cloud assumed the initiative, she organized her own volunteer aid society, of which she was “President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Manager and all the members.” She obtained from the business men of the town donations of goods, which she persuaded the ladies of the Baptist Sewing Circle to make into hospital supplies. The organization was to be a “permanent institution, until a more efficient substitute” should be provided.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Democrat*, April 25, May 2, June 6, September 12, 1861.

Her attitude toward war gradually took definite shape. She had always been somewhat skeptical of Lincoln's policies, and the early events of his administration did not remove her distrust. Once she was convinced that war was necessary, his conciliatory program could not meet with her approval. She desired firmness and dispatch; Lincoln proceeded slowly and deliberately. She heartily detested slavery and insisted that it be abolished. Lincoln detested slavery too; but he understood the danger of alienating the border states of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri by precipitous action. <sup>26</sup> As the war progressed and he continued his conciliatory policy, she grew more and more impatient. One military defeat after another focused her wrath on the luckless officers in command of the Union forces and on the administration, which she felt was partly to blame for their failures. In the end, as might have been expected, she swung over to the radical wing of the Republicans headed by Horace Greeley. John C. Frémont became her especial deity, and Edwin M. Stanton, Democrat though he was, bore the stamp of her approval.

Late in the summer of 1862 the Minnesota frontier was shocked and terrified by the bloody revolt of the Sioux Indians, in which hundreds of white inhabitants were massacred. Although the principal scene of action was in the Minnesota River Valley, the post at Fort Abercrombie was attacked, and the Indians committed murders and depredations as near St. Cloud as Sauk Center and were seen at Maine Prairie, a scant dozen miles away. During the tense days of the outbreak Mrs. Swisshelm issued daily bulletins relating the news that filtered in. Living as close to the Chippewa as they did, the people of St. Cloud



## Library of Congress

were in constant fear that those Indians also might revolt. During the weeks of August and September Mrs. Swisshelm completely altered her attitude toward the Indians. "Before going to Minnesota," she wrote, "I had the common Cooper idea of the dignity and glory of the noble red man of the forest." Her admiration for the Indians appears to have changed to contempt during her first year in Minnesota, for in 1858 she declared that the Indians "are simply a set of lazy, impudent beggars, affecting to despise the arts of civilized life while most anxious to avail themselves of the proceeds of these arts, provided they can do so by begging or stealing, which they regard as honorable, while working is quite beneath their dignity." With the outbreak of hostilities, she came to fear and hate them. She favored a policy of merciless persecution of the Indians, and she vigorously denied that whites and Indians could live peaceably side by side. "Exterminate the wild beasts," she demanded, "and make peace with the devil and all his hosts sooner than with these red-jawed tigers whose fangs are dripping with the blood of the innocents!"<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Democrat*, December 9, 1858, August 28, September 4, 11, November 13, 1862; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 223.

The hanging on December 26, 1862, of thirty-eight Sioux convicted of murder during the outbreak afforded her a modicum of satisfaction, but she demanded more. She bitterly resented the interference of Bishop Henry B. Whipple, the missionaries Stephen R. Riggs and John P. Williamson, and others who strove to lighten the burden of punishment for the remainder of the Sioux. Convinced of the guilt of the Indians and certain that the massacres were inspired by southern men, she fought the missionaries at every turn. On January 8, 1863, she started on a lecture tour of the country to arouse eastern opinion in favor of more drastic punishment for the Indians. She spoke before audiences in Chicago, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and finally in Washington. Her arguments, backed as they were by her strong conviction that she was right, convinced many. She was unable to secure an interview with President Lincoln, however, to pour her bitterness in his ear.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Democrat*, January 22, February 26, March 26, 1863; *Saint Paul Pioneer*, March 14, 1863; *post*, 159, 181, 185.

## Library of Congress

While Mrs. Swisshelm was in Washington she met an old friend, Secretary Stanton, through whose influence she was appointed to a clerkship in the war department early in April, 28 1863. When the position was assured, she made arrangements for the sale of the *Democrat*, and in June, 1863, her nephew and assistant editor, William B. Mitchell, took over the management of the paper. During a brief period of inactivity while she was awaiting a summons to begin her new work, she discovered that there was a shortage of nurses to care for the wounded in and about Washington. She at once offered her services to the doctors at Campbell Hospital, one of the large base hospitals near Washington. There she worked night and day for months, and with but few intervals she was busy nursing throughout the war. At last she suffered a breakdown which brought her near death. Upon her recovery, she again took up her duties in the war department, where until then she had worked only intermittently.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> See *post*, 175, 232-263; the *Democrat*, April 9, June 11, 1863; and Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 355-357.

Andrew Johnson's early reconstruction measures were all that could be desired by Mrs. Swisshelm and other radical Republicans; but when it became evident that he would follow Lincoln's policy of conciliation they rose in revolt. The radicals soon felt the need for a medium through which to express their views, and Mrs. Swisshelm determined to establish a newspaper in Washington. On December 21, 1865, the first issue of the *Reconstructionist* her third paper, appeared. For a short time it flourished, but so outspoken was she in her criticism of Johnson that she aroused his enmity. As she was still in government service, her condemnation of the official acts of the government on which her means of support depended undoubtedly seemed to him like ingratitude. After a particularly bitter attack, he lost his patience and, through a special order, dismissed her from the service. Without the clerkship, there could be no *Reconstructionist*, and in March, 1866, it suspended publication. <sup>29</sup> In a letter to the *New-York Tribune* she stated that the paper had overtaxed her strength and resources, and that, moreover, a deliberate attempt had been made to fire the building in which it was printed. Since the building was a fire

## Library of Congress

trap, she said, she could not risk the lives of the families dwelling in upstairs apartments. This submissive attitude in the face of threats of violence was quite unlike the aggressive spirit of the Jane Grey Swisshelm who had triumphed over the St. Cloud mob.

Thus, at the end of her Washington, career, Mrs. Swisshelm found herself without a position, without funds, and without a home. Then, just as she was becoming reconciled to the thought of an impoverished old age, she discovered that she had a tangible claim to the Swisshelm estate at Swissvale, near Pittsburgh. Upon the suggestion of Secretary Stanton, she brought suit to secure control of the property and won the case. A home and a small income for the remainder of her life were thus assured.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Saint Paul Pioneer*, December 28, 1865; *Democrat*, November 30, December 7, 1865, January 11, April 12, 1866; *New-York Daily Tribune*, March 29, 1866; Shippee, in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 7:225-227; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 362. The Minnesota Historical Society has copies of the *Reconstructionist* for March 10 and 24, 1866. These are the only copies known to the editor.

The active part of her life was over after 1865, and she settled down to a more peaceful existence. Her daughter Hemrietta married and made her home in Chicago, and there and in Swissvale Mrs. Swisshelm spent the greater part of her remaining years. She rarely returned to St. Cloud, for she suffered from a heart ailment and found that the journey to Minnesota was a great tax upon her strength. For the most part, she was content to remain secluded from the world in which she had once so actively contended for public attention. In 1880 she set herself the task of writing 30 her autobiography. Shortly after her marriage she had destroyed all her correspondence and diaries, for she found that nothing she owned was safe from prying eyes. Throughout her life she destroyed letters as she received them, and so she was forced to write the story of her life from memory, supplemented by information from newspaper files. *Half a Century*, nevertheless, contains a surprisingly large array of facts and impressions that remained vivid even after the details had been erased from her memory. In July, 1884, she became seriously ill; on July 21 she died.<sup>34</sup>

## Library of Congress

34 *Swisshelm, Half a Century*, 164; *St. Cloud Journal-Press*, July 24, 1884. For an account of Mrs. Swisshelm's later life see Fisher, in the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 4:172-174.

An interesting tribute was paid to her by an editorial writer in a Minnesota newspaper some months before she died:

Do Minnesota people ever think nowadays of Jane Grey Swisshelm, the pioneer journalist of St. Cloud? She is living quietly near Pittsburg, enjoying the little competency which, by Secretary Stanton's advice, she made a fight for in the courts, in 1865, when she hadn't a dollar in the world and was practically an invalid, although doing a clerk's duties in the quartermaster's department at Washington. She left Minnesota in January of 1863 to argue President Lincoln out of his leniency with the Sioux who had been condemned for their murders in the outbreak. The little reformer never returned. The war and the hospital service claimed her. She is now close on to seventy years old. In her time she was a tiger. Her duel with Sam [ *Sylvanus* ] Lowry should be printed in red letters in the ultimate history of the commonwealth.<sup>35</sup>

35 *Pioneer Press* (St. Paul and Minneapolis), January 27, 1884.

During her lifetime Mrs. Swisshelm was one of the best known women in America. She was absolutely fearless in her adherence to what she considered the right. Her writings, always interesting, were sometimes brilliant, and her faculty for sarcasm made her an enemy to be feared. "She was always terribly in earnest, and used her woman's gift of intuition with cutting force," commented one newspaper reporter after her death. But for all her courage and zeal, her outward appearance failed to indicate a combative disposition. In her youth she is reported to have been beautiful, and her appearance in later years tends to confirm the report, for she was described as a woman of "slight figure, of less than medium height, with pleasant face, eyes beaming with kindness, soft voice, and winning manners." Many, seeing her for the first time, were surprised that she was not masculine in appearance. "What was masculine" about her, wrote one commentator, who evidently was masculine himself, "was her intellect and courage." In 1850 another writer described her

## Library of Congress

as “quite a Jenny Lind in appearance ... with an unusual expanse of forehead, dark brown hair, combed over her temples, light blue liquid eyes, nose rather prominent, mouth small and disclosing very fine teeth—countenance pleasing, and smile truly enchanting.”<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Pioneer Press*, July 24, 1884; *St. Cloud Journal-Press*, July 24, 1884; *Minnesota Pioneer*, June 6, 1850.

The following pages contain selection from the extensive writings of this interesting woman. They consist of editorial letters written during the period from 1858 to 1865—the most active and the most significant period of a lifetime of activity. During her absences on lecture tours, Mrs. Swisshelm usually communicated with her readers by means of editorial letters, in which she pictured for them the country through which she passed and characterized the people she met. She repeated to them current gossip and gave expression to her views on pertinent topics of interest. Her letters reflect her interest in people, and they reveal her personality—her inherent kindness as well as the vindictiveness engendered by a lifetime of conflict. They give a charming and intimate picture of frontier Minnesota in the period of strain just preceding the Civil War and during the first two years of the conflict. The letters from Washington, written between 1863 and 1865, depict some of the breath-taking suspense endured in the national capital during those years. Those describing hospital conditions record the sufferings of the wounded and sick and also reveal the sympathy and poignant grief of the journalist-nurse as she ministered to their needs.

Nearly all the letters that Mrs. Swisshelm wrote for the *St. Cloud Democrat* are included in the following pages. The few omissions are indicated in footnotes. Some of the letters were written for other newspapers, and were later copied by the *Democrat*. Many of them are unsigned as they appear in the *Democrat*; others are signed “Jane G. Swisshelm” or “J. G. S.,” and these signatures the editor has omitted. Except for their division into chapters, the letters are reproduced as they were published in the *Democrat*, with the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation unchanged. In some instances omitted words, letters, and punctuation have been supplied in brackets for the sake of readability.

## Library of Congress

Whenever possible, the editor has indicated the full names of individuals mentioned in the letters, except in cases of names generally familiar.

Arthur J. Larsen Minnesota Historical Society St. Paul.

33

### I. Central Minnesota in the Fifties

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, November 25, 1858]

From the beginning of our public career, some of our nearest relatives, as well as many friends, have fancied we had some talent for public speaking; and as we have ever held that gifts are the measure of responsibilities—that each individual will be called to account for the improvement of every faculty, we have lived in a cowardly dread, lest, at some time, we should find out that we could face to face “plead the cause of the poor and needy.” The destruction of our press here,<sup>1</sup> brought the revelation we dreaded; for we found that we had no more hesitancy in talking to as many people as could get within hearing distance than in talking to one, and that there was something very comforting in looking on a sea of human faces, and noting the tides of human sympathy while asking compassion for the poor and needy.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante* 16.

So, when a Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society of St. Anthony wrote, asking us to deliver one of a course of lectures there, we were glad to consent;<sup>2</sup> and chose as our subject “Woman and Politics,” as best giving a reason for the hope that is in us; and as affording the best plea for urging upon <sup>2</sup> An announcement of the course of antislavery lectures arranged by the “St. Anthony Anti-Slavery Committee” appears in the *Minnesota Republican* (St. Anthony and Minneapolis) for November 5, 1858. <sup>34</sup> woman their duty toward those outraged children of a common God, who are bought, sold and bartered, as the brute which perisheth, by the government which they are obliged to support and compelled to obey.

## Library of Congress

We read our lecture in St. Anthony on the evening of the 15th and were very kindly received. The seats in the house were all filled and a great portion of the aisles with people standing.

A committee from Minneapolis waited upon us and we repeated it there on Tuesday evening in Woodman's Hall.<sup>3</sup> Again the house was filled; and the people manifested their approbation of the very, very unpleasant truths we felt called upon to tell them in very plain language. We cannot but hope that some will think more seriously of their responsibilities in view of the political inquiries which are sweeping over our country like a flood of desolation.

<sup>3</sup> The lecture in Minneapolis was given on November 16. According to a brief résumé of the address in the *Minnesota Republican* for November 19, Mrs. Swisshelm insisted that a "woman *ought* to meddle in politics," that "such 'meddling' did not ... unsex ... and unfit her for domestic duties' and that the" 'strongest women' of all ages, had made the best wives, the best mothers, and combined most of true womanly instinct." The *Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul) for the same date commenced that "Mrs. Swisshelm is bound to create a sensation if she can."

If the people could be brought to feel that amongst those who are bought, sold and robbed of all things in our Southern chattle market, are many of whom Christ shall say, "In as much as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me," there would very soon be a stay to the flood tide of oppression.

It has ever appeared to us that Anti-Slavery lecture [r]s do not generally use the higher law with the force and directness it ought to be used, while very many permit the enemy to use both it and the Constitution as though they were engines of 35 oppression. In that field which claims the Bible and the Constitution as panoplies of human rights, the laborers are so few that the humblest may do something; and even we may fill a niche which would otherwise be vacant.

## Library of Congress

It is therefore probable that, in future, we may use the voice of speech as well as the voice of the pen, in advocating the cause whose success appears to us necessary to the salvation of our country and the world, as by that means we may hope to reach many that would otherwise be inaccessible.

Our trip below has furnished materials for many items, which shall come up in their season.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, December 9, 1858 ]

### **The “Winslow House”**

This is a Minnesota institution, of which all Minnesotians are in duty bound to be proud.<sup>4</sup> It is in the city of St. Anthony, situated on an eminence overlooking the falls; and from its observatory commanding a series of magnificent views.

<sup>4</sup> The Winslow was opened in November, 1857, by James M. Winslow, who operated hotels of the same name in St. Paul and St. Peter. See the *Falls Evening News* (St. Anthony and Minneapolis) for September 28, October 3, and November 12, 1857.

The twin cities of St. Anthony and Minneapolis lay at our feet, with Nicol [I]et Island, the proposed future Capital of the State,<sup>5</sup> now crowned with a dense forest, lying a little above the Falls; and many bright gleams of the flashing river in its bed of pearl, when we saw it, making a gorgeous panorama; and one we can imagine as still more inviting when the pearl is exchanged for emerald.

<sup>5</sup> In February, a bill was introduced in the House to remove the capital of Minnesota from St. Paul to St. Peter. During the debate it was proposed to amend the bill by substituting “Nicollet Island” for “St. Peter.” For a history of the bill, see William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 1:382-387 (St. Paul, 1921-30). 36

The graded line of the railroad from Stillwater, opening a view through the bluffs and forests to the eastern horizon, readily suggests its idea of a path for the sunrise of civilization to flow in upon the wilderness, lying in full view to the West. On the one side lie



## Library of Congress

millions of acres of the most inviting and fertile land on this continent, inhabited by bears, wolves, elk, buffalo and 'the ilk;' and to the other side, we look straight down the pathway of that great magician, "the iron horse" which is shortly to cover these broad acres with thousands and thousands of happy, prosperous homes for the honest sons and daughters of toil, who now work for the privilege of living on the smallest possible portion of man's heritage, this green and glorious earth.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> It was not until the summer of 1862 that the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company completed the first ten miles of its road, between St. Paul and St. Anthony. This was the first railroad in Minnesota.

It is difficult while standing in that observatory, looking over the broad expanse of country so sparsely occupied, thinking of its unrivalled natural advantages, and of the almost interminable succession of rich prairies and woodlands, lakes and rivers rolling on and on to the Rocky Mountains and offering homes and broad farms for the price of a ball dress, to understand why it is that millions of the human race, even in our own favored land, are groping away their lives in damp cellars and dark, reeking alleys. When millions of hands want acres, and millions of acres want hands, "there must be something wrong."

We have never been so impressed with this, as in the five moments we stood upon that observatory with the whole Mississippi at our feet converted into a mill race, capable of doing the manufacturing for a continent, with the horizon shutting down upon a country we know to be lying in an atmosphere the most healthful and invigorating, and capable of raising bread, and supplying sunny homes for uncounted millions; and remembering the cry for bread and work which is coming up from our Eastern cities, how we longed to see that open path to sunrise illuminated by the fiery eye of that great civilizer, as he comes careening along with his long trains of home and health seeker, who must shortly pour long its iron away.

But the "Winslow House" itself!—There is something of it beside[s] the observatory. Down below are stories upon stories—we do not remember how many—of cosy chambers,

## Library of Congress

pleasant dressing rooms and long hats, all finished and furnished in a style of luxury which is seldom equaled in first class Eastern hotels.

The house is built of a handsome bluish stone and the walls are about three feet thick of solid masonry. This gives it an air of imposing grandeur, such as one connects with the idea of old ancestral castles, while the high ceilings, large and numerous windows, and predominance of white and bright coloring in walls and furniture takes away all thought of the gloom usually attached to massive buildings. In fact, we have never, in any place, seen a house where French luxury and sprightliness were so combined with English solidity and comfort.

The "Winslow House" must become a favorite resort for invalids and pleasure seekers. The Allegheny Mountain air, to which invalids resort for health, is not nearly so pure and invigorating as our Minnesota atmosphere, while the opportunities for boating, riding, driving and hunting and all manner of out door exercises are unsurpassable. When invalids can enjoy this, with the luxurious comfort and quiet of such a hotel—if there are any more such—thousands must learn to avail themselves of it.

38

While at the "Winslow" we did hear loud word, a rattle of an impudent bell, or clatter of any kind—no noise or confusion any more than in the most orderly private family. True, the house was not full, but there were plenty of guests to have got up a tremendous rush, if the whole machinery of the establishment had not been working on greased hinges—had not been properly arranged and thoroughly managed. The thickness of the walls and softness of the carpets do much to insure quiet; but the gentlemanly supervision of the clerk, Capt. [J. F.] Darrow; and orderly movements of the servants make confusion impossible.

## Library of Congress

The halls are heated and the cooking principally done by steam.<sup>7</sup> Two superb pianos furnish visitors with an opportunity for home sounds; and the culinary departments is in that perfection, that even the bread, butter, cream, tea and coffee are of the first quality.

<sup>7</sup> A steam engine of ten horse power was installed in the building for “working the pumps, cooking the victuals, scoding hot and cold water to all parts of the house, and furnishing the stream that warms the building.” *Falls Evening News*, October 3, 1857.

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, February 3, 1859]

On Monday evening, the 24th inst, we read a lecture in the Presbyterian church, of Sauk Rapids, on Woman's right to “meddle” in politics. The audience is said to have been the largest ever assembled in the House. It was not opened to us in the spirit of any disregard for the popular religious opinion which is so strongly in favor of woman's keeping silence in churches; but in obedience to that indication of the spirit, which says, “Your sons and your *daughters* shall prophecy.” We are a daughter by birth, baptism, and deliberate choice, of the Presbyterian Church, of the strictest, straightest division of that church; and, in common with the 39 mass of its members, receive the Bible as “a complete rule of faith and measures.” We have not lightly or irreverantly set aside the injunction of Paul “Let women keep silence in churches;” but mature reflection and comparison of this passage with other passages of Scripture, and with the universal usage of all Christian churches convinces us that this is one of the passages Paul wrote “by permission, not by command.”

In all branches of the Christian Church, except the Friends, women are expected to sing as loud as they are able; and this is certainly as far from “keeping silence” as any talking could ever be. Anna, a prophetess, “Spake of the child Jesus, to all them that looked for Redemption in Israel.” It must have been in the Temple she spake, for she *departed not from it*; and as it was women who were first sent to proclaim a risen Savior, we maintain that our sex does not disqualify us for delivering any message we may feel that the Lord

## Library of Congress

has sent by us; and that it is no profanation of the walls of a church to reverberate to the sound of a woman's voice.

The Pastor[,] Elders, and Members of the Presbyterian Church, of Sauk Rapids, in tendering us the use of their church, have shown a spirit of genuine, Bible Christianity.

It is a beautiful, little edifice—the handsomest we have seen above St. Anthony—and is capable of seating three hundred persons. Our meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. [Dan H.] Miller, a Baptist clergyman. The audience were most respectful and attentive; and, we learned afterwards that there were four clergymen in the house, and four government officers from the forts above; beside[s] our venerable friends, Col. Hays, of the “Land Office”—an “old Virginia gentleman,” who entertains some hope of talking 40 us out of our anti-Slavery heresy; and bears our hard talk with the utmost politeness.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm later bitterly denounced Hays for his proslavery attitude. See *ante*, 21.

At the close of the Lecture, Hon. E[dward] O. Hamlin, Presiding Judge of the District, arose and moved us a vote of thanks, which was very cordially given. As the judge is a regular Democrat, this does not, in any sense, commit him to our ultra views, but is simply an evidence of the urbanity and kindness of his disposition, and, we hope, of his conviction of our earnestness and singleness of purpose in taking a position which does, and must, bring us so little of honor or worldly wealth.

The occasion added largely to the weight of obligation we were already under, to that genuine Democrat, the Representative elect from Benton county, Wm. H. Wood, and his wife, the “Minnie Mary Lee” of Arthur's Home Magazine.<sup>9</sup> He came, with his elegant cutter; and took us up. We were their guest while there; and he brought us back again.

<sup>9</sup> The session of the state legislature for which Wood was elected in October, 1858, was not called. In 1860 he established at Sauk Rapids a weekly newspaper, the *New Era*, which included a literary department edited by Mrs. Wood, under the pen name “Minnie Mary Lee.” *Arthur's Home Magazine*, which occasionally published contributions from Mrs. Wood, was a monthly periodical edited and published by Timothy S. Arthur at Philadelphia.

## Library of Congress

There is a brief sketch of Mrs. Wood in the *St. Cloud Visiter* for January 14, 1858. *St. Cloud Democrat*, October 14, 1858; Folwell, *Minnesota*, 27:59; Daniel S. B. Johnston, "Minnesota Journalism from 1858 to 1865," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 12:207.

With him, it [is] not so much politeness as an earnest desire to have the anti-Slavery question thoroughly discussed; and our country delivered from the domination of the Slave Power—which seeks to dictate "What we shall speak; and when and how."

There are many indications that the God of the oppressed is opening the hearts of thousands which have heretofore been closed to all appeals on behalf of the oppressed and enslaved Mothers of America.

May He hasten the day of their deliverance.

On Thursday evening, the 27th inst., we read the same Lecture before the Lyceum at Little Falls; and *there* met the same generous confidence and assistance from the Clergy Rev. Mr. [Andrew J.] Nelson, of the Methodist Church, was one of the Committee to extend us the invitation; and presided at the Meeting. Rev. [Ezra] Newton, of the Congregational Church, opened with a touching, earnest prayer, which exhibited his anxiety lest we might sow other than good seed in the vineyard; but at the close of the Lecture he arose and expressed himself happily disappointed—endorsed our sentiments, and hoped to see them generally adopted, and women induced to take that interest in the welfare of their country which we had urged as a solemn duty. He dismissed the people with the Apostolic Benediction; and will ever live in our grateful remembrance for thus strengthening our hands in the place we desire to occupy, viz., a co-laborer with the Ministers of Christ.

We went to Little Falls in a cutter, through a driving snow storm which beat all day in our faces; and continued the greater part of the night. Notwithstanding this most unfavorable state of the weather, the house was filled to overflowing, some coming in eight miles from the country; and the general sentiment appeared to be a conviction of the truth of our positions. We have, so far, been heard with respectful attention, and many marks of approval; and this leads us to believe that public sentiment is fast ripening for an utter

## Library of Congress

repudiation of all connection with, or responsibility for, Slavery. Fifteen or twenty years ago, any one who would have dared deliver such a lecture in any part of the United States, would certainly have been mobbed. *Now* they pay 42 an admission fee to hear it, return hearty votes of thanks, and crowd around us to express their sympathy.

Be assured, ye wavering souls who talk of *bringing down* political platforms to a standard that shall suit doughfaces, you have greatly mistaken the heart-throb of the American people. At this moment it is beating high for Liberty.

If we could travel as easily as a stout man can do, we would, in one year, bring the North Star State to the standard of “No more woman-whipping! No more baby-stealing,” under the stripes and stars.

Those men who have led that party in this State; which professes to be opposed to human chattledom ought to blush for their cowardly, halting policy of saying “good Lord, good Devil.” Why have they not, why do they not cast themselves upon the generous impulses of the human heart; and call boldly upon every man and every woman breathing our glorious atmosphere, to come up and aid them in grappling this monster fiend of chattledom by its hideous throat; and choking the life out of it?

Why not call up[[on brawny farmers and mechanics to aid these white-fingered dilitanti—the slaveholding lordlings, who are here to rule a free people, into a bath of public scorn, which shall take the starch [out] of them; and set them to earning an honest living.

We give the Republicans of Southern and Middle Minnesota fair warning that they have not only to keep up to the standard of the Philadelphia Platform, but to get beyond it on Freedom's side, or the Democrats of Northern Minnesota will drive them into the Red Sea of public indignation, and drown every sinner of them.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The platform adopted at the first Republican national convention, held at Philadelphia on June 17, 1856, insisted on the preservation of the Union, opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the extension of slavery into the territories, and denounced the

## Library of Congress

attempts to force slavery on Kansas, Kirk H. Porter, *National Party Platforms*, 47-50 (New York, 1924). 43

Minnesota is bound to be a free State! Mark that, all ye doughfaces and truckling apologist for Southern woman whippers.

Folks do not breath[e] an air like this and revel in the light of these glorious sunsets and brilliant moonlights, to have to go crawling through the world on their hands and knees! Not a bit of it! This is the very land in which to grow backbone; and there is crop "coming on" which will astonish the nation by and by.

Before the close of the Little Falls meeting, Stephen Miller Esqr., of St. Cloud, who was present, was called upon for a speech.<sup>11</sup> He declined; but made some happy and appropriate remarks.—This gentleman is one [of] the best, if not *the* best, stump speaker in Northern Minnesota, quick at repartee, extensively read, thoroughly acquainted with the machinery of government, and keeping the run of passing events. The pro-slavery party here, dare not meet him in last falls campaign; and the friends of Freedom are relying upon him to do good service on many a well fought field.

<sup>11</sup> Miller, a cousin of Mrs. Swisshelm's husband, was one of her strongest supporters during her conflict with Sylvanus B. Lowry and was a member of the company formed to finance the *St. Cloud Visiter* after the destruction of the press. See *ante*, 16, 18. In 1859 Miller was in business with Henry Swisshelm, Jane's brother-in-law. Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 192; James H. Baker, *Lives of the Governors of Minnesota*, 131. ( *Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 13 — St. Paul, 1908); *Democrat*, August 5, 1858.

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, April 7, 1859]

On Thursday, March 3rd, we started to fill a series of appointments for Lectures.

That evening we were to be at Clearwater, fifteen miles below St. Cloud, and as there was no public conveyance Mr. Miller volunteered to take us down. We got a little out of 44 the way and drove three hours through a driving snow storm in an open cutter, with snow and water six inches deep over the ground.

## Library of Congress

Arrived, we went to Mr. G[eorge B.] Benson's house, and found we were not generally expected "in such a storm." But we were there; and in the evening the large hall was crowded. Mrs. Lyons was President of the Lyceum, and presided with great dignity. The audience was enthusiastic and talking was easy. Mr. Miller was called upon for a speech; and, as usual, "brought down the house." After Lecture we went home with Mr. [Hiram] Woodworth to Fremont City, two miles up the river; and here found ourself with old friends, readers for years of the "Pittsburg Saturday Visiter," and thorough *Abolitionists*—how we love that name.

We were surprised to find such commodious dwellings as the people have at Clearwater and Fremont City. They are already past the privations of pioneer life in the matter of accommodations; and the Clearwater hotels and mills are large and superior. Next morning our escort left us with Mr. Benson's family; and it was, not without serious misgivings we looked forward to the remainder of our trip, over unknown routes by unknown conveyances; but at noon "the mail boy" called for us as per contract, with a neat little cutter and a saucy Indian pony. The boy[,] Mr. Fletcher, turned out to be a resolute intelligent young man who had in the big woods, defended the Mail against a robber, left his antagonist insensible, and carried his charge safely to its destination.

Our Monticello friends had made all arrangements for our comfort; and a drive of fifteen miles through a beautiful country thickly dotted with farms brought us to Monticello, 45 where we stopped at Bernard Smiths house and had our heart gladdened with the sight of familiar house plants and Kindly faces. Mr. Smith is one of the old Liberty life guard, who voted for James G. Birney and is still in the harness, doing brave battle for the right.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm also had supported Birney. See *ante*, 5.

At Monticello they have a school building which cost \$7,000. In the second story is a hall which would hold about eight hundred persons. The seats were all filled, but the house was not crowded, as the Methodists had a revival meeting in full progress; and some unpleasant feeling existed between them, and the Lyceum before which we lectured. We



## Library of Congress

were, and are sorry for this, sorry to see Abolitionists ignoring the church influence. The bible; the church, and the U.S. Constitution, are three things we do not intend handing down to the devil, to be used by him against the slave. They do not belong to him; but are all agencies of human rights; and our most efficient anti-Slavery laborers have been members in churches, while the churches even when they err in this question, teach and foster that sense of future accountability, that reverence for Gods word, which are the most powerful levers that can be applied to human action; and the only efficient agencies against wrong of every kind.

Our audience was kind, nay enthusiastic; and at our earnest appeal to the freemen of the north, to leave the defensive policy of the Republicans, and charge the columns of Slavery down the center, they broke out into a perfect storm of cheers.

Oh, there is something of the old spirit of 76 in the hearts of the American people yet.

Monticello has a beautiful site, on the western side of the Mississippi, 30 miles below St. Cloud. It is in a rich farming 46 country, and has fine improvements amongst them two handsome churches, Presbyterian and Methodist.

The title to the land is still in government, as it has long been in dispute. Baron [Moritzious] Wisenberger [Weissberger], a Hungarian nobleman who came out with Kossuth, claims the right of pre-empting it; and the dispute seems likely to be settled in his favor.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Welsberger, a Hungarian refugee, in 1854 preëmpted seven hundred acres in Wright County for a town site, which he named "Moritzious." He left the vicinity soon afterward, and upon his return eighteen months later he found that his preëmption had been "jumped" by a town site company and that the thriving town of Lower Monticello had grown up on his lands. He appealed to the state legislature, which in 1858 recognized his claim by repealing an act of 1857 incorporating Lower Monticello, and reincorporating the town as "Moritzious," naming Welsberger as president of the town council. The townspeople, however, refused to pay him for the lands, which they had bought from the town site company, and ordered him to leave. Eventually he relinquished his claim. *Monticello*

## Library of Congress

*Times*, August 7, 21, 1858; Franklyn Curtis-Wedge, ed., *History of Wright County*, 2: 777 (Chicago, 1915); *Special Laws*, 1858, p. 182.

The citizens have built on quit claim rights bought of the Baron's opponents; but they are perfectly easy, feeling assured he will do right, even when the law would authorise him to do wrong.

We have met the gentlemen several times and assumed the responsibility of confirming this view of the case; as we do not remember ever meeting one, who has more the stamp of a gentleman—one of Nature's Noblemen as well as Hungary's.

Those who know him will represent him as acting up to the highest sense of honor and justice; and as he is lover of freedom; and foe to oppression in all lands. We would rejoice to see not only proprietor, but resident of our neighbor town.

We want his good influence in the North Star State.

Saturday Morning, Mr. Smith drove us on the river to the 47 Sherburne House, where we took the stage for Anoka. At five o'clock we reached Mr. Jared Bensons, four miles this side of Anoka, where we stopped for tea, and had our eyes gladdened with the sight of a lady who is not sick.

Mr B. is chairman of the Republican State Committee; and appears plentifully supplied with back bone. We were highly gratified with our visit; and much interested in the barn and its denizens. We have not seen such a Stock of cattle, hogs and sheep, in Minnesota. This reminded us of old Pennsylvania.

After tea Mr B. had his big sleigh hitched up; and with his wife, who looks as if there were no neuralg [i]a in the world, accompanied us to the place of meeting.

[St. Cloud Democrat, May 5, 1859]

## Library of Congress

At Anoka our lecture was in the new and really beautiful Baptist church, of which Elder [Lyman] Palmer is pastor. Our letter of invitation, in behalf of the Lyceum, was written by Mr. Palmer, and we were truly glad to find in him and his good lady a pair of warm-hearted, earnest friends.

The Lecture was on Saturday evening, because we could not well be there on Friday, the usual evening of their Lyceum meetings. The house which is a two aisle building and capable of seating about three hundred persons, had been dedicated the week previous. It is elegantly finished, carpeted and furnished with beautiful lamps, and was filled to its utmost capacity; of sitting and standing room.—The audience presented such a mass of intelligent, kind, appreciative faces that we never but once before spoke with so much ease.

One of our anxieties had been to get from Anoka to Princeton, which is a new town on the edge of the pine 48 wood thirty-six or eight miles above Anoka on the Rum River. Our good friend, Dr. [Vickers] Fell of Princeton, had written us that the Mail Contractor had engaged to take us up; but who the Mail Contractor was, and whether he would take us in an ox cart or in one end of his saddle bags was more than we could guess, and we were some what relieved when after lecture a tall gentleman stepped up and handed us a letter from Dr. Fell introducing him as Mr. Charles Foster, the Mail Contractor who had volunteered to take us up to Princeton and back to Anoka free of charge. After many kindly greetings in church we went home with our good old friends of many years standing Joseph B. Holt and lady to their beautiful residence in Champlain [ *Champlin* ] on the opposite side of the river where we took leave of Jared Benson and lady with a feeling of regret, we seldom feel at parting from the acquaintance of a few hours; and we cannot but hope the friendship began then will last a life time at least. Mr. Benson we shall certainly not drop easily for we expect to see him Governor of Minnesota some day and shall want to claim his acquaintance then of course.

## Library of Congress

On Sabbath forenoon we attended service at Elder Palmer's church and heard a plain, practical and excellent sermon in which the Christians duty to the slave was not overlooked.

In the choir was a young lady, Miss Jones, who has the finest Sophrano voice we have heard in Minnesota.

On Sabbath afternoon we lay abed and rested being very weary; but met Mr. and Mrs. [Samuel] Colbu[r]n of Champlain. This lady is a regularly educated M.D. and practices all her health will permit. She lectures occasionally and is said to be a very graceful speaker. She must once have been a person of great personal beauty, as now, in middle 49 life, when emaciated with disease, her large purpleish-blue eyes, raven hair;high, white forehead and clearly cut profile give her a commanding appearance, while her whole expression is sweet and gentle. We took quite a fancy to Mrs. Colbun and would like to have under our finger and thumb a while to put her on a low diet of beefsteak, oysters and fresh eggs. She has certainly Grahamized enough for any one woman and any one lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> "Grahamism," according to Webster, is "the vegetarian dietetic system or principles of Sylvester Graham," an American physician of the first half of the nineteenth century. Biographical sketches of Samuel and Mary Jackman Colburn appear in Isaac Atwater and John H. Stevens, eds., *History of Minneapolis and Hennepin County*, 21 1363, 1366 (New York, 1895).

On Monday morning Mr. Holt drove us to a hotel in Anoka, when pretty soon Mr. Foster walked in to announce himself ready. Great was our surprise upon going to the door to find a neat, double seated cutter half filled with buffalo robes and blankets, with a span of silver maned cream-colored horses which would have "cut a dash" in Broadway. After tuck[ing] us in as carefully as ever a market woman stowed away her basket of eggs, our escort took his seat and the moment he took up the lines we saw that we were booked for that, to us, rare enjoyment[,] a drive in which we did not have to watch the driver. He was evidently

## Library of Congress

born to the post of "Master of horse," and here the dreaded part of our journey was to be a regular pleasure trip.

After taking one other passenger, a gentleman who had escaped from the Illinois mud and come up to seek a home on firm earth, we started on what we shall ever remember as a very agreeable ride, over small prairies and through broken patches of timber, tracing the wolf and deer tracks along each side of the road; and listening to the conversation 50 of our companions on horses, deer hunting and wood adventures.

At noon we stopped at a rough log house for dinner, and had such coffee as we have not drank half a dozen times in our life.—

To us it was and is a perfect marvel, how such a beverage can be made from the ordinary coffee berry, without some special apparatus; but Mrs. Smith, the landlady assured us it was the way she always made it, and appeared somewhat surprised to learn that it different greatly from other people's coffee. She did not know how she made it, only she was very careful about roasting it evenly and having it fresh.—

This has always been our rule; but still we never succeeded in making such coffee half a dozen times in our life, while hers was always just so.

About three o'clock we arrived at Dr. Fell's where we met quite a number of kind friends beside himself and good wife, lectured that evening to a crowded audience in the New Methodist church; and had our meeting graced by spirited music from a choir of pleasant singers. Two ladies went up into the pulpit with us, and sat there that we might not feel isolated, and in every possible way showed us the utmost kindness. It was the first time we had seen any of their faces, our only knowledge of them being through a correspondence with Dr. Fell, who is from Eastern Pennsylvania, a brave, true friend of freedom and an honor to his native state. Princeton is a very new town, in Benton County which is in this the 20th Legislative District. It shows marks of resolute enterprise, is in a rich

## Library of Congress

farming district, on the edge of an immense region of timber, and must become a place of importance.

Next morning our escort of the day called early. We took 51 a hasty leave of our good friends and were soon on the way back to Anoka. We had discovered the day before that our companion *de voyage*, although six feet and over, and most likely thirty years old was not *Mister Foster*, not a bit of it. He is nothing but "Charley."—

As the jingling of the bells heralded his approach, old men on crutches or urchins in rags crept our from cabins to wait for "Charlie" and get little packages with verbal messages from down the road; and send packages and messages still further on. At one place an old man waited with a great string of fish, to be carried [as] a present to some friend; and Charlie stored away the fish. Another had a sack, which had been forgotten, and some one else a parcel, while to the doors and windows can young girls and children; to call "Good by Charlie."

He was evidently one of that class of "good fellows," who strew their pathway through life, with those small acts of every day kindness, which add so much to the general stock of human happiness.—

God bless all the Charlies. We shall not soon forget this one, and his considerate, gentlemanly attention to our comfort.

Arrived at Anoka, we went to Mr. [E.] Shaw's hotel, got a private room with a fire; and did a surprising amount of resting in eighteen hours, beside making the acquaintance of our hostess, the present graceful correspondent of the *Democrat*, 15 who has in her parlor, a landscape painting in oil, executed by herself in girlhood, and showing a genius of the highest order.—

15 Mrs. Shaw contributed several stories and poems to the *Democrat*.

## Library of Congress

The pencil was laid aside for the pap spoon, else she might have been in landscapes what Rosa Bonheur is in animals.

52

She would have made, trees, rocks, and ruins speak, as Rosa sets the horses in motion on her canvas. She told us she had chosen between her art and her husband, and although she does not regret the choice, we do. There are thousands of wives and mothers, as ever she can make, and perhaps not another such an artist as she might have been.

On Monday [*Wednesday*] we took the stage, and arrived at Col. [John] Emerson's 16 at ten o'clock a. m. [p. m.], found the ice on the river giving way with water running over it at either shore, borrowed Alderman [Charles] Ketchum's [*Ketcham's*] big boots, and with the Colonel's man of all work for an escort, waded over and slept at home.

16 Emerson was proprietor of the Emerson House in East St. Cloud, William B. Mitchell, *History of Stearns County, 21 1443* (Chicago, 1915).

Ketchum insists that we burst his boots; and owe him one years subscription to the *Democrat* for damages; but we maintain that he ought to try all our causes and decide them in our favor, for our labors in extending his understanding. The mere fact that we got into his boots, would go to prove that he could easily "stand in our shoes," although of course, an Alderman never could fill the place of an editor. The Squire was in luck that night, for as Deputy Post Master he got a large mail and a small female— *to boot*.

53

### II. Through Southern Minnesota by Stage

[*St. Cloud Democrat, March 8, 1860*] St. Paul [February]26th, '60

Dear Will: 1 — Here I am snugly ensconced in the Merchants Hotel, looking out over the icy chains of the Mississippi. Mr. [George A.] Nourse whose guest I was at first, lives

## Library of Congress

too far up town for me to attend to any business.<sup>2</sup> I have had several kind invitation to other private houses, but thought it better to come here; and find that Mrs. [E. C.] Belotte [*Belote*] the proprietor's wife, is a sister of one of my pupils in the Butler Seminary.<sup>3</sup> So I am at home all at once, snug as a flea in a blanket. I do not wonder your father likes to stop at the Merchants, for it is pleasant, comfortable quarters. I lectured in the Hall of Representatives on Tuesday [*Thursday*] evening the 23d.<sup>4</sup> The House was so full that there were seats in the aisles, and it appeared as if one third the audience were standing. The lecture was "Woman and Politics" and it was received with a favor far beyond my highest hopes. This fills my heart with so much gratitude 1 "Will," to whom many of these letters are addressed, was William B. Mitchell. See *ante*, 28. 2 Nourse was an active organizer and leader in the Republican party in Minnesota, Eugene V. Smalley, *A History of the Republican Party*, 153 (St. Paul, 1896); *post*, 56. 3 On Mrs. Swisshelm's connection with Butler Seminar, see *ante*, 5. 4 Accounts of this lecture appear in the *Pioneer and Democrat* and in the *Minnesotian and Times* (St. Paul) for February 25. 54 to our Father the Great Disposer, to think that I should at last, have such an opportunity to speak unto the people that they *go forward!* That the best and most honorable of our State should listen at last with approval to the great cry which has been bursting my heart for long, long years!—It is worth while to have lived and suffered, to have labored and waited, long years for such an opportunity of pleading for the Slave mothers of our land, before such an audience. Those who *wait* upon the Lord will surely see his salvation! On Tuesday evening I lecture in the Atheneum, on "Slavery as I have seen it in a slave State." We chose the Atheneum because it is larger than any other room in the city. It belongs to a German company who have given me the use of it at half price. Mr. [Joseph] Louis [*Lewis*] who used to keep an Intelligence office in Pittsburg, and was one of my subscribers there, attended to securing it for me. He is Gov. Ramsey's business man, or as Judge [Aaron] Goodrich<sup>5</sup> express it, "The Governor's Legal Representative!" He has shown me much kindness. Gov. Ramsey and his lady with other people who combine real merit, with social and political distinction, have extended to me a cordial recognition. They thus lend me



## Library of Congress

moral power, which I pray God I may pay back with interest, upon the altar of His glory, and the redemption of our race.

5 Goodrich was chief justice of Minnesota Territory from 1849 to 1851. Upham and Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies*, 264.

Col. [Daniel A.] Robertson, who is Mayor of the City, called upon me by my request. I had learned that my first impression of proposing me as Surveyor General, is the correct one.<sup>6</sup> He is a jolly man, and it was simply a jest. He <sup>6</sup> Robertson was mayor of St. Paul in 1859 and representative in the Minnesota legislature during the session of 1859-60. In the *Democrat* for January 12, 1860, Mrs. Swisshelm commented at length on Robertson's suggestion to the House that she be made surveyor-general of logs and lumber for the third district. There is no record of this proceeding in the *House Journal*. J. Fletcher Williams, *A History of the City of St. Paul and of the Country of Ramsey*, 283, 462 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 4—St. Paul, 1876). 55 was one of my readers years ago, and a good friend, would be the last man to insult any body; but he pronounces himself to have been so much in earnest as to be quite ready to support me for any office I may desire. His lady came with him. She is a lovely woman, and they are to send their carriage to take me to tea with them on Tuesday evening; and the only question on which the Col. and I are at variance is Slavery.

I was honored by a call from Senators [Christopher C.] Andrews, [Thomas] Cowan and [Alonzo J.] Edgerton. Mr. Andrews is looking well; ad their call was very pleasant to me. Mr. Cowan and I got along best for he is a Marylander, and a gentleman for all that, an out and out advocate of Slavery in all the States. So, we could take issue and understand each other fairly. He is an unusually fine looking man. I have not yet visited the Capitol during a sitting of the Legislature and it may be I shall not, for I am not strong, and find myself quite unequal to going around and doing business as I expected to.

Our talkative friend, Judge Goodrich, had been initiating me into the history of Columbus, who he pronounces, an impostor, a mountebank, a pirate, an ignoramus, a perfect

## Library of Congress

monster.<sup>7</sup> It is worth the Judge's while to talk, for he always has something to say. He is a clear thinker, and must have been a hard student.

<sup>7</sup> Goodrich later wrote *A History of the Character and Achievements of the So-called Christopher Columbus* (New York, 1874).

Here I was interrupted by our good friend G. A. Nourse, calling for me to go to church. Went and heard Mr. [A. S.] Fisk[e], the Congregational minister, preach an excellent 56 sermon, which, very opportunely was on the subject of the mission of christianity in overturning corrupt governments and breaking down wicked laws. He took precisely the same ground I had in my lecture of Thursday previous; and I was greatly interested in having that ground so [much] more ably defended.

I do not know how I should get along without George A. Nourse; he has taken charge of me, and is my special reliance. He is one of the Republicans who "believe in it." One of the recruits from the Democratic party, who has labored for the advancement of the organization when it did not expect to gain power and patronage for long years. There is too much disposition amongst Republicans to lay aside this class of men; and substitute those who have never made enemies by fighting their battles. So, I find that not a few leaders look complaisantly on the proposal to pass Seward and take up Bates, because Bates has not been in the political field to make enemies. This is nothing more or less than a bribe for noncommittal. It is the best possible plan for manufacturing shysters, demagogues and political knaves. If a man is to impair his chances of promotion in his party, by earnestly and steadily advocating its policy and principles, who is to come forward and take the post of danger? Are brave men to be used simply as a means of elevating cowards to places of trust? Are the soldiers who go out to do the fighting to sit down at the victories they win, and leave it to those gentlemen "who remain at home," to distribute the pay?

Before I came here, I should have looked upon a Republican who was not a Seward man, as a natural curiosity, but here I am assured it is doubtful if our delegates will present a

## Library of Congress

united front for him, in the National Convention! That he is the chosen of nine tenths of the voters I have not a 57 doubt; but some of the managers are troubled with feeble knees. They quake before the “irrepressible conflict,” and cannot possibly believe that the masses who are not seeking office, are not as cowardly as themselves. I believe Mr. [Stephen] Miller is all right; but give him my compliments, and say that if he represents at Chicago, the anti-Slavery sentiment, of the anti-Slavery extension party of Northern Minnesota, as any thing below the Seward standard, he had better make arrangements for staying in Chicago, or going somewhere else, for if I do not make St. Cloud to[o] hot to hold him, I am not *the* St. Cloud Democrat! Amen!8

8 Miller was one of the Minnesota delegates to the Republican national convention at Chicago in May, 1860. See the *Democrat* for March 8, 1860. A letter from Miller giving an account for the nomination of Lincoln is in the *Democrat* for may 24.

In our first issue, do you place at the head of our columns the names of Wm. H. Seward, for President and Cassius M. Clay for Vice President—subject to the decision of *nobody's* convention.9

9 The names of Seward and Clay appear in the masthead of every issue of the *Democrat* from March 8 to May 17.

If the Republican party does not give us leaders who have been out of the woods long enough to let us know they will not lead us into a quagmire, why the *sooner* it is scattered to the winds it will be all the better. This letter has lain over until it is Tuesday. I am not well to day, and write the latter part of it in bed; and now I must lie still and grow strong as fast as possible until 7 o'clock, when Mr. Rodgers, one of our St. Cloud proprietors, is to call and take me to the Atheneum, to read my lecture on “Slavery as I have seen it in a Slave State.” My other engagements for the day must lie over; and to-morrow I go to Northfield.

58

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, march 15, 1860 ] Faribault, March 7th, '60

## Library of Congress

Dear Will: —I have a great many things to say about St. Paul and the people who live there, but must postpone them until I get home. I left there on Wednesday morning, the 1st [February 29], feeling so weak that to strangers it appeared imprudent for me to go out, but I had sent appointments to Northfield and Faribault, and have been so accustomed to getting strength for the performance of any duty just as the time came when it was wanted, that I felt no uneasiness. I had a pleasant traveling companion, Mr. [George E.] Skinner, of this place, who made me feel I could rely upon him for any assistance, and did not tease me with officious offers of aid. We crossed the noble bridge which spans the Mississippi at St. Paul, through West St. Paul, a most forlorn looking town-site in Dakota Co., and rode twenty miles through a thinly settled country resembling Pennsylvania, woods and streams, ravines and stony precipices. It was very refreshing and home-like. We took dinner at an humble tavern kept comfortably by a window; then with fresh horses started across a twenty-mile prairie. Our horses stalled in the first slough, but after that, did very well. There are several small settlements on this prairie, and one great natural curiosity—"Castle Rock." We passed about four miles from it, and saw it jut out of the smooth prairie, looking just like a medium sized church with a tall spire.<sup>10</sup> —One or two miles from Northfield, we reached the Cannon River and the southeastern end of a "Big Woods," which <sup>10</sup> Castle Rock, near the town of that name is Dakota County, is a curious sandstone formation, which in the sixties rose some sixty feet above the surrounding country, like the "dismantled tower of an ancient castle." Erosion has since greatly reduced its size. See W. H. Mitchell, *Dakota County*, 74 (Minneapolis, 1868). A picture of the rock as it appeared in the sixties may be found on page 72 of Mitchell's work. <sup>59</sup> some forty or fifty miles long by six or eight broad. We kept along the bank of the river, then crossed a substantial bridge into Northfield, of which John W. North is proprietor. The old bridge was swept away last Spring, and has been replaced the past Summer. There is a fine water power with grist and saw mill, and the dam roars just above the bridge. The country is rolling—almost hilly. There is a large and elegant hotel on an elevation above the bridge, with the printing office of the *Northfield Journal* over the way, a tannery on the river bank, one church, a lyceum room, and a general appearance of industry. I went

## Library of Congress

directly, according to order, to Mr. North's house, and was immediately at home. All of Mr. North's home surroundings confirm my previous opinion of the man; and in his wife he has that indispensable requisite to any man's permanent greatness—a helpmate for a good and noble life. I was confined to bed, or sofa, during my stay, and only left the house to read my lecture at the Lyceum. The room was crowded, and I had the rare encouragement of an earnest lady “talking out in meeting” to enforce and endorse my positions. The meeting was very gratifying; but everywhere I find people much more willing to hear me on subjects connected with *Woman's* rights than on the rights of the slave. I regret this, for women, as such, have few wrongs compared to those of the slave, and I would that God would open the ears of this people to the cry of the oppressed before it is forever too late!

I lectured in Northfield on Thursday evening, and on Friday afternoon came by stage to Faribault, 17 miles—part of the way through a gentle rain, and all the way a very ungentle wind. The stages in this part of the country are open wagons, narrow, with the shallow bed “stuck up” on “kinky” springs, and the backless seats stuck high up in the 60 beds, altogether giving one the sensation of being on a perch, with a general feeling of insecurity such as “stuck up” folks are apt to have all over this world. It was long after dark when I reached the residence of Gordon E. Cole, our State's Attorney, which was my destination.<sup>11</sup> All that warmth, light, tender care, and a kind welcome could do to banish fatigue, was done; and next day I was quite bright; lectured on Saturday evening to a very full house,<sup>12</sup> and before reaching home, had symptoms of my last Summer's trouble, n[e]uralgia of the stomach. You know the fear of it had kept me home all the early part of the Winter, and before leaving I hoped the tendency was overcome. I did all that appeared necessary to insure relief, went to bed and lay expecting every moment to be better, but before morning it assumed cholera symptoms, as it had done once last Summer. Before daylight, Mrs. Cole sent for Dr. N. N. [Nathan M.] Bemis, who remained with me all the morning and forenoon, keeping up very active treatment, and all the time it was very doubtful how the case would end, but early in the afternoon the symptoms yielded. The Doctor, proud to be one of Liberty's old vanguard—a Birney man in '40—and for sake of

## Library of Congress

the cause, would receive no fee, except a copy of the *Democrat*. So, put him down on our list, paid, until he gets tired of his bargain and sends in his bill for reading it.

11 Cole was attorney-general of Minnesota from 1860 to 1866. 12 The *Central Republican* of Faribault for March 7 gives an account of this lecture and adds: "Mrs. S. is really one of the pioneer reformers such as we have had in all ages of the world. ... Though she, as thousands before her have done, may go to her late rest before the world comes up to her standard, the rime will come when the women and men of the American Republic, will occupy the position she now occupies upon the education of women, and the slavery question, or ignorance and barbarism will again rule over America."

Tell mother I am cured of my log-standing hallucination that no one but her can nurse me well when I am sick; for 61 even she could not have tended me more carefully and tenderly than Mrs. Cole has done, and is doing. No wonder I advocate "the common brotherhood of man," for go where I will, I find brothers and sisters, just when I want them most.

No doubt, you all feel I should go home; but I cannot travel until quite recovered, and then it will be just as easy to go forward as back. I have so set my heart upon talking to the people of Minnesota before the coming insanity of the next political campaign, that I cannot readily give it up. I want to see Minnesota *free!*—to see the day when a slave cannot breathe the air of the North Star State! One has gone to his farm, another to his merchandise, and there appears to be no one to plead the cause of the poor and needy. Those who are in bonds are to be forgotten in the "*great issues*" to come before the country. The slave mother is to be robbed with impunity; Christ's little ones are to be bought and sold, as usual; and the rights of nominally free men are, alone, to be considered; and who is to stem the current of selfish policy which is bearing everything away? This Western vineyard has no laborer to spare; and little as I can do, it is *all* for which I am accountable. So, I cannot give up this tour until fully convinced that by no care can I preserve sufficient strength to get through with it.

## Library of Congress

Of course, this is all for publication; for you know the readers of the *Democrat* all belong to our family circle, and I have not strength to write for the exclusive annoyance of one or two members of the family.

[*St. Cloud Democrat, March 22, 1860*] Faribault, March 10th, '60

Dear Will. —I should have said last time that Northfield is in Rice county, near the Northern line; from thence to 62 Faribault is principally over high, rolling prairie, more thickly settled than Dakota county. We passed through Cannon City, a nice little village; and four miles North of this place, reached another 'Big Woods' and travelled the four miles through them in the dark, mud and rain, past the camp-fires of the sugar makers, and amid tall, grand old trees, down a rough hill, over the Straight River—so named from being the crookedest creek in Minnesota—over a good bridge into this, the County Seat of Rice county. It lies at the junction of the Straight with the Cannon River, which runs East and empties into the Mississippi above Red Wing. It is in a rich agricultural district, is beautifully located, has good building stone, inexhaustible supplies of wood, and the common glorious Minnesota climate; but no pine lumber. Bass-wood is used instead, and appears to answer very well. There is an unlimited supply of maple, white and black walnut, and bass. The place has grown up in the last four years to have fifteen hundred inhabitants. There is handsome Congregational church, finished, furnished, a good bell, a most excellent preacher, and *no debts*. There are two good public halls, a large Catholic church, of stone, nearly completed, Baptist and Methodist congregations, and a public school house.

Mr. [James Lloyd] Breck, the Episcopal Missionary driven from Leech Lake in '57 by the Indians, is living here, has bought, property, and built. Rev. [Solon W.] Manney, of the same persuasion, is settled in a handsome but quaint parsonage, and they have a flourishing school with six teachers and appropriate school buildings. They have a Divinity school here, also, and it is expected that Bishop [Henry B.] Whipple will make this his residence. So that it is likely to be an Episcopal center for the State, and draw a large emigration 63 of that class of Christians.<sup>13</sup> As a Presbyterian, I should object to



## Library of Congress

turning over the entire business of Education in a new place to a High-Church, Puseyite<sup>14</sup> establishment, and as an American would insist upon more attention to *Public* schools and less to sectarian establishment of any kind. I have had the good fortune to meet Mrs. Breck, and found her a singularly unpretending, pleasant lady, with unbounded faith in the capability of the Indian for civilization. She thinks them particularly open to the introduction of Civilization and Christianity, and lays all their misdoings to the charge of bad whites. They have adopted several Indian children into their family, and Mrs. Breck was so kind as to send one of these children to see me—a Chippawa girl of eight or nine years—a remarkably bright, pleasant child, with clear, olive complexion, a broad, well-formed head, masses of soft black hair, and almond shaped eyes—a really loveable, beautiful child. In looking at her, I was anew reminded of the cool impudence of our poor white Legislators who only last winter set up to make still more distinctions against the dark-skinned children of the Common Father. If Indians, under proper training, are capable of becoming as this child—and of this I have no doubt—our Government 13 Breck established a mission at Leech Lake in 1856, which he abandoned soon afterward because his life was endangered by the Pillager Indians. In 1858, under the supervision of the Episcopal church, he founded the Bishop Seabury University at Faribault. Manney was instructor in theology at the school. In 1860 Bishop Whipple, who had been made bishop of Minnesota the year before, established his home in Faribault, and under his direction the school was reorganized and incorporated as the “Bishop Seabury Mission.” From that institution have developed the Seabury Divinity School, Shattuck School, and St. Mary's Hall. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1:182; George C. Tanner, “Bishop Whipple and the Schools at Faribault,” in *Minnesota Historical Collection*, 10:697, 699. 14 A “Puseyite,” according to the *Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia*, was an adherent of the Oxford movement toward ritualism in the Anglican church, as advocated by Edward B. Pusey, a leader in the movement 64 is rolling up a fearful responsibility in permitting them to be robbed and demoralized by the brutal whites who seek their ruin. Mrs. Breck expresses herself perfectly willing to return to their Indian Mission, and is a noble, earnest woman.



## Library of Congress

Mr. [Alexander] Faribault, for whom the place is named, is a Half-Breed—French and Sioux. His wife is a Sioux. He used to be a trader at this point, and is wealthy.<sup>15</sup> The whole family talk French and Sioux only; and have a beautiful residence on the wooded bluff, on the opposite side of Straight River from the town. Mr. Breck's residence is quite near, and so the Chippawa members of his family are brought into intimate daily intercourse with quite a number of their hereditary foes, who treat them with great kindness. Mr. Faribault is quite a horticulturist, and has orchards giving full promise of all the ordinary fruits of the Middle States.

<sup>15</sup> Faribault established a fur-trading post on the site of the city of Faribault about 1826. Grace L. Nute, "Alexander Faribault," in *Minnesota History*, 8:178 (June, 1927).

They have a good steam grist and saw mill; and are quite certain that they have *the* point for a large city. I have great difficulty in persuading them that the pivot on which creation turns is certainly located in St. Cloud, just in front of the *Democrat* Office; and am forced to have patience with their unbelief. One thing certain, the State Printer, O[rville] Brown, is located here, and is one of the very cleverest men I have met in a long time—a Republican who believes in it, and is not afraid to say so, as his paper, *The Central Republican*, abundantly testifies.

E. [P.] Mills, brother of Mrs. [Z.E.B.] Nash, of St. Cloud, has done all my business here, and has been so unweariedly generous and kind that I am under heavy obligations to himself and family. I have lectured here twice to crowded 65 houses;<sup>16</sup> and leave on Monday morning for Owatonna, where I expect to see Mrs. [Hiram M.] Sheets [*Sheetz*], editor of the *Journal*, that other woman in Minnesota who is conducting a political paper.

<sup>16</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm's second lecture in Faribault was announced for March 10 by the *Central Republican* of March 7.

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, April 5, 1860] <sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> A detailed and satirical description of "The Court of Death," a painting by Rembrandt Peale, which comprises the first part of this letter, has been omitted.

## Library of Congress

Arriving in Owatonna, the first thing was to inquire for Mrs. Sheetz and the Printing Office, when I and several citizens of Owatonna learned to our great surprise that the office had that week passed out of Mrs. Sheetz' possession. The facts as I afterwards learned them are these: Hiram Sheetz was a leading Republican of Central Minnesota, was twice elected to the Legislature, was a man of rare intellectual acquirements, of enlarged benevolence, highly cultivated taste and unspotted morals—a young man of rare promise who commanded the respect of all who knew him. He came to Owatonna and invested his all in property there. He and Mr. Frances started the Journal, renting the press, type and building of proprietors who had ceased to be residents of the place. Last fall he took typhoid fever and died, leaving his homestead mortgaged and some small liabilities. His wife who is very way worthy to have been the help mate of such a man, crushed down her overwhelming sorrow and went to work. His creditors forwarded her efforts to save her home. She took his place in the office, made arrangements to settle the estate without the expense of administering; and had a fair prospect of a full means of clearing his liabilities and making a living for her family. One small creditor, Mr. [A. B.] Cornell, proposed buying 66 her interest in the *Journal*; but she told him plainly it was her only means of earning bread for herself and her two children; one a daughter less than three years old, the other yet unborn. Whereupon he disclaimed all thought of interfering, declaring that the note of one hundred dollars which he held against her husband should never be used. Well, this same Mr. Cornell, aided it is believed by [Amos] Coggsell the Republican hound who voted to make Minnesota a slave state,<sup>18</sup> went to work, stealthily, and made all his arrangements. When the time of Mrs. Sheetz' confinement arrived, Mr. Cornell appeared with a bill of sale of the press and type; and a lease of the office building. All the lawyers in the place offered their services to contest his claim and keep it in law until the citizens could procure her another office; but Cornell informed her that if she contested his right he would take out letters of administration on the estate; and this would have consumed the pittance she hoped to save. So she thought best to “sell out” to him and thus lift the note he held.

## Library of Congress

18 Coggsell, speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives in 1860, was the only Republican member who voted in favor of a resolution to permit slave owners to hold slaves brought with them to Minnesota for a period of five months. The proposal was lost by a large majority. *House Journal*, 1859-60, p. 649; Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:700.

So, I found her with an infant daughter five weeks old and one not yet three years—her means of support gone; and her heart full of quite thought, of hope, and trust in the orphan's shield and the widow's stay. The citizens of Owatonna appear unanimous in the determination to establish her in an office of her own; and certainly every interest of justice and generosity prompts to that course. I feel the utmost confidence that it will be done; and in the mean time, cut the Owatonna paper off our exchange list. Its name is changed to—I do not know what, but cut it off; and we 67 would earnestly request all our exchanges to protest against this gross injustice by refusing to hold communication with such a man, or acknowledging him in any way as a member of the Minnesota corps editorial.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> No confirmation of Mrs. Swisshelm's story that Cornell forced Mrs. Sheetz to retire from the *Owatonna Journal* has been found. The following explanation is taken from Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, ed., *History of Rice and Steele Counties*, 2:1009 (Chicago, 1910): "Hon. William F. Pettit, at that time state senator from Steele county, had started a project to allow Mrs. Sheetz, who was a woman of considerable literary ability, to retain the office as a mark of esteem from the public ... and has [ *had* ] already received \$150 from his fellow members of the senate to aid in carrying out this benevolent project. But upon returning home he found that the office had been sold to A. B. Cornell, which at once put a stop to the publication of the 'Journal.'" Cornell changed the name of the paper to the *Steele County News Letter*.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 12, 1860 ] Mantorville, March 17th, '60

Dear Will. —Left Faribault on Monday morning, the 12th, at 4 o'clock; clear moonlight, but could and windy. The *stage* was a continuation of the line of narrow dripping-pans set high above four wheels, on short, jerking springs, and furnished with seats minus backs, said seats being disconnected from the pan-bed except at the ends—thus leaving ample space for the wind to pour in under them and keep passenger's feet well ventilated. Then, each seat is furnished with a buffalo robe with which gentlemen-passengers cover their

## Library of Congress

knees, thus preventing the wind's escape as it comes in from behind. The contrivance is excellent for keeping cool, and if each seat were furnished, in the center, with a bench-screw set in the middle of a horizontal lever, to fasten across the limbs of passengers and hold them fast on the perch, it would be an improvement. These stage seats remind me so much of hen-roosts, that I cannot help feeling they were designed for folks who travel barefoot and hold on with their toes, hen-fashion; but as I am somewhat aquatic, I find it often necessary to "cuddle down" on the bottom of the shallow bed, to avoid being jerked out upon the road. That ride was rather experimental after my severe illness at Faribault, and I was rather uneasy about the result, but reaching Owatonna for breakfast, able to eat a little and feeling quite as well as I had hoped. The letter sent forward to announce my coming, had failed, and I started up street to the printing office. The first man I met, appeared to be the very one I wanted. So, I inquired of him the way to the printing office. He answered that inquiry with another—

"Are you Mrs. Swisshelm?"

Upon being answered in the affirmative, he turned about, saying—

"Well, just come into our house. My wife wants to see you; and I will go for the editor."

I knew, instantly, I had found the right man, and went with him. He was Dr. [W. A.] Ware, Mrs. Sheetz's family physician and most intimate friend. He has a large, dashing horse, and comfortable buggy, and until I left Owatonna, he and they were busy. I made one of the two families, and we spent our time together, first in one house and then in the other. I also met Mrs. Ezra Abbott, a relative of the authors of that name, and his accomplished wife, and her brother-in-law, the Democratic Senator, [William F.] Pettit, who is highly esteemed at home as a generous, whole-souled man.—From what I saw of him, and learned of his home life, I concluded he is deservedly popular. Of all the friends I have met since leaving home, I look back to none with so much interest as those of Owatonna. Mrs. Sheetz's peculiar circumstances; her humble surroundings, with the evidences of high

## Library of Congress

cultivation and exquisite taste, both in the relics of 69 her deceased husband and in her own appointments; the choice library on the plain shelves; the portrait of the late owner, with its expansive forehead, finely-chiseled features, and mild expression; the exquisite oil paintings, evidences of her taste and skill as an artist; her fair, earnest face, and her generous, devoted friends, form a picture of fadeless colors in the galleries of memory.

Owatonna is the County Seat of Steele County, but has a woe-begone, neglected look. There is a lack of good garden fences, and of any evidence of taste in cultivating trees or shrubbery, while the out-buildings are of the most primitive and unsubstantial kind. I was surprised, in so rich an agricultural County, to see the principal town so destitute of agricultural or horticultural taste. Go to, Good Friends, make unto you good fences and barns, plants trees, bushes, and strawberry beds, and look as if you intended to live in Owatonna.

Lectured on Tuesday evening, in Merford's [ *Morford's* ] Hall to a well-filled house of intelligent looking people—Mr. [Joseph W.] Merford [ *Morford's* ] refusing any compensation for house or lights. Started next morning, Wednesday, for this place, parting with my good friend Dr. Ware, last; and meeting the good luck of a comfortable, covered stage. In it was Mr. [E. W.] Sommers [ *Somers* ], late Clerk of the Senate, returning home from St. Paul;<sup>20</sup> and I had an exceedingly pleasant ride through a beautiful country of rich farming and pasture lands, interspersed with belts of heavy timber. “Rice Lake” is the only lake in Central Minnesota.<sup>21</sup> It is shallow and grown quite over with wild <sup>20</sup> Somers lived in Ashland, Dodge County. *Minnesota Legislative Manual*, 1860, p. 105. <sup>21</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm is here in error, for central Minnesota abounds in lakes. There are few lakes, however, in southern Minnesota near Rice Lake. <sup>70</sup> rice. There is a little village near, and named for it, lying in Goodbye County. They informed me that wheat had been sown three weeks previous. Dodge is a rich, wheat-growing County. The soil is a clay-loam, and all this kind appears to yield more spears of grass to the square yard than our Northern, more sandy, soil. The sod is more compact and the roots closer together; yet their wheat, corn,

## Library of Congress

and root crops appear inferior to ours; and I saw or heard of no natural meadows such as we have up there, with their six-feet-high grass, making hay superior to timothy.

Brownsville, Monday, March 26th

I was interrupted in this letter by Mr. [John E.] Bancroft, editor of the Mantorville *Express*, with a carriage to take me to his house. There I had so much talking to do, there was no time for writing. Mrs. B. is an old friend from Crawford Co., Pa. It was she who wrote the letter I incorporated into the "Letters to Country Girls."<sup>22</sup> So you may judge we had a pleasant time.

<sup>22</sup> See *ante*, 8. Mrs. Bancroft's letter is evidently that on pages 33 to 37 of the *Letters*. It is addressed to Mrs. Swisshelm and signed "Madge" all the other letters are unsigned and apparently were written by Mrs. Swisshelm.

I lecture here this evening, and go up in the morning boat to La Crosse. It generally comes along about three o'clock; so that I shall not get much sleep; but I am well, and shall not be seriously sick for some time.

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, April 12, 1860] Winona, Friday, March 30th, '60

Dear Will: —Here I am at last, and have news from home. The last news I had from St. Cloud previous to this morning was several days old when I left St. Paul on the 28th [29<sup>th</sup>] ult. So I have been a whole month without 71 hearing, and had grown fidgety. Amongst the letters awaiting me here, I find invitations to lecture in Chicago, Milwaukee and Racine; but it is too late in the season now, and I am homeward bound. My tour would have been pecuniarily more profitable had I gone to these places; but I like best to talk to Minnesota people. Even over in La Crosse I felt as if it were a strange country, while the moment I touch Minnesota soil I feel at home. All that I love most is here. The people have been to me like brothers and sisters. I have shared her hard times, and intend to share them to the end, and I value more that I can say the opportunities I have had of becoming personally

## Library of Congress

acquainted with so many of her best and noblest sons and daughters—adopted of course like myself.

I dropped my narration in the stage from Owatonna, a comfortable covered conveyance on a bright, warm day when I had Mr. Sommers for a traveling companion; and a most agreeable one he proved to be. He and Mr. [Peter] Mantor of Mantorville, Representative from Dodge County, who was in company in a private conveyance, advised me to stop in Wasioja, a village four miles from Mantorville. I did so and found it like Owatonna, only more so. Not a fence worth the name. No trees, no shrubbery, no gardens; I was there the greater part of two days, for the stage only passed once in two days; and it was beautiful, bright warm weather, just the weather for fixing fences and transplanting, yet I did not see one man, woman or child doing anything to make their homes look like places to live in. I learned that the proprietors had been contending with Mantorville for the County Seat, and had lost. Both places have spent as much energy in this petty struggle as would have made their respective towns desirable places of residence. I wonder when the people of Minnesota will learn that their only hope of wealth lies in cultivating the soil? Plow, fence, plant, hoe, mow, raise horses, cows, sheep, pigs, poultry. Dig gold out of her teeming soil; and as you value peace and plenty, stop your petty local squabbles for some little political advantage.

I would rather see one thousand good farmers, settle in Stearns County this year than to have the State Capital removed to St. Cloud next week. Through the center of the State there is great disappointment that the Legislature did not build a Rail Road, but according to my idea the shortest cut to a Rail Road, is our teeming bins of grain and pastures covered with cattle and sheep. Let the people of Minnesota develop her agricultural wealth and foreign capital will soon build her Rail Roads.—Few of our farmers are more than two days drive from a navigable river, and when people can raise twenty five or thirty bushels of wheat on an acre of land which costs but \$1.25 with no expense for clearing, they can afford to wagon grain some distance. Then, no country can be better adapted for good wagon roads. There is so little rain; and during the long winters they are smooth and hard.



## Library of Congress

But granting that it will not pay to raise *grain* in remote places—cattle and wool will be bear transportation from the most remote corner.

I would like to see the iron horse in Minnesota as well as any one, and believe that grumbling will not bring it here; but well-directed industry surely will.

At Wasioja, as at every place else I met kind, pleasant friends. Rev. J. L. [James H.] White and itinerant Methodist preacher, came with his buggy and span of horses and insisted upon taking me to his house. He and his wife were Missionaries in Northern Minnesota before St. Cloud was thought of. She lived at Sauk Rapids and Watab, and his circuit was from Anoka to Lake Superior and Red River, inclusive. He had just two members in his big church, Mrs. Becker who now lives near St. Cloud; and Mrs.——(the wife of that Republican up at Crow Wing who was Chairman of the Republican State Convention before the last.)<sup>23</sup> We had a pleasant time talking on the past, present and future of Northern Minnesota. I spent my time in his family and that of Mr. Williamson, an ex-editor, formerly of Pa., a man of cultivation and refinement. Lectured to a full house with decided marks of approbation. Went next day to Mantorville, and became the guest of Mr. and Mrs. [Zeno B.] Paige [ *Page* ], a young couple who are making a magnificent home on the best Pennsylvania plan, a roomy, airy, house surrounded by substantial fences, large trees, paved walks, comfortable outbuildings with fruit trees and shrubbery. Mrs. P. and indeed a majority of the Mantorville people are from Crawford Co. Pa., and this part of Minnesota—Dodge Co.—looks like Pa., rich farms well fenced, interspersed with rough hills heavily timbered, grand precipices from which jut out inexhaustible supplies of the best building stone in blocks of all removable sizes, already squared, running streams shaded by a mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees. It is very beautiful and very rich in resources.

<sup>23</sup> No record of a convention chairman from Crow Wing has been found.

I was at Mr. Paige's writing my last letter to you when Mr. Bancroft came for me. I stayed over Sabbath with Mr. and Mrs. B. and started on Monday for Rochester. Oh! I almost forgot to say that Mantorville has fences and looks as if the people intended to stay there!



## Library of Congress

Every town has churches, and school houses, and preaches, and lawyers, 74 and doctors, but only about one half have fields and gardens. At Mantorville I lectured two hours, and the people were so kind they listened and applauded to the last.

Had an uncomfortable, tiresome ride to Rochester. Part of the road was very bad and the wind was high and cold. Got in about half past nine o'clock, went to a hotel and found my appointment had failed to come. Next morning went to the office of the *City Post* and waited until the editor, Mr. [David] Blakely, should come in.—When he did come I was bewildered.—There was the editorial room with all the usual paraphernalia—there was the editor standing in the door, looking down at me just as if Robert M. Riddle has risen from the dead, as I first saw him—the same tall figure six feet three, the same thoughtful, enquiring eyes—the scrupulously neat, yet apparently careless costume—the same low, earnest voice, that same deferential manner which appears to be so devoid of all thought of self and is yet so full of command, and quiet self-possession—the illusion was painfully complete.<sup>24</sup> Mr. B. entered at once into the business of notifying the public of my lecture for that evening. It was in the Court House and I had the largest audience I have had except the Minneapolis and St. Paul; but Rochester is much the largest inland town in Minnesota, and is growing rapidly on what appears to be a good foundation.<sup>25</sup> It has a very fine water power, and superior mills. The country around is rich and well settled. It is calculated that there are 8,000 sheep in the county, and the number is rapidly <sup>24</sup> For further information about Blakely, see *post*, 147 and note. Mrs. Swisshelm's connection with Riddle is mentioned *ante* 5, 8. He died late in 1858. There is a long obituary of him in the *Democrat* for January 6 and 20, 1859. <sup>25</sup> Rochester had 1,424 inhabitants in 1860, while Faribault, also an inland town, had a population of 1,508. *United States Census, 1860, Population, 259.* <sup>75</sup> increasing. Immense quantities of grain are brought in for sale, and Rochester is bound to be a large place.

I was very tired after lecturing here; but the people appeared much pleased and I met a number of agreeable persons; but had an appointment at Chatfield for the next evening and was only asleep when I was awaked to start in the stage and left at 1 o'clock in the

## Library of Congress

morning all shuddering with chills. It was quite cold and I was glad to have a covered conveyance, but we had only gone about five miles when we get the stage going the other way, and had to change and take an open wagon made to carry twelve people. The roads were rough and frozen hard, the seats without backs or any way to ensure possession; and the springs so strong and jerky that I soon found I should be jerked out if I persisted in trying to sit on one of the benches. So I laid a cushion and buffalo robe on the bottom and cuddled down, half lying, half sitting, and managed to keep alive until we got into Chatfield, after daylight. I got a good day's rest and lectured both evenings I stayed, to good houses.<sup>26</sup> Stayed at Mr. [Henry W.] Hawley's [ *Holley's* ], editor of the *Chatfield Republican*, and had a pleasant time. Started Friday morning for Preston, County Seat of Fillmore Co. About half the road was so bad we had to get out and walk around the worst places, but it was only 15 miles and we got there before dinner. Lectured that evening to a good audience; and as usual, met pleasant friends. The only Wool factory in the 26 Accounts of these lectures, on "Woman and Politics" and "Slavery as I Have Sen It in a Slave State," may be found in the *Chatfield Republican* for March 27 and the *Chatfield Democrat* for March 24. The *Democrat*, while it praised "the more than ordinary ability" of the lecturer, spoke disparagingly of her "strong intolerant and enduring prejudices" and of "a special talent and taste for merciless and pungent invective, which in their development have overgrown and smothered in a measure, what some of us regard as finer attributes of Womanly nature." <sup>76</sup> state, is at Preston and is owned by a woman.<sup>27</sup> It has carded 10,000 lbs. of wool in the last two years, and the enterprising owner is putting in spinning and weaving ap[p]aratus, as fast as she can pay for them. Preston is a pretty little place and has a fine water power.

<sup>27</sup> Mrs. Barbara Schweitzer was the owner of the mill. Manuscript schedules of the United States census for 1860, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

I left on Saturday morning in a rough looking little wagon which proved to be the most comfortable conveyance on the route, and rode forty miles over hilly but hard smooth road, to Calidonia [ *Caledonia* ], County Seat of Houston County. Mr. [A. H.] Butler Representative from Fillmore Co., had made these two last appointments for me; and Mr.

## Library of Congress

[James M.] Cavanaugh<sup>28</sup> had kindly carried a confirmation to Calidonia, so that although it was near dark when I arrived, the Court House in which I lectured was full. Calidonia is fifteen miles from Brownsville; on the Mississippi, and I must either go on Sabbath morning in the stage which brought me there or wait until Wednesday. I came on, got to Brownsville after dinner, intending to take boat for La Crosse in the morning before day; but some of the citizens learned I was there and wished a lecture, so I lectured there on Monday evening, and came up to La Crosse on Tuesday morning 's boat, stopped and lectured Wednesday evening; but had been sick in the afternoon and could scarce make myself heard. Stayed and rested next day, and came to Winona this (Friday) morning. Lecture here to-morrow evening—at Reads Landing Monday evening—Red Wing, Tuesday—Hastings Wednesday—Stillwater Thursday—Hudson and Prescott on Friday and Saturday, then home direct.

28 Cavanaugh was one of the two first congressman from Minnesota.. 77

[*St. Cloud Democrat, April 19, 1860*] Red Wing, April 4th, '60

Dear Will :—Here I am, a little old woman living under a hill, and if I don't soon be dead, I expect to be living here still. I am staying at an establishment which rises up from the wharf like a tall tomb stone. It is built against a bank so steep that the third floor is about level with the back yard. I noticed from the boat there is an inscription on it, "Metropolitan," and I have been tempted all day long to run down on the wharf and look up to see if it tells when the poor gentleman died, or what particular virtues were his, that his successors took this queer way of handing down his name to posterity—don't like to ask questions of those around me, for they all appear to have been relatives of the dear departed, arrived at that second stage of grief, when the first anguish of bereavement is followed by exhaustion. It would be cruel to reawaken their sorrow by speaking of it. So, as politeness requires, I have entered into their feelings and we are having a solemn time. It did not occur to me at first that the building was a Mausoleum and I guessed that there had been a revival of religion, and that the folks were all under conviction. Then I thought there might be some distinguished stranger in the house—some chile takin' notes, with the

## Library of Congress

malicious purpose of printing them, and that folks were under restraint; but the absence of groans convinced me the first was a mistake; and a look at all the faces banished all thought of the second conjecture. Then I thought there must be a corpse in the house, and the whole truth flashed on my mind at once.

You never saw such a sorrowful set of people, and when in solemn silence all, we march into the dining hall: the “Serious Family” are a noisy set compared to us. One 78 seldom speaks above a whisper.—Even the knives and forks appear dumb and when one does venture a remark the echo of his voice evidently frighten him. Opposite me sits a young lawyer, with a very curly head, who has apparently brought himself to his present state, by great exertion. To my left sits a Judge, who is quite in his element in the solemnities of this occasion, because the cares of state have long sat heavily upon his shoulders. One of the proprietors appears to be a cheery little man by nature, and would be willing to enjoy life once more if he were not deter[r]ed by respect for the other mourners, while I, who have sorrow enough at home, would gladly have gone up street to stay with a friend if I had not found that by so doing I might miss a boat if one should ever come along.

Through the interior[,] stages run but three times a week, and I must needs spend two days at each place; but at Brownsville they assured me a daily boat was a matter of course. So I made daily appointments from Winona up the river; but there was no up river boat, from that on which I came to Winona on Friday evening, until Monday evening, the time at which I should have been at Reads Landing. I came on to Red Wing and here again I have been two days and no boat. It is so late now that i could not reach my appointment at Hastings if there were a boat here; and if it were not for the solemnities which surround me, impatience might ensue; but all boiling over is out of the question in this atmosphere. Outside the wind raves until going on the street is impossible; and there can be no boat until old Boreas gets tired. Heigh ho! wish I could get on a spree, so far as to outrage the proprietors by humming ‘Old Hundred’ or ‘Hark from the Tombs;’ but such light amusements are not to be thought of on the present solemn occasion. 79 Good bye!

## Library of Congress

take care of the *Democrat* and my Rose Bushes. If I live until a boat comes you will hear from me.

Doretha Doleful

P. S. It might be a satisfaction for you to know that I lectured two hours last eve in the Court Room—the handsomest hall I have seen in Minn.—large and beautifully furnished, with a lofty, arched ceiling. It was election day, folks were considerably excited about returns, and the house was not full; but there were many more out than I had been led to expect; and they looked so much interested, so kind and intelligent, and applauded so heartily that it was a great pleasure to talk. Our cheery proprietor, of the half mourning, hitched up his dashing span of horses and drove me to and from the lecture; and I, have had plenty of everything good to eat, a nice, clean room and fire.

D. D.

[*St. Cloud Democrat, April 19, 1860*] Syil[[]] water, Apr. 6th, '60

Dear Will:—To day still finds me the little, old woman under the hill; but it is not the Red Wing hill, it is up by the pines, where the water is still, just the place where a “Surveyor of Logs”<sup>29</sup> had ought to be located, in the city of pine lumber. I am at the St. Croix House, and the folks appear as brisk and cheered as robins in spring.

<sup>29</sup> See ante, 54.

A boat did come along Wednesday night and I came on, up to St. Paul, and across by stage. Got here at noon yesterday.—There was no certainty that I should be here and my appointment was not fixed, as there was a festival that evening for the benefit of the Presbyterian church. So I lecture this evening; but more of this again.

It is evident there is not to be much emigration to Minnesota <sup>80</sup> this season, and I find that the general tendency of lower lips is downward. The Legislature did not build a Railroad

## Library of Congress

last winter, when they might just as well as not have laid a double track of good T rails up to the moon, across to the planet Jupiter and down through the center of Minnesota, with a branch to every man's barn yard; and a locomotive manufactory in at least sixteen towns of every country. Seeing that our Legislators have neglected an obvious duty, what is to be done? Eastern capital will not come in! speculators will not come and buy up the balance of our land and keep up the old business of growing wolves and prairie hens to feed them; and what is left to the people of Minnesota but starvation and ruin and despair! Boo, woo, woo! Let us all, My Brethering, go too, get up a simultaneous and tremendous flood of tears; and see if we cannot raise the rivers—or—or—or do something—make ourselves ridiculous at least! This would be some comfort!

The people of this State are now in the condition of a convalescent, recovering from a wasting fever and delirium, sitting drearily watching his thin hands, and almost despairing of ever again walking abroad. To look at the relics of that delirium, one need not wonder. To see the towns where there should have been grain fields, the public buildings with their cupolas and Mortgages, where only hay stacks should have been erected, one feels as in the case of some convalescents, that only a strong constitution could have survived it. On the way from Preston, County Seat of Fill[!]more Co. to Caledonia, County Seat of Houston Co., we passed the ruins of a *Steam Saw-mill*, out on the open prairie, miles from a tree or a stream of water, a little further on are the walls of a stone church, never roofed, another Steam Saw-mill on a prairie, built apparently for the purpose 81 of sawing prairie grass, houses with the outside all plained and painted with fancy cornices and ornamental windows, and—never a fence, no well, no garden, no fruit trees growing—not even a wild grape vine at the door, or a native brush transplanted to yield the berries with which the people of this state could so easily supply themselves with fruit and save thousands of dollars sent away for dried and canned fruit.

In some localities the people are farming with a will; and in these places there is a plentiful lack of sighs and groans, a scarcity of tears; and good supply of cheerful faces. Wonder when people of Minn. will find out that her wealth is in her soil; and that those who are

## Library of Congress

not directly or indirectly engaged in digging it out are little better than loafers? With such a soil and climate as ours, it is disgraceful to hear men whine. Take off coats gentlemen, roll up your sleeves and go to work with good hearts and cheerful faces. In ten years this is to be one of the richest states in the Union, according to her population. If there should never one more emigrant come into it, or one dollar of money except what is paid out for produce, there are plenty of people and capital to give her a most commanding position. A man who cannot make himself independent and command respect here, might about as well give up the business. Plow, make fence, plant, hoe, mow—get a cow and a sheep, make your butter and raise your wool, set out your own grape vines, black-berry and currant bushes—make your self independent; and every dollar's worth of everything you raise, is a one dollar subscription toward building Railroads—not a mere promise to pay, but a genuine hard cash dollar worth the face of it the world over.

The more I see of other parts of the State, the prouder I am of Stearns County; for in no other county do the people appear so universally at work, adding to the wealth of the State. The first time you see Uncle Joseph Edlebrock [ *Edelbrock* ] and brothers, [Joseph] Broker and [John W.] Tenvoord[e], just give them my compliments and tell them to please write on to [the] “Father Land” and see if it cannot spare us two or three thousand more citizens for Stearns County, just such as it has sent us, or as much better as possible, that is if it has any of that same sort left. Our New England people should seek to add to their numbers of such as shall be saved from the crowded labor market and strikes of the low paid laborers. I cannot tell why men stay and struggle in the East, with low daily wages, when they might make themselves magnificent homes, on the banks of our beautiful lakes and rivers.

Talk about the low price of grain and distance to market. In Pennsylvania I remember, men used to raise wheat, and think ten bushels to the acre, a great crop, on land which would cost \$50. Here with land at \$1.25 and no cost of clearing; and with 25 or 30 bushels to the acre, men grumble if they cannot get the same per bushel which they did then, when the fact is they can afford to raise it for one third the price. The beef, mutton and wool, we



## Library of Congress

can yet afford to raise for one third less than they can in Illinois; and these are articles to which our climate and soil are so adapted, that ours must command a higher price than similar products of the Western States. Cattle and sheep require much less care here than in the Central or Western States. There are no cold rains, sleet, and bogs of half frozen mud, to chill and weary them. We have no cattle diseases. Our domestic animals are more healthy than in other States. Our grass is more nutritious. Sheep yield more and finer wool; and 83 already our beef brings half a cent per pound more than that of other States, in the Milwaukee market.—Our lands are not liable to be deluged like those of Illinois and Indiana. We are less liable to untimely frosts than the middle States, and our seasons are gloriously beautiful, each in its time. Go to work good folks, go to work and our word for it that [the] good time a coming will be wonderfully hastened. Expect to be home about the 14th.

84

### III. The Eve of the Civil War

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, August 9, 1860 ]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written in Pittsburgh. The *Democrat* published only the extract that appears here.

I took stage at Anoka, and was glad to meet our good friend Mr. [Theodore H.] Barrett, one of the good folks who must be very intimately known to be appreciated.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately we had taken tickets on different routes, or I should have had him with me to Chicago. Lieut. [George D.] Ruggles, U.S.A. was in the stage, on his way to Jefferson Barracks, whither he was taking the band from Port Ripley.<sup>3</sup> He is polished, gentlemanly and pleasant; but with a little more of the air of an officer than is quite necessary; but this is excusable in a young man. For the first ten years you are all apt to feel the importance of your beards and the dignity of manhood to be somewhat in your way, like a schoolboys hands on exhibition evening. After a while you get used to them, forget and look more at ease.

<sup>2</sup> Barrett was chairman of the committee that drew up the resolutions condemning the destruction of the *Visiter* press. See *ante*, 16, and the *Visiter*, May 13, 1858. <sup>3</sup> Ruggles



## Library of Congress

was a second lieutenant in the Second United States Infantry, which in 1860 was stationed at Fort Abercrombie, Dakota Territory. Thomas H. S. Hamersly, ed., *Complete Regular Army Register of the United States, 1779-1879*, 735 (third edition—Washington, 1881); *Pioneer and Democrat*. July 22, 1860.

We got into St. Anthony in good time, took supper at the St. Charles and arrived at St. Paul half past ten. I went on 85 to the Merchant's, and found the prompt, and attentive reception one is always certain of receiving there. Mr. [M. L.] Veb[b]er is certainly the best hotel clerk I have ever seen. The prompt and cheerful air with which he looks after the women and ladies and little toddling nice things, with the last trunk, and basket, and carpet bag, and band-box, and umbrella, is a curiosity. There is no cavalier air about it, as if it were a something that had to be done and it was best to get over it as pleasantly as possible, no look of martyrdom or heroic endurance, but a kind, ready interest, as if he thought "poor things how tired you do look." He is certainly the *ne plus ultra* of a hotel clerk, as Mr. and Mrs. Belote are of host [and] hostess. In the morning I found Mr. Nourse, who attended to me as usual, just as if it were a matter of course that he were to get, and bring, and fetch, and have anything I wanted. I shall keep an eye on cousin George lest some of these days when I am in the very flush of my banking operations, he comes with a tremendous bill of services rendered. These lawyers, the best of them, need watching.—Amongst those I met in St. Paul, was Mr. Louis [Lewis], Gov. Ramsey's business man and my good friend. He is looking much better than when I saw him before, but I was hurrying to the boat and could not even get messages from him to carry to Pittsburg, his old home and mine.<sup>4</sup>

4 Mrs. Swisshelm went by boat to La Crosse, and from there by train to Pittsburgh.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, August 9, 1860 ] Swissvale, July 30th, '60

Dear Will: —You see I am in the old place, come by special notification, and expect to remain until I get my Pittsburg business settled. As I have never brought those 86 business matters before the readers of the *Democrat*, it is not now necessary to do so.<sup>5</sup> Certain legal forms require that I should be here for the present; and I find my old

## Library of Congress

neighbors exceedingly kind. The little twigs I stuck in the earth, and trees I dug out of the forests, and carried here and planted are grown into great, stately trees. The little vines I hunted out of the woods or bought from nurseries and set out, and fed, and watered, and tended, are now gloriously luxuriant, giving pleasure to many by their grace and beauty. My shrubbery is doing well, and you cannot imagine how much gratification it is to me to see shade and verdure where I found hot, dusty, unlovely banks and bare acres of yellow clay. I have not lived those years in vain, for roses now bloom where I found but thistles. Out in fence corners, on the highway side, my trees and currant bushes make the wayfarer glad.— Those who never heard of me, sit under the shade, eat the fruit and regale their senses with the loveliness of my flowers—I call them mine, no matter, that in common parlance they belong to others. In my inner life they are mine, and no parchment deeds can deprive me of the title by which they enrich and gladden my life.—Let this be a lesson to you who have but started on “Life's Journey,” no matter how much the thorns may prick your feet, as you walk on—no matter how hot and weary the stony path, try to leave roses and verdure, and soft mosses behind. Thus the world is the better that you have been in it; and every right act brings its own reward.

5 Probably the “business matters” that brought Mrs. Swisshelm to Pittsburgh had to do with her divorce.

In my last I left off at La Crosse. It was odd to find myself in a rail-way car, but as I always feel much more safe with steam for a motive power than with horses, I enjoyed the 87 ride. The cars are very comfortable, and there is always a sleeping car for those who desire it. The conductor was civil and the road good, so that we sped along at a rapid rate. This road passes through a beautifully variegated country of forest and green field. We stopped for breakfast and had time enough to eat.—We were in Milwaukee before noon, and omnibusses took us directly to the Chicago cars. There was no fuss, no delay, no trouble about baggage. We were through the city, in the cars and off again in twenty minutes. Milwaukee is quite a large place and handsomely built. It has the appearance of great business activity; and the great blue lake stretching away off to the horizon, with stately vessels flecking its surface like specks of foam, is a glorious vision. One is in sight of the

## Library of Congress

Lake much of the way to Chicago. The country is thickly settled, and many thriving towns on the line. We were in Chicago for dinner; I went to the Tremont, had time to bathe, dine, lie down and rest and spend three or four hours going through the city and transacting business; and then went to the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne & Chicago cars, and found some of the folks I had left on the boat, just in from the Dunleith cars, dusty, warm and weary. By going the La Crosse road one has the afternoon at Chicago. We left Chicago at seven o'clock. I took a berth in a night car, lay down and slept until morning, when we stopped at Crestline for breakfast, and changed cars. Stopped for dinner at Alliance, and was in Pittsburg that evening about 4 o'clock. The cars cross the Allegheny on a bridge just below the aqueduct, run through the center of those squares below the canal and in to the depot of the Pennsylvania Central. Here in train was waiting to go on East. Those who were going on crossed the platform, took their seats and in fifteen minutes were off.— This certainly 88 is an expeditious and pleasant route. I was pleasantly disappointed in finding the road much smoother than I had expected, and with very much less dust. There was not sufficient annoyance of any kind to warrant a comfortable grumble; and I have a serious notion to return by the river, in hope of meeting something with which to find fault.

I see no such grain fields any place as we have in Minnesota, although everywhere people speak of a bountiful harvest. There will I think be a good fruit crop in most fruit-growing regions. We are having rainy weather—heavy showers which beat down the oats. Rail Road and river travel always agreed with me and perhaps this is why I am so much stronger and feel so much better than I have done for some months. I shall write soon again.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, August 16, 1860]* Pittsburg, August 3d, '60

Dear Will: —I returned to the Smoky City on the 1st, got my feet wet, was sick and could not lecture that evening according to appointment; and want to feel quite well before setting another evening.—Pittsburg is greatly improved. There are street Railroads on Penn St. and Pennsylvania Avenue, on Smithfield from Fifth to Birmingham, and on

## Library of Congress

St. Clair St. running to Manchester. The Penn St. Road runs to the Cemet[e]ry, cars starting every ten minutes. I went out to Lawrenceville in one to make a visit at the Rev. A. Stewart's. He is pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Fifth Ward, and was formerly settled in Chicago.—A man of commanding presence, firm address and unusual acquirements as a scholar. He is a popular preacher and I think a most excellent man; and he has promised to visit St. Cloud next Summer, with the idea of settling there if he likes it. His principal object would be health. He is much 89 worn by city labors, and his wife is in poor health. I can but hope he will settle there as his services would be invaluable in our growing city. He is a fine botanist and entomologist, and has a very fine collection of herbs and insects. He lectures next Tuesday evening before the Western Pennsylvania Teacher's Association, in Greensburg, on entomology. He is anxious to get a specimen of our migrating grasshopper. I shall leave no stone unturned to get him settled in St. Cloud. But about the city improvements. The old Allegheny Bridge has been replaced by a fine suspension bridge, with rails for the horse cars crossing it; and there has been a great number of valuable blocks of buildings put up in different parts of the city. Fifth Street is almost entirely built up with splendid blocks; and the city appears strange to me. If it were not for the kind faces I meet, I should feel like Rip Van Winkle. But I have quite got over my regret about coal. I used to think I never could live without a bright coal fire, but since seeing the smoke again I shall go back to our wood stoves with a genuine enjoyment. Neither shall I mourn for the old Pennsylvania hills; but feel with a renewed sense of their value, the beautiful utility of our prairie lands and sparkling lakes. How easy it is to make superb homes in the West compared to the digging, and mauling, and grading which is demanded here; and our natural, unmade roads are in many places superior to their street Railroads. Minnesotians are not fully aware of the advantages of their position, much as they are thought to overestimate them. I expect to lecture on "The North-West" before returning to it; and try to convince some of our Eastern tillers of the existence of a "better land."6

## Library of Congress

6 Mrs. Swisshelm delivered this address on August 29, according to an announcement in the *Pittsburg Dispatch*, which was copied by the *Democrat* for September 20. Extracts from the lecture appear in the *Democrat* for March 28, 1861. 90

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, August 23, 1860 ] Swissvale, August 13th, '60

Dear Will: —I promised to write you something about the Chicago Zouaves, and intended doing so several days ago; but our excessively hot weather has been displaced by excessive wet. It rains every day and every night. Everything out of doors is dripping or swimming; and the roads ankle deep in yellow mud, so that I do not go out; and everything indoors is thoroughly penetrated with damp—all the bedding and clothing in capital order for ironing—furniture, books and carpets unwholesome and mouldy; and as I have been so long accustomed to Minnesota air and sunshine, this spell of Pennsylvania weather does not agree with me. The only safe place appears to be in the kitchen beside the cook stove; and this is not a good place for writing. As for personal matters, the prospect now is that I shall get my long standing difficulties satisfactorily and pleasantly settled; but I doubt if my strength will suffice for travelling or lecturing much for some length of time, and I am longing to see St. Cloud and some of the people there; and hope to be there early in September.

But the Zouaves.<sup>7</sup> The press has informed you that they have astonished every one with their military maneuvers; and they certainly are the only set of men I have ever seen, who impress me with the idea of being able to fight, or being trained for that purpose. Soldiers on parade always appeared to me as if they had been “got up” for exhibition, only this 7 The Chicago Zouaves, which were organized by Elmer E. Ellsworth in April, 1859, gave exhibitions in many towns throughout the country. Ellsworth's original diary, covering the period from April 11 to August 25, 1859, is in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society. Charles A. Ingraham, *Elmer E. Ellsworth and the Zouaves of '61*, 23-30, 59-112 (Chicago, 1925); *Minnesota History Bulletin*, 4:168 (August-November, 1921). 91 and nothing more. Their high, choaking stocks and collars, their tight coats buttoned to the chin, and stuffed with cotton, their ten pound leather caps, great flaring plumes and stiff,

## Library of Congress

pompous strut are all so contrary to ones ideas of any kind of work, that they have always appeared to me more like monkeys in a Menagerie than men prepared for a labor of life and death. But the Zouaves, as they marched into the parade ground, filled me with a kind of shudder; and the thought instantly occurred "what if these men came as enemies?" Their march is a long, free, regular step, which leaves the ground behind at rapid measure; and gives the idea of a kind of panther power of muscle. They look as if they were going some place—walking for some purpose and not to be looked at. Instead of the stiff military boot, they have soft gaiters, with undressed leather buttoned tightly up around the ankle, outside their red pants. I thought the gaiters altogether like our Minnesota moccasin-boots, as they appeared to give full play to the muscles of the feet, allowing them to spread to their natural shape; and so giving that free, swinging tread which carries such an idea of power to get about. They wear light blue-gray flannel shirts, closed in front; and short, dark blue cloth jackets rounded off in front at both top and bottom, with no attempt at fastening over the chest.—Their necks are bare and bronzed to the collar bone; and they evidently breathe without asking leave of coat, vest or collar. They wear small, jaunty, scarlet caps which are as little in the way as anything could be to protect the top of the head and shade the eyes; and altogether they have as much the appearance of being dressed for hard work as have a troop of Upper Mississippi lumbermen, on their way to spend a winter in our Northern pine woods. God help the city on which a regiment of them should be let loose!

92

Some of the Pittsburg papers spoke of them as small and rather "hard looking customers," and from their forte being personal activity I expected to see them of that class of men who approach the monkey; but was disappointed. They are small men, or their dress gives them that appearance; but their features are generally good, and as some of them removed their little brigand caps I noticed intellectual, gentlemanly heads, and pleasant, laughing faces.

## Library of Congress

They load and fire, making every motion as one man, or as if they were all moved by one wire. For half an hour they drilled on a full run, turning, wheeling, sometimes all abreast, then single file, or two, five, six, twenty abreast—turning right angles, charging forward, firing, wheeling and retreating at the pace a school boy would chase a ball or butterfly; and never making a misstep or getting into any confusion. Once they formed into two lines, both lying flat on their faces, and a reserve standing back. The forward line popped up their heads like turtles, took aim and fired, then turned over on their backs and loaded, while second line arose to a stooping posture and ran before them, threw themselves on their faces, popped up their heads and fired; and turned on their backs and loaded while the other line ran forward and repeated the operation.—Once they lay on their faces, and at a sign seized each his gun in his teeth, ran forward on hands and knees, fell flat, popped up their heads and fired away in less time than it takes me to write it. But I could not in half a day give you an idea of all the maneuvers they went through in two hours. The drill was on the Fair Ground; and it was estimated that ten thousand persons witnessed it. I am much interested in it, not so much for its military value as because it appears to me, this Zouave furor must exercise a wholesome influence on the dress and physical training of Young America; and perhaps aid in preventing its becoming *Old* America at twenty. The Kossuth fever relieved thousands of aching American brains from the ancient necessity of wearing a section of stove pipe; and I hope the Zouave furor will emancipate thousands of feet from stud-toed and narrow-soled boots—let down thousands of half strangle unfortunates who are hanged by the ears on unyielding shirt collars until they are half dead; and bring into healthy use many a set of dwindling muscles. A mixture of Zouave drill would greatly aid the manhood and comfort of American men, and for this I say God speed Zouave exhibitions.

There, it has not rained for five minutes, but my feet are chilled and damp, and I must go back to my corner by the cook stove.



## Library of Congress

The dry spell is over. It lasted ten minutes; and I have my feet warmed, when I come to tell you that the Republicans are very sanguine of carrying this State by a large majority of the entire vote. Strenuous efforts are now being made to unite the Breckinridge and Douglas tickets; and some of our Republicans are anxious that they should throw Bell and Everett in, so as to make it all apparent to the honest portion of the Democratic and Union parties that the sole object of the leaders in all these three factions, is the extension of Slavery over the Territories in defiance of the will of the people. I never believed there was any real quarrel between Douglas and the South; and recent events do not tend to convince me of error. Southern Statesmen are shrewd, and know very well that the people of the North must be humbugged on a large scale, and they out-Barnum Barnum in the humbug line. The present dodge is to make the people of the North believe that Douglas is persecuted for his devotion 94 to Squatter Sovereignty. After he has been persecuted to the death—to the second breaking up of their Democratic National Convention, and all the enthusiasm and sympathy manufactured which can possibly be got up, the Breckinridge Committees begin to court him. He plays the incorruptible with a desperate swell, isn't going to have anything to do with them—no, not he—he is standing on principles, he is; and scorns all approach to the citadel of his integrity; but after a while his patriotism will take a new turn, that is if he sees a reasonable hope of any large number of his followers turning with him; and on this, hangs all the hopes of the Slave Power. He will take a trembling fit for the fate of the country in case it be given over to Black Republican rule—and—and —ahem —will, much against his will conclude to postpone the settlement of the differences in the great and glorious Democratic party, and run on the same electoral ticket with the armed Slavery extension candidates; or, he will run in such States as it is thought he can carry, while Breckinridge will run in those he ca carry; and the electors will vote for either of them in the Electoral College. The friends of Freedom need to be awake, for the Slave Power was never more dangerous than now.



## Library of Congress

Here comes the noon train. It appears as if the neigh of the iron horse resounded through these valleys every five minutes of the twenty-four hours; but I shall be glad to see the St. Cloud ox-teams once more.

P.S.—Do not be afraid of running short of light. One Pennsylvania oil well is yielding 10 barrels per hour, and it is generally supposed the supply is inexhaustible.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> It was just a year before Mrs. Swisshelm wrote this that the first oil well in the United States, at Titusville, Pennsylvania, began producing. During the next few years hundreds of wells were sunk in the Oil Creek and Allegheny River valleys. Andrew Cone and Walter R. Johns, *Petrolia*, 50, 72 (New York, 1870). <sup>95</sup>

*[St. Cloud Democrat, September 13, 1860]*

It is almost worth while to go away from home just for the honor of meeting with some of the distinguished folks who are sure to be abroad at all seasons. If any one doubts it let him read of some of our late encounters, two of which we give below as the most remarkable:

Going down by stage we stopped at the St. Charles, St. Anthony, for supper.—Now it so happened that the last time we had traveled by stage we fell in company with Capt. [Anson] Northup, the proprietor, and as we were flush of money, having five dollars in cash, and the Captain had two outlots in the City which is to be the capital of Dacotah,<sup>9</sup> we made arrangements for starting the banking and real estate business here in St. Cloud under the firm of Swisshelm & Northup, he granting us the precedence in name on account of our superior amount of capital. This capital, the Captain thought quite sufficient to justify a very large business while we should do business; and secure us a prominent place in the list of “extensive failure,” when we should wind up, as he had known men who, when they first came to Minnesota were unable to pay a week's board, but who had started extensive business; and soon failed after sustaining heavy losses. So heavy as to place them in an enviable position as great sufferers. We had been greatly amused by the Captain's dry humor; and as the man who placed the first steamboat on the Red

## Library of Congress

River, looked upon him as rather distinguished;<sup>10</sup> but he sunk quite into insignificance compared to a gentleman 9 Northup's property was probably in Medary on the Big Sioux River, which early rumors predicted would be the capital of Dakota Territory. *Minnesotian* (St. Paul), July 14, 1857. 10 Northup in the winter of 1858-59 transported a boat across country from the Mississippi to the Red River, where it was launched the following spring and christened the "Anson Northup." Russell Blakely, "Opening of the Red River of the North to Commerce and Civilization," in *Minnesota Historical Collection*, 8:48. 96 we encountered on this evening after leaving his house. The Stage Company had generously arranged to give us a couple of hours extra riding, and so after supper the driver with hi load of weary up-country passengers [started] to drive all about the twin cities, and continued to drive through the rain until it was quite dark. We kept as quiet as two mice lest by calling attention to the extra riding we might meet and extra bill. We had indeed felt inclined to grumble at not going on directly to St. Paul. when the conversation between some new passengers revealed to us the fact that we had taken up one of the men who made Minnesota.—Up to this time we had an idea that the North Star State had been thrown in the general lump job of Creation, and now, for the first time, we learned one [our] mistake. Minnesota was made by the speculators, of which firm Edmund Rice and our fellow traveler were the head partners.<sup>11</sup> They, especially, *made Minnesota*, while his brother (the gentleman's brother, not Mr. Rice[']s,) found the brick. He told an anxious enquirer all about it; and how much they had lost on the job while farmers and late comers were now reaping the benefit of their labors, enjoying the country they had found ready made; and the makers overlooked in their just claims of pay.—The case was a hard one, and recalled instantly to our mind the two or three hundred thousand dollars which Northup and ourself had calculated to *lose* for the benefit of the country, in our banking and real estate operation.

<sup>11</sup> Rice accumulated considerable wealth through the purchase and sale of real estate in St. Paul. He is best known for the prominent part he played in the early development of Minnesota railroads. Thomas M. Newson, *Pen Pictures of St. Paul and Biographical Sketches of Old Settlers*, 153, 154 (St. Paul, 1886).

## Library of Congress

We feel well repaid for having been kept two extra hours on the road, by learning the true history of the creation of 97 Minnesota; and would respectfully suggest that some alteration be made in that sweeping declaration which heads the first chapter of Genesis; and have it read somewhat in this wise: "In the beginning God made the heavens and the Earth, all except Minnesota, which was afterwards made by the speculators.["] This injured gentleman served as a full supply of distinguished traveler during our journey eastward; and on our return we were equally fortunate in meeting a young lady in a soiled gingham dress ornamented with white cotton trimmings, who in the first half hour informed us that she had been dandled "in infancy" on the knees of an "old nigger" whose name was not Uncle Ned, but Uncle Adam, which same old nigger had performed a like dandling operation for her mother and her grandmother, that she had lately visited that same old nigger, on the ancestral estate in Kentucky, been clasped in his fraternal arms, and found him in fine health and spirits at the early age of one hundred and fifty. She had also the humiliation of acknowledging that she is cousin to the Illinois Rail Splitter, also to Mr. Bell of the Everett ticket, but her patriotism leads her to prefer that Mr. Douglas will be elected, as in the event of either of her relatives reaching the White House she fears some interference with Uncle Adam's rights and immunities. As the lady lives in a house which cost ten thousand dollars and has one or two intimate acquaintances whose front doors alone cost eight thousand, and will extend her travels into Minnesota, we trust that Uncle Adam may be sent for to take charge of her until she cuts her eye teeth, and that a committee be appointed to receive and introduce her to the man who made Minnesota.

98

[St. Cloud Democrat, September 20, 1860]

We returned from the East by the La Crosse route; and half a mile west of Portage the cars came to a dead halt, on a narrow embankment. The cry was "change cars here!" It was twilight. Gentlemen got their carpet bags, women their babies and bundles—no conductor about—but at the end of each car a stout man lifted each woman and child

## Library of Congress

and set her down ankle deep in loose sand on the steep side of said embankment. After wading and clambering round past the locomotive, we all took the track, jumped over a cow-ditch, and presently came into a "cut" where the banks arose perhaps twenty feet on each side. In the centre of this we found the track torn up for two or three rods; and an obstruction built of logs, stumps and tree tops. A knot of men were standing on the bank apparently enjoying the sport of seeing the passengers loaded with "traps" and wading through the sand. These called down to us merrily that that was an "injunction." We stopped and one passenger inquired if it were a specimen of Wisconsin Railroad law; and he answered, "Yes!"

"It is an injunction issued by the Supreme Court of Wisconsin?"

"Yes!"

"Whose land is this?"

"Mr. Davis'."

"What is his first name?"

A pause. "Don't know."

"Maybe it is *Injunction Davis*" we suggested; and the laugh was on the side of the passengers.

After wading the eighth of a mile, we reached the train waiting on the other side of the injunction. Here we sat and waited until the baggage could be carried around Mr. Injunction's land, and until our conductor could dodge the 99 sheriff and get aboard the train. He had already been arrested several times, given bail and been discharged; and the road master was arrested that evening.

## Library of Congress

As the case was stated to us, the trouble was all about the right of way across a sand bank in a country that appeared to be all sand banks. The Railroad Company had used two acres of land belonging to Mr. Davis, for which he claimed \$4,500. From what we could see in the deep twilight the land appeared to be worth from one to two dollars per acre if no rail road had been through it, and from ten to fifteen dollars as it now stands. Supposing Mr. Davis owned one hundred acres we should judge that he owes the Company from seven hundred to twelve hundred dollars, minus two or four dollars for the land used. We make this estimate without any knowledge of the particulars of this case; but founded upon all our previous knowledge of a Railroad's right of way.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The decision of the Wisconsin supreme court in the case of *Davis v. the La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad Company* may be found in *12 Wisconsin Reports, 18-29*.

In Pennsylvania we knew a man who had several hundred acres of land which he valued at from sixty to one hundred dollars per acre. A railroad was surveyed through it, and immediately he estimated it at from four to five hundred dollars per acre. There was no doubt on any mind but that the making of the road would quadruple the value of every acre of land he had, yet he fought the Company for years claiming thousands of dollars *damages*. According to Governments estimates, the making of a railroad doubles the value of the land the whole length of the road, six miles on each side, and by what rule of justice and common sense is a company required to add thus to any man's wealth, and then to pay him for the privilege?—We hear a great deal about private rights—the rights of private individuals; but 100 there are such things as public rights—the rights of the people at large. The people of this country claim the right to ride at the rate of from twenty to sixty miles per hour; and just in proportion as this right is recognized so we give up the idea of any man's dog-in-the-manger right to obstruct railroads, by imposing unjust burdens upon the builders. In nine cases out of ten all that is paid for right of way is an unjust burden, and all such react from the Company to the travelling public. In all cases of damages claimed of a railroad company a sworn, and, if possible, impartial jury should be required to take testimony as to the value of the land before the road was surveyed—

## Library of Congress

the addition to that value in consequence of making the road—the amount of land used, and injury done, and then strike the balance. If the road adds to the market value of the land more than the worth of the amount used and inconvenience, make the claimant pay that amount into the stock of the road. What would our country be without railroads; and by what rule of right are the whole travelling community taxed to double, triple, and quadruple the value of private property and then pay the owners for the privilege?

We hope that our Minnesota Legislature will see to it that our railroads are not to be incumbered by the absurd claims of that class of land sharks who take advantage of their position to press unjust and unreasonable demands.

Another thing we noticed that our western roads have great trouble with cattle on the track. The trains around Chicago check up and whistle the cows off the track every five minutes; and the whole line of the La Crosse & Milwaukee road is fenced in with cow ditches at every crossing.

Now, it occurs to us that a railroad is not intended for a cow pasture, and that people should be obliged to keep their 101 cattle out of the way. In Pennsylvania, if a man's cow or horse gets on the track and cause[s] any damage he is liable for the amount. This is the correct principle.—Cattle and hogs should be kept off public thoroughfares; and the owners have no more right to permit them to roam in such places than in their neighbor's enclosure. People who have domestic animals should have enclosures to keep them in; and they should, certainly, never be permitted to dispute the way with a locomotive.

*St. Cloud Democrat, December 27, 1860*

On last Monday forenoon in company with Mr. [William D.] Babbitt, of Minneapolis, we left St. Cloud for a short visit to Little Falls.<sup>13</sup> Although the sleighing was bad, we reached our destination at 3 o'clock P.M.—a distance of over 30 miles in less than five hours.

<sup>13</sup> Babbitt was one of the abolitionists involved in the liberation of Eliza Winston, a slave who was brought to St. Anthony by her master in the summer of 1860. See Swiss helm,

## Library of Congress

*Half a Century, 173-177.* An interesting account of this case is given by Folwell in his *Minnesota*, 2:69.

Little Falls is the county seat of Morrison County, and is situated on a beautiful prairie. It contained, by the last census, about 250 inhabitants, principally Americans. The streets are wide and well laid out, and the houses neat and regular. A little East of the main portion of the town, a large Court House has been erected, but not entirely finished. In the south-west corner of the building, a room has been finished and furnished, and is now occupied by N[athan] Richardson, Register of Deeds of Morrison County. For the erection and completion of this building, \$8,000 in bonds were issued by the County; but they have more to show for that amount than we of Stearns County have for our \$13,000 issued for the same purpose. In the center of the town, is a 102 very large and commodious hotel—we know not the name—two-and-half stories high. It appeared to us to be larger than the necessities of the place demanded; but it is well-furnished, the proprietor sets a good table, and we can cheerfully recommend it to travelers. Four or five well-filled stores are situated in different portions of the town, and appeared to be doing quite a brisk business.

The Little Falls Manufacturing Company have erected a large saw mill, but on account of the dam being swept away by the freshet last spring, it has not been running lately. Eighteen or twenty men have been employed for the past month repairing the fracture; but when we arrived, found that eight or ten of them had been on a strike for the past few days.—Arrangements were made, however, by which they should return to work on Tuesday morning. We also found a tin and blacksmith shop, each well supplied with the necessary instruments and stock for their business, and the proprietors busy.

The first person we met upon our arrival was N. Richardson, Esq., Register of Deeds. He was elected to this post by five majority over his Democratic opponent, while Douglas received a majority of thirty in the county. This speaks well for his popularity with his neighbors. We were indebted to him for numerous favors received during our stay. We next had the pleasure of meeting Levi Wheeler, Esq., our Representative elect, and who was the only candidate elected on the Republican Legislative ticket in this District. We

## Library of Congress

remained but a short time, yet have no hesitation in saying that the people of this district have in Mr. Wheeler a representative of whom they need not feel ashamed. He has now a contract for supplying Fort Ripley with fresh pork and beef, and will be busily engaged until the sitting of the legislature 103 in purchasing stock to supply this demand. We also saw Mr. [Joseph H.] Le Sage, recently elected County Auditor. He and Mr. Richardson were the only Republicans elected County offices in that County. He is of French extraction, and possesses great influence with his countrymen. In manner he is somewhat reserved, though very gentlemanly. Great confidence is placed in his capacity to discharge the duties of his office.

On Saturday afternoon a knock-down took place between two Frenchmen. It appears that Frenchman No.1 had been making unfavorable remarks concerning Frenchman No. 2.'s wife—for whose hand he had formerly been a suitor, but had been rejected—which coming to the ears of Frenchman No. 2., the latter took occasion upon meeting No.1. to administer sound thrashing, which was pronounced to be no more than he deserved.

On Sabbath morning we attended Episcopal service— Rev.[E. Steele] Peak[e] officiating.<sup>14</sup> We noticed in this gentleman a fault somewhat prevalent among public speakers; viz. that of fixing the eyes upon the rafters or an upper corner of the room and making their remarks apparently oblivious to the presence of an audience. This makes a discourse very tedious. Otherwise the sermon was very good.

<sup>14</sup> Peake was stationed at the Indian mission at Gull Lake.

On Monday afternoon, we started to return to St. Cloud, highly pleased with our visit. Little Falls is a pleasant, thriving little town; and will, when the mill is in operation, transact a large amount of business. Success to it!

104

### IV. The First Minnesota

[St. Cloud Democrat, May 23, 1861]



## Library of Congress

During our visit to Minneapolis, we made a short call at Fort Snelling. Saw Col. [Stephen] Miller in his new uniform, a dark blue frock coat and pants with the large brass buttons and yellow cord.<sup>1</sup> He looks well and is improving; but still has too much of that gait in which American merchants go hurry-scurrying through this world, hopping over acres of barrels and around mountains of boxes. Col. [Willis A.] Gorman politely offered to make us commander-in-chief for twenty-four hours if we prolonged our visit that long; and we feel like going back to claim the offer.<sup>2</sup> So that we may take friend Miller, by authority, and drill him in the art of walking. He has all the natural qualifications for a good officer. Courage that never falters, promptitude and decision in no common degree, integrity and care for the welfare of others which must win the respect and affection of the men of his command; but he does not walk well for an officer.

<sup>1</sup> Two weeks after Miller enlisted as a private in the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry he was commissioned lieutenant colonel. In 1862 he was made colonel of the Seventh Minnesota. Baker, *Governors of Minnesota*, 132-134. <sup>2</sup> Gorman was appointed colonel of the First Minnesota in April, 1861, when the regiment was mustered at Fort Snelling. He was brevetted brigadier general for gallant conduct at the battle of Bull Run. In the summer of 1862 he assumed command of a military division in Arkansas. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 7:435. 105

We saw his new saddle, holsters and pistols, superb articles; and Jeannie and Nettie are much happier for having sat upon his knee, ran their fingers over his bright buttons and given him a dozen good kisses and a "big hug."<sup>3</sup> God bless him; and make him all that his friend desire.

<sup>3</sup> Jeannie (Jane) was a daughter of Henry Z. Mitchell, Mrs. Swisshelm's brother-in-law. Nettie (Mary Henrietta), Mrs. Swisshelm's daughter, was about nine years old at this time. Col. Gorman is every inch a soldier.—Walks as though he stepped to martial music. Every motion and glance shows that he was born to command. In any dress and any place we should have picked him out for a soldier. If the Minnesota First does not give a good account of itself it will surely not be his fault.

## Library of Congress

Major [William H.] Dyke [*Dike*] has made himself extremely popular with the entire regiment; but we did not get a good look at him, as we met for the first time quite a number of gentlemen in whom we felt unusual interest.

The Fort itself was an object of curiosity to us. It is situated at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers.— Going to it by land from Minneapolis one crosses the stream which makes Minnehaha [Falls], on a rough wooden bridge, about forty rods above the fall. The stream is bare of timber around the bridge and is a very common place creek. There are no rapids above the falls, and as we drove across the bridge, a man in bare feet with his pantaloons rolled above his knees, was quietly wading about in the stream just above the fall, walked down to the very edge of the precipice, stood in the water full a foot deep, and looked leisurely down over into the abyss below. We drove down the well-worn road to the front of the house of entertainment on the southern bank, and getting out clambered down the precipitous, rocky, and thickly-wooded banks of the ravine, into which the stream plunges in a broad sheet of white foam. It was not in company dress. The winter jewels were all gone and the spring fashions not yet arrived. Minne-ha-ha amid leafless trees and bare brown rocks is beautiful and grand. Surrounded by ice and snow, or embowered in foliage and flowers, it would of course be more so.—The fort is one mile and a half below, and the stream forms the boundary of the Fort Snelling Reservation, of which Mr. [Franklin] Steele, got a dear bargain.<sup>4</sup> It is high rolling prairie, unimproved except by the graded bed of the Cedar Valley Rail Road, which is fast washing down and filling up. To the right are the remains of fences behind which the soldiers of the Fort used to cultivate grain and vegetables. There are long wooden stables where a troop of horses used to be kept, and two low, stone farm houses. The grave yards lie to the left, fence broken down; and the Fort buildings are a range of low stone houses.

<sup>4</sup> The purchase of the Fort Snelling Reservation by Steele is discussed in Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1:432-434.

A large gateway in the stone wall was guarded by a sentinel. To the right of the gate, the building is two story, with a porch running around the second. This second story is the

## Library of Congress

hospital. To the left of the gate is the magazine. Entering the gate one finds that the buildings enclose acre in a triangular form. There are covered porches, and a broad gravel walk around the green space in the centre, and at the head, facing the gate is a cottage with a portico, a broad hall through the centre, and rooms on each side. A sentinel paced back and forth on the portico, wrapped in a blanket, and carrying a gun. The room to the right is Col. Gorman's. It has an open fire-place, and there was a fine wood fire beside which sat Mrs. Gorman, a tall dignified lady, very pleasant,

Officers of the First Minnesota [From a photograph in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society. The photograph was taken in front of Colonel Gorman's headquarters at Fort Snelling on the eve of the regiment's departure for the front in 1861.]

St. Anthony in 1861 [From a photograph in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society. The large building in the background is the Winslow House.]

107 and giving the room quite a home look. A few chairs, a writing table, an iron bedstead, with a bed covered with clean blankets was the furniture. The room opposite is the quarters of Col. Miller and Major Dike; and the back of the hall opens out on a parapet overlooking the river.

We visited the hospital and found one man dangerously ill with pleurisy and lung fever, from cold caught by throwing himself on the wet ground when overheated on parade. Some four or five others were slightly ill from the same cause; but they appeared to be receiving every attention. We went into one of the barracks where the tables were set for dinner. A tin plate, a small tin pan, knife and fork and tin cup were the utensils. Bread looked good, and the cooks were in a shed outside making soup in two great cauldrons. We had some out of a dipper and found it good.

We did not stay to see a parade for the men had not their uniforms, and we did not care to see them in dishabille; but hope to go back when they are fixed up. It is evident they are rapidly acquiring a military air. In walking about the grounds they step with more precision

## Library of Congress

and firmness than the visitors with whom they mingled. Some of them wore bright scarlet caps—a grand mistake unless they want bullets through below them. They are certainly very conspicuous targets and should be exchanged for some other color.

We were glad to learn that there was no truth in the *Pioneer's* report of their protest against obeying the order to hold themselves in readiness to march to the Forts. We know that Colonel Miller will not lie, and he assured us that neither Col. Gorman nor one officer under his command has hesitated an instant about signify his readiness to obey; but they afterwards petitioned Gov. Ramsey to use his influence to have some of the other companies, which have been offered, 108 sent to the forts, and let the First Regiment represent Minnesota on the battle field.—This was all as it should have been. Who would expect Col. Gorman and the men he commands to be anxious to get into quarters where they would have only mosquitoes to fight? Who does not feel that every one of them would prefer trying a round with the muskets at Harper's Ferry.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Early in May, 1861, the First Minnesota was ordered to send two companies each to Forts Ridgely, Ripley, and Abercrombie to relieve the troops garrisoned there. The regiment, which had hoped to serve as a unit against the South, was disgruntled, and Colonel Gorman called a meeting of his commissioned officers, at which resolutions were passed requesting Governor Ramsey to obtain a reversal of the order. Because of this action, Gorman was severely censured by the *Pioneer and Democrat* of St. Paul. Governor Ramsey declined to interfere with the government's plans and the order was obeyed as rapidly as the detachments could be equipped. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:81; *Pioneer and Democrat*, May 7, 1861.

Success, sheaves of laurel, a safe return to the Minnesota First—if ever they are called into action, which we doubt.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, July 4, 1861 ]

On Friday forenoon all was bustle at Fort Snelling.<sup>6</sup> Outside the Fort, Lieut. Col. Miller's Fort Abercrombie detachment was encamped. There were two companies, Company C, of St. Paul, and Company D, of Minneapolis, Capt. [Henry R.] Putnam.<sup>7</sup> It was a pleasant

## Library of Congress

and novel sight, the clean, white tents ranged in two streets, the back part of the tents in the two center rows coming close together, 6 The First Minnesota left Fort Snelling on Saturday, June 22. Mrs. Swisshelm spent the preceding day and night at the fort “looking after the comfort and welfare of the soldiers.” According to the *Saint Paul Press* for June 23, 1861, she said that, “had her health allowed, she would have gone with the regiment to help take care of the sick and wounded.” 7 Miller's detachment had been recalled from St. Cloud, on its way to Fort Abercrombie, upon the receipt of orders for the regiment to depart for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The detachment already at the frontier forts were also recalled. William Lochren, “Narrative of the First Regiment,” in *Minnesota in the Civil and India Wars, 1861-1865*, 1:5 (second edition—St. Paul, 1891); *Pioneer and Democrat*, June 19, 1861. 109 the Colonel's tent standing at the head, and some distance off, with the open end fronting the centre of this double row so that it commanded a view down both streets.—While the tent of each captain stood to the right and left in advance of it so as to command each a view of both sides of the street on which the tents of his respective company were ranged. To the right of the Colonel's tent, and in range with it stood the Surgeon's tent.8 Capt. [William H.] Acker and his two lieutenants [Wilson B.] Farrell and [Samuel T.] Raguet [ *Raguet* ] occupied the same tent, but Lieutenant [Dewitt C.] Smith, of Company D, had a separate tent to the left of Capt. Putnam's as his wife and son were with him. The camp was laid out with mathematical precision. The camp-fire of one company being to the left near the head, and that of the other at the foot of the camp. In his tent sat Col. Miller on a camp stool, writing and using the top of an unpainted pine chest as a writing table, said chest also doing duty as breakfast, dining and tea table.—His cot sat outside with the mattress and blankets on it, enjoying the benefit of the sunshine, but alas, the eating utensils were already packed, the officers' mess broken up for the nonce and no opportunity for taking dinner off the chest lid. In the Fort were two boarding houses, one in the hospital rooms had the ordinary fare and other appliances of a first class hotel and so one visitor, at least, was badly disappointed at having to accept the usual hotel fare of “roast chicken, roast beef, boiled ham or roast veal,” on a white plate,

## Library of Congress

to be followed by “apple pie, cranberry tart or rhubarb,” on another, instead of pork and beans off a patty pan.

8 Jacob H. Stewart of St. Paul was surgeon of the regiment, *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:49.

Col. Gorman was in his old quarters, the stone cottage at 110 the head of the Fort; it had been made quite homelike by the introduction of carpeting and furniture by his guardian angel—the woman to whom Minnesota is to owe so much of whatever credit the First Regiment may reflect upon the State—Mrs. Gorman. She was packing the Colonel's trunks with such articles as he was to take. Packing and sending away other articles to be sent to their home in St. Paul, boiling ham to be sent on as rations on the journey, receiving visitors at the rate of one every five minutes.—Saying something pleasant to every one; and looking every inch a lady in a calico dress with close sleeves and not a ruffle or fold or frumple or bit of jewelry about her. And, ladies, would you believe it? he did not once apologize for that “horrid dress,” or say a word to induce her visitor to believe she had a better one somewhere in reserve. If there is one test of vulgarity and parvenuism more unfailing than any other, it is that of a woman under any ordinary circumstances calling attention to her dress by apologies and explanations.

Mrs. Gorman is her husband's purser, Commissariat [*sic*] General, counsellor and assistant, while treating him with that affectionate respect which goes so far to command the respect of other. Assuming no airs of command, doing nothing to belittle herself or him by an assumption of authority, but taking pains to understand his duties and interest, she advises and assists, takes care of the Colonel while he takes care of his military duties.

One thing was decidedly amusing to the weaker sex, viz.: The delightful state of uncertainty which pervaded the camp on many questions.

Would there be a regimental drill this afternoon?

## Library of Congress

The privates did not know, orderly sergeants could not tell, lieutenants had not been informed, Captains had not learned, the major was not in the secret, Lieut. Col. had no orders on the subject, while the Colonel thought that with the hurry of packing there would scarcely be time.

The Winona company were drawn up in order, and received each man a pair of superior woolen socks from the Quarter Master's department, and a havelock from the ladies of Minneapolis. Would all the companies get havelocks? Nobody knew.

A knife and fork was also given to each. Would they be obliged to carry their own eating implements and blankets? Couldn't say. Well, no one appeared to know anything in particular except that he was ordered to Harrisburg—hurrah! and expected to go to Washington— again; and though there would surely be a big fight at Richmond or someplace else; and that the Minnesota First would be in it some place near the front— hurrah again! They rather thought there would be steamboats and rail cars to carry them, and something to eat and wear, and room on the ground to sleep when they got time; but the big fight was the only great certainly contained in this small world at the particular time. No one boasted what *he* was going to do, but all appeared deeply impressed with the idea that the Minnesota First was soon to meet the traitors face to face.

About 2 o'clock, Col. Gorman's great war horse was led up to the door of head quarters, and three men succeeded in getting the saddle on him. Was there to be a drill? Nobody knew. The band drew up at head quarters, and rolled out great strain of martial music, swelling up to the clouds in a grand symphony, and carrying the souls of listeners so far upward that the bodies appeared loth to stay pinned to the solid Earth. Was it to be a dress parade? Nobody could tell.

112

Presently Col. Miller comes hurrying up. They are to proceed to the parade ground, and his horse is away to be shod. Maybe Major Dyke's [is] in the same case, as a noble animal



## Library of Congress

is unhitched from a visitor's buggy, and prepared for his use.—Soon they all mustered on the parade ground —Col. Miller on a fine grey, borrowed to take Fanny's place. By slow degrees it became known that the object of the muster was to permit an artist to take Photographic views of the regiment. These were taken first in line-of-battle order, or standing side by side two deep, one rank behind the other. Col. Gorman and staff in the centre, and behind far enough to command a view of the entire line, Col. Miller to his right and Major Dyke to the left. The standard bearer, young [Howard] Strawsberry [ *Stansbury* ], a slight, fiery youth, held aloft the magnificent flag presented by Mrs. Ramsey and the ladies of St. Paul. It is of heavy silk, dark blue, the Minnesota coat of arms exquisitely painted in the centre on one side and a Union motto on the other and edged with heavy gold fringe. This is the parade flag. The battle flag is the National ensign of rich silk.<sup>9</sup> A second picture was taken, every company standing in single file, one behind the other, and about twenty rods apart.—Col. Gorman and staff in the centre, between the lines. Col. Miller near the front and Major Dyke in the rear. They presented a fine appearance. The two rear companies under Major Dyke had been uniformed at Fort Ridgely in the U.S. uniform of dark blue frock coats with brass shoulder pieces. The others were all in bright red shirts with dark blue pants like the others. Col. Gorman's horse is a superb and ponderous <sup>9</sup> The flag mentioned was the gift of the women of Winona. It was carried in the battle of Bull Run, after which it was sent to St. Paul and deposited in the Capitol. *Pioneer and Democrat*, August 8, 1861; Lochren, in *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian War*, 1:5. 113 bright bay, a gift from the people of St. Paul. The Col. rides well, so does Major Dyke, who is a large and portly man; but Col. Miller is much the best rider of the three, mounts with the utmost ease, and looks exceedingly well on horse-back. The arms of the men were highly polished and they handle their guns with great precision.—The few manoeuvres they performed in getting into line and changing form were done promptly and without the slightest confusion. From this parade they were dismissed until the dress parade at six in the evening. There appeared to be thousands of visitors on the ground. They were from all parts of the State. So a large proportion of both officers and privates had friends to attend to as well as packing to do.



## Library of Congress

Gov. Gorman's quarters were like a fair ground, with the ceaseless ebb and flow of visitors. The covered walks in front of the quarters were crowded with a gaily dressed crowd, the many colored dresses of the ladies mingled with the red and the blue uniforms of officers and men, civilians in white coats, and children glancing hither and thither in the crowd like butterflies in a flower garde, but the sad faces and heavy eyelids one met at every turn, made the whole scene a speaking epitome of this world of gladness and graveyards. Here was a private with his wife of two weeks on his arm; and us they thus walk in the midst of the honeymoon, who shall wonder that the edge of his eyelids are more highly colored than usual? or if in returning your greeting his voice is low as though wearied from a recent struggle with a great sob? Men and officers share alike in these trials. That tall Lieutenant and the lady at his side stood before the altar only last week. Did you ever see two pairs of eyes so full of unshed tears, or hear two voices with such a low refrain of sadness? There is no pomp of sorrow, no grandiloquence of 114 woe there.— No thought that the trial merits sympathy; nothing in the manner but a vague wonder and terror of that terrible to-morrow, when in the midst of thousands each shall be alone. There are many sad scenes under all this brilliancy of color and light and motive, but nothing more touching than that mute misery. Here sits an officer with “the baby” in his arms—that wonderful baby and how it is amused with papa's shoulder straps, while the mother sits looking on at papa and baby asking herself “when shall we three meet again?”

But come, this is not to be endured!—There is another bride smiling as the sunshine around her, for she is going along with him, and surely nothing evil can happen while they are together.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, July 11, 1861]*

The quarters of the men were in the long, one-storied stone houses which appears to be about sixteen feet wide. They were fitted up with rough scantling posts, and boards nailed to them supporting two tiers of berths, and standing endwise with narrow passages between. This occupied about seven feet of the space; and down the remaining eight or

## Library of Congress

nine feet stood long pine tables and benches. There are few openings in the back of the buildings.—Those in the front are darkened by the covered walk; and the ventilation is not what it ought to be. Still there was no unpleasant odor, showing that a goodly degree of cleanliness had been maintained. For bedding they had muslin slips filled with straw and thin blankets. Members of the St. Paul company said they had not been furnished with a second blanket as reported by our brethren of the press. One of them exhibited his blanket which answered the description given by the prophet 115 Isaiah of the devices of the wicked: “The bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on, and the covering is narrower than a man can wrap himself withall.” This small blanket was all the bed and all the covering. The whole mess confirmed the account and it must have been true for we received it standing in their tent shortly before the lights were to be put out for the night. They had gathered up a few odd scraps of boards and laid [them] on the ground. These, with one blanket, too narrow to go both under and over the sleeper, and too short to wrap shoulders and feet at one time, did not appear a very luxurious couch.

At nine o'clock at night a dozen men of Company F, were in the store room quarters around a guttering tallow candle, marking their bed ticks, which they expected to take with them and have filled with straw, when they came into quarters.—They were very polite and respectful and evidently pleased to see a bonnet stray in all alone as if there was nothing to be afraid of. They knew what they were about, and understood the cause for which they hoped to fight. They left that every interest of humanity was staked on the conflict; and although we talked indiscriminately with the soldiers, not hesitating to address and question them without the presence of any officer or any introduction, there was no complaint. Even the men with the bed of scraps of board and homeopathic blankets had no tone or word of complaint, yet it did occur to us that such men as our old friend John Ball, orderly sergeant of the Winona Company, a scholar and a gentleman, must feel a little out of place with such accommodations; and there are a large proportion of the rank and file who have been accustomed to the luxuries of life. It is worse than the roughing it in the bush encountered by our frontier surveyors. here a surveyor expects to 116 carry a

## Library of Congress

buffalo robe and pair of blankets as bedding.<sup>10</sup> But Col. Miller did not know at ten o'clock on Friday night whether transportation would be furnished for the second blanket which had been provided for some of the companies, by their friends at home. The orders on the evening parade were that each man should take charge of his own *blanket*, his gun, haversack and canteen. He thought it would be unwise to attempt carrying a second blanket, if they should have any hard marching.

<sup>10</sup> Ball was a surveyor. Upham and Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies*, 31.

It would certainly be economy to furnish each man a piece of light india rubber cloth seven feet long and two feet wide to spread on the ground for a bed, to be worn as a cloak while walking in the rain. Every tent, too, should have a window about a foot square, high up in the gable and opposite the doorway. This would draw the air across and carry off the expelled breath of the occupants. A close tent, ten feet square, with eight men sleeping in it, is in a fair way to become a pest house. This window might have a curtain to be buttoned down during a storm.

Then there ought to be a greater variety in their rations. We can see no reason why soldiers should eat beans from the first of January to the last of December every year. Wheat is as cheap, as easily carried and cooked as beans; and wheat boiled in clear water and eaten with molasses or sugar is very palatable and very healthful; or it is good boiled with meat and eaten with salt. Boiled wheat once or twice a week would add to the soldier's health. Then baked potatoes are not expensive. Let the cooks scoop out a hollow in the ground, lay in a bed of live coals, put in the potatoes and cover them with hot embers. They can be cooked thus so as to be excellent, and are a first class anti-scorbutic. Some 117 kind of fruit should be furnished every day. Cranberries as often as possible alternated with dried apple or peach when there is no ripe fruit in season which can be procured, and the commissariat [ *sic* ] department should advertise for proposals to furnish the army with cucumber pickles, put up without "greening" and ripe tomato pickles. When hungry men eat fat pork, they ought to have pickles. To expect men to live on bread and beans and bacon and coffee and preserve health and vigor is absurd. We do not

## Library of Congress

ask for our soldiers pastries, puddings or rich condiments, but they ought to have fruit and vegetables, a proper proportion of acids, and changes of plain diet. If Uncle Samuel cannot afford this we had better stop fighting and go to picking cotton for "Massa" Carolina; but the fact is, that the people pay for comfortable subsistence for the defen[se] of their liberty, and the contractors pocket the money. Government paid fifty cents per day for boarding each man while at Fort Snelling, three dollars and fifty cents per week; and the contractor paid no house rent, furnished no furniture or bedding. With provisions at the prices they command here, the actual cost to the contractor could not have been over twenty cents per day, leaving thirty clear profit.

In the evening at six o'clock there was the usual dress parade inside the Fort.—None of the officers were mounted, and the men did not go through any complicated movements, but all they did was well and promptly done. One thing appears apparent; and this is that the Zouave drill so extensively exhibited by Colonel [Elmer E.] Ellsworth last summer, has made an end of the military strut with which volunteer companies used to get about in steps of about fourteen inches, getting forward at about the pace old Col. [Dunning] McNair's horse used to move, when the Col. said 118 he trotted all day under the shade of a tree.<sup>11</sup> The step of the Minnesota First is long ad free, and looks, when marching, as if they were going some place, not pattering about to exhibit themselves to the boys. At the close of the parade, Adjutant General [William B.] Leach, read from a written paper, the orders for next morning. The troops were to disperse to their quarters, lights to be blown out at ten o'clock, the reveille to be sounded at half past three in the morning. Call to divine service, conducted by the Rev. Mr. [Edward D.] Neil[I], at half past four.<sup>12</sup> Call to breakfast at 5, when they were all to be ready to embark on the steamers for Harrisburg. Companies A, B, C, and D to embark on board the War Eagle under command of Lieut. Col. Miller to proceed to Prairie du Chien and then take cars for Chicago, to meet companies F, G, H, I and J, which should embark on the Northern Belle for La Crosse, there to take cars for Chicago and meet the other detachment. Each company was to be divided into messes of eight, to be assigned one tent. A responsible person from each mess was to be

## Library of Congress

elected to get the rations for that mess and cook them, giving each man his share. Another responsible person was to take charge of the plates, cups, knives and forks of the mess, and be held accountable for them. Still another should take charge of the tent, tent pins, &c., while each man took charge of his gun, canteen, haversack and blanket. Rations would be distributed for their sustenance on the way, and browned coffee was to be taken and made into coffee on the boats, and distributed into every man's canteen, and this he was ordered to drink as much as possible in lieu of water.

11 McNair was proprietor of Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania, where Mrs. Swisshelm spent a part of her childhood. Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 10. 12 Neill served as chaplain of the First Minnesota until July, 1862. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 4; 438, 439. 119

Here was work for officers, and they all gathered around to hear the orders re-read. They appeared perfectly explicit in every minutiae, and yet it was wonderful to find how many things there still were which nobody knew. Were they all to take breakfast on the boat, and why? If not, why was the breakfast call at five, the hour of embarkation? Would the officers be boarded on the boat, and why?—And would they require rations? Would they be mustered and marched in order to divine service, and why? or would each man go on his own responsibility?

At the close of the parade, there were many tearful leave-takings of the visitors who were going away not to return.— Yet so many remained that every mattress was occupied. Col. Miller and son were driven from their tent by lady visitors, and took refuge with the doctor.<sup>13</sup> At dark the password was given, and sentries set, and when Col. Miller essayed to pass the line, a few steps from his tent, in the clear moonlight, it was amusing to see the sentry stop, point his bayonet at him and demand:

<sup>13</sup> Miller's son, Wesley, enlisted in the First Minnesota with his father. He became lieutenant in the Seventh United States Infantry, and was killed at Gettysburg. See *post*, 247-249, and *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, I:49,55.

“Who goes there?”

## Library of Congress

“A friend with the countersign,” was the answer.

“Advance friend, and give the countersign,” and he stepped up to the point of the bayonet and whispered the cabalistic word. Coming to the gateway of the Ft., the sentry there was receiving a severe reprimand from his captain for permitting him to pass with Col. Gorman; and at the entrance of headquarters, the commander-in-chief reprimanded the sentry for presenting arms as he went in. “No honors to anyone after dark, sir,” was the stern order.

120

During the stay at the Ft., Col's Gorman and Miller, Major Dyke, were out dining with Ex-Governor [Henry H.] Sibley. Returning after the watch was set, the sentry challenged, although he knew them very well. Col. Gorman tried his eloquence to gain admission, for it was late, but was promptly informed no one went in there without the countersign. So the three officers stood first on one leg and then on the other, and the sentry stood confronting them, keeping them in range of his bayonet and bullet until he sent for the officer of the day, and had them admitted according to military rule.

The camp fires were burning bright, and the coffee and beans in progress of preparation, for the cooks appeared to have breakfast ready, whether it was eaten there or elsewhere—at four o'clock or five. By two [ *sic* ] o'clock all else was dark except at head quarters, and the white tents looked like mist wreaths in the hazy moonlight. The only sound was the whippoorwill's cry and the beat, beat, beat of the sentries' walk, until midnight, when the demand was heard sharp and clear:

“Who goes there?”

“Relief watch with the countersign.”

“Advance relief watch, and give the countersign.”

## Library of Congress

There was a click of arms, an order “forward march,” and the beat, beat, beat was resumed until the reveille sounded. There was a heavy dew, and the air was chill. The companies, in a few minutes were drawn up, and the orderly sergeants called the rolls hurriedly, with the oft-repeated order “Answer quick.” Then, the names of the different messes were called, the men named to take charge of the rations, the dishes and the tents.—It was a serious business, and required much rapid, energetic speaking; and the answer of many questions as men would fail to get the idea of the 121 mess to which they were appointed. The tents were disappearing, as mist wreaths melt before a breeze, as the men after ascertaining, went swiftly to their duties.

Pans of beans and pork, slices of bread and tin cups of hot coffee were carried to the sites of the disappearing tents, and in the gray mist of the chill morning, on the wet grass or scraps of boards, the gallant defenders of our National life crouched down or stood and snatched a hasty meal—one at a time, two or a whole mess, just as they could get time from packing tents, or loading wagons to have their baggage driven down to the boats. Three or four of them whom we did not know we had ever before seen, and may never meet again, divided their breakfast with us as we stood on a bit of a board, and took coffee and beans in somewhat of Indian fashion, using somebody's spoon and cup.—We wanted to know if the food was good of the kind, and found it well cooked and properly seasoned. Col. Miller walked about in his great coat in front of the site of his recent habitation, quietly and very promptly giving orders which sounded very like suggestions, or requests, as one after another came to him to know what was to be done with this, that and the other. He had no idea where his breakfast was to come from, and that, to him, indispensable cup of coffee.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat, July 18, 1861* ]

As it became broad day, Lieut. Smith, lady and son emerged from their chamber ere it tumbled about their ears and stood on the wet grass wondering about breakfast. The wife of one of the privates, who had also spent the night in camp, but was to see her

## Library of Congress

husband leave, was accommodated with a board and a blanket to sit upon as she took her morning meal with her husband's mess. Presently messengers returned 122 to say breakfast was ready in the boarding houses, and here we found Col. Gorman and family; and immediately after, as by magic, the whole regiment was mustered on the inside parade ground, for morning service. The chaplain, Mr. Neill, is certainly well calculated for his place. The christian gentleman is the first impression his appearance must make on every one; and the chaplain of an army ought to be a gentleman, as well as a christian. Should be a man of polished, urbane manners; and kindly, gentle nature to correct the tendency to coarseness which must abound in camp life. We do not like the idea of fighting chaplains in camp. There is enough fighting material there; and we rejoiced to hear Mr. Neill distinctly announce himself as the Ambassador of the Prince of Peace. He stood upon a chair, the staff officers around him with uncovered heads, the men drawn up in front with company officers in place.—They generally joined in singing “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee,” when Mr. Neill read a psalm which occurred to us as peculiarly appropriate, delivered a short address and offered a touching and beautiful prayer that God would keep their hearts from vengeance and cover their heads in the day of battle. With few exceptions the faces of the men spoke a reverent attention, and there were many tearful eyes. Looking over them as they stood, we were glad to notice the clean and comfortably-clothed appearance of the men.

Two of the companies, as we have already said, were in new U.S. uniforms of dark blue surtouts and pants, which at first so deceived us that we thought them all officers, so jaunty was their appearance. The other seven companies—Capt. [Alexander] Wilkin's was still at Fort Ripley<sup>14</sup>—were in 14 Company A under Captain Wilkin and twenty-five men of Company G under Captain Lewis McKune joined the regiment shortly after it arrived in Washington. Lochren, in *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:5. 123 complete uniform of dark blue pants, and bright red shirts and black felt hats which all appeared so particularly substantial that we could not detect work for a needle and thread on any of them. Their shoes were sound and we had seen and examined woolen socks given out



## Library of Congress

to them the day before of superior quality. Each man had his blanket done up neatly, and transportation had been furnished for that second blanket which had been given by friends to some of the companies; also their bed ticks were to be forwarded so that they might be filled when they reached a halting place. As the word was given to march for the boats, Capt. Putnam came running to us with a key and a message for home from E[dward W.] Ball, a son of a near neighbor, and the sturdy, gallant fellows marched off two and two in very good order, except that as they came near to pass out of the gate some of them were impelled to break step long enough to cut one pigeon wing or execute a slight double-shuffle.

As they marched down the steep, circuitous, rocky road to the boats they presented the finest spectacle we have ever beheld. The bank on which the Fort is built is precipitous and presents an angle at the confluence of the two rivers. It must be considerably over a hundred feet above low water mark and crowned with the grey old stone walls, the most advanced part in circular form; the winding, rocky road around it; the pathway of the river glistening like polished mirrors in those gorgeous emerald frames, and the long train of men in white havelocks, rich red shirts and gleaming arms called vividly to mind the old pictures of Highland soldiery with which Walter Scott has bewitched the world. They were marched two and two on to the boats, each company having been assigned its place, and with all the rush of wagon-loads of provisions going on, there was no confusion. 124 Those rolling barrels, or carrying boxes and tents halted, faced, marched, &c., &c., in regular military precision.

On the War Eagle, Col. Miller took possession of the Bar, and set a guard over it early in the embarkation.

In a marvellously short time all was ready. Hasty adieus were spoken.—Those on board who were *not* going, left; and those on shore who *were*, hurried on, the planks were drawn, and with three cheers the boats moved away, the Northern Belle, with Col. Gorman's division taking the lead.

## Library of Congress

Success to the gallant First. We have taken a personal mental portrait of most of the officers, and a general panorama of the men that we might be able to follow them on their way to glory, death or a safe return, and will most likely have more to say of some of them at another time.—In the whole regiment we noticed not more than half a dozen faces which bore the trace of former habitual inebriation, and sorry to say two of these were officers. We do not think a man who is liable to become intoxicated under any circumstances, should ever be selected as an officer.—His example is ruinous and he may be drunk at the moment a cool head and steady hand are most needed. Every man who knows himself addicted to seeing blue stars occasionally should, in all honor and patriotism, resign and go into the ranks or go home.

If a misstep is made in our Regiment, we shall at once inquire for the position of two officers and take it for granted until disproved, that they were at the bottom of the mischief. We see that Col. [Cyrus] Aldrich has been amongst our troops at Washington furnishing them with whisky, and would like to know what Colonels Gorman and Miller were about just at that time? Had we been in their places we 15 Aldrich was a member of Congress from 1859 to 1863. Lochren, the historian of the regiment, states that shortly after its arrival in Washington one the night of June 26, Aldrich, “followed by a large squad of colored servants, bearing pails of hot coffee, baskets of sandwiches, and other refreshments sufficient for all,” appeared among the men. Later Lochren says: “The regiment never had a warmer or more efficient friend than Col. Aldrich. Generous and open-handed, he was always ready and alert to do everything in his power for the regiment.” *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:7, 12. 125 should have had him arrested as we should any other whisky peddler, and sent to the guard house. The only trouble of the commander arises from a few men who will become intoxicated when they have the temptation; and there has been one instance of serious insubordination from this cause, and to have one of our Congressmen go around amongst them peddling the means of revolt and disgrace and imprisonment to our soldiers is a little too much for a joke. No man should be permitted to bid for political preferment, by feeding the depraved appetite

## Library of Congress

of such soldiers as have it, to the danger and disgrace of our crack Regiment; and we respectfully suggest that Col. Aldrich drink his own whisky; and that if he brings any more to camp, Col. Gorman put him under arrest like any other law breaker!

126

### V. Lecturing in 1862

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, January 23, 1862 ] Minneapolis, Jan. 19, 1862

Left home Thursday morning 7 o'clock by stage, mercury 28° below zero, and as we had been in the office for months previous, where the air must be well heated, and had not been out for five moments at one time felt the cold sensibly. Stage on runners with plenty of robes, and cushions and hay, and a close canvass top, first class team, and good drivers all the way; passengers got on without suffering or any unnecessary wear and tear of patience even at this degree of cold. We reached Anoka at half past two and there learned that the appointment for our lecture had been given out for the Thursday previous and that much disappointment had been expressed at our non arrival. Could not understand how this could be as it had been the 16th we had intended coming, but as Rev. Mr. Fisk[e] was to lecture that evening on the war, concluded to remain, hear him and find out where the mistake originated. Our friends thought we had better remain and lecture on Friday and we concluded to do so. Found next day that in our letter to the editor of the *Republican* we had said Thursday without appending any date. He naturally supposed it was Thursday first, so gave out the appointment accordingly. We remained and lectured on Friday evening in the Baptist Church but there was so little time to give notice, the audience was not large, but large enough to make it well worth while to talk of[,] composed of that class of people one likes to address as being sure to be understood. It appears to us that in Anoka the mark of intelligence on the faces one meets is more unusual than in any other town.

## Library of Congress

We renewed a former pleasant acquaintance with Dr. [Aurora W.] Giddings, (nephew of Josh[ua] R.) and lady, our former correspondent [Mrs.] Shaw,<sup>1</sup> and several others beside making new and valued friends. We are very much indebted to Rev. Elder Palmer, Pastor of the Baptist Church for unabated kindness and to the trustees of the church for the gratuitous use of their beautiful house ready warmed and lighted. Mrs. [J. B.] Leufkin [ *Lufkin* ] of the New England House made us so entirely at home that we grat[e]fully declined all other invitations to accept any of the many hospitalities tendered. We there met Dr. Pahen, a gentleman of fine education, extensive travel, large intelligence and abundant means, who has entered land in Meeker Co., two miles south of Paynesville where he intends, next spring, to start wool-growing, commencing with a thousand sheep. As Major [William J.] Cullen takes one thousand up Sauk Valley, next spring, to his estate, we can count on wool for home consumption, at least in two years more.<sup>2</sup> We shall all hail the advent of woolen yarn in Minnesota, and the end of all necessity for bringing up these great five pound bundles of twisted dog hair which is retailed for stocking yarn.

1 See *ante*, 51. 2 Cullen owned a stock farm of 1,120 acres in the Sauk River Valley. From 1857 to 1861 he was superintendent of Indian affairs of the northern department. *Democrat*, October 17, 1861; *Pioneer and Democrat*, May 15, 1861. 128

Dr. Pahen has no uneasiness about dogs and wolves, as he says there is a large supply of strychnine in the market, and that he understands using it as Texas wool-growers have used it to the extermination of those natural enemies of sheep. On this we agree with him, and consider ten pounds of strychnine worth all the dog laws any Legislature can pass.

On Saturday after dinner took stage. Had a span of superb black horses furnished with bells. The weather was so mild that it snowed on us all the way but with a close cover it was no inconvenience, and before four o'clock we arrived in Minneapolis, finding friends all well save Mr. B[abbit?]<sup>3</sup> who had cut his foot badly with an ax.

3 Mrs. Swisshelm was frequently a visitor at Babbitt's home. See Swisshelm, *Halm a Century*, 175, and *ante*, 101.

## Library of Congress

Have an appointment to lecture here in the Free Will Baptist Church on Tuesday evening, and shall probably go to St. Paul on Wednesday. There are fifty recruits here for the First Regiment. They drill daily and expect orders to join their Regt. at Edward's Ferry. Mr. J. Holt formerly of Champlin, Minn. is amongst them.<sup>4</sup> Having succeeded in escaping from Tenn. with his family, whither he had removed something over a year ago he leaves them here to go back and fight secession. There is not so much snow here as at St. Cloud but enough to make good sleighing.

<sup>4</sup> See *ante*, 48.

The report of Cameron's removal from the Cabinet is confirmed.<sup>5</sup> It looks dark; looks as if the business of our army was still to be that of permitting desertions from the enemy; but let us wait and hope and see the result of the great movements which appear to be at hand. It may be that some brighter day will dawn for us.

<sup>5</sup> See *post*, 132n. 129

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, January 30, 1862] St. Paul, Jan. 23d, 1862

Thus far there appears to be no ground for discontent with the change in the Cabinet, except the evidence it seems to give that the Administration is determined to protect slavery at whatever hazard to the country. If such appearances are not deceitful, and this is the ground we are to occupy, it is well that Mr. Stanton should be the man selected to hold it. We have no idea that the war *can* end without the extinction of slavery, except by the acknowledgment of the Southern Confederacy; and if this opinion be correct, the sooner it is made apparent the better. If we are to have a separation of the States, with slavery in the southern portion, it will be best that the fact should be recognized before the North is bankrupt, and at the present rate of expenditure this event cannot be long delayed.

From our personal recollection of Mr. Stanton, he will bring the war to an issue if human energy can do it. The last time we spoke with him was in that old cobweb-draped

## Library of Congress

sanctum on Fourth street, Pittsburg, when he was unknown to fame, before the Pittsburg Steamboat interest employed him to go to Washington to prosecute their suit, in the U.S. Supreme Court against the Wheeling Bridge Co.<sup>6</sup> —He called then to express his approbation of our advocacy of a law granting to married woman the right to hold property in their own name; and we have preserved a distinct recollection of the earnest, manly contempt with which he spoke of the petty, legal persecutions to which women were subjected, and the impression he gave us of concentrated vitality, 6 Mrs. Swisshelm describes her meeting with Stanton in *Half a Century*, 104. An account of the part played by Stanton in the suit mentioned is given by George C. Gorham in his *Life and Public Services of Edwin M. Stanton*, 1:38-45 (Boston, 1899). 130 governed by a cool judgment and an iron will. He was then, “Mr. Stanton, a young lawyer from Zanesville [*Steubenville*], Ohio,”—as such he had been introduced to us. Then we had a special fancy for reading character by carriage—judging what manner of man or woman one was by the style of walk by which he or she got over the ground. As we watched him leave the office, in his firm, measured tread—feet set down square on the centre—steps apparently of that exact length which best combined the getting forward with speed and the perfect preservation of the centre of gravity, while the left foot planted itself as firmly as the right, our reflection was, “Ah, Mr. Stanton, you have started with the distinct intention of going someplace, on a bee line, and those who live to see it will find you there.”

We do not remember ever seeing any one who so impressed us with the idea of *going straight through*; and we shall be greatly disappointed if he does not soon demonstrate either that we *can* or *cannot* conquer the Rebellion on the present plan. He is of the regular Jackson stripe, and what he has set out to do we think he will do, or squarely acknowledge his failure. If he tells us that we shall have no more defeats and no more retreats, we shall at least feel certain that he will use every effort to make good his word; that he will make such exertions as will leave no shadow of doubt but that he has done all that could have been done. What his views on the slavery question are now we do not know. He was anti-Slavery,—as were all Democrat[s],—when we knew him; but whatever

## Library of Congress

he proposes to believe and do, he will stand by; so we hope that he will have the Rebellion crushed or convince himself and the world that it cannot be done without a change of policy.

131

His appointment appears to indicate that the days are ended of philandering between Brother Johnathan and his pouting lady love. Johnathan's courtship of his Carolina will take the turn of William's of Normandy with his Matilda, and the coy lady must come to his arms or take a thorough drubbing.

I have learned since coming to St. Paul that [Thomas W.] Sherman, who is down in Port Royal making pretty speeches to his "brethern of the *Sovereign* State of South Carolina, whose hospitality he has often enjoyed," is he of the Battery, late commander at Fort Ridgely; that soon after he was called to Washington the Republicans of St. Paul telegraphed on saying that his loyalty was doubtful, that his southern proclivities were well known, and that it would be unsafe to trust him in any responsible post.

No wonder the Administration permitted Cameron's instructions to him to pass without reproofs as it must have been well known that in his hands they were literally a dead letter. It is the old story of one face North and one South. Amuse the North with the idea that the slaves were to be permitted to aid in putting down the rebellion, while bowing and kneeling to the South, begging her to accept our services in restoring to her her runaway property.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Sherman was in charge of a company of artillery at Fort Ridgely from 1857 to 1861 and in command of the Union land forces at Port Royal, South Carolina, from October, 1861, to March, 1862. See Thomas Hughes, "History of Fort Ridgely," in the *Mankato Free Press* for August 22, 1916, and *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 5:502 (New York, 1887-1900).

Cameron instructed Sherman, on October 14, 1861, to avail himself of "the services of any persons, whether fugitives from labor or not, who may offer them to the national



## Library of Congress

Government.” In a proclamation to the people of South Carolina made in pursuance of these instructions, Sherman made no mention of the use of slaves, but merely assured “a great sovereign State” and the “proud and hospitable people, among whom I have passed some of the pleasantest days of my life” that the troops” have come amongst you with no feelings of personal animosity, no desire to harm your citizens, destroy your property, or interfere with any of your lawful rights or your social or local institutions, beyond what the causes herein alluded to may render unavoidable.” Edward McPherson, *Political History of the United States during the Great Rebellion*, 247, 248 (third edition—Washington, 1876).

132

Had Cameron gone no further than instruct Sherman we should conclude that he was simply playing the hypocrite; but his after course<sup>8</sup> attests his sincerity, and the responsibility doubtless lies with Kentucky, the author of all our absurd contradictions, our imbecility and double-dealing. God grant that she may join the Confederacy before we are utterly ruined by her hypocritical pretensions of loyalty, and consequent hold upon our Kentucky President, his Kentucky lady and her rebel Kentucky friends!<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm evidently refers to Cameron's recommendation, in his report of December 1, 1861, to the president, that slaves be armed and that those employed as soldiers be freed. He later modified the report to conform to Lincoln's policy, but not before it had obtained considerable publicity, for he had distributed copies of it before submitting it to the president. This act of insubordination was one of the causes of Cameron's removal from the cabinet in January, 1862. McPherson, *Political History of the United States*, 249; James F. Rhodes, *History of the Civil War, 1861-1865*, 84 (New York, 1917). <sup>9</sup> Kentucky's position was somewhat in doubt until after the Union victory at Fort Donelson in February, 1862, although it had declared for the Union in September, 1861.

I almost forgot that I had not written since lecturing in Minneapolis, at the Free-Will Baptist Church, where I had a “good house”—that is, a church full of intelligent and highly respectable looking folks, who listened with patience and marks of approbation. If I do not mistake, there are more systems of oppression than *Southern* slavery which are growing shaky; and I expect to see the day when all that a married woman acquires by her labor or service will belong to herself;—when wives as well as slaves will own their own bodies



## Library of Congress

and souls just like white folks. I am to lecture 133 here to-morrow on the same subject "Woman's Wages as Wife and Mother."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The lecture in Minneapolis was given on January 21, according to the *Minnesota State News* (St. Anthony and Minneapolis) for January 25. In commenting on the St. Paul lecture, the *Saint Paul Press* for January 25, after praising Mrs. Swisshelm's delivery, added: "It pains us to say, however, that the argument was carried to an extreme that in its moral influence on some minds would be positively dangerous. ... It so heightens the wrongs of women, as to render almost justifiable even the crime of murder to effect deliverance from their wrongs."

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, February 6, 1862 ] St. Paul, Feb. 3, 1862

Dear Will —I had thought to start for Madison, Wis. to-day, but having been on the sick list most of the time since my lecture here, I postpone until Friday. I have not visited Legislature or any place else except to spend a day at Gov. Ramsey's and go to preaching yesterday, so that I have not been picking up news very fast.

But the statement made in my last about Gen. Sherman, I am glad to learn, was a mistake. I made it on the positive assurance of a gentleman upon whose accuracy I have found reason to rely; but he had confounded Gen. Sherman with Major [John C.] Pemberton of his command, who was known to be disloyal and with whom Gen. Sherman had serious difficulty on account of his openly avowed disloyalty.<sup>11</sup> —It was of him that the Republicans of St. Paul telegraphed to Washington. Gen. Sherman was believed, in St. Paul, to be thoroughly loyal.

<sup>11</sup> Pemberton was in command of the garrison at Fort Ridgely in 1860-61. At the outbreak of the war he resigned his commission and joined the Confederate army. Hughes, in the *Mankato Free Press*, August 22, 1916.

I regret to learn that letters have been received here from some of our Congressmen expressing the opinion that *no* confiscation bill can pass the present Congress. When Congress 134 assembled a large majority were in favor of confiscating the property of rebels, but finding the administration fixedly opposed to such policy, and wishing to

## Library of Congress

avoid divisions they have settled down into the old plan of regarding property as more sacred than life, and in order to be consistent, all manner of property is to share the sanctity hitherto extended to slaves alone. So that our Minnesota soldiers may killed J. C. Breckinridge if they can catch him, but the United States authorities may not invalidate his title to the property he holds in Minnesota. Slidell may involve us in a war with England, but his twenty-five thousand acres of Minnesota land is to be secured to him and heirs. While the property of Union men is confiscated by the Confederates, and no redress afforded by the Federal Government, that of rebels is to be secured and preserved to them by all the powers of both parties.<sup>12</sup> We cannot think of a better way of offering a premium for rebellion, and it appears almost impossible that such a course can be preserved in without producing rebellion in the loyal States.

<sup>12</sup> An act had been passed on August 6, 1861, providing for the confiscation of property only if it was being used for insurrectionary purposes. The leniency of this act evoked considerable adverse criticism in the North, and on July 17, 1862, a second confiscation act was passed, which provided for the seizure of all property of all persons engaged in rebellion against the United States. *Statutes at Large*, 12: 319, 591.

The late Kentucky victory would appear to indicate that there is some intention of urging on the war.<sup>13</sup> It was nobly fought, and if the officers have not exceeded the spirit of their orders in so fighting it, it shows a determination to test the present policy by a vigorous prosecution. The sooner it is proved a failure, as it certainly must be, the better for us all. It is not in the range of human pos[s]ibilities that this rebellion can be conquered and the property of rebels preserved <sup>13</sup> This was the Union victory at Mill Springs on January 19, 1862. 135 to them. Whether this shall be demonstrated to the comprehension of the powers that be, while there is strength left to profit by the lesson, remains to be seen. That the rebels will maintain their ground so long as they are permitted to do so with impunity to their property appears certain; that England and France will recognize them soon if they are not effectually disposed of, appears certain. This could hardly be without involving us in a war with those powers, and where the end is to be, God only knows; but Uncle Abraham is going to stand his ground, and maintain his right to guarantee to the South all

## Library of Congress

their Constitutional rights, if the whole nation goes to smash. He has taken his position and he will “stick to it.”

True, his conversation with Gen. [James H.] Lane, as reported by Mr. [William A.] Croffut, would indicate the reverse of this;<sup>14</sup> but that was talk, and in no way corresponds with the no-confiscation policy maintained in Congress.

<sup>14</sup> Croffut wrote the *New-York Tribune* that, on January 17, 1862, as Lane was preparing to return to his command after a conference with the president, Lincoln told him that the essential difference between them regarding fugitive slaves was this: “You are willing to surrender fugitives to loyal owners in case they are willing to return; while *I do not believe the United States Government has any right to give them up in any case.*” Lane was brigadier general of volunteers in command of a Kansas brigade from June, 1861, until late in February, 1862, when he resigned from the army, Croffut was correspondent of the *Tribune* for the First Minnesota. *Tribune*, January 21, 1862; Wendell H. Stephenson, *The Political Career of General James H. Lane*, 106, 122 (*Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society*, vol. 3—Topeka, 1930); Daniel S. B. Johnston, “Minnesota Journalism in the Territorial Period,” in *Minnesota Historical Collection*, 10:338.

But our lady readers will not forgive if I neglect fashions. Well, Mrs. Ramsey wears a cloak down half way below the knee of dark muskrat skins. It buttons up closely in front, and has sleeves, and is altogether the most suitable winter wrap I have seen. The fur is pretty without being expensive. The garment does not appear too good to use for 136 ordinary occasions, and is in accordance with our limited State resources. I commend her excellent example to those ladies who suffer for want of furs, and yet could not condescend to wear anything short of sables. Coat sleeves with a small cuff or rows of puffs at the top are much worn. Black and white is much worn for bonnets. A black velvet bonnet with white feathers and strings is extra genteel, but in this cold climate I prefer bright colors for those who wear colors. Nature gives us white enough, and scarlet, crimson, orange or pink mixed with black, has a rich, warm look and makes a good contrast with the surrounding snow and ice.

## Library of Congress

The Governor's house is a model of home comfort, and small elegancies, showing plain, good sense, and artistic taste in the mistress of the establishment. There is a piano, books, pictures, photographs of distinguished person &—Eureka! dinner without sauce plates. Oh, dear, but it was a relief to get our meat and all the vegetables and sauce to be eaten with it, on large plate, to be disposed of a leisure and not be required to take charge of half a dozen plates, one of fowl and potato, one of oysters, one of cranberry, one of cabbage, one of tomato, &c., &c., and so on according to our St. Cloud company programme. When I think of the stew into which a St. cloud housekeeper gets on the subject of “sauce plates,” and the enforced limitation to the vari[e]ty in her meal from the difficulty of getting sauce plates and spoons enough to serve each guest with more than half a dozen of each, I readopt, with renewed obstinacy, my chronic contempt for sauce plates, and give in a renewed adhesion to our old Pennsylvania plan of eating meats, and all that go with them, off one plate.

Lieut. Gov. [Ignatius] Donnelly and lady, dined and spent the evening with us. Our readers all know our opinion of 137 Mr. Donnelly, Gov. Ramsey's right hand man in bringing our State up from the Slough of Despond in which they found it floundering, but Mrs. Donnelly is by far the more entertaining companion. She is very much the finest singer I have ever heard off the stage, and those who hear her can form a good idea of Jenny Lind. It is so long since I have heard of any of our great singers that I have forgotten, but it appears to me that few of them excel her. Then she heard for us “Lochiel's Warning,” as one might expect Charlotte Cushman to read it.

Mrs. Ramsey, gets no older, but retains her queenly beauty fresh as when I saw her first. She is as natural and unaffected, in her manner, as a child who has never been taught to be a “little lady” and when expecting visitors and [*she*] runs to open the door instead of sitting in state while they ring, stand in the cold and are ushered by a servant into the august presence, a la parvenu, imitating aristocracy. I spent a pleasant day, but was not well next day and fear I must give up all visiting projects and save my strength for

## Library of Congress

necessary talk and travel. Yesterday I went to hear Rev. J[oseph] McCartney preach in the room of the Young Men's Christian Association. He is on a mission here from the United Presbyterian Church of Pittsburg. His congregation is small, and has no house of worship.

I am waiting now for a telegram for Milwaukee, and shall probably start for Madison on Friday.

The weather has been very cold and stormy ever since I have been here. Mr. Nourse, whose guest I am, lives in the Marshall house, a mile and a half from the business portion of the town.

138

*[St. Cloud Democrat, March 13, 1862]* Winona, March 2d., 1862

Dear Will. —Thank God, I am not afraid to write home, which I have not dared to do for more than a week. The cold caught in the Madison City Hall hung to me, and I greatly fear that many of my fortunate audience will have reason to date sad memories back to that time.<sup>15</sup> After spending some days at Dr. [Ezra S.] C[arr]'s I started homewards, and spent four days at Milton, visiting Joseph Goodrich, the inventor of Concrete Walls.<sup>16</sup> He has a large hotel and block of stores, a school room and outhouses built of concrete, and with his hammer gave me ocular demonstrations that a pebble bedded in one of these walls will break before coming out. I was glad to be thus convinced of their exceeding hardness; for this kind of building is so suitable for Stearns country; and I have always paused to recommend them on account of the imperfections of our plastering. Our plasterers say it is the fault of the lime that our plastering is soft and drops off, and the natural inference was that if our lime would not make hard plasterer it would not make concrete; but the plastering in Wisconsin appears no better than ours, and in Mr. Goodrich's house one-third of it has dropped off the ceilings. Yet the concrete walls made of the same lime are hard as a granite rock, and as the concrete is made one bushel of lime to twelve of sand and gravel, or even one <sup>15</sup> Apparently a letter from Mrs. Swisshelm giving an

## Library of Congress

account of her visit in Madison was published in the *Democrat* for February 20 or 27. Both of these issues are missing from the two files known to the editor—those in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society and the *St. Cloud Times and Journal-Press*. 16 Goodrich was the founder of the town of Milton in Rock County, Wisconsin, and of Milton Academy, which later became Milton College. In 1844 the first building of the school was erected under his direction. Its walls were made of gravel and lime “so mixed that they would harden like mortar and in a short time become impervious to the action of the atmosphere.” *History of Rock County*, 485, 486, 490, 817 (Chicago, 1879). 139 to twenty, without making any perceptible difference in the hardness of the wall, the inference is that our plasterers use less than enough sand, as we have all known for some time that, on ceilings, they use about one-third enough hair. Certainly, no one who should see Mr. Goodrich's walls pounded, and hammered, and picked as I did, knowing they were made with lime such as ours, could believe that the fault of our plastering lies in the lime. Please as brothers [Ambrose] Freeman and [James F.] Kennedy to make a note of this.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Freeman and Kennedy were St. Cloud masons.

At Milton, Rev. [William C.] Whitford, the excellent Principal of the Academy,<sup>18</sup> made arrangements and I lectured in Academy Hall to a house full, and found it both pleasant and profitable. But the Academy buildings are on an eminence, and it blew a gale that evening, so that it almost lifted me off my feet in passing from the rooms occupied by Mr. Whitford and family to the Hall, and as I was still suffering from cold, next morning I was positively ill—had a regular argue chill followed by high fever. This was Thursday morning, and I had an engagement on Saturday at Horicon [*Horicon*] to meet the gentleman with whom I have been negotiating about delivering a series of lectures in Illinois and Wisconsin. You know how hard it is for me to give anything up. I had already given up the purpose of going to Washington this Spring, although my letters from there encouraged me to do so; but it was so late in the season and public attention so intensely occupied with the rapid movements of our army—the army does move so that it is even possible that all might not be “quiet on the Potomac.” If there should be a movement there I could

## Library of Congress

18 Whitford was principal of the school from 1858 to 1902. William F. Brown, ed., *Rock Country*, 2:853 (Chicago, 1908). 140 not hope for a hearing in the din of war; yet there might be still time to make this Western tour about which I have been so long negotiating. But before noon I was seized with a sharp pain in the right side indicating inflammation of the lungs, and the fever increased. I was reminded that lung fever from cold is just now quite prevalent and fatal in that part of Wisconsin. I felt nearly certain of being pretty well in a week, and the question was to go to Horicon on Saturday and be certainly detained there over Sabbath and run the risk of serious illness amongst strangers, or use my strength and reason while I had any to get as near home as possible. Friday evening when there was just time to make connections and get to LaCrosse for Saturday morning's stage. I had been steadily growing worse, could get but half a breath, change position with difficulty and the fever still burned. So, I started for Minnesota, and Saturday at two o'clock was in Winona, so much better that if I had been in Wisconsin I should not have come home. But it is best; for the winter is holding on bravely, and I shall have time to visit those places I had wished to go in the State, before the break up. I am well enough again, only a slight internal soreness, some blisters made with Kerosene and some loss of strength which I shall get back soon. I have written the worst and you need not worry. I am at Judge [Thomas] Wilson's<sup>19</sup> and shall stay here until Tuesday, and if comfort and kindness, the surroundings of happiness and elegance can make any one well and strong I ought to forget anything has been the matter before it comes time to leave. As I want to have a good rest I shall not trouble you with a long letter. So good bye for a day or two.

19 Wilson was judge of the third judicial district from 1858 to 1864 and chief justice of the Minnesota supreme court from 1865 to 18698. Upham and Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies*, 868. 141

[ *St Cloud Democrat*, March 13, 1862 ] Lake City, Feb. [ *March* ] 8th, 1862

Dear Will. —The soreness has all left my lungs, and there is no vestige of the fever save a surprising crop of cold sores on nose and lips, which makes me decidedly interesting as a public speaker. I remained almost a week with our good friends in Winona—staid until I



## Library of Congress

was well and strong, and lectured there the evening before I left to a full house, which, you know, is both pleasant and profitable.<sup>20</sup>—The late deep snow has made stage traveling very difficult, and it is perfectly wonderful the energy but forth by the Burbank line to get mails and passengers through; but through they have gone with only a few hours detention at the worst time.

<sup>20</sup> This lecture was given on March 5.

I left Winona at five o'clock Thursday evening; there were two four-horse sleighs loaded with passengers and baggage. The snow was drifted, then crusted and very heavy. We soon passed a sled load of straw turned over and resting on one side.

“Why do you not turn that load up on the runners? It would go better!” shouted a merry passenger. The driver joined the laugh and no doubt felt the better.—A few miles on this side of Minneiski [ *Minneiska* ] over went our coach; and as I was resting my head against the canvass side sleeping and the coach fell to my side, my head was slightly bumped.

“Keep quiet there,” says the driver, cool as a cucumber.

“Keep your horses quiet,” was my reply.

“Oh, they'll be quiet!” he answered, and sure enough they stood as firm as rocks until the gentlemen climbed up out of the door way which lay right side up with care and lifted four ladies out of what appeared a pit, for the stage top lying on one side is nearly as high as the top of my head. It 142 was good moonlight and we soon all stood out on the snow crust. One runner had broken through and the stage lay on its side. One lady had her shoes off and stood on the snow in stockings until a robe was brought and the shoes found.—Then the gentlemen turned the sleigh up, and the robes, baskets, blankets, shawls, valises, carpet bags, and etceteras were all hunted up. Each one found his or her own, got their places and in ten minutes we were under way again. No one had a scratch or a bruise. Not a profane, impatient or loud word had been spoken, and a lady remarked that that scene would make a good picture for Leslie or Harper. We reached



## Library of Congress

Wabashaw,—where I had an appointment,— at midnight, and stopped at the regular stage office, the National, and was as kindly cared for by mine host, his wife and daughter as if I had been a relation just come. Mayor [Charles W.] Lyon and lady called and invited me to their home; but as I was to leave at midnight again it was best for me to stay. Mrs. Lyon is a daughter of my St. Paul friends, Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, one of our large St. Cloud proprietors. As I return to Wabashaw to deliver a second lecture and take stage for Rochester I am to go to their house. I lectured in Apollo Hall which was filled with one of the pleasantest audiences I have ever addressed. I had written to Mr. [N. E.] Stevens, editor of the *Herald*, who had kindly made all my arrangements.—Wabashaw is some three miles below Reed's [ *Read's* ] Landing and several sleigh loads came down from there. It (Wabashaw) is County Seat of Wabashaw County, has one thousand inhabitants and quite a brisk business.

I was greatly surprised at the business of Winona. There the streets are thronged with teams discharging wheat. Farmers bring their wheat twenty-five and thirty miles from the Wisconsin side and often over one hundred miles on the 143 Minnesota side to the Winona market. The *Daily Republican* is well sustained, and in point of enterprise outranks a large portion of what is called the Metropolitan Press; while, as the weekly shows, it has few, if any, superiors in point of independence and consistent advocacy of the right and true. Mr. [Daniel] Sinclair appears to have the reputation with friend and foe, of sterling honesty and integrity of purpose.<sup>21</sup> —Southern Minnesota grows.

12 Sinclair was editor of the *Winona Republican* for nearly half a century —from 1856 until 1901. Johnston, in *Minnesota Historical Collections*. 10:286.

But, I wrote from Winona to Lake City to our old friend and townsman, Rev. C[harles] G. Bowdish, and when I arrived here this morning at four o'clock found a bill in the Hotel office announcing my lecture for this evening. Mine host of the Montgomery House made me a fire in a chamber where I had a good sleep until eight o'clock, when Mr. Bowdish sent up a note that he was waiting to take me to his house, and breakfast was ready. So, I am here, safely anchored; and Mr. B's numerous St. Cloud friends will be glad to

## Library of Congress

know that he is well and doing well—has repented of his batchelorism and has a most suitable and sensible helpmate. He informs me the Methodist have a membership of fifty here and are about to build a comfortable church. Lake City is beautifully situated on a bend of land jutting out into Lake Pepin, and has sprung up in five years to be a place of 1200 inhabitants, with a brisk business and a fine country back to sustain it. Hard times, financial revulsions, and what not, Minnesota grows and keeps on growing.

The trustees of the Congregational Church have kindly given me the gratuitous use of their church for my lecture this evening. The pastor, Rev. D[e Witt] C. Sterry, is very highly spoken of as a man of progress, and of good christian faith and patience, who acceptably performs his duties as pastor although crippled so as to be unable to walk or stand. He preaches from a high chair and teaches the grace of cheerfulness in affliction both by precept and example. Talk about the wickedness of this world! Why, there is not a hamlet in which there are not great and noble souls—large, loving, generous spirits, examples of heroism and christian graces, beautiful exceedingly to contemplate.

Oh, I almost forgot to say that coming up from Wabashaw this morning we tipped over again; but I was in the upper side and it was much nicer. The gentlemen did not think worth while lifting out the women and children; but just got themselves out and turned the sleigh up again when we proceeded for three miles with three of them standing on the upper that much extra weight to keep top upwards. Nobody was hurt, or frightened, and nobody cross or impatient. My paper is out.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, March 27, 1862, ] Northfield, March 14th [24th], 1862

Dear Will. .—I wrote from Rochester, but as two other letters mailed at that point failed to reach their destination, it is probable this too may be missing.<sup>22</sup> The business of carrying mails through the center of the State appears to be rather poorly managed.

<sup>22</sup> The letter written as Rochester evidently did not reach the *Democrat*, for it was not published; consequently Mrs. Swisshelm's route from Lake City to Rochester is rather difficult to trace. After leaving Lake City on March 8, she returned to Winona, where

## Library of Congress

she gave a second lecture on March 19. The next day she made a second address at Wabasha, and on March 14 and again on March 15 she spoke at Rochester. *Winona Republican*, March 12, 1862; *Wabashaw County Herald* (Wabashaw and Read's Landing), March 12, 1862; *Rochester City Post*, March 15, 1862.

Facsimile of the St. Cloud Democrat

[From a copy in the files of the Minnesota Historical Society.]

145

At Rochester I made my home with your namesake, Mr. [William H.] Mitchell, editor of the *Republican*. He and his wife were exceedingly kind; and he appears to be doing well with his paper, although it is recently established and the second Republican paper in Rochester. He has formed a partnership with Mr. [Richard A.] Hoag, proprietor of the press on which the Northfield *Telegraph* was published and the office has been moved from this place to Rochester. We shall all regret this, of course, and miss the *Telegraph* from our exchange list.<sup>23</sup> It is the second paper which has failed to Northfield, and as the press is removed, there is no probability of another being started soon; for experience must demonstrate the fact that no matter how intelligent and public spirited a community may be in a town of a few hundred inhabitants which is not a county seat, a newspaper is sure to cost more than it comes to. It is rather amusing to an old publisher to hear the people in a town of three or four hundred inhabitants complain of the want of enterprise in their editor. Some man or woman would take the paper if it was "worth anything." I surprised one of these conditional supporters of the home press by informing her that if every family in town took two copies and paid cash in advance it would not justify the editor in setting up two extra columns each week—that a dollar and a half was a small matter in the yearly expenses of the smallest paper. I find it strangely common for the proprietor of town property which he hopes may be increased hundreds and <sup>23</sup> Hoag published the *Northfield Journal*, not the *Telegraph*, before he entered into partnership with Mitchell in 1861. He sold the press of the *Journal* to David H. Frost, who established the *Telegraph*, which, under the editorship of Charles H. Mann, suspended publication a few days

## Library of Congress

before Mrs. Swisshelm's visit to Northfield. Johnston, in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 12:187, 215,222; *History of Winona, Olmsted, and Dodge Counties*, 641 (Chicago, 1884); *Rochester Republican*, August 20, 1862. 146 thousands, by the publication of a "good paper" at that point to feel that he is quite a liberal patron of said paper if he grumbles at each issue, gives his ideas as to what it ought to be, and takes a copy for which maybe he pays and maybe he does not. The idea that one should justly reward the editor for using his physical strength, his time and talents to add value to the real estate investments of his neighbors appears never to enter the brain of more than one-half our proprietors; but they do not forget to be desperately indignant if the paper does not do credit to the place. I do not mean these remarks to apply to Northfield, except to illustrate the difficulty of sustaining a paper in a small town. No matter how good the paper may be, or what energy or talent may be expended on it, a town to have one thousand inhabitants of full average public spirit, backed by considerable legal advertising, to give any assurance of support to a local paper. The Northfield papers, both the *Telegraph* and its predecessor, the *Journal*, were a credit to the State both for typography and the character of the contents. There is no better settlement in the State for intelligence, morality and public spirit, yet their papers fail.

Both the *Post* and *Republican* at Rochester appear to be flourishing, but the town claims twelve hundred inhabitants. It is the center of a rich farming district, has extensive water power, and it the Country Seat of a wealthy Country. But Rochester does not grow, nor does any of the inland towns.<sup>24</sup> They all expect to take a fresh start when the railroad comes along; and no doubt they will all be improved in the general benefit of giving the farmers more easy access to market, and hundreds of farmers who now go long distances to reach <sup>24</sup> The population of Rochester increased from 1,424 in 1860 to 2,663 in 1865. *United States Census, 1860, Population, 259*; Minnesota Secretary of State, *Reports*, 1865, p. 100. 147 river towns, will then draw their produce to the nearest point on the railroad and make their purchases there. But of all the towns I have seen no other place

## Library of Congress

appears to me to be growing half as fast as St. Cloud, or to have half the assurance of a steady and continued growth.

Our tall friend, D. Blakely, was suffering from cold taken in returning from Legislature, but nevertheless attended to having my arrangements made with his usual considerateness and care. I visited them and was greatly entertained by superb music. Professor Hubbard, band master of the Fourth Regiment, was there and played several pieces on the violin, accompanied by Mrs. Blakely, who is a brilliant performer of the piano. Mr. Blakely boards with his father, whom I have previously met in Pittsburg; and altogether the evening spent there was a very pleasant one.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Blakely was chief clerk of the House at this time. He was secretary of the state from November, 1862, 59 1866, when he resumed his journalistic career. Later he was manager first of the Gilmore, band and then of Sousa's marine band. See *ante*, 74; *Legislative Manual*, 1862, p. 48; and Johnston, in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 10:342.

Monday morning at seven o'clock I started for Mantorville, where I arrived at eleven and found that my letter, announcing a lecture for that evening, had not been received. There was nothing for it but to give out such notice as time would permit; then it rained that evening and the audience was small; but I was so gratified in the opportunity to visit my good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, that it scarce seemed a disappointment. They are from Crawford Co., Pa., and our acquaintance on paper has lasted fifteen years. It was a rare treat to have a whole afternoon to talk to Mrs. B. once more.<sup>26</sup>—Next morning I came by private conveyance to Wasioja to find that my letter to that point had also failed; but my appointments before were made to suit. So I remained <sup>26</sup> See *ante*, 70. 148 and had notice given, and was surprised to find the college chapel filled in the evening with a pleasant audience.—The handsome stone building for a seminary which was only up to the second story when I was there last had been carried up, roofed and the second story finished. This contains one large hall or chapel and two recitation rooms. A flourishing school is kept in it. Rev. [Alvin D.] Williams, formerly Pastor of the Free-Will Baptist Church, Minneapolis, is principal, besides whom there are five other teachers. Wednesday

## Library of Congress

afternoon I came on to Owatonna through what the driver said was the worst snow storm of the season. Part of the time one could scarce see two rods through the driving snow. I went directly to my old friend, Dr. Ware's, and as it stormed all the evening did not go out, although all arrangements had been made for a lecture. Judge [Nicholas M.] Donelson [ *Donaldson* ] resides at Owatonna.<sup>27</sup> I met a daughter of his and learned that the United Presbyterian church has quite a flourishing congregation there, the Judge and all his family being of that faith.—There is also a congregation at Wilton, eighteen miles east, and they have been without preaching all winter, while Mr. McCartney is kept at St. Paul preaching to one-sixth the audience he would have at either of these tow points. It is a mistake for Mission Boards to sent out missionaries without leaving them discretionary powers to choose their field o labor.—The funds which this mission have nearly or quite thrown away in St. Paul would have given a great impetus to that cause if expended at several other points in the State. Next evening at five o'clock I started for Faribault and rode until after nine through the storm which still continued. As on my former visit to Faribault, I stayed at Attorney General Cole's, lectured <sup>27</sup> Donaldson was judge of the fifth judicial district. <sup>149</sup> next evening and started at five in the morning for this place where I was expected as the guest of Mrs. [M. H.] Mann, who keeps the American House. Her son, lately editor of the *Telegraph*, <sup>28</sup> had kindly made every arrangement for my lecture on that evening (Saturday) in the Lyceum room, which was so densely packed that all the standing as well as sitting room appeared to be occupied. I have a special request to remain and deliver a temperance lecture, but as I am unacquainted with that subject I concluded to stay and lecture this evening on "Babies & Co.," which I take it comes nearer to temperance than any other question I know anything about. I stay the more readily as there is no way to get forward before to-morrow. I have sent an appointment to Hastings conditional upon the stage getting from here to that place to-day in time, as I had been informed there was a daily stage between these points and only learned at Faribault that it is tri-week. I shall go home that way but it is not probable I shall stop again until I ge to St. Paul, when I hope to hear from home.—Sometimes I am almost wild to get home and feel determined to start by the first stage and go straight through, but I cannot afford to drop my work. It is

## Library of Congress

“work, work,work,” for the lecture as well as other folks; and no matter how much the heart hunger may gnaw I will do my work.

28 See *ante*, 145n.

There, I forgot to write ever so many things about Faribault and must leave them for another time.

P.S.—I do wonder if the rebels have ran away from Richmond yet, or when they intend to start.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 3, 1862 ]

Left Northfield on Tuesday 25th and came on runners to Hastings. For the first five miles the roads were almost 150 entirely bare of snow while great drifts lay on each side. This was while we were in the valley of the Cannon River, but when we got up on the prairie the case was reversed. On the prairies wherever a track is made the snow drifts in and fills it level. The next team makes a new track which is again filled until the roads become a ridge raised quite above the level of the snow on each side. As it melts more slowly being trodden hard it remains a snow ridge after the soft snow on either side has quite disappeared, but as it becomes soft, and is often undermined by water it soon becomes impassible if the snow is deep. In this case we had to avoid the road very carefully and make our way over the lighter snow and pools of water on each side. From [where] you leave the Cannon on until you reach the Vermillion some four or five miles from Hastings the country is almost destitute of timber, but well watered. That part of the State is well adapted to large farms, having a rich, deep alluvial, soil, so nearly level as to be suitable to cultivation by machinery and yielding grand wheat crops.

The approach to Hastings from the interior is beautiful and very easy, through a thick settlement coming quite up to the city limits. In this Hastings has quite the advantage of other river towns in the State below Minneapolis. The others are all more or less shut in by steep bluffs, through some gorge of which they barely find a road into the back country.



## Library of Congress

Then the difficulty of finding water, on these bluffs at any point near the river leaves a strip of from six to twelve miles almost uninhabited. The place appears to improve its advantages and grows until it has quite a cityfied, business air notwithstanding its great beauty of location its handsome residencies embowered in trees and plenty of room for more.

We arrived at the Herndon, formerly the St. Cloud, at 151 about five o'clock and were rather surprised to learn that there was an appointment for a lecture. As we had written to Mr. [Columbus] Stebbins<sup>29</sup> thinking there was a daily stage from Northfield and expecting to come on Monday and leaving it to his discretion about advertising a lecture. He soon made his appearance jolly, jovial full of life and hope and to our representation that no one could get out through the fathomless depths of mud and moonless darkness, he replied that he had engaged a big hall and there would be a house full. Sure enough, so there was although in addition to mud and darkness we had rain, floor and galleries were full, and we so tired it was hard to talk. But the audience was in a special good humor, and at the close we were assured that if we remained another evening there would be a house full again. We went home in Rev. [C. M.] Whitney, editor of the *Conservator*, who by the way impresses us as one of the few men who combine large conscientiousness with good executive abilities and mental power above the average professional man. It is a combination of character one does not often meet, for your "go-a-head" folks are apt to be a little unscrupulous, and lose sight of other things in their prime object of "getting on." Mr. Whitney is a Methodist preacher and proposes returning to his place as a traveling preacher. Next morning we went to our Hastings home—ex-Senator [Eli] Robinson<sup>30</sup> after our hopeful energetic brother Stebbins and others had advised us to go down to Red Wing and we had written to that effect. Our second Hastings lecture was also a success although it was on prayer meeting evening and a revival in progress; <sup>29</sup> Stebbins was editor of the *Hastings Independent*. Johnston, in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 10:326. <sup>30</sup> Robinson was a member of the Minnesota Senate in 1860. 152 and after a pleasant visit with our pleasant friends Mr. and Mrs. R. we started on Thursday, at noon for Red



## Library of Congress

Wing and soon began to realize that there might possibly be bad roads in Minnesota. Up to this time we had not found any, and considered all the tales we had heard of terrible roads as so many bug bears made to frighten children, and yet to any one who has traveled by stage, in winter or spring, through Northern Pennsylvania, Minnesota *bad roads* are weak imitations of the genuine article. But the ice was giving way at Hastings, and we must cross it to get home. The roads were bad enough to make it very doubtful if we should get to Red Wing in time for our appointment and to stay over a day was not to be thought of. Got into Red Wing at dark and there learned that the up stage instead of coming at twelve o'clock as we had been taught to expect would be likely to arrive at eight so that to lecture was to stay a day. Dressed in a hurry and went to the Court house which is so far from side walks and over so uneven a road that it appeared to be with difficulty our driver found the way. As the audience collected was small, we made our apology and rode back to the hotel to be ready for the stage at eight—lay down all ready to start and slept until three when the stage came and we started homeward much indebted to mine host of the tall tavern on the river bank, where the stages stop, for getting out his crack team and carrying us to the Court house and back, through the inky mud and darkness.

The road from Hastings to Red Wing has scarce any settlement. From five miles back from Hastings one does not pass fence of house. So far as we could note ten miles, when the half way house shows itself on the edge of a bluff, a low rambling log edifice with a stable where stage horses are kept. This is called Hungry Point. A fine stream of water runs around the bluff and here is the only finished and furnished railroad in the State. It is some twenty rods long from a clay bank to a brick yard, is made of wood, and the rolling stock is a small wooden truck with solid wooden wheels. Between Hungry Point and Red Wing there are a few farms, but generally it is a speculators' desert. Coming up we met Mr. [Myron] Coloney, of Douglas County, on a fur buying tour and going down, Mr. Moss, of the Chipaway Agency, going to Maine on a visit.—Also a gentleman and lady from Superior *en route* to Denver City. Think of that for land traveling! They had been five days by Burbank's line from Superior to St. Paul, and must go to Chicago to

## Library of Congress

get to Quincy, Illinois where they took cars for Atkinson, then stages to Denver. Since the troubles in Missouri, the great Stage Co. have changed their starting point from St. Joseph to Atkinson, and we learned from a mail messenger who was over the route last fall that all the way from At[kinson] to San Francisco there are stations at an advantage of fifteen miles when fresh relays of horses are procured.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, May 1, 1862]*

March 28th walked across the river at Hastings on the ice, it being deemed insecure for teams, and took stage on the other side. Between that point and St. Paul found the best imitation of bad roads we have found in the State although the road is more carefully made than any other we have seen, but the ground is hilly with considerable clay. In the stage met a gentleman who passed himself off for lawyer [John B.] Brisbin the former Attorney General of the State. This person was evidently not aware of the fact that we, as one of the oldest inhabitants of the Salt river country, must be familiar with all the peculiarities of our former State 154 officers. Just imagine an unassuming well-dressed, well informed, agreeable gentleman, without a brass button on his coat, or any amount of that precious metal in his face taking the role of "Bris"—the old Bris of newspaperdom with whom we are all familiar!<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Brisbin was the Democratic candidate for attorney-general in 1859, but was never elected to that office. Evidently he habitually wore brass buttons on his coat, for in an editorial in the *Democrat* for October 27, 1859, entitled "Up the Salt," Mrs. Swisshelm wrote: "Brisbin had invented a small machine, with which he turned out brass buttons at a wonderful rate." Salt River, according to Webster, is "an imaginary river up which defeated political parties or candidates are supposed to be sent to oblivion."

Well, of course that humbug was too transparent to deceive any one, although Mr. [Harvey] Officer of St. Paul, lent his countenance to the imposition.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Officer was reporter of the Minnesota supreme court 1857 to 1864. Upham and Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies*, 562.

## Library of Congress

Got into St. Paul about 5 o'clock and took a buggy for Mr. Nourse's where my letters would be, and on the way the driver told us that the stage driver had told him the ice was giving way at St. Cloud; So went word back with him to have the stage call for us next morning. It came at four o'clock, loaded down with baggage for Red River, with a silent German packed down, in one corner, *en route* for Red River to paint the new boat.<sup>33</sup> — The express agent, John Bingham, succeeded in packing us comfortably into the adjoining corner, and mounting beside the driver we four started, before daylight, through the snow drifts which appeared to defy wheels, and the mud which set runners at defiance. In our inquiries as to how many turn-overs he would furnish us between that and St. Cloud, 'John' named three. At Minneapolis we got fresh horses and a boy passenger going as cabin boy to the new Red River steamer; <sup>33</sup> This was the "International," which was launched in the Red River in the spring of 1862. "Relations with Western Canada," in *Minnesota History Bulletin*, 2:21 (February, 1917). 155 and in St. Anthony we took on the steward, another German who was obliged to leave behind his small chest weighing some five hundred pounds. By dint of diligent traveling we reached Anoka at noon, where we found our friend Lufkin and family, of the New England House and their home pleasant as ever. Here we got such a dinner as one finds no place else on that road, and started again on wheels. Reached Baily's at 3 o'clock and there took a sleigh and had more room. Got to Riddles long after dark, raining and no word of supper, and friend Bingham was not even as good as his word to the extent of one turn-over, after promising three, and we all cold and Hungry as he was himself. Here his brother James joined us as driver with fresh horses and cheerful words, and as the cover kept the rain off and we had plenty of robes and hay we rather concluded in our own mind that we'd go to sleep and did not care to wake up even for a turn-over, as we must needs get into two feet deep of snow well saturated with water in order to enjoy it, dozed occasionally until waked to find we were fast in a bed of the heavy snow, into which our sleigh had sunk to the box, the rain was still falling and air cold. "John" and the driver got out and went to tramping the snow down before the runners, but the horses could not move the load. The three men got *out* and were soon *in* over their boots tops, still all five of them waded and tumbled through

## Library of Congress

the treacherous slush ice unloading the sleigh, and all to no purpose. That sleigh had suddenly become real estate. The passengers got in, drew off boots and hose and rolled their chilled limbs in robes. "John" and the driver went into consultation on ways and means. Two miles and a half back was a house where they might get a shovel to shovel out the sleigh. To take one of the horses and ride back there was the plan. 156 They are both young and we an old traveler, so we inquired if fresh horses could be procured back there. They could not, and we represented that the horses were wearied. It was one o'clock and they had been working hard since eight. It would take two more hours of hard work, for one, while the other would be stiff standing in the cold, and if we were shoveled out of this we would be likely to stick again the next ten rods. It was five miles to St. Cloud, where fresh horses and another sleigh could be had and the load divided, and we suggested that the driver should "go forward" instead of back. "John" appeared to have thought of all this, and assented to all but exclaimed

"But then, we will keep you here until morning!"

We told him he could not avoid keeping us there until morning, and his best plan was to make sure of getting us out at daylight.

The driver unhitched both horses, mounted one and took the other to lead, feeling that he could not leave one of his horses to finish the night standing in the rain and up to the knees in slush ice.—How much we honored the brave boy, for he appeared little more than a boy, for his humanity to his horses. Through the whole trouble he had not struck them a blow or spoken a cross word.

When he was gone we all tucked ourselves in for sleeping, "John" fastening down the side curtains and then laid himself across the front of the sleigh on his mail bags and that precious express box. Pretty soon we begin to think of the driver going alone through those five miles of treacherous snow, not a house on the way where he might get assistance if he got into trouble. Leading a horse while riding another is no children's

## Library of Congress

play even in daylight and on good roads. He might lose his way in the thick mist; and we went industriously 157 to work to conjure up all manner of disasters to the brave fellow out alone on that inhospitable prairie—would sleep and wake with a start, thinking we saw him sinking in unfathomable snow-drifts. Our old friend quinsy had been reminding us, through the day, that he might possibly visit us. We usually have a vial of Camphor, and one of Kerosene for his benefit, as he always stops our eating if we neglect his drinking, and fail to give him a few drops of something strong. Our vials were both broken. So we had asked Jimmy to send back, with the horses, some whisky or brandy, feeling that those would be easily procured and that our traveling companions, after their work in the rain and slush, would probably want stimulus and might feel awkward about asking for it lest we should ‘put them in the paper.’ There was no hot coffee to be had, and they had all been laid liable to cramps and chills, whisky or brandy might answer our purpose as well as Kerosene or Camphor, until we got home, and theirs a good deal better. By the way it is worth knowing that Kerosene, bound upon the outside of the throat until it can be tasted inside, has, with us, never failed to stop quinsy and that to swallow one teaspoonful of raw brandy or whisky with or without camphor dissolved in it will always hold it in check a short time. So we wished for brandy and a hot brick, dreamed about the poor driver and turned, and twisted, and slept and waked, and had not such an uncomfortable time after all, until strong cheerful voices waked us in the gray day of morning. A second sleigh was along side, and two teams of fresh horses, with some two or three strong men, — (after all men are rather a useful institution.) One broad-shouldered fellow, in gray slouch hat and coat said they'd put the passengers in ‘tother sleigh and send “John” on with them and the mail, and they'd 158 attend to this concern. So a bridge was made by laying the loose seats on the slush, from one sleigh to the other, and the big man in gray took the hand of each passenger and steadied him as he walked from one sleigh to the other, while he himself stood knee deep, wedged in so that getting a foot up was no easy matter. One of the men changed coaches in bare feet, being unable to get his wet boots on. The brave driver had come back with the rescuing party and brought the brandy and we all took what we wanted.

## Library of Congress

In calculating the ups and downs of life, do not know that we had ever counted on drinking brandy, out of the same bottle, without any intermediate vessel, with six or eight men none of whom write "Hon." to his name, out on a prairie, miles from a human habitation, at daybreak on Sabbath morning, and ourself the only woman in the group. It was rather an odd social gathering, but the whole matter just appeared a natural as if we had been brought up to it. Our brandy produced its usual effect, sent the tears over our cheeks in a short fit of strangulation, and made our throat feel as if it was the chimney to a steam engine running a boat race under full pressure of pine knot, and tar barrel fuel.

"John" soon took the reins and we came to St. Cloud at a dashing trot, but the other sleigh soon overtook us, when the man in gray ordered our obstruction out of the way, but we headed the caravan up to the river crossing, where we magnanimously let them pass to try the bridge before we crossed. All safe at half past six we were "home again."

Mr. Bingham, familiarly called John, is a capital express messenger and a pleasant, gentlemanly fellow, but for all that he did not give us *one* turn-over after promising three.

159

### VI. War-Time Washington

[*St. Cloud Democrat, February 12, 1863*] Hawkin's Hill, near Pittsburgh, Jan. 29th, 1863

Dear Democrat. —You see I am not getting on very fast, I was detained here some days waiting for my ticket on the Penn. Central R. R., as it was sent by mistake to Chicago, and I missed it. Before it came I was taken ill, but shall probably be able to leave to-morrow, and I shall go on as far as Washington unless sickness prevents; but my going further is doubtful, as I have a special dread of being sick far away from home and find that I cannot calculate on a day's health. Of course, I am as comfortable with my good friends here as it would be possible to be, but playing invalid, first one place and then another, does not pay expenses. Neither is it desirable that I should attempt to lecture when so

## Library of Congress

weak as to be unable to stand, as I did in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> —The anxiety about the Indians—what they may be doing or what they may do before I get home—drives and draws me forward and backward with about equal force. If I can do 1 This was on January 17, when Mrs. Swisshelm spoke on “The Indian Massacres of Minnesota; the Wrongs of the Poor Indian and What Should Be Done with Him.” A Chicago paper described the address as an “intensely interesting story, which for horror and heroism recalls the early times of the settler in Kentucky,” and the speaker as “a woman of plain sound sense, a frontier woman, who can be a lady and a heroine.” Accounts of the lecture from three Chicago papers are reprinted in the *Democrat* for January 29. 160 anything East to create a more correct public sentiment on our Indian policy, I ought to go forward, and if the Indians should hasten their intended operations of the spring, as the affair at Sauk Centre appears to indicate, I ought to be at home.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A party of Chippewa on a marauding expedition did some damage in the country between Sauk Center and Long Prairie early in January, according to a letter dated at Sauk Center, January 8, 1863, which appears in the *Democrat* for January 15.

I had a pleasant stage ride from St. Cloud to Minneapolis. Messenger [L. N.] Parker was along and has such a happy knack of keeping things in order that, although I was the only lady passenger on the stage, loaded inside and out with soldiers, there was not even a puff of tobacco smoke of which to complain, and the comfort of all was insured. The roads were one solid bed of glare ice, but we bowled along at a slashing trot without slipping around or danger of capsizing, as the Burbank's, with their usual readiness of resource (I wonder if they are Yankees?) had the tire of the wheels drilled and great, sharp spikes inserted at regular intervals to cut into the ice and hold the stage steady. From St. Cloud to St. Paul they run the old, swinging stage coach, which on the smoother roads there affords such a luxury of motion. From St. Paul to La Crosse they have the square boxed coaches, on elliptic springs as the others would be more likely to overturn on the rough, hilly roads. It reminds one of the old staging over the Allegheny mountains, to look down over the precipices around which the coaches wind. We had two coaches heavily loaded; and, for safety, the men walked up and down dangerous places, and with patent breaks



## Library of Congress

[brakes] and lock chains we got along safely. The foresight, vigilance and care which carries the stream of travel back and forth over that road, month after month, 161 without an accident is something wonderful; and messenger Wait did not find his office a sinecure. From St. Paul we traveled two days and all night to reach La Crosse. As the ice is not safe below Hastings, the stages go clear down to La Crescent on land.—Here we took a large yawl, and were shoved through the shore ice and rowed three miles down the broad, open current in the river, until opposite the levee at La Crosse where we were landed on the ice and walked a considerable distance to the omnibuses waiting on the shore, while the mails and baggage were drawn on hand sleds. At La Crosse there are several hours to rest; then the omnibus to the sleeping car, which is very comfortable, and one wakes in the morning ready for breakfast at Portage City. The La Crosse Road is well managed, the bed of the road kept solid and smooth, the cars unusually clean and comfortable, and the conductors the most gentlemanly I have met any place off the Penn. Central.—Early in the forenoon we came to Minnesota Junction, there changed cars to take the Great Western. The change here is very little inconvenience, being simply to step from the cars to a platform, wait a few minutes in a pleasant station house, then take seats in the other cars. Here I met my old friend, formerly Mrs. Finney, M.D., a successful and popular physician of La Crosse, a beautiful and accomplished woman—the widow of a physician—who did the world the service of adding one more example to those which prove that a woman can be successful in earning an independent living by avocations usually followed by men, and at the same time preserve, in perfection, all the beautiful and distinctive attributes of womanhood. She has laid aside her practice to become the helpmate of one who appears worthy of such a life-partner, Mr. [Leonard] Lethridge [*Lottridge*], editor of the *La Crosse Republican*.

162

I also met on the cars Mr. Williams, editor of the *Sparta (Wis.) Herald*, with whom I have had a long editorial acquaintance, and found him a gentleman of plain good sense and most kindly expression of face. Senator [Charles B.] Cox, now Representative from a



## Library of Congress

northern district in Wisconsin, was one of my traveling companions from Hastings, and to him I am much indebted for aid and comfort by the way.<sup>3</sup> With so many kind friends going to Madison it was rather a temptation to turn aside and go with them, but I should have been in Chicago three weeks sooner and wanted to have been in Washington long before this, else I should have accepted an invitation to lecture in Racine.

<sup>3</sup> Cox was a representative from St. Croix and Pierce counties in the Wisconsin Assembly in 1863. *Assembly Journal*, 1863, p. 4.

The North Western R. R. is the finest smoothest road, in the West, that I have ever traveled on, and one goes direct from Minnesota Junction to Chicago without change of cars. It passes through a beautiful district of country, and to those who do not wish especially to visit Milwaukee, is the most direct and convenient route.

In Chicago I found our good friend, "Ruth Hall," slightly indisposed, but genial, energetic, whole-souled as ever—a genuine English woman.<sup>4</sup> She has been engaged a portion of her time, for two years, writing for the Patent Office Reports. Last year she contributed an article on horses, this year one on houseplants on both of which subjects she is well qualified to give information. I was the guest while in Chicago, of C. M. Hawley, Esq., and lady, in their pleasant home on Wabash avenue, as usual falling into the hands of Good Samaritans. I often wonder where all the Priests <sup>4</sup> "Ruth Hall" was a correspondent of the *St. Cloud Visiter* and of the *Democrat* until July 30, 1863. 163 and Levites have gone to; but 'spects they must be some place about.

Nothing, for years, has so surprised me as the unmerited and exceeding kindness of the Chicago press— *Journal*, *Tribune*, *Times*, *Post*, *Gazette*, all and each extended to me the most cordial and kind greeting. As it is a debt I can never repay I can but acknowledge it and place to account of that overwhelming debt which this *wicked* world had against me, in the matter of good done and received.

From Chicago I came direct to this cozy nest, where the long-tried and unwearied kindness of Col. H[awkins] and family, where familiar faces and scenes, make a home it

## Library of Congress

would be hard to leave but for the still dearer faces in the dearer home of St. Cloud and the duty which sends me forward to labor for its safety and preservation. I leave in a few hours for the city (this is the 30th) and hope to go on by the lightning train this evening and reach Washington to-morrow.

The rivers are open and boats running; no ice for next summer's cream; mud in abundance. Yesterday snow fell to the depth of two inches, and the ground is frozen so as to carry a person and let a horse break through at every step. Let Minnesotians be thankful for their roads and prize their climate. The dis-United States has nothing with which to compare the North Star State for fertility, combined with beauty and health-giving atmosphere Oh, our glorious Minnesota winters! I would rather travel all over the State in our coldest winter, in an open cutter, than through the Middle States in cars.

164

*[St. Cloud Democrat, February 12, 1863]* Washington, Feb. 1st, 1863

Dear Democrat. —Here I am, snug as a flea in a blanket, in the great Capital of the once United States. Got along swimmingly, just as well as if you had not notified the public of my desertion and your determination not to be accountable for my bed and board. Fact of it is, I rather suspect it improved my credit and that absconding agrees with me; but I am here, any way—got in last evening at dark and have seen nobody. But, would you believe it, the waiters at the hotel where I am staying are all negroes and all the guests are white! The proprietor and clerk are white men, and last evening, coming down street, I noticed that there are white men in all the stores as clerks—that white men and women were walking on the streets just as if they were not afraid or ashamed either! Black porters were running errands, carrying bundles, wheeling trunks and “drumming” for omnibusses. Black drivers were driving teams, and white folks riding in carriages. I did not see a sprinkle of blood on the street, which was six inches deep in mud, instead of that precious fluid which should have covered the pavement long ere this and keep on covering it. I cannot think what it all means, for it cannot be possible that the prophets have made a blunder, or that

## Library of Congress

I have mistaken the record. "If you emancipate slaves they will refuse to work, and will murder their masters," say the prophets. Of course the prophets know, and yet I have read somewhere that the slaves in this District have actually been emancipated. How does it come that they are at work and their masters not yet murdered? It does look as if they are losing time and spoiling the trade of the prophets. Then they are answering questions—questions which were not addressed to them, and which questions they did not desire to have answered—such as, 165 "What will you do *with* the negroes if they are freed?" and from the way in which they appear to be giving the reply, I should judge that the query will have to be change to, "What will you do *without* the negroes if they are freed?" Just here I was interrupted by the fireman who came to put coal on my fire. His face is as shiny black as the coal, and yet when I told him the fire needed no more coal, he bowed and said, "Well ma'am," as politely as if he knew I could have him flogged for insolence. Meeting any one of the waiters in a passage or on a stairway, he always stands aside and bows, instead of sticking out his elbows, strutting and swaggering, his free-and -equal, as the prophets said he would. Then, I have not heard that the daughter of any Member of Congress or other high official has yet eloped with any of the newly emancipated Apollos, who have been accounted so fascinating by our pro-Slavery brethren and sisters, that they supposed nothing less than the social law of chattlehood could prevent our ladies from rushing pell-mell into their arms. In short, it appears to me that the colored folks of this District are quietly solving the great problem of the age, and putting to shame all the much ado about finding a place to which they can be sent when their freedom shall be acknowledged. The folly, the blindness, the madness of seeking to export laborers from a country like this, where labor is the great want, has always been apparent to radicals, and if the indications I see, in the short space of time I have been here, be correct, the despised colored man will tax the ingenuity of his maligners to find apologies for their hatred and persecution.<sup>5</sup>

5 Slaves in the District of Columbia were emancipated by act Congress on April 16, 1862. Section 12 of the second Confiscation Act provided for the colonization of confiscated slaves in "some tropical country." See *ante*, 134*n*, and *Statutes at Large*, 12:376, 592. 166

## Library of Congress

Abolitionists have always thought and said that all temptation to insurrection would be taken away by emancipation, and that negroes would work for wages more readily than for lashes. Common sense and all the teachings of history verified their words, and now the freedmen of this District are adding their testimony to that of those in the West Indies and Hayti. Yet the old cry is kept up more violent, it appears to me, than ever before, for no adder ever stopped her ears more determinedly than those who feel their own nobility depends upon the black man's slavery—of those who know no way to elevate themselves but by putting some one else down. It appears as if our pro Slavery people feared the competition of the negro, and believe that the only way to prevent his outstripping them in the march of mind, is by chaining him hand and foot.

By the advice of our good friend, Mr. [William S.] Haven, of Pittsburg, I took the 5 P.M. train and went on to Philadelphia, which gave me four hours there and daylight to ride through Maryland. The road from Philadelphia was down the Delaware River, through Chester—which is a little daughter of Philadelphia—through Wilmington, a busy little ship-building city, across the State of Delaware, through Maryland and the streets of Baltimore, where the Massachusetts soldiers were assassinated. The road is superb—equal to the Penn. Central in the firmness and smoothness of the track; and the views of the Delaware and the great ships on her bosom are perfectly glorious. To have seen them is a joy forever, and any one from the West visiting Washington either on business or pleasure should come and go by that route.

At one point the iron-horse divides his burden and runs it side by side on to the top of a great boat which paddles it 167 across the mouth of a river, an inlet of Chesapeake Bay.—I forget the geography of that region and have no atlas handy.—The motion of the boat under its monster burden is quite imperceptible. It strikes the opposite shore without a jar and the cars trundle off and thunder on. This is in Maryland, and files of soldiers guard the road and the boat. Here an ancient and woebegone African came on board to sell apples, but refused postage currency. He appeared to be trading for Massah's benefit and

## Library of Congress

to care little for the business. At two other points the road crosses the mouths of broad rivers on bridges so firm that they rush on without any motion different from that on the solid earth. The country is thinly settled, and looks poor— *and there is a call for tea*. I have been writing all day by way of resting.—The gas is burning, and I hate gas light. The rain is falling, falling; and, oh, the mud!

Talk about an army moving is this red clay over which the skies weep half winter! Oh, no! When General McClellan got rid of the Autumn mouths he insured safety to his friends of Richmond until next June. By the way, I have heard a great deal of Democratic-Session talk since I left home, and every enemy of Mr. Lincoln's Administration whom I have met, is a friend of Gen. McClellan. In one breath they will condemn the war, express their preference for the Confederacy against the Union, and demand the restoration of McClellan.<sup>6</sup> The proposition now is to throw New England out of the Union, remodel the Constitution to suit the South, suppress all expression of opinion against Slavery, and repeal all laws forbidding its extension into any State or Territory, and the friends of this policy universally <sup>6</sup> On March 11, 1862, McClellan was removed from the command of all but the Army of the Potomac and on August 30 of the same year he was relieved of that also. <sup>168</sup> demand the restoration of McClellan! Said I not, eighteen months ago, "He is a traitor?"

P.S.—I have had tea and that rattle, and clatter, and rush, "and hurrying to and fro-ah" is over and I must tell you what a most delightful evening I spent at the International at St. Paul. Of course I staid at friend N's. [ *Nourse's* ] most of the time, but the evening before starting he took me down there to make it more convenient starting in the morning. It is going home to go to the International; and I tell you that apart from Mr. Belote's gentlemanly welcome and Mrs. B's almost sisterly reception which make it home to me, the International has few equals and no superiors in any city I have yet seen. For luxurious elegance, for quiet and comfort it need never be excelled even in fairy land and the genial temper of host, hostess and clerk fills it with an atmosphere of ease and repose which must be very pleasant to unaccustomed travelers, afraid of strange etiquette. There I met

## Library of Congress

Lieut. Gov. Donnelly and lady, Mrs. [John] Ninniger [ *Nininger* ] and family, Judge Goodrich and other friends, beside our friend and representative, H[enry] C. Wait[e], who was busy boring some member for a vote on the Senatorial question. I was glad to meet him, although I did have to assure him, in presence of many witnesses, that I would not vote for his candidate. In one of the halls I almost ran against our jolly friend, Superintendent [Clark W.] Thompson, on whose broad shoulders philanthropists say so many of the Indian murders rest.<sup>7</sup> To be such a terrible criminal, he appears to have a very good conscience and does not get thin.—Then too I met friend Mitchell, of the Rochester *Republican*, and wasn't I glad to see him; and by 7 Thompson was superintendent of Indian affairs of the northern department at this time. 169 the way, I met his father on the Great Western road *en route* to Madison. He introduced himself and is a splendid looking old gentleman. He electrified the folks in the cars with his staunch Union talk; told them that “no man can afford to be rich, at the cost of having the devil in partnership in his business, that this nation had tried it and failed—that her case is on trial now in the court of heaven and that that court always takes terrible costs.” I was delighted with him, and, oh! I have so much to write, and daylight is so short and there is so much to see, and hear, and do, and say. Insert the advertisement I send of the Pittsburg, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad and be sure it is just as good as there represented, and will be better.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, February 26, 1863 ] Washington, Feb. 9th [ *10th* ], 1863

Dear Will —You remember the anecdote of the loafer taken up by the police, who, when asked the cause, replied, “Oh, the same old drink!”

Here I am, the ninth day in Washington, and have done nothing—cause, the same old sick. I have been four days confined to my room, and this is the first day I can write, but am quite better.—There has been a great difficulty in getting a hall for a lecture and this difficulty may yet prove an impossibility. Our Congressional delegation have appeared anxious I should be heard and had the promise of a fine hall last Saturday evening but I got sick Thursday evening and was abed until Monday. The Indian question comes

## Library of Congress

up to-day, and will likely be decided.<sup>8</sup> There is no 8 A bill providing \$1,500,000 for “the Relief of Persons for Damages Sustained by reason of Depredations and Injuries by Certain Bands of Sioux Indians” was passed by the House on January 5, 1863, but it was amended in the Senate to provide a fund of \$200,000 for immediate relief and a commission to examine claims for damages. The money in both cases was to be diverted from Sioux annuities. The amended bill was passed by the House and became a law on February 16, 1863. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:246; 37 Congress, 3 session, *House Journal*, 130-132 (serial 1155); *Statutes at Large*, 12:652. 170 possibility of a hall before Friday or Saturday evening and it scarcely appears worth while to wait and lecture when there can be no hope that my statements would affect the question. The course of anti-Slavery lectures here last winter so enraged the pro-Slavery citizens and frightened conservatives that every hall and churches in the city is closed and hermetically sealed against every lecturer suspected of any opposition to the peculiar institution, and the utmost efforts of the Lecturing Association have failed to procure a place for a course of lectures the present winter.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See post. 198.

Slavery dies hard, if dying it is; and I doubt if the spirit of the Institution was ever more rampant in the Capital than it is to-day.

The Democratic programme now, is to get possession of the Government; get a decision of the Supreme Court declaring the Confiscation Act, the Proclamation and all similar measures unconstitutional; offer the South their own terms to come into the Union, and as it is probable she will refuse association with New England, New England can be left out. Slavery is to be made National, and Freedom to be driven from the continent. The Freedmen are to be re-enslaved and the white laborers to be brought to the level of the poor whites of the South—to be without schools or the right of private ballot. The masses are in short to surrender all other rights for the right to whip a nigger—if he can get one.



## Library of Congress

The plans are boldly laid and openly discussed; and they are met by the most disgraceful, unmanly, halting tumidity 171 on the part of the Republicans. The bill for arming negroes, over which Congress has spent so much time, is a long step backwards.<sup>10</sup> The President already had ample power to enlist as many blacks as he thought proper for the public defense. This bill permits him to enlist them everywhere, except where he has the ability to open a recruiting office. Before the passage of this bill he had as much authority to enlist negroes in Virginia, Kentucky and Maryland as in South Carolina. Now he can only enlist slaves in those States where our armies have no possession or such an insecure foothold that slaves may well fear to join our standard, lest they should be left to the vengeance of their old masters as were those two thousand who dug the canal for us at Vicksburg. Then, the President shows no confidence in the enlistment of colored soldiers. As usual, he hesitates and counts probabilities. "Will the army of the Potomac mutiny?" is the question. "How do the hundreds of useless officers now hanging around Washington, visiting friends in distant States or smoking cigars and drinking champagne on the Rappahannock feel about permitting black men to fight for the Republic?" This is the question with the President.

<sup>10</sup> A bill authorizing the president to enlist for not more than five years "such number of volunteers of African descent as he may deem useful to suppress the present rebellion," excepting, however, "slaves of loyal citizens in the States exempt by the President's proclamation of January 1, 1863," was passed by the House on February 2, 1863, after much wrangling and filibustering. The Senate rejected the bill because enlistment already had been legalized by the second Confiscation Act, which provided for the employment of Negroes for the suppression of the rebellion in "such manner" as the president should "judge best for the public welfare," and by a general militia law passed at the same time, which gave the president the right to employ Negroes for constructing entrenchments and for performing camp service or any military or naval service. See *ante*, 134n; *Congressional Globe*, 37 Congress, 3 session, 689, 923; *Statutes at Large*, 12:592, 599.

He said to a Western Representative lately:

172



## Library of Congress

“But, if I loose as many white men from the army of Virginia as I can enlist black men, will it pay?”

So, this McClellanized mob has already overawed the Government, and the only hope for the nation is in disbanding it. I find that serious, thoughtful men, intimately acquainted with the workings of the machinery here, are very anxious to be rid of this army; but how is it to be disposed of?

Congress dare not grapple with it, but meanly throws the responsibility on the President, leaving it optional with him whether or not we are to accept the millions of stout arms, willing to fight for our freedom if they can secure their own, or whether the North is to continue to pour out her best blood of the Caucasian race to leave a country for negroes. Our sons and brothers may be butchered by the thousands, by the balls and bayonets of traitors. They may rot and die by thousands in hospitals, but a black man's life is too precious to be risked under the enemy's guns. Why? Simply because he represents the property of rebels.

On the same principle the Confiscation Act is a dead letter. I have heard it estimated here that not one million of property has been disposed of under that act. The clause which limits it to the lifetime of the present proprietor renders it void;<sup>11</sup> for who will purchase a life interest in an estate at a time when war makes life tribly uncertain? The lands of Virginia rebels in this vicinity would long since have been disposed of, bringing large revenue to the Government and furnishing means for prosecuting the war, but <sup>11</sup> A joint resolution passed by Congress at the same time that the second Confiscation Act was passed provided that no “punishment or proceedings under said act” should “be so construed as to work a forfeiture of the real estate of the offender beyond his natural life.” See *ante*, 134, and *Statutes at Large*, 12:627. 173 the fences are all gone, outhouses destroyed and dwellings injured, if not burned. Who will buy and improve them, knowing that to-morrow some claimant may come in as heir and be ready to prove the death of him who was proprietor of the estate at the time of the passage of the act? So, open rebels

## Library of Congress

continue to hold their property in this city, and even though they have fled and joined the Confederacy, their agents collect rent and transmit it to them.

An open rebel came here from Richmond, sold two houses which he owned here, got eight thousand dollars in gold for them, and returned to Richmond with the money, less than two weeks ago.

Secession is at a premium, here in the Capital, and when committees wait upon the President to urge strong measures, he tells them a story. A delegation waited on him some time ago, on important business, and he told them four anecdotes! A Western Senator visited him on official business and reciprocated by telling an anecdote the President had not before heard. After he rose to leave, Mr. Lincoln remarked: "Wait a moment; I want you to give me the notes of that story!" The notes were given, carefully taken down and filed away on his desk.

Alas! Our President fairly represents our people. Without concentration, without any comprehensive plan, we stumble on, getting deeper and deeper into the mire. Could he be brought to organize, arm and equip the negroes, as *permitted* by laws of Congress, the crushing of the rebellion would be a sure thing, and even McClellan and the Democratic party would fail to place us side by side with the slave, under the heel of Jeff. Davis; but he will not do it unless he is forced by an outside pressure from the North.—Why do our people sleep as their liberties are slipping from their grasp? Why 174 do not they hold public meetings, discuss, petition, beseege the White House with committees urging the President to arm every man who is willing to fight for freedom? As a nation, we never can be saved unless we call upon the black, as a co-laborer, to come up and fight for freedom as their forefathers did in the Revolution.

The loyal men of the North will be overborne by traitors at home and traitors abroad unless he call[s] the loyal men of the South to make common cause for Freedom and they have not much time to lose.

## Library of Congress

Of all the sad news and bad news that has been transmitted over the wires in this war, the saddest and worst has been, " Washington is Safe! " Would God the rebels had taken her, and captured the cage of unclean birds two years ago and then we might by this time have had the news, " The Republic is Safe! "

Washington is the great crucible which transmutes all gold to foil. The noble band of patriots who rushed with high-hearted patriotism through a hostile city, to defend her against her internal and external foes, have now become the dread and danger of the Republic. The Congressmen sent up in the first hours of the struggle, overflowing with the patriotic ardor infused into their hearts by the pure prairie winds of the West and the mountain storms of the East, have learned to wilt, and cower, and trim, and turn, to suit the malarious atmosphere of this slavery-cursed soil, until their disgusted constituents have become hopeless, and, in their despair, half voted the Republic to the devil; and then, instead of redeeming themselves and the country by energy, by decision, by doing something to insure the original expectation, they read the rebuke as meant for any little show of energy they may have made, and again go to work to trim, and turn, and twist, and shrink responsibility more entirely than before. There is no hope of Congress doing anything to save our country; no hope of the Administration, unless the people drive it, drive it, by committees, none of whom should be permitted to stay in the city more than forty-eight hours. Let the people send a succession of committees to demand that all loyal men of the South be armed and set to fighting for the Union; let these committees arrive and go by every train, and each one bring reservoirs of pure air that they may be able to stand erect while here, and not wilt like young corn after frost, in this pestilential atmosphere.

Agitate! agitate! send committees—your written petitions will not be read.—Let the living presence of the free North confront the President every hour until he uses every means God and Nature has placed in his power, to save our almost mined country.

## Library of Congress

I am staying with our old friend, Dr. Fell, formerly of Princeton, Minn., who has shown me much kindness, and continues to walk erect. Will write again soon.

[ *St Cloud Democrat*, February 26, 1863 ] Washington, Feb. 14th, 1863

Dear Will. —This morning I had an appointment to go with Senator [Morton S.] Wilkinson to see the President and talk to him about our Indian affairs.<sup>12</sup> Going in to the door of the White House we met two gentlemen just coming out, and before I had time to recognize the foremost, Mr. W. had introduced me to Sec. Stanton, who remembered and recognized me at once; for, you know, I knew him in the 12 Wilkinson was a senator from Minnesota. 176 Smoky City, long time ago. His cordial greeting was very pleasant. I had called at the War Department yesterday and finding him locked in his office, left my card, and he warmly assured me that when I wished to see him I had but to call, as my card would be sure to come in, and he would be glad to see me; all of which was said with an air of more than politeness, for he really appears to have a distinct and pleasant remembrance of the time when he was a young lawyer, unknown to fame, and I a successful editor, when he made it a point to call at my office and talk, earnestly for an hour over the object of my labors at that time, viz: securing the property rights of married women.<sup>13</sup> He gave me some valuable suggestions and sympathized entirely with me in the matter—s manly men do, and just in proportion to their courage and manliness. It is always a coward who seeks to oppress, by legal enactments, a weaker party and fears the discussion of existing laws. Whatever Mr. Stanton's failing may be, cowardice is not one of them, as he gave recognition, at that early day, to the then radical idea of a married woman's right to own property, so, I learn that he is particularly cordial, now, in recognizing the many efforts of ladies to aid our soldiers; and thus he acknowledges woman as co-laborer in preserving the Government.

<sup>13</sup> See *ante*, 129.

During the few moments we talked, his companion, whom I had not noticed, stood looking on, and judge of my surprise when Mr. Wilkinson presented me to—Gen. Fremont! Well,

## Library of Congress

I shall never forget that meeting, or the genial hand-clasp with which I was received as one he had "read about." Gen. Fremont, unlike Mr. Stanton, is thin and looks anxious. His hair and beard are quite gray, and the beard cut until about an inch long. He is of medium size, with sinewy 177 muscles. His keen gray eyes are tempered with a look of deep earnestness, almost amounting to sadness; and his dress so simple that one might pass him for a Second Lieutenant who had been through the Peninsula campaign without a furlough, and who had retreated behind his men with his back to them and his face toward Richmond; for, no dress could conceal, from an ordinary observer, that, as a soldier, he is not made for "masterly retreats." No wonder his troops worship him, for that unostentatious, firm, earnest bearing must be the Lord's label for a true soldier; and it is for our sins that we are now deprived of his services in this, the hour of our country's peril. He is the Path finder who boldly struck out into the trail which alone can lead the Union armies to victory;<sup>14</sup> but, alas! the North is scarce less guilty than the South of "trading in slaves and souls of men," the old crime, named by Divine justice as the reason of Babylon's destruction. It was not in the power of that justice to permit our arms to triumph until the wealth we had accumulated by running cotton mills in company with old Satan should be wasted, wasted wasted! We must give the world a lesson on the profits of such partnerships, and verify the truth that "no man can afford to be rich at the cost of having the devil a partner in his business."

<sup>14</sup> Frémont, as commander of the department of the West, on August 30, 1861, issued a proclamation freeing the slaves of rebels within the limits of his lines, which was subsequently revoked by presidential order. This was a cause of his dismissal the following November. Allan Nevins, *Frémont: The West's Greatest Adventurer*, 2:563-574, 615 (New York, 1928).

Learning my business here, the General promptly proposed calling on me that we might have longer time to talk of our Indian troubles; but, dear me, it took my breath away to think of him, whom I have so long looked to as the future savior of our country, calling on such a poor, little, obscure 178 laborer in the good cause as myself. I forgot for the moment that it was his interest in Minnesota, in our great North-west, which prompted the

## Library of Congress

suggestion, and told him, with a gasp, and I fear almost rudely, that he must not call on me, that he was needed elsewhere. Yet I would not have Minnesota forget this evidence of his interest in her welfare. His enemies—the enemies of the Republic—have been most maliciously persistent in representing him as inaccessible even to the officers of his own army, as adopting aristocratic, if not princely, airs of exclusiveness; and his proposal to call on a poor frontier editor, that he might learn more of the wrongs of our neglected and scattered people, struck me as a queer evidence of inaccessibility. May the good Lord prosper him; for I have always felt that he is the Moses who is to lead this people out of the wilderness!

He and Mr. Stanton appeared on very good terms, and as they had had a long interview with the President, I regard it as a hopeful sign; and as going far to refute the rumor here that McClellan is to be restored to the command of the army he has already rendered dangerous to the liberties of his country. Hooker is rapidly bringing this McClellanized mob into shape—sending some to reinforce the *fighting* divisions of Union armies and thus *distributing* the *retreating* corpse. The mud is still unfathomable; so much so, that a sutler who started to go to the Rappahannock from Washington, got his empty wagon, with four good horses attached to it, stuck fast and had to come back. Hooker cannot possibly get within attacking distance of the rebels and take any artillery with him, and he will not likely fight without it.

On Friday evening I attended Speaker Grow's reception, and met such a number of distinguished and pleasant people that a list of their names would make a page. Mr. Grow had 179 a pleasant recollection of St. Cloud and made special inquiries about a number of her people.<sup>15</sup> He is a bachelor, and lives with his brother, whose wife plays hostess charmingly, and her husband is a very genial and fine-looking man. There are four brothers of the Grows, and only this one has a wife. As there is no sister, the little lady has her hands full, but bears her honors charmingly.

15 On Grow's visit to St. Cloud in 1859, see *ante*, 22.

## Library of Congress

For the benefit of the ladies I must mention that she wore a very rich crimson *moire antique*, with black lace trimmings. The ladies present were generally richly dressed, but many of them were disfigured by quillings or puffings which gave them, more or less, the appearance of French hens, that, you know, have the feathers turned upward. I cannot think of anything more ungraceful, as a trimming, than a narrow satin ribbon, quilled in box plaits, unless it is an over-waist and sleeves of stiff lace, all drawn into puffs which completely take away all outline of form and make the wearer into a *fouze*.

Commissioner [William P.] Dole and Mr. [Schuyler] Colfax both took pains to seek me out and talk over their St. Cloud visits, and ask for St. Cloud people. Mr. [John G.] Nicollay [ *Nicolay* ], also, who has been exceedingly kind. He and Mr. [Ashton S. H.] White remember every lady they met at our house the afternoon they met the Soldier's Aid Society there, and ask for them by name or description.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Dole, Nicolay, and White visited St. Cloud in August, 1862, when they were in Minnesota as members of a commission sent by the government to negotiate a treaty with the Red Lake and Pembina Chippewa. The day after their arrival at St. Cloud, however, the Sioux Outbreak occurred, and the treaty plans were cancelled. Dole, who was United States commissioner of Indian affairs, devoted himself to keeping the Crow Wing Chippewa quiet. Colfax spoke at St. Cloud on behalf of the local Republican candidates for office in 1859. *Democrat*, September 22, 1859, August 21, 1862. 180

Rev. Dr. [Byron] Sunderland, Chaplain of the Senate, came to me to know why I had not lectured in the lecture room of their Church after he had gone personally to the trustees and procured their consent, and this was the first I knew that it could have been obtained, for somehow it is next to impossible to get an understanding in Washington. I had no special agent. A full dozen men, including our entire delegation, were trying to make arrangements for me to lecture. One thought the other had done this, and another thought one had done this. Sometimes they could not find me, and sometimes they could not find one another, or some one else who had to be found. When they thought they were ready, I was sick; and it is my failing to get out of patience. If I cannot do what I want, at the time I want to do it, I get out of the notion, and by the time the great whirligig had got turned

## Library of Congress

around right side up, I concluded that Congress was so near adjourning and everything in such a rush that I might as well save my breath to talk privately to the President and other leading men, as I have been doing and shall do.

The President I have not yet seen.—The first day that I was to go, I was abed, and Gen. Fremont's early visit yesterday took up the time Mr. Wilkinson expected to have, so I go to morrow morning, to see both him and Mr. Stanton.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, March 5, 1863 ] Washington, Feb. 23d, 1863

Dear Will. —I have feared that the people of Minnesota would think I had forgotten their interests and my purpose of laying our Indian troubles before the public in the capital of the nation. For want of a special agent it did appear that I never should be able to make both ends meet for a public lecture, and when I last wrote I had abandoned the project<sup>181</sup> and calculated to depend on private talks with public men. Our Minnesota men have been very unwilling to have me leave without lecturing, and so Dr. Fell took the matter in hand and with the aid of Mr. [David M.] Kelsey, formerly of the Illinois Legislature, undertook to make the arrangements. The Minnesotians raised a fund for expenses, so as to have the lecture free—each one of our Congressman and Wm. S. King giving \$5, and other lesser lights contributing. So, I delivered my lecture in the lecture room of Rev. Dr. Sunderland's church.<sup>17</sup> It is a large hall and was densely filled. It is very easy to speak in. I was “dead in earnest” and had no trouble in being heard. Mr. G[eorge] E. H. Day, formerly of St. Anthony, introduced me. The audience were evidently in a humor to be easily pleased and I talked two mortal hours, except such portions of the time as the people took the floor and kept up such rounds of applause that I had to stop. Trust me, Eastern sympathy with Indians is the result of misapprehension. The people listen to the story of the massacres with breathless interest and tears; and, at every demand for justice, burst into rounds of applause.—Away down under all this tenderness for criminals, is a hearty, old Puritanic love of justice; and the most sympathizing of the Indian's friends will yet see the propriety, the necessity, of stern justice to these murderers.



## Library of Congress

17 A communication addressed to “Members of Congress and Citizens of Washington,” in which Mrs. Swisshelm announced her lecture and stated that she had come from Minnesota “as the representative of the women and children of that State, to tell their story of the Indian massacres there, and give their opinion of ‘our Indian policy,’ past, present, and prospective,” is reprinted in the *Saint Paul Pioneer* for February 28, 1863, from the *National Intelligencer* of Washington for February 21. The influence of the talk upon public opinion is the subject of comment in the *Democrat* of February 26, King, the founder of the *State Atlas* of Minneapolis, was in Washington at this time as postmaster of the House of Representatives. Forwell, *Minnesota*, 3:90, 91.

At the close of the lecture the Western Congressmen present passed a resolution endorsing the truthfulness of my representations and expressing their conviction that the delivery of the lecture was calculated to do great good. Some 182 one in the audience said he had heard that I had a lecture on “Woman in the War of the Rebellion” and moved that I be invited to deliver it in that place on any evening which suited my convenience. This was carried by acclaim. Thus, you see, it is probable I shall be here a while longer and get a good opportunity to tell the folks what a frontier woman thinks of the Southern war. May the Good Lord give me words of truth and soberness and send them forth to do His will.

After the lecture so many kind friends, principally Minnesotians and Pennsylvanians, crowded around to congratulate me that we had quite a Love Feast. Mr. [William] Windom came up, with his good honest face all aglow, and returned me his thanks and the thanks of our State,<sup>18</sup> and I, to[o] so much wanted a place to have “a good cry” to think that God had ordered it all so, and enabled such a poor little weakling, so successfully, to plead the cause of our wronged and outraged people. Mr. [Lewis] Clephane, of the [Washington *National*] *Republican*, asked for the closing passage of the lecture, for publication; and, as I am anxious to get the facts before the people in every way possible, I have promised it; but first I send it to the *Democrat* that our people may know what I am saying in their name. It is this:

18 Windom was a congressman from Minnesota at this time.

## Library of Congress

The people of Minnesota demand that the United States Government shall cease to treat these assassins as prisoners of war—that she shall cease to recognize the right of any class of people, under her jurisdiction, to make war upon any other class. They demand the repeal of all treaties establishing or recognizing 183 Foreign governments in our midst. They demand that these criminals, captured by our State authorities; and, by them, tried and convicted of murdering our citizens on our own soil, shall be given up to these authorities to be dealt with according to our laws.

When that glorious, old martyr, John Brown, and his nineteen heroes, made war upon Virginia, and the old Dominion very properly acknowledged her inability to cope with this invincible host—which, even Death has been unable to conquer, and who in their graves, are marching on—the United States sent thousands of troops to capture them; handed them over, bound and bleeding, to the authorities of Virginia and stood guard until the chivalry had wreaked their vengeance on the last man. If the number had been nineteen hundred instead of nineteen, think you, would the result have been different? Yet, less than a dozen citizens of Virginia lost their lives in that war; and these, in an open battle brought on and urged by Virginians and the United States.

Minnesota has had hundreds of her citizens butchered while in the peaceable pursuit of their accustomed avocations; and, although crippled by her exertions to defend the United States against Virginia, she has encountered these murderers, an organized band of thousands, dispersed them, relieved three besieged United States forts, took over two thousand prisoners, tried them, by her laws, found over three hundred of them guilty of participation in these murders and condemned them to death. Here the United States Government steps in, takes the prisoners out of the hands of the State authorities, refuses to execute the sentence, because forsooth, there are too many of them. There was no limit to the number Virginia might hang in defense of her soil and citizens, but thirty-eight Indians are all Uncle Samuel can spare to stone for the lives of fifteen hundred

## Library of Congress

Minnesotians, and the others are to be turned loose amongst us or on our borders, to repeat their work of rapine and blood.<sup>19</sup>

19 Mrs. Swisshelm, in common with most of her contemporaries, over estimated the number of casualties in the Sioux War. The exact number of persons, including soldiers, who were killed by the Sioux is not known, but estimates range from 447 to 737. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 391-393.

If this course is persisted in, Minnesota will—well, she will 184 not secede like South Carolina for fear her rights may be infringed, or like Virginia in defence of the abstract right of secession. She will *not* go down on her knees, like Illinois, to beg for peace at the hands of armed traitors. She will not bluster, and whine, and swagger, and haggle, and dicker, like Kentucky to extort a price for her fidelity to the old stars and stripes. Oh, no! Minnesota is the North Star State, and although he has been left out in the cold, thank God her loyalty, like the chastity of a virtuous woman, can never depend on contingencies.

If, through the Philistines of the South, the Delila of the Border States and the trading Jews of the North, our young Sampson be shorne of his strength, and become the blind giant to grind in the mill of Despotism, Minnesota will wait and watch her chance to guide him to the pillars on which rest the powers of his foes.

If our Ship of State goes down in this triple storm, raised by the black spirits and white, green spirits and gray, of Southern rattlesnake poison, slimy, alligator Border State brokerage, and cold, clam[m]y, Copperhead Northern treason, the guns on Minnesota's side will thunder forth their last volley of defiance as the water comes in at the muzzles; whatever others may do, she will go down Cumberland fashion. For any event Minnesota will support the Administration and the war, and cast her next electoral vote for the Republican candidate for President; but, she will never make peace with rebels, neither will she with their allies, the Sioux. If justice is not done, she will go to shooting Indians whenever these government pets get from under Uncle Samuel's wing. Our people will

## Library of Congress

hunt them, shoot them, set traps for them, put out poisoned bait for them—kill them by every means we would use to exterminate panthers.

We cannot breathe the same air with those violators of women, crucifiers of infants. Every Minnesota man, who has a soul and can get a raffle, will go to shooting Indians; and he who hesitates will be black-balled by every Minnesota woman and posted as a coward in every Minnesota home.

Well, I think they applauded that sentiment for full five minutes, and appeared as if they did not like to quit then. So, our people must have a broad and deep public sentiment on their side.

185

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, March 19, 1863 ]<sup>30</sup> Brooklyn, March 11th, 1863

<sup>30</sup> Another letter in the *Democrat* for March 19, written at Philadelphia on March 7, has here been omitted. In it Mrs. Swisshelm described a performance presented by Phineas T. Barnum in Washington.

Dear Will. —I got here on the 9th, and found a letter from our good friend Dr. Fell, saying that my appointment to a clerkship in the War Department had been placed in his hands, so I shall return to Washington.

I lectured last evening in the lecture room of Rev. Henry War Beecher's church, and cannot help feeling from the cordial and approving manner in which the lecture was received by an audience embracing some of the leading minds of the country that it will be productive of good in aiding to create a better understanding of our difficulties. I should like to go through the New England States, but should risk losing appointment by not reporting myself and feel that I have now called public attention to the matter so much, that the matter can be discussed through the Press with much less labor to me, and more important results to Minnesota, than anything I could hope to accomplish through traveling, which is a serious tax on my strength.

## Library of Congress

I have much to write about, but lay awake last night as I usually do after lecturing and my eyes incline to fall shut.—I am the guest of our great-hearted friend, G[eorge] B. Lincoln, Postmaster in Brooklyn, who met me at the depot with his carriage, and brought me to his elegant home from which there is a magnificent view of the Bay. Mrs. Lincoln is in every sense the helpmate of her husband, and their home is a model of hospitality as their lives are of benevolence. Both their sons, all the children they have, are in the service of their country, the one in the army, the other in the navy, and are of that class which forms the moral backbone of 186 our country's defense. I occupy the room devoted to Parson [William G.] Brownlow's daughter while here, for the Parson and his family were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln during all their visit to New York.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Brownlow, the editor of an antisecession newspaper of Knoxville, Tennessee, was bitterly persecuted for his loyalty to the Union and eventually was forced to leave Tennessee. In 1865 he succeeded Andrew Johnson as governor of that state. James Schouler, *History of the United States of America, under the Constitution*, 6:144n (New York, 1899); George F. Milton, *The Age of Hate: Andrew Johnson and the Radicals*, 141 (New York, 1930).

In Philadelphia, the Parson was entertained by families of whom he found a very high estimate, and some one asked him if he knew that he had been in a nest of the greatest Abolitionists in the country—of that very class of men he had said in Ohio ought to be hung—conductors on the underground railroad? “No,” the old man said, “he had not known it, but he didn't care, they were clever folks.” On the first evening of his arrival here, he told the anecdote, when Mrs. Lincoln told him he was caught again, for he had never been in so radical a crowd as he sat with just then. “Well,” said the Parson, “when I go back to Tennessee I shall tell the folks I came up here as a missionary and sought out the chief of sinners.”

Before leaving Washington, I went to the President's levee and have not written about it because I then got hold of one end of some ideas that I had no means of filling up to any

## Library of Congress

satisfactory conclusion and thought I should wait and think about it a little. Maybe I can tell you something about it in my next.

A deep snow fell here last night and is going off now under a bright sun.

187

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, April 2, 1863] 22 Washington, March 18, 1863

22 This letter is reprinted in the *Democrat* from the *Chicago Evening Journal* for March 21, 1863.

No friend of the Administration can shut his eyes to the fact that it has not answered the expectations of the public. To my mind, President Lincoln lost sight of the fundamental principle of our Government, i.e., the right of the majority to rule, when he appointed the first Democrat to office. The people, by a legal, constitutional majority, voted the Government into the hands of Republicans—voted for a change—voted that Republican men and Republican measures should rule for four years. A portion of the Democratic party, and by far the larger portion, rebelled against this legal constitutional decree, and in so doing struck a blow which they intended to be a death blow at the vitals of republican institutions. They undertook to enforce their rebellion by armed resistance; and in this emergency President Lincoln, instead of standing by this imperiled principle, and holding, for weal or woe, the reins which had been placed in his hands by the people, handed one-half of them over to the very party which people had voted out and the majority of which was in open rebellion.

That he did so from the feeling that even loyal Democrats required a consideration for their fidelity to the Government, and from the best and most magnanimous of motives, is certain. That every Governor of the loyal States did likewise, and that most of them preceded him in this work, is equally certain; but the plan of conciliating foes at the cost of friends was merely a mistaken policy, while the giving office to a party voted out by the people was a forsaking of the first principle of our Government; and not until the Administration 188 comes up to the constitutional ground of holding and wielding the

## Library of Congress

power voted into its hands, will the full confidence of the people be restored. This dividing the Government by its friends has been the main cause of weakness.

Another cause of distrust has been the unpopularity of the Lady of the White House. The impression has been almost universal that she is and has been in sympathy with the rebels; that she betrayed the secrets of Cabinet meetings to secession agents; that she selected her friends amongst persons of flippant character, &c., and so on to the end of a chapter which made her out anything but a suitable person for the high position she occupies.

I came to Washington so strongly prejudiced against her that I quite made up my mind not to see her, for fear I should be tempted to write something to increase the feeling against her, and so lessen the confidence of the people in the Administration. I let four public receptions pass without calling, and was with difficulty persuaded to go to the Levee on the 2nd inst. As I had sent my baggage to Philadelphia before concluding to go, I was forced to go in my old black traveling dress, which some folks hint is not the height of fashion, since it was made nearly seven years ago, has seen hard service, and was never altered. But as there was no lack of silks, laces, feathers, jewels, trails, flounces, puffs, quilling, fans and flowers, it was very well, and when presented to the President I do not believe he saw that I had my cloak over my arm, and hood in my hand, as he stood shaking hands with the immortal million, and working harder than he ever did splitting rails.

As custom required me to add to his labor, I could not help saying to him that I hoped the Lord would have mercy on him, as the people had none; and in the midst of his 189 drudgery he laughed a great hearty, honest laugh. It was a pleasure to see him—a man whose honesty has never been questioned by friend or foe, and I stood back against the wall to look at him, still determined that I would not play hypocrite by paying external forms of respect to Mrs. Lincoln. She was pointed out, and I forgot to look at her, she appeared so different from what I had expected. Her complexion is fair as that of a young girl, her cheeks soft, plump and blooming, and her expression tender and kindly. It was

## Library of Congress

one of those faces I feel like stopping on the street to kiss, because it recalls one that was dearest of all in childhood's days. I think the features are not classical, but I forgot to look at them. The dress was something that looked elegant and appropriate—nothing incongruous, nothing tawdry. They tell me since that it was black velvet, with pearls in the hair. I saw them as I looked down on her hair, which is abundant, dark and glossy. She is not so tall as I. She stood receiving her guests with quite as much grace and more dignity than I had seen [in] the celebrated Betty Bliss when in the same position.<sup>23</sup> I concluded to be presented. On hearing my name, she looked up with a pleased surprise, and offered her hand with a cordiality and kindness which greatly surprised both myself and the friends who were with me—one of whom remarked, afterwards, that it was “the most cordial thing he had ever seen her do.” She shakes hands with very few of her guests, and it is not etiquette to offer her one's hand. This is a matter of necessity. No one who has not served an apprenticeship to hard manual labor would be able to shake hands with half the people who go <sup>23</sup> The reference is to Mrs. Silas S. Bliss, a daughter of Zachary Taylor who acted as hostess of the White House during his presidency. Mrs. Swisshelm may have seen Mrs. Bliss in Washington in the spring of 1850. See ante, 7, and Elizabeth F. Ellet, *he Court Circles of the Republic, or the Beauties and Celebrities of the Nation*, 412, 414, 418 (Hartford, 1869). 190 to the White House; and it is a labor from which good sense and good manners should relieve the President.

I went home that night thinking what it could mean: why should a pro-slavery woman, a secessionist at heart, show that sudden felling of kindness to an old Abolitionist—one who, twenty-five years ago, was threatened with a coat of tar and feathers in her native State?<sup>24</sup> There was no acting about it, for it was the first impulse of surprise, and if she had wished to play such a part I would have been a poor subject on which to begin. If she was vain, as folks say, and fond of gentlemen's admiration, and wished to stand well with anti-slavery people, she could, very easily, play the agreeable to good-looking gentlemen, radical editors who do so much abroad. To give one of the brightest smiles of the evening to a little, old woman, noted for nothing but Abolitionism, was an odd move for a vain



## Library of Congress

secessionist. So I resolved to reconsider some of the evidence on which I had formed my opinion, and have found some breaks in the chain. I have also learned several facts in her history, both before and since her husband's election to his present post, which place her in a very different light from that in which she is generally regarded. In atonement for the wrong I have done her in thought and private conversation, in justice to her and to the cause which must suffer by everything which lessens the respect of the people for, and their confidence in, those whom they elected to preside over the Government, I intent to publish all the evidence I have and all I can get of her loyalty and good-feeling; but as this letter has spun out unaccountably, I must postpone to another much that I intended to say.

24 See *ante*, 4. 191

### **VII. Echoes of the Sioux War**

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 2, 1863 ] Washington, March 19th, 1863

Dear Will. —After having been around a good deal talking about Minnesota Indian affairs, I have come to the conclusion that active sympathy with Indians is confined to a very small class. The great mass of the Eastern people have a positive aversion to knowing or hearing anything about our troubles.

This old Indian question has been such a long-standing perplexity—the people have been so bored about Indians, their wrongs and crimes—so talked to, and preached at, and taxed, and blamed and lectured on this subject, that even in ordinary times they would have been unwilling to have had their repose disturbed by the hopeless medley of Indian perplexities; but now that so much thought and action is required for the War of the Rebellion they are doubly unwilling to give any attention to a subject so very disagreeable and about which they feel powerless to do anything.

## Library of Congress

The real feeling of the Eastern public has been revealed to me in various ways; but was most concisely and emphatically expressed, a short time ago, by one of the very first men in this nation, when he said with a gesture of disgust and impatience:

192

“Why didn't you *kill* them? My—to think of the crimes you say they perpetrated and then to think of you coming here to whine and ask for justice!!

“Why didn't you kill them?

“There was enough of you to have exterminated the whole tribe and relieved the world of the presence of the monsters! Why didn't you do it? Nobody could have blamed the people of Minnesota under such provocation for killing the whole tribe. Or at worst it would have been savage killing savage; but you take them prisoners, admit them to the rights of prisoners of war and then come here and ask the Government to damn itself in the eyes of all Christendom by a wholesale hanging of these prisoners!!

[“] Why didn't you take the responsibility and not seek to involve the government in what would be regarded as monstrous and disgraceful? *Why don't you do it now?*”

To my explanation that Col. Sibley wished to secure the white captives,<sup>1</sup> he answered:

<sup>1</sup> Sibley was in command of the military expedition sent by Governor Ramsey against the Sioux Indians in 1862.

“Stuff! He had force enough to have conquered them and released the captives by force, not treachery; and when he preferred to treat rather than fight you have no right to complain that the Government refuses to hang those he took as prisoners of war!”

Of course I do not attempt to justify these statements of opinions, but I am fully convinced that this embodies the general feeling on this question. To argue against it is like beating the wind.—People want deeds not words. Our Minnesota troubles are felt to be all of a piece with the anti-Jackson spirit which rules the hour. Nobody to take the responsibility.

## Library of Congress

Congress throwing it on the President 193 and the President waiting for the people. Everybody wanting something done and nobody doing it. Nineteen-twentieths of the Eastern people would have been rejoiced if we had made wolf-feed of every Indian on our soil, with the exception of [John] Other-day and the few who resemble him;<sup>2</sup> but not the one in twenty is willing that his government should take the responsibility of hanging those whom we took as prisoners.

Other Day was a Sioux who was loyal to the whites during the uprising of 1862. He led sixty-two white persons to safety. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:117.

Then, there are Minnesotians here pleading the cause of the Poor Indian.<sup>3</sup> George E.H. Day, for instance, who tendered his services to introduce me to the audience before whom I lectured here, a ceremony to which I submitted under protest, and who joined in the crowd who congratulated me at the close of the lecture, has since been getting up public meetings in company with old father Beeson, to answer my "tirade against the Indians, the President and the Missionaries." He represents, on the authority of Lawyer [Dan M.] Demmon, of St. Anthony, that the trial of these condemned Indians was a disgraceful farce conducted by men who were drunk on the bench, and who ordered some of the prisoners out of their presence, with oaths, setting them down as convicted without having heard any evidence whatever, while in most cases the parties were condemned on their own admission of guilt, a proceeding against which Mr. Day protests as especially unjust and illegal.

The *Washington Chronicle* for March 7 announced that three public meetings would be held the next day, at which Indians and white men would answer "Mrs. Swisshelm's tirade against the Indians, and against President Lincoln for not executing three hundred of them at once." The announcement was reprinted in the *Saint Paul Press* for March 15, 1863.

When our own people, or those who profess to be of us, are publicly taking sides with the Indian and denouncing 194 the white settlers of Minnesota as the aggressors, how can you expect Eastern people to decide in our favor?

## Library of Congress

The long and short of it is, that the people of our State must redress their own grievances, and if they let those murderers escape, the world will simply denounce them as pusillanimous cowards, or totally disbelieve the story of the outrages committed. People cannot and will not believe it possible that any set of savages committed the outrages we say they did on the people of a civilized State, and that the men of that State let them go unpunished, unless they are a set of cowards whose lives would be neither worth saving nor avenging.

I am glad to see that the Senate has refused to confirm the nomination of Sibley for Brigadier General.<sup>4</sup> I thought after he recovered the captives that his course had been dictated by a wish to protect the whites; but the event shows that he has complicated the whole matters so as to make protection next to impossible; and my fear now is that Governor Ramsey may adopt the conciliate-my-foe-at-the-cost-of-my-friend policy, which has so nearly proved fatal to President Lincoln's administration; and use his large influence to push that confirmation through.—If he does he will only confer upon his enemy an increased power of injuring him while he will greatly lessen the wish of many a friend to aid him.

<sup>4</sup> The Senate refused to confirm Sibley's nomination on March 11, 1863, by a vote of twenty-one to seventeen. On March 20 President Lincoln renewed the nomination, and the Senate finally confirmed it on April 7, 1864. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:186.

Since leaving home I have talked with a half dozen men who took part in that last battle with the Indians, when they were so badly worsted that Little Crow retired to Dakota, while the more cowardly portion of the band came to claim Sibley's protection, and they all agree that that battle was 195 wholly and solely brought on and fought out by the Third Minnesota boys acting against orders.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This battle, which took place at Wood Lake on September 23, 1862, resulted in the dispersion of the Sioux and the return of 107 whites and 162 half-breeds captured by the Indians. Some of the Indians fled to Dakota under Chief Little Crow, their leader, but a large number surrendered to Sibley a few days after the battle. Dr. Folwell's interpretation

## Library of Congress

of the actions of Sibley and the Third Minnesota differs from Mrs. Swisshelm's. See his *Minnesota* 2:178-185, 265.

For several days it had been known in Sibley's camp, that the Indians were camped three miles from them, and all were strictly forbidden to go out in that direction.

The Third boys stood it as long as they could; and then concluded they *must* have some potatoes which grew very near the Indian camp. Thirty of them took their guns, spades and three wagons and started for potatoes, the others protesting against the move as contrary to orders and sure to bring trouble. When the thirty had got out about two miles, they were fired upon by a large body of Indians, and instantly each man sprang to such cover as he could find and returned the fire as fast as they could load and take aim. —. They had no shooting Indians, and shot. The first fire was expected and heard in camp, when every man of the Third seized his gun and cartridge box and ran to the aid of his companions, Lieut. [Abraham E.] Welsh [*Welch*] running with the rest and being recognized as commander. A messenger went to Sibley asking leave to reinforce the men engaged as from the heavy firing it was evident they were tremendously outnumbered, and Sibley *sent out an aid [and] ordered the Third to retreat*. They sent him orders to go to — and continued the battle two hours, each man on his own responsibility, some lying down some behind small elevations on the ground, some behind bushes or bunches 196 of weeds. They extended their line to the utmost, but the enemy so far outnumbered them, that they began to surround them, when they fell back fighting as they went.—When within half a mile of camp, when the Indians had abandoned their plan of getting between them and Sibley's camp, they became more concentrated in front, in a small ravine, and here our men poured in such a fire that they fled, leaving nineteen dead on the field.

All this time Sibley remained quietly in camp positively refusing to send a man to the aid of the few hundred who were fighting the enemy he was sent to fight, and fighting them against an odds of four to one; but, when it proved a victory he made out a pompous official report, coolly taking the credit and never noticing the Third except in that last charge in the ravine. Such is the account given me by different men, in different places

## Library of Congress

and at different times. These all argued that if Sibley had reinforced the Third, they would have engaged the whole Indian force, drawn them away from their camp, and gone around and captured it, captives, and all. Before they could have had time to murder the prisoners, we would have had enough Indian captives to have taken life for life and so have debarred them from this means of conquering a disgraceful peace—a peace forcibly wrested by a few thousand lousy savages from a civilized people vastly their superiors in arms, power of endurance, numbers and all that gives military superiority.

For this infamous peace we indebted to Sibley, the Minnesota State Undertaker, who has not yet with all the forces of the State at his command, succeeded in giving burial to those he, as military commander, failed to protect.

It is [no] less than just that he should fail to gain promotion by his exploits; and if I am not greatly mistaken 197 our people need expect no protection from Indians while he occupies the place he does.

The weather here is horrible! Snow, slush, hail, rain, mud, a little sunshine and then more snow. Six inches, sometimes ten, will fall in a night and go off the next two days and by the time the street crossings are dry there will be another snow. On Sabbath afternoon and night is hailed, sleeted, thundered, lightened, snowed and *blowed*. On Monday the street rails were so filled that the cars stopped on all the voutes except Pennsylvania avenue and here they were off and on the track, on an average of about five times a trip. It reminded one of the old stories of staging in Illinois, to see the passengers get out and lift, and tug, and pry, and shout to get the cars on the track, then get in and ride a few squares, to get out and repeat the operation. I fear that more than one span of horses were killed, or seriously injured for life, while all were more or less abused.

I went to the War Department that day, and took the oath of allegiance as administered by Gen. Thomas,<sup>6</sup> and became one of the Uncle Samuel's paid servants. As I have served

## Library of Congress

him a good while for nothing and found myself, I agreed that I would not go to work until he sends after me and finds me when he gets my room ready.

6 Thomas was adjutant general of the army.

Oh Dear! Don't I wish I were in St. Cloud, in that old, dingy office, distributing type? But I guess I shall feel better when I get Nettie here, and maybe I can stand it until I am turned out; but I can do more for Minnesota here than I could there and I feel about her as captive Jews did about Jerusalem when hanging their harps upon the willows of Babylon.

I have a pleasant room on a pleasant street, 333, 9th St. 198 and my windows look out on a beautiful yard, with an arbor covered with an evergreen honeysuckle arbor vitæ fruit trees and rose bushes. My room is on the first floor and I am in the house with kind western people, and but one square from Dr. Fell's. So I try to think it is home, and fancy it will not be long until the river will open and I can go for Nettie—if I get leave of absence; but as I am servant of servants my time is no longer my own to go and come at pleasure.

I hope the readers of the *Democrat* will keep a green spot in their memories for me, and that I may live to sit at that old table once more, from whence I have talked to them so often.

P.S.X.O.V.D.T.—which means, I forgot to send you the enclosed card which explains the difficulty I had in getting a hall for a lecture.<sup>7</sup> If it had not been that our Delegation were united in the matter and anxious I should get a hearing, and that they were backed by over twenty other members of Congress, I should have given up at once after hearing the failure of the Lecturing Association. As it was, after we had the hall engaged and part of the audience were collected, two of the trustees went and ordered the gas turned off; but the people collected so rapidly they concluded it would be rather too much of a public outrage; and I feel as if it were almost an insult that I should have had the use of a hall closed against such men as are named in this card and opened to any or every nobody who is unsuspected of any <sup>7</sup> The card inclosed by Mrs. Swisshelm appears in the

## Library of Congress

*Democrat* at the end of this letter. In it the officers of the "Washington Lecture Association" explained that the reason for their failure to give an expected course of lectures was that the organization had been denied the use of various churches and halls in the city, including the Smithsonian hall and that of the House of Representatives. Among those who were to have lectured were Edward Everett, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. 199 sympathy with Human Freedom. I count it a disgrace to have spoken in such a place; but I hope folks will understand that, although *with* the insignificant crowd who have the *entree* there, I am not *of* them.

Next P.S. and to me the most important. I missed seeing Gen. Fremont, who called to see me while I was in Philadelphia<sup>8</sup> and has left the city, I hope and believe, with an important command. Oh, what I should have given to have looked into his honest eyes and talked to him ten minutes, and for me to miss him so stupidly. He understood that I was settled here and he kept himself so quiet I thought he had left without calling. His visit to Washington has been strangely devoid of ostentation. No one knows where to find him; but how the great national heart throbs at his name! I attended Wendell Phillip's lecture on Touissaint L'Overture at the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, of which more anon, and at the name of Fremont there was a wild and prolonged burst of applause, although the lecture was delivered before one of the most conservative associations in the city and a conservative audience of course. At the Cooper Institute, the evening before, they stamped and shouted at his name.

<sup>8</sup> During this visit in Philadelphia Mrs. Swisshelm lectured on the Indian massacres. *Democrat*. March 26, 1863.

Recorder Smith, of New York, a Seymour Democrat, said to a gentleman lately:

"McClellan is about played out. When his name is brought in, in a theatre or any public place, as it is sure to be, we have to get up some applause; but it is a hard drag, but the name of that Fremont goes like wild fire." Apropos.



## Library of Congress

You know they got up a sword for McClellan, in Boston lately. As one of the collectors was going around with his 200 paper, begging the money, he called upon a merchant in State street, and inquired what he would give to this.

“Give to what?”

“To buy a sword for Gen. McClellan.”

“A sword for McClellan? Why in the name of all the d——ls in h——don't he use the sword he's got?”

Mr. Collector left without answering the question.

Horace Greeley told at a dinner party, given by Mr. George B. Lincoln, Post Master of Brooklyn, at which I had the good fortune to be present, that a gentleman once rushed into his office in a state of great apparent excitement exclaiming:

“What do you mean in this establishment, what do you mean by always attacking McClellan? It is cowardly, uncalled for, unprovoked! McClellan never attacks anybody—never did and never will! It's unprovoked, sir, unprovoked!”

201

### **VIII. A Union Meeting in Washington**

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 9, 1863 ] Washington, April 1st, 1863

Dear Will. —I see by a late number of the *Democrat* that you have had a snow storm in Minnesota—here we have not had anything else. All through February and March about every fourth day the ground was covered with snow from two to ten inches. These snows disappear in the streets in one or two days, between them there is always a rain and a few hours of sunshine. Only two of the streets are paved, Pennsylvania Avenue and Seventh St., which run at right angles. The others are yellow clay. Imagine the mud! About

## Library of Congress

the last of March we had, I think five days without snow and only fourteen hours' rain. There was one day of high wind and one of sunshine; so the dry land began to appear, and on Monday evening all the best crossings were dry; but on Tuesday morning there were three or four inches snow and snow still falling. About nine o'clock it turned to rain and rained until two. Last night it froze a little and to-day there is a high, cold wind which means and raves in a dismal way; but, after all man makes the climate in which he lives just as much as he does the house. Only a barbarian is dependent on the weather for comfort. In a New England town such weather as this would be no serious inconvenience, and here a majority of the people are positively miserable.— 202 Even the day laborer or farmer spends less than half his time in the open air, and if his dwelling is comfortable and he has the sense to clothe his body properly, he is, in a great measure, independent of the weather. Here the public buildings are generally comfortable in all weather, for Northern brain has been used in constructing them; but the dwellings and appurtenances are usually relics of that old barbarism which has been formally abolished, but is not yet passed away—that form of social life where brain and muscle are systematically disunited, and where the art of living is unknown—the people being all engaged in staying about. For instance, this house was built by a wealthy slaveholder. In the basement is a kitchen and great range for supplying hot water in pipes to the rooms above; on the roof is a cistern; out in the yard is a negro house, with old andirons standing in a great cavern of an open fireplace. My room was the library; has two large windows facing the south and looking out on a beautiful yard of arbors, evergreens and shrubbery. It is the very ideal of one of those elegant, aristocratic, hospitable mansions you read about in Mrs. Southworth's novels and elsewhere;<sup>1</sup> and there is not a house in St. Cloud, not even Mrs. L——'s shanty, that is not more comfortable—simply because her cook stove warms her domicile, and that this with expensive and ornamental heating apparatus cannot be heated. Here have I been since seven o'clock this morning, and after having a fire all night, trying to get my room warm—so warm that I could sit at the table, three feet from the fire, and write. At half past eleven I gave it up, and with all the clothing I should wear in Minnesota in mid-winter, have wrapped my shawl around me, taken a 1

When Mrs. Swisshelm was in Washington in

## Library of Congress

1850, she was Mrs. Southworth's guest for a time. Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 129. 203 slate on my knee, got my feet on the stove, or whatever its name may be, and have sat down to shiver and write. For two weeks in the last of March I have been buying coal at the rate of five tons a year, at ten dollars a ton, in the vain effort to warm one room, and out of this time have had it comfortable about twelve hours in all. This is a fair specimen of the waste in the one item of fuel which characterizes all the dwellings I have noticed in this Southern built city. Had it been the beginning of winter I should have sent to Philadelphia for a stove within the first three days after I took possession, and no respectable Yankee would stand such a contrivance more than a week.

But it was the great Union meeting of last evening I sat down to shiver over and write about.<sup>2</sup> A Union meeting was announced at the Hall of Representatives, at five o'clock. We went at four o'clock and found the front seats of the gallery nearly all occupied. Extra chairs had been placed on the floor so as to afford seats for as many as possible. In the space immediately before the Speaker's stand, six large stuffed chairs, from some of the adjoining rooms, were placed for the President and members of Cabinet.—Half a dozen rows of seats behind these were reserved for naval and army officers, and other distinguished folks. Police officers were stationed in every aisle. A large body of committee men with badges were present and at half past four the central door to the floor was opened, and it was a sight to sit above and see the stream of eager, hurrying people—men, women and children—pour in, pour in, pour in.—For one hour and a half they came, and they kept on coming. At first men took chairs, but one by one, and row by row, were bowed out by polite committee men and their places filled by women. Then row 2 Another account of this meeting is given in the *New-York Tribune* for April 1, 1863. 204 after row of reserved seats were given up to them, and still they came. One wondered where the invited guests were to be put. The Reporter's gallery which is directly over the Speaker's chair was occupied by the Great Marine Band.—They performed two pieces, both of which were familiar, but I could not recall the name of either, and the music was of the very finest.

## Library of Congress

At a door to the left of the Speaker's stand a troop of naval officers entered, were received by a great portion of the audience rising, and with loud and continued applause. Commodore Foote was eagerly sought for and pointed out. They with those who came with them, filled all the remaining seats and no place was left for President or Cabinet.

At half past five the meeting was organized by calling the Mayor of the city to the chair. He made some remarks which were not generally heard as his voice is poor.

Rev. Dr. Sunderland, Chaplain of the Senate, pronounced an impressive prayer, which was generally heard and general in its terms. This gentleman has a happy faculty of steering clear of shoals—does not mention subjects about which there is a difference of opinion amongst orthodox folks—and so, of course, did not refer to the cause of danger to the Government while he prayed for its preservation.

One of the Committee called on the band for Hail Columbia, and as they struck up the familiar air, the whole audience arose to their feet and with loud cheers, waving of handkerchiefs, and clapping of hands, greeted our national anthem. By this time the galleries were densely packed, every aisle being full and every doorway jammed, and the mass outside, eager to gain admittance, pushed, and struggled, and quarreled, and talked aloud in vain efforts to see what was going on inside.—Gov. [William] Bibb [*Bebb*], 205 formerly of [Ohio], then read the resolutions, which you will have seen long before this reaches you.<sup>8</sup> His voice is good and his enunciation very distinct, and by great exertion and deliberation he made himself heard throughout the vast assemblage. At all the strongest points, those most forcibly endorsing the Administration and pledging it confidence and support, he was interrupted by shouts of applause.

<sup>8</sup> The *New-York Tribune* for April 1, 1863, summarizes the resolutions. Bebb was governor of Ohio from 1846 to 1848. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was appointed an examiner in the pension department by Lincoln. Emilius O. Randall and Daniel J. Ryan, *History of Ohio*, 4:97 (New York, 1912-15).

## Library of Congress

Taking special notice to the points in every speech and resolution which elicited the heartiest applause, I came to the conclusion that the assembly would have wildly cheered a resolution endorsing John Brown and the hero martyr of this country; or the sentiment that universal, unconditional emancipation and arming of freedmen is the duty and necessity of the hour. This has appeared to me to be the temper of every public meeting I have been in since I left home, and certainly the Administration is holding the people back on this question. I cannot think otherwise than that it is their impatience of control and inaction which caused the tide of public sentiment to flow or appear to flow backward, and resulted in the Copperhead triumphs. The Northern sentiment against that institution which has caused all this danger to our Government met the President's countermand of Gen. Fremont's Proclamation as a river in its seaward course meets a hill or precipitous bluff. It cannot get over it; and so, sullenly turns upon itself and runs in an opposite direction until finding an outlet it rushes on, on,—ever amid all its turnings and windings keeping on its course toward the goal it first set out to reach.

Death to Slavery as the cause of the Rebellion was the 206 sentiment of nine-tenths of the Northern people when Fremont's Proclamation was issued, and death to slavery, the cause of the Rebellion and of the disgrace of our copperhead treason, is the accumulating sentiment of that same people to day. But, I have run away from the meeting.

The first speaker introduced was a Green Adams, a tall, consumptive looking man, who is Sixth Auditor in the Treasury Department, and who wagged and shook his head so rapidly and persistently and shook his long, bony finger at us all in a most spectral and Everett-like fashion. The first thing he told us was that he, even he, a Green Adams, was a Kentuckian—and he stopped a little to give us time to be astonished—then reiterated the astounding fact; yes, a Kentuckian was he—moreover, he was proud of being a Kentuckian, was he. True, he would have no objection that all State distinctions should be forgotten or abolished, (to which I didn't say, Amen!) but since there were distinctions he was proud of being a Kentuckian, as he would be of belonging to any other section, (which

## Library of Congress

of course, was saying a good deal.) Next to being a Kentuckian, he was proud of being a citizen of the United States, he was so! Again he stopped to let his audience breathe after this astounding intelligence, and I began to wonder to which point of the political compass this specimen of half man, half horse, and half alligator eloquence was tending, when we were all brought up standing by the emphatic reiteration of the gentleman's place of nativity and the sublime rounding off of the sentence with the stunning declaration that being a Kentuckian, he was still loyal to this Government!!!!!! ( *Aside*. If you have any more exclamation points put them in.)

There we had a *rara avis*, a natural curiosity, and one 207 who was fully conscious of his unique position; a live Kentuckian loyal to the Government he has sworn to defend and support; a native born son of Kentucky who claims that he is not a perjured scoundrel! The people were evidently aware of the proud distinction claimed by the speaker, a distinction rendered still more marked by a fact he did not name, i.e., that he is a recently sworn officeholder under his Government, which he condescends to patronize, and at whose crib he feeds; and so they received his announcement with hearty applause.

I think I shall try and be transferred from the War to the Treasury Department, and get into the bureau of the Sixth Auditor, that I may have a daily view of this green orator, and so [be] reminded that there is a loyal Kentuckian. Whenever he got away a moment from the contemplation of the strange anomaly of his birth and loyalty, his remarks were good. He claimed that traitors have no rights under the Constitution they have repudiated and are seeking to destroy, and that the Government has a right to take their property —“even their niggers,”—their liberty, and their lives. Near the close of his remarks there was a bustle in front of the stand; more chairs were brought in; those designed for the President and Cabinet were wheeled forward, and others substituted. The band struck up “The President's March,” and the President marched in with all the Cabinet Members but Mr. Stanton. The audience received him standing and with cheers, shouts, waving of handkerchiefs and clapping of hands. He is very tall, and very pale, and very thin. He walked quickly forward, bowed and took his seat. He was dressed in a plain suit of black

## Library of Congress

which had a worn look; and I could see no sign of watch chain, white bosom or collar. But all men have some vanity, and during 208 the evening I noticed he wore on his breast, an immense jewel, of the value of which I can form no estimate. This was the head of a little fellow, about seven years old, who came within him and for a while sat quietly besides him in one of the great chairs, but who soon grew restless and weary under the long drawn out speeches of the men in the desk, and who would wander from one Member of the Cabinet to another, leaning on and whispering to him, no doubt asking when that man was going to quit and let them go home; and then would come back to father, come around, whisper in his ear, then climb on his knee and nestle his head down on his bosom. As the long, bony hand spread out over the dark hair, and the thin face above rested the sharp chin upon it, it was a pleasant sight. The head of a great and powerful nation, without a badge of distinction, sitting quietly in the audience getting bored or applauding like the rest of us; soothing with loving care the little restless creature so much dearer than all the power he wields#a power greater than that exercised by any other human being on earth.

God bless our native land, and preserve to us this simple, paternal yet powerful Government of the people! No grinding of the poor by enormous taxes, to support royal pomp and parade! No starving of the million that the few may flaunt in fanciful robes or flash in burning diamonds! England, the purest, most economical monarchy on earth, what would it have cost her people to have made their chief ruler presentable on such an occasion? Yes; and God bless the honest, careful, steady-going head of our Government in his earnest zeal for the common welfare.

When Mr. Adams took his seat, Mr. [Horace] Maynard, M[ember of] C[ongress] from Tennessee, was introduced. He is a tall, spare, hollow-chested man, graceful, polished 209 and gentlemanly, of partly Indian origin, and bearing the traces of that race in his long straight black hair and square features.—He spoke of the recent marriage of the Prince of Wales, of its expense and parade, and the contrast of the starving operatives of that country; then went on to show that the object of the leaders of the Rebellion was to destroy our Republican form of government and place us under a monarchy where we should

## Library of Congress

have similar contrasts of prodigality and penury. His speech, though eloquent, polished and philosophical, was not of that kind calculated to awaken enthusiasm in a popular multitude and was not received with much applause.

Either before or after Maynard, forget which, Commodore Foote was helped up on the stand amid *such* roars of applause, and talked about ten minutes. He is a little fellow, very lame from wounds, has a short neck, wore a ridiculous little bobtailed coat, such as all naval officers do, is stiff as Washington's monument, anything but graceful and not a bit handsome; had a bad headache; talked poorly, what time he got talking amid the cheers, and hobbled off. Talking is evidently not his vocation; and I can think of nothing the is good for except flogging the rebels in the name of the Lord. I wish we had a few more of that same sort; for if we lose him we shall lack variety in our assortment of great men. By the way, he more nearly resembles Gen. Fremont in features, than any other of our prominent men I have seen.

Gov. Johnston [Johnson] of Tennessee, was introduced and rapturously received. As he took the stand some one called out, "Give to 'em, andy!" When he began I was utterly surprised to hear him begin to tell us about his state of unpreparedness—the importance of the occasion—what he was going to say to us, and his determination to begin at once, as he always did, and be brief! Thinks I, can it be 210 possible than Andy Johnson is going to bore us, to riddle us through and through with little holes? From his reputation it appeared incredible, but the evidences were not to be mistaken, for whenever a speaker begins by telling you he is going to begin, and what he is going to say, and what he isn't going to say, and the short time he is going to say it in, you had better leave, for no matter what any body may have said, the man is a bore.—So it proved in this case, for Andy Johnson, the notable Andy Johnson, the hero and Governor of Tennessee, bored us fore a mortal hour and a half with what he could have said and should have said in half an hour; for every idea was gone over three times on an average. He made good points,



## Library of Congress

expressed good sentiments and strong. These have, not doubt, been given in the reports of his speech, and he was often applauded, but was nevertheless wearisome.

At the close of his long talk the President, Cabinet, Naval officers and a large part of the promiscuous, audience left.—I wanted twenty minutes until ten, and as soon as the aisle was partially cleared we came away and left Major [Edward C.] Carrington speaking to a large audience.<sup>4</sup> Getting out into the halls we found every place crowded, and found that the Senate chamber and Rotunda had each had their organized meeting and speakers. Both in point of spirit and numbers it was certainly a very strong demonstration in favor of the Union and the Administration, and must have a large and good influence on public sentiment. One must be here to realize the crowd and the enthusiasm, and this in spite of the fathomless depths of mud.

<sup>4</sup> Carrington was United States district attorney for the district of Columbia. Wilhelmus B. Bryan, *A History of the National Capital*, 2:465n (New York, 1916). 211

### IX. War Gossip

[*St. Cloud Democrat*, April 23, 1863] Washington, April 11th, 1863

Dear Will. —I hope you have read the “Report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War” and that the friends of Liberty — the Republican County and District Committees, will take measures to place a copy in every family of Northern Minnesota that all may understand the causes of the past failure of all efforts to suppress the Rebellion.<sup>1</sup> Surely no nation, no Government, ever escaped such a complicated, deep-laid and powerful plot for its destruction. The Northern copperheads and Southern rattlesnakes having failed to carry the last Presidential election and place the liberties of all classes of citizens in the hands of the slave power, they changed their tactics from ballets [ *sic* ] to bullets. The rattlesnakes sprung their signal and commenced an open warfare on the fundamental principles of Republican Institutions. What they failed to do by political trickery they attempted to accomplish by the artillery — the bullets and bayonets they had stolen from the Government they wished to overthrow. While their cannon thundered around

## Library of Congress

Fort 1 In April, 1863, the findings of a joint committee of four representatives and three senators, appointed in December, 1861, to investigate "the conduct of the present war," were published in a preliminary report of three volumes. The final report consisted of four volumes issued in 1865 and two supplementary volumes published in 1866. 212 Sumpter, their copperhead allies of the North lay low; and by feigning to join in the righteous indignation of a people whose liberties were thus openly menaced, won the confidence of the Government they sought to betray. Belonging to that political party which had wielded the power of the executive patronage almost from the beginning of our national existence, they had filled two-thirds of all the War and Navy offices with their own creatures. One military academy had been under their control and had sent forth its thousands of embryo traitors. Our Supreme Court had been made their tool; our means of National defense they had stolen. While the one division of the great Rebellion thundered forth the evidence of their treason, the other skulked, and lied, and stopped to conquer. All of the military teachers, educated at the National cost, which were required to lead the armies of Secessia went to their places; but the grand, arch-traitors, the Judas Iscariots, remained to take command of the forces on the other side. Foremost amongst these stood McClellan, and with the political trickery and wire-pulling of an old party organization he was foisted upon the nation as the General-in-Chief of her armies. By suborning presses of the New York *Herald* stamp and deceiving loyal editors with false professions, by excluding from his camp all papers except those in his interest, by direct and indirect appeals to the human weaknesses of the men under his command and by every other art of demagogueism he McClellanized the army of the Potomac. While he lay at Washington holding two hundred thousand fighting men in idleness and suffered his allies of the Confederate States to blockade the Capital, he also continued to sow in the minds of the men he thus disgraced in the eyes of the world a sentiment of distrust towards Congress, the President, the Cabinet and all the 213 constituted authorities of the Government he pretended to defend while busily betraying it.

## Library of Congress

That he contemplated establishing a military dictatorship preparatory to striking hands openly with Secessia, there is little room for doubt. His leading organ, the *Herald*, put out feelers to see how it would work, but the general sentiment in the ranks was that the first time the Dictator came within range of a private's musket he would get a ball in his brain-pan. Of course this sentiment was conveyed to him through his horde of spies and lackeys. As this army was composed of the very flower of the country, of men whose loyalty was unquestionable and who were not to be bought or bribed, the process of disposing of its members, in such way as to bring glory to Southern arms, disgrace to Yankees, weariness and distrust to the loyal millions at home and material for political allies at the North to work upon the minds of unsuspecting men by charging his failure on the President and every one who might be in the way of the ascendancy of treason, was industriously prosecuted.

Baker and his band of heroes were purposely sent to Ball's Bluff to be disposed of. That they were purposely sacrificed to get them out of the way, and that his object was to silence forever the faithful muskets of our Minnesota First in revenge for the death they dealt amongst his secession friends at Bull Run, I have not doubt.<sup>2</sup> One of the War Committee told me he had evidence which satisfied his mind, although not sufficient to warrant the statement in an official report, that in speaking of Baker's death McClellan said:

<sup>2</sup> In a skirmish on the day following the decimation of General Baker's brigade at Ball's Bluff, the First Minnesota, which was among the troops sent to the aid of the defeated forces, had one man killed and several wounded. Lochren, in *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:15.

"The damned volunteer deserved to be killed!"

214

## Library of Congress

After the Ball's Bluff massacre the army was taken, purposely taken, to the Chickahominy swamps to be decimated by disease and by placing detached corps in positions to be attacked by overwhelming numbers of the enemy.

Since coming here I have talked with a young ex-officer of a Wisconsin regiment who was discharged on account of permanent sickness contracted in those swamps and who now describes the attack on Casey's Division with dilated nostrils and clenched fist, when recalling the feelings with which he and thousands of brave men in the other divisions stood and heard the roars of artillery and musketry of the overwhelming numbers who were mowing down their companions in arms and they not permitted to go to their assistance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> At the battle of Fair Oaks Brigadier General Casey's division, which was in the advance, was driven back by greatly superior forces before reënforcements could be furnished. James K. Hosmer. *Appeal to Arms*, 134-137 ( *The American Nation: A History*, vol. 20 — New York, 1907).

It was that same battle of which McClellan telegraphed that “all the Divisions behaved well except Casey's.”

It is wondrous to look through the columns of that report and trace the same features of seeking excuses for delay, of deliberate plans for having Washington exposed to capture, of his mismanagement, his sacrifice to troops and calls for men. He could not follow the enemy after the battle of Antietam without reinforcements although that battle had been won while he held 45,000 men inactive.

His only cry was “give, give.” Washington should be left unguarded, the Western States to the mercy of the enemy and all resources of the government given to him.

On reading the report the question is, “Why did not the President remove him?” He disregarded not only the advice but the express commands of his superiors in command, 215 delayed, baffled, defied the purposes and wishes of the entire War Department and

## Library of Congress

yet he was retained in command. Even so, and it appears an evidence of great weakness in the President; but before the President and Secretary of War became convinced of his treason or incapacity the army had been so far demoralized or McClellanized that there was every reason to expect a revolt and open rebellion if he were not first permitted to test his proposed theory of getting ready, and some steps taken to convince the army and the public of his real character.

The President had a sharp corner to turn in dismissing McClellan. That he got round it without disrupting our government is not the least of his achievements. A Jackson *might* have dismissed and hanged him with perfect safety a year sooner, and he might not. I doubt if earlier justice would not have made him a martyr and brought worse consequences than even the patient toleration which left him to heap up evidences of his treason. Even now I doubt if he could be hanged without a serious revolt in the Northern States. Certain it is that grave, cautious men believed Washington and the Government to be in danger from his influence over the army since I came here, and at one time there was imminent peril of his restoration to the command. For this object the entire Seward, or Thurlow Weed, branch of the Republican party was banded with the Border State influence, which represented his restoration as the means of appeasing the Northern copperheads, as it would give assurance that the Proclamation would be a dead letter.

In this emergency, Stanton, Halleck and Radical Republicans stood shoulder to shoulder. It was the Peace and War parties striving for the mastery. The Peace men want McClellan to command the armies as the one certain plan of carrying out their policy. Seward always intended to have our little difficulty settled with the Southern States by a compromise, hence his immense influence has been used to keep McClellan in his place to prevent "a general engagement," the catastrophe so dreaded by the doughty little commander.

Whether the army is yet so purged of his satellites that a general engagement can be brought on under circumstances which will permit a Union victory remains to be seen. He

## Library of Congress

certainly has many secret allies in high places, who will bring delay and defeat if in their power, there is no room for doubt; but as he has joined church and so made a requisition on the Commissary Department of his Satanic Majesty's army for a new uniform in which to prosecute his service, he will, no doubt, be reinforced by all the forces which cant and cunning can command, and where he will dig his next entrenchment it is hard to surmise.

I have much more to say but want to get this in the mail this evening.

[*St. Cloud Democrat, May 7, 1863*] Washington, April 27th, 1863

Dear Will. — The army of the Potomac has been moving, moving for two weeks. The stray officers have been gathered in, and one does not now see one, in Washington, for every ten who were visible a month ago. They have been restricted to twenty pounds of baggage — something of a change since McClellan used to have *forty* two-horse wagons to carry his personal effects, when but *two* were allowed to a regiment. The camps have been broken up and the men put in motion to accustom them to change of place. Extra baggage of officers and men, in great quantities, has been sent to this city. 217 The hospitals opposite Fredericksburg have been emptied and the sick, eleven hundred, sent here, where they are comfortably disposed in the different hospitals. For two weeks everything has been in readiness to march upon the enemy whenever the roads will permit, but rain, rain, mud, mud. In each of the past two weeks there has been forty-eight hours steady rain beside storms; but this is the fourth successive day of dry weather. If it continues dry four days longer the mud in the streets here will all be dry except the very deepest chuck-holes; and may safely opine that the fields and country roads will be in good condition for the progress of our army.

People generally think there will be a battle this week but it is more probable there will be a rain and it must be out of the question to move artillery before the winter mud has dried. If it had once dried a rain would not be so much hindrance; for, it would only make surface

## Library of Congress

mud; but rain on mud six months old makes the question of firm bottom a very uncertain question.

People may as well be patient. This delay is only the closing up of the old McClellan, get-ready, rule. Since Gen. Hooker took command it has been simply impossible to get the army out of the mud in which that arch traitor had stranded it. The danger now is that Gen. Hooker will not wait until a forward movement can be made to advantage.

The time of the two-years men expires the first of June. So the War Department has decided, while the men contended that it was the first of May, the difference being that between the time of volunteering and the time of being mustered into service. Gen. Hooker is of course anxious to give these men, who compose about one-third of this army, a chance to meet the rebels during the time they calculated 218 their service due their country; and, at least, he will do his best to bring on an engagement before they are mustered out.

It is thought that but few of these troops will re-enlist.

You of course know of the new policy adopted about arming the blacks. I was let into the secret of this purpose some weeks before it became public, by an agent of the colored men of New York who visited the President and related to me the particular of his interview. I wrote an account of it for the *Chicago Journal*,<sup>4</sup> and was not surprised to see the strong ground taken in General Thomas' speech. There is no doubt that the President is very much in earnest in the matter; and that he will do what he thinks is best to make the colored soldiers efficient. But, like all his other measures, it is half way. In adopting a new policy he should by all means intrust the carrying out of the policy to men who have been its advocates and champions when it was unpopular—to the men who have had the wisdom and statesmanship to see, in advance of others, what *they* have taken at second hand.

<sup>4</sup> The account referred to was published in the *Chicago Journal* for February 19, 1863.

## Library of Congress

It is a fixed rule in governments that when a *new* policy is adopted, the *old* ministers retire and the new order of things has a fair trial by being intrusted to the management of its friends.

Gen. Thomas has been one of the most stringent opponents of any anti-Slavery measures in the management of this war; and when events have proved how altogether mistaken he has been, it would appear as if consistency, self-respect and respect for men whose judgment have been proved to have been so much superior to his own demand that he should reign, so of Seward and Halleck, so of all the pro-Slavery, conservative officers. They should resign or be displaced. It is unjust and preposterous to attempt to inaugurate a great and important national policy and place it on trial, in the hand of its persistent enemies, while its early friends are to be held responsible for the success of the measures they devised and urged; and, are carefully excluded from all places where they might assist to give it efficiency.

It is nothing more nor less than dishonest, unmanly, *mean* for these old pro-Slavery conservatives to steal the thunder of Generals Fremont, Hunter and Cameron. Had these men been permitted to carry out the plans they announced we would have been through with the rebellion now;<sup>5</sup> but it required two years of war, the loss of two hundred thousand lives, and more millions of treasure than any one could count and a dozen copperhead victories to bring our old fogies to see what live men perceived at the first; and now, they have the hardihood to come forward as the representatives of the policy they kept back just as long as they could.

<sup>5</sup> Hunter, who was in command of the land forces on the coast of Georgia and South Carolina, on May 9, 1862, issued a proclamation freeing the slaves in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Lincoln immediately declared the proclamation void. See Edward Channing, *A History of the United States*, 6:532, 533 (New York, 1905-27). On the policies of Frémont and Cameron, see ante, 177n, 132n.



## Library of Congress

It is unjust and unfair in President Lincoln to permit these men to retain their places under the circumstances and to continue to deny Gen. Fremont an opportunity to carry out his own policy.

Now, you must not send a copy of this letter to any of those gentlemen—unless there is some hope they might be induced to read it—for, as I depend on their forbearance for bread and butter, it might be inconvenient to get a note informing me that i have been transferred to the Ex-terior Department.

(P.S.—Will some of our Maine Prairie farmers please 220 plant a row of potatoes on my account, in case the bread and butter should fail?)

The colored men of the District have been notified to appear before the President on Wednesday, day after to-morrow. It is expected that regiments will be raised here, but the regulations are that all the officers are to be white men. I do not see that colored men can do much about raising troops; but the world moves; and if they prove as good soldiers as their friends think they will, their merits will be acknowledged in the right to fill the offices as well as the ranks.

It will be glad news in Minnesota homes that our farmers are no longer to be taken from their plows to preserve rebels from the indignity of being shot by negroes—that our homes are not to be desolated to keep the slaves at work raising corn for the rebellion—that our women and children are not to be left to the scalping knife of the savage while our men are away fighting to leave a country and government for cowards, traitors and colored men.

All classes of men should share the privileges of our free Government; but they should also bear their share of the burdens. If black men have homes here they should fight for them—they should do their full share of the fighting. Their lives are no more precious than those of white men, and why should they be spared all the toils and dangers of war while

## Library of Congress

our rivers were red with the blood of the noblest in the land, dying for a country in which all my find homes?

Let the black man fight and win the liberty our government has guaranteed to him. This is the sentiment of all who desire the success of the government in putting down this rebellion.

Those who talk of “negro equality” and an “Abolition 221 war” are men who are altogether deceived by demagogues, or traitors who seek to aid Jeff. Davis in hi attempt to break the Union into fragments. It has been proved by a sad, a bloody and costly experience that the North cannot conquer the rebels with the left hand while using the right to sustain and defend them. We cannot conquer them while we are guarding their property and standing overseer to keep their unwilling laborers at work.

Had we begun at first with the purpose of simply conquering them without reference to Slavery—of treating them and their property according to the common law of war even without availing ourselves of the special international laws in regard to slaves—had we just let slavery alone —let the rebels take care of the State institutions and the slaves look out for themselves, it is probable we should have crushed the rebellion without emancipating one thousand slaves. But the Copperheads of the North instituted such a hue and cry about “the Constitution” the Constitutional rights of rebels who were in arms to destroy the very Constitution under which they were mean enough to claim rights, that honest people thought there really would be something wrong if we did not first of all make it our business to take care of and defend that very system for which they were striking at the heart of the nation. So we waged an olive branch war in which we stood hat in hand before our old masters, catching, returning and keeping at work their slaves; and begging their honors to take note that we were their most obedient, dutiful and subservient servants.

We followed this trade until we had spent so much blood and treasure and so strengthened our enemy that it became impossible for us to conquer him without not only

## Library of Congress

withdrawing our protection from him, but also asking the 222 co-operation of the men we had offered to help him hold as chattels to the latest generations.—Thanks to the friends of Slavery at the North, emancipation and arming the Freedmen have become necessary to the preservation of our national life. God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. Slaveholders and their Northern tools have abolished Slavery and converted the slaves into free soldiers of the Union.

To re-enslave them is now impossible, but they will not render near so good service to the Union cause as they would under the proper leaders.

With a commission to raise as many colored soldiers as he could and lead them against the rebels, Gen. Fremont could clean out the nest of rattlesnakes in twelve months. To them his name is a host. Since 1856 they have been waiting to hail him as the deliverer—waiting and watching for his coming, as the Jews waited for the Messiah.

Those who have been amongst them say that the stupidest negro from the most remote plantation lifts hi head in eager attention at the name of Fremont and asks“ When is Massah Fremont comin'?”

That they make good soldiers appears to be conceded, and those who object to employing them, simply prove that they do not want their friends, the rebels, flogged, as only men with a heart in the work can flog them.

28 th. —I did not send this last evening, and to-day it rains—a good steady rain which promises to have the gift of continuance for two days at least. Patience, General Hooker, patience! It may be that the Lord does not intend you and your army to break the back bone of the Rebellion. He may be reserving this honor for Fremont and his black legions; for “the Lord lifteth up the humble and condescendeth to men of low estate.”

223

## Library of Congress

When this army does meet the enemy, let not the people be too sanguine of victory. It is by no means certain that the traitors are all weeded out; and as McCellan's minions defeated Pope and Burnside by refusing or neglecting to obey orders, at the critical moment, so Hooker may be defeated. The Departments here swarming with traitors.— Treason has been traced to the room of Adjutant General Thomas—to the very spot where his official business is transacted. This was done more than a year ago and there the matter stopped. Lately his chief clerk has been arrested together with his brother who is also a clerk in one of the Departments, but both are performing their official duties. Traitors turned out on evidence given before the Potter Committee have been reinstated and promoted through the active exertions of radical Republican Senators.<sup>6</sup> It is treason, treason, treason all around about—paid treason—official treason; and I have no doubt there are traitors in position to defeat Hooker. So that I look forward with great solicitude to the event of a battle. Some people believe the revelation of the dying Knight of the Golden Circle,<sup>7</sup> which says that Hooker's army is to be drawn to Richmond, while Lee steals a march by way of Warrenton and bombards Washington. I should be sorry if they are right in thinking this will actually

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm's charges of treason were probably based on the opposition of Thomas, in December, 1861, to an investigation of the disaster at Balls Bluff. In April, 1863, James L. Addison, a clerk in Thomas' office, and Addison's brother Anthony, a clerk in the census office, were suspected of giving information to the enemy. There was insufficient evidence, however, to bring a charge against them. John F. Potter was chairman of a committee appointed to investigate the loyalty of government employees. Its report, dated July 31, 1861, indicates that there was a considerable amount of southern sympathy among them. Albert G. Riddle, *Recollections of War Times*, 169 (New York, 1895); *New-York Tribune*, April 24, 25, 27, 1863; Frank Moore, ed., *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events*, 2: 446 (New York, 1862-68).

<sup>7</sup> The knights of the Golden Circle was an organization of northerner's who were in sympathy with the South. 224 happen. Still, if it *should* come that, the Lord's will be done, for then the Copperheads of the North are to take up arms; and then wouldn't the Lord and His armies make clean work of it. Let them make every marble palace of this city a heap of ruins, let

## Library of Congress

every traitor don his armor and show his head—let the people the loyal people know their enemies and feel that this is really a struggle for national existence and we will be stronger with Washington a smouldering ruin and a million Northern traitors in arms than we are today.

The people, the *freemen* of the West and East would then know what was to be done and do it, in the style of our Puritan fathers.

P.S.—Since writing the above I learn from a gentleman just from Hooker's army, that a number of the two years New York regiments are under arrest for mutiny. Claiming that their time of service is out, they insist on disbanding and going home. Among that portion of the army the McClellan feeling is so strong that the men refuse to read the report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, and would drum any one of camp found circulating anything reflecting on the military career of their pet leader. This is as one might expect.—The men who would stand on a technical quibble to avoid meeting the enemy they volunteered to fight, and desert their country's flag on the eve of a battle, are McClellan men of course—and in favor of war or *[on]* peace principles.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, May 14, 1863]* Washington, May 1st, 1863

Dear Will—I went on Wednesday and again this morning to try to see the President about the early opening 225 of the Sioux campaign. On Wednesday he was at the War Department closeted with Mr. Stanton, and Mr. Nicolay thought it impossible for me to see him; but hoped I might this morning. This morning there were twenty persons waiting and as the Cabinet was to meet at twelve o'clock, I thought it best to see Judge Usher. I found him most accessible and on this Indian question more in sympathy with the people of Minnesota than any other member of the Cabinet. I was fortunate enough to find him and Commissioner Dole together, and asked them why, in view of the fresh Indian murders of this spring, the Indian prisoners, held by Government, could not be used as hostages? I asked Judge Usher to lay before the President the proposal to release one or more of the

## Library of Congress

Sioux prisoners and send him or them to Little Crow with the announcement that for every woman or child killed by Sioux, and for every man killed, except in open battle, one of the prisoners in our hands would be executed—that we should hold them as hostages for the good behavior of their tribe.

He promised to talk the matter over with the President, but both he and Commissioner Dole assured me that President Lincoln never would consent to have one of those prisoners executed, no matter what their tribe might do. “Why,” added Judge Usher, “it is impossible to get him to arrest and imprison one of the secesh women who are here—the wives of officers in the rebel army, and hold them as hostages for the Union women imprisoned in the South. We have tried again, and again, and cannot get him to do it.—The President will hang nobody!”

I inquired if they themselves approved of keeping the prisoners as hostages and executing one for every massacre committed by their tribe.

226

They stated distinctly that they did *not*. This would be taking the life of an innocent person. To my representation that such proceeding was in accordance with the rules of war—that it had always been practised and that Gen. Hunter deterred the rebels from murdering colored soldiers, when taken prisoners, by threatening to hang to slave-holders for every negro soldier executed. They argued that such practice would not deter the Sioux—that there was no assurance that they would kill one the less if they knew we would hang every prisoner we have.

I trust there will be no more Indian prisoners to feed, educate, and wrangle over. Let the people who have an interest in the settlement of the State and cultivation of the soil resolve that the officer who fails of success on Indian expeditions—or who brings back any prisoners, is politically and socially doomed and damned. There are so many men interested in keeping up the old Indian system—so many citizens of Minnesota who are

## Library of Congress

personally safe and are making money by the Sibley-McClellan mode of warfare, i.e. getting up armies and dress parades that the settlers who ask protection for their homes have the speculators as well as the Indians to meet and overcome.

Government expends vast sums of money in Minnesota in Sibley campaigns and those who get fat contracts worship Sibley. His do-nothing, get-ready style of warfare suits them to a T; and as long as they make more by army contracts than they would by the settlement and cultivation of our lands they will use all their influence against any measures likely to end the Indian war.

Perhaps it would be barbarous to take the life of a squaw or papoose prisoner in atonement for the murder of a white woman or child by roving bands of Sioux; but if we have 227 the squaws and papooses of warriors now in Little Crow and duly notify him of our purpose it is highly probable that one or two examples would give security to our frontiers. The policy is certainly worth trying, if the lives of our frontier settlers is worth protection.—Could not the unmilitary, unorganized portion of the people of Minnesota send a runner to Little Crow stating that *they themselves* will see to it, that for every white person killed three red skins shall die, and then organize hunting parties of from two to ten, kill the number and send Little Crow the scalps in evidence that the threat has been executed.

There will be no danger of the General Government punishing men for thus taking the law in their own hands. “President Lincoln will hang nobody!” and barbarous or cruel as the plan may appear to sentimental people, there can be no security of life in Minnesota until these savages are taught to fear the whites, and neither the General or State Government appears likely to teach them that wholesome lesson. What is called mercy to them is cruelty to the white settlers. The condemned Sioux murderers have been stolen out of the State—carried by stealth beyond the reach of the people and laws to whom and which they had forfeited their miserable lives. In due time they will be released and sent some place either to return, at their convenience, to the scenes of their former exploits or to

## Library of Congress

reenact them in some other place, and for this the missionaries more than any one else are responsible. They have had such “a season of prayer” with their red brethren, have given them so many primers and testaments and have published such touching accounts of their piety and progress in pursuit of knowledge that the President, if less than savage, could scarce be expected to break up this academic grove by hanging all the pupils. So 228 they are transplanted to another scene, and after they have finished their education they will be able to make their next massacre as much more horrible than the last as *it* exceeded, in horror, all that had ever been done by savages unblest by years of teaching and training under the care of the very men who are now finishing them off.<sup>8</sup>

I intend to see the President and talk this matter over with him. He should at least hear the views of that portion of the Minnesota people whose sympathies are *all* with the white settlers.

<sup>8</sup> On March 3, 1863, Congress authorized the removal from Minnesota of all Sioux in the custody of the government, and early in May they were sent to the Crow Creek Reservation, on the Missouri River about eighty miles above Fort Randall. While they were in captivity, large numbers of them were converted to Christianity. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:249-254, 258-261.

While in the Patent Office building to-day to see Messrs. Usher and Dole, the men were in groups in the halls hurraing and throwing up their hats; and Judge Usher informed me that they had news that Hooker has surrounded the rebels at Fredericksburg. You will hear all the particulars by telegraph long before this reaches you. Several days ago Col. [D. M.] Evans, of a New York regiment, and the first editor in Rochester, Minn.,<sup>9</sup> told me that twice, Gen. Hooker had had his pontoon bridges at the very points where the troops crossed to the Burnside battle of Fredericksburg—that he had them there, in the night, and appeared to be prevented crossing by rain and before morning would hide the bridges.

<sup>9</sup> Evans and Nathan B. Robbins established the *Olmsted County Journal* of Rochester in 1857. Johnston, in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 10:313.



## Library of Congress

I thought this very singular, for it gave the impression to the army under him that Hooker was just going to repeat the attack on Fredericksburg on the old plan. He must have been very busy keeping up this appearance and with such a 229 show of secrecy as completely to have deceived the rebels. He has no doubt kept them watching for the crossing of his army at that same old place while his flanking columns were getting around cutting off their railroad communications and putting them in a tight place. He will do all that one man can do to follow up his advantage.f—The corps commanders are vouched for as loyal to the core, and high hopes are entertained here of his signal success.

I suggested to Judge my fear that some McClellan man held some post which would enable him to defeat Hooker's plans by failing him at the critical moment.

"If any one does," he replied, bringing down his hand on the table with a thump, "If any one does, we'll hang him!"

"The President won't let you," I replied, and he said, "True enough!"

[*St. Cloud Democrat, May 21, 1863*] Washington May 10th, 1864

Dear Will .—Before this reaches you, you will know much more of the Rappahannock movements than I do now; but no one in Minnesota can realize how much mud and water has to do with every repulse of our army. I thought Gen. Hooker's movement premature. I think so still, and the men must have been too anxious for a fight who sought one through those red and yellow clay chuck-holes.

I have been visiting the forts and hospitals around Washington in company with Mrs. [Almira] Fales, a connection of Mr. [Charles T.] Stearns of our place, a lady who devotes herself to distributing tracts, books, papers and bodily comforts to our soldiers.<sup>10</sup> She has an ambulance appropriated <sup>10</sup> For a sketch of the war activities of Mrs. Fales, see Linus P. Brockett and Mary C. Vaughan, *Woman's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism and Patience*, 279-183 (Philadelphia, 1867). 230 to her use by government, and

## Library of Congress

goes in all weather. An ambulance is a two-horse covered wagon on springs with seats like those of an omnibus, but made so that by raising a cushioned leaf attached to each seat it can be converted into a bed. It was during the army movement that I spent two days riding around with her, sticking fast in ditches within sight of the capitol, getting our and crossing chuck-holes on boards while the horses dragged the ambulance through, clambering around bad places by walking on the lower rails of fences and holding by the top as the horses dragged their feet out of the stiffening clay, and the carriage twisted, and plunged, and pitched, threatening to overturn at every view paces. I saw one horse in a team hauling hay fall flat in his efforts to get on one of the little knolls which alternated the mud holes. There is not a paved or macadamized road leading to Washington and but one railroad. All through Virginia these clay bogs are called turnpikes. How the artillery was dragged over the roads around Fredericksburg to storm forts, is one of the wonders I shall never understand. How the men got through or around the pits of mire, stiff, half-dried heavy clay, which must have formed one-third the surface of the ground they passed over, is a mystery of mysteries. Gen. Hooker, with all his fighting propensities, never would have undertaken such a move but for the long inaction of the army, the impatience of the people and the near approach of the end of the term of service of so many of his troops. Yet with all the disadvantage of the state of the ground he could no doubt have been entirely successful, but for the rain, which he had no doubt hoped would be withheld. When it rained, rained, rained and poured for three days and nights there was nothing for it but recross, 231 or have his communications cut off with this side of the Rappahannock.

.....11

11 Mrs. Swisshelm's report of a conversation that she had with a colored woman at Washington on the movements of Hooker's army is here omitted.

This is the second consecutive dry day, and it is said Gen. Hooker is recrossing the Rappahannock. The Union men here are in fine spirits.

## Library of Congress

A colored Regiment is nearly raised here by the Rev. Lieut. Col. Raymond, of N. Y. State, who is the counterpart, physically and mentally, of Elder Inman<sup>12</sup>—a close communion, revival Baptist preacher, full six feet high, with a square full of determination; but slightly indebted to colleges for his gifts; apt in preaching to wander from the direct line of the subject to relate incidents in his own experience; confident of his ability to charge a battery or get up a revival; with a voice perfectly lion-like and a most powerful frame—he is a formidable specimen of a Yankee soldier.

<sup>12</sup> See *ante*, 19. 232

### **X. Hospital Service**

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, June 4, 1863 ]<sup>1</sup> Campbell Hospital, Washington, May 23d, 1863

<sup>1</sup> The following notice appears in a *Democrat* at the beginning of this letter: “No letter for publication having been received from the editor, we make the following extracts from a private note.”

I cannot leave hospitals; am completely stuck fast and feel that here is my place. Oh! the suffering, the agony and death, and this is the model hospital! I have just written to Secretary Stanton for a pass and transportation for stores to go to the hospitals opposite Fredericksburg.

“... I have two rooms in this hospital placed at my disposal by the surgeon in charge, Dr. [Jedediah H.] Baxter, who has never permitted a female nurse in the establishment. I have an immense field of labor, and have been going from six in the morning until twelve at night, or have been called up at twelve or two whenever I went to bed at bed time. I have been through two other hospitals to-day. There are beds in this one for 1300 men, but there are only about 700 here. One or two dies every day, but since the first two days I have never had time to sit by a death bed. Those who might be saved always need me; and as I go through the wards the poor sufferers call “Mother!” “Mother!”

## Library of Congress

“I keep well, only get so tired sometimes; but any doctor, or nurse, or man in any position in the hospital will do any 233 thing for me, and I am the only woman in this community of from one thousand to two thousand men.”

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, June 18, 1863 ]<sup>2</sup> Campbell Hospital, Washington, May 19

I have been here in the hospital ten days, dressing wounds, wetting wounds, giving drinks and stimulants, comforting the dying, trying to save the living. The heroic fortitude of the sufferers is sublime. Yet I have held the hands of brave, strong men while shaking in a paroxysm of weeping. The doctors have committed to my special care wounded feet and ankles, and I kneel reverently by the mangled limbs of these heroes, and thank God and man for the privilege of washing them. I want whiskey—barrels of whiskey—to wash feet, and thus keep up circulation in wounded knees, legs, thighs, hips. I want a lot of pickles, pickles, pickles, lemons, lemons, lemons, oranges. No well man or woman has a right to a glass of lemonade. We want it all in the hospitals to prevent gangrene. I will get lady volunteers to go through the wards of as many hospitals as I can supply with drinks. My business is dressing wounds where amputation may be avoided by special care. I write at the bed-side of Arsanius Littlefield, Augusta, Me., ankle wounded,—where I have been since 2 o'clock this morning, his life hanging in doubt.

Four days ago I unclasped the arms of A. E. Smith, of Belvidere, N. J., from around my neck, where he had clasped them dying, as I knelt to repeat the immortal prayer of the blind Bartemus [ *Bartimæus* ]—laid down the poor chilled <sup>2</sup> This is part of a letter that appeared originally in the *New-York Tribune* for May 22. The first two paragraphs of the letter, which are omitted in the *Democrat* are devoted to acknowledging the receipt of money and fruit for wounded soldiers donated in response to an appeal made by Mrs. Swisshelm in the *Tribune* for May 13. <sup>234</sup> hands, and rant to Mr. L. then threatened with lockjaw. Oh, God! there is plenty of work; with the great advantages of the most skillful physicians, the utmost cleanliness, and best ventilation, the exceeding and beautiful tenderness of war masters and nurses, there is much to do, if the right persons appeared

## Library of Congress

to do it. Dr. Baxter, physician in charge, will not permit female nurses here, and from the manner in which he cares for his patients, and the reasons he gives for his decision I have no disposition to quarrel with it. The Chaplain, the Rev. N[oa]h M. Gaylord, and lady are indefatigable, and aid in the distribution of all comforts to the wounded.

In answer to many letters, I say we would rather have fruit and wines than money. All sent to me at No. 424 L street, will find gratuitous storage from Hon. D. M. Kelsey, of Illinois. I will find a person to keep an account of all that comes, and acknowledging it without paying clerk hire, and God do so to me, and more also, if I do not use my best efforts to have everything committed to my care go to comforting and sustaining our wounded men.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, July 16, 1863 ] Washington, July 2d, 1863

Dear Will .—I wrote a few days ago, to N[ettie], from Philadelphia whither I had gone on my way home for a week's rest and to bring her. My feet are suffering from so much walking in hospitals and I thought I could rest them traveling and get back here before the next fight should fill the wards with new patients. Those I have been specially attending are out of danger or dead, and I want so much to see St. Cloud if but for one day and bring N[ettie], that I blinded myself to the magnitude of the rebel invasion of Pennsylvania—thought I could go and come back while Lee was getting forage and be here before the fight he might 235 have near Harper's Ferry. I reached Philadelphia on Saturday night, ten minutes too late for the western train, and in the morning found such a deep seated conviction that there would be a great battle at Harrisburg, that I waited for it two days so that I might go and help tend the wounded. When Tuesday morning came and no fight, but news that the rebels were falling back toward Baltimore, I concluded their object was Washington and thought if I did return immediately I should probably not get here, as the railroad was menaced. I came to this conclusion on the street, and, without saying good-bye to any one, took the first train and came on.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Swisshelm postponed her trip to St. Cloud until the following September. Her daughter returned to Washington with her. *Democrat*, September 24, October 1, 1863.

## Library of Congress

My opinion still is that Washington is the object of all this Pennsylvania invasion—that it was simply a flank movement. Whether it will succeed and Washington fall into the hands of the traitors remains to be seen and to my mind is exceedingly doubtful. Harper's Ferry has been evacuated by the Federal troops, the guns spiked, the magazines blown up, the fortifications part tumbled and troops removed, which shows that the Union leaders do not hope to capture the invading army, and invite them to leave. A great battle is reported as going on to-day, near Shippensburg, between the army of the Potomac, inured to defeats, and Lee's exultant troops. The fact that the Pennsylvanians went to ditch digging and crept behind mud walls instead of each one turning out, with such weapons as he could get, and shooting his rebel, shows that they will not follow up their invaders with anything like energy, if they do it at all, and I should be nothing surprised to have the remains of Mead[e]'s army come pell mell in here in a day or two as McDowell's and Pope's did from Bull Run. If that army is defeated nothing can save Washington but the hesitation of the rebels and I think they will not hesitate for there are rebels enough here to attack and betray forts enough to let them in. It is thought treason here to utter such sentiments, or give voice to a whisper that the Union cause is not going on swimmingly; but at the risk of being called traitor, coward, croaker, I reiterate what I believe to be the possible danger of the present hour. I do not in any sense despair of the Republic. I have no less trust in God than those who think it is treason to expect, or admit the possibility of anything but victory; but God works by means, and I don not see that He has as yet directed to the means of victory. He has not given us repentance for past sins. As a nation we are still oppressors of the poor. It does not shock us, as a people, that innocent persons, born poor under the protection of the laws of Free States should be forcibly carried into slavery. As a people we would offer up millions of American citizens as a sacrifice to win back the commercial copartnership of an organized band of man thieves and perjured traitors.—What right have we to expect God's blessings on our arms?

Men talk of trusting God just as if we had some claim upon Him, when the fact is that utter destruction is no more than this Government deserves at the hand of Eternal Justice.

## Library of Congress

Thus far God has been fulfilling His threatenings of dashing “the potsherds against the potsherds of the earth,” breaking the two divisions of a guilty nation as a man might break two earthen vessels by dashing them against each other.

That we will eventually be brought to repentance I cannot help hoping. That the petty strifes for honors and emoluments which fill our armies with jealousies; the weak and mistaken magnanimity which offers a premium for treason and the sordid avarice which steals supplies from dying men, may be uprooted and dug out and killed off in time to save our national life, I still have hope. There is a large abundance of sublime courage, and virtue and patriotism in the people. This has deeply impressed me in witnessing the conduct of our wounded soldiers and the prompt liberality which ministers to their wants; and thinking of it I sometimes claim God on our side, but the corruption in high places, the piebald policy of the administration, and lethargy of a majority of the people leave me to doubt if the Government be not like a quartz boulder which must be ground to powder in order to secure and preserve the gold scattered through and imbedded in it.

It is growing dark, and I must lie down again and gather all the strength possible in as short time as possible. I have a very considerable amount of hospital stores and money entrusted to my care for the benefit of wounded and sick soldiers and have a presentiment that in a few days I shall need a full allowance of health to see them properly applied.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, July 21, 1863 ] Washington, July 12th, 1863

Dear Will .—Since my last the *glorious* Fourth has come and gone. The people here had made extensive and expensive preparations to celebrate it—had begun them during the exciting and depressing times of Lee's march into Pennsylvania and continued when calling out every man liable to military duty, in order to insure the safety of the capital. In the afternoon the news reached us of a victory by Meade at Gettysburg, and two thousand dollars worth of fire works were burned at the foot of the unfinished Washington Monument 238 in view of some twenty or thirty acres of people.<sup>4</sup> The rejoicing appeared

## Library of Congress

to be universal, for the many old citizens who had boasted, but a few days before, that Lee's army would take their Fourth of July dinner in Washington, concluded to keep quiet and play loyal.—That a large majority of the citizens proper of this city would be glad to see Jeff Davis established in the White House, there is little doubt. It is the northern emigration which keeps up a show of loyalty here, and it were not that men who can play loyal to a government they hate in order to save their property are of necessity cowards, I should fear that in any attack on Washington these traitors would give armed assistance by storming an attacked fort on the rear.

4 The Washington Monument was begun in 1848 but was not completed until 1884.

When visiting the forts around the city it occurred to me that his contingency had been thought of, for they all appear as strong on the Washington side as on that next the enemy.

I spent the Fourth at Campbell Hospital with my rapidly convalescing patients and staid to see them carried out to enjoy the fire works, rockets, wheels, blue lights and various kinds of blazes, so that I saw nothing of the great display except such as rose high enough to be seen from that point. There were bunches of rockets of various colors made to resemble bo[u]quets. Many people condemned the celebration as a waste and counted what might have been done with the money. I for one, though that the worth of these fire works in feather pillows have been quite a God-send to hospital patients; but all such calculations are mistakes. Some kind of parade and display appears to be necessary to keep up the spirit and national pride of a people and this is 239 a nation's true wealth. I hope you had a good celebration in St. Cloud. I took a great deal of comfort in thinking over our celebration of 1862 and telling the sick men about it—describing the dresses of the girls who represented the different States—the procession, the music which the Band played at our Office-door—the songs which the girls sung in the grove—the speeches and dinner and all. It helped them to get through the day pleasantly, especially one whose parents live in Manterville [ *Mantorville* ], Minn., and who from the imprudence of trying to stand before he was strong enough was suffering very much.<sup>5</sup> I have been there one afternoon since—have spent one day in Carver, one in Judiciary Square and one in Lincoln Hospital



## Library of Congress

distributing lemons, sugar, pickles and jelly. To go through one of these hospitals requires hours of walking. I had partial paralysis of the feet from too much walking and find that no two or three days of rest will cure the trouble, so I have gone to work in the Department where I must sit seven hours a day. I hope to be better so that if any great battle in this vicinity should fill our nearly empty hospitals, I may be able to help take care of the wounded for a few weeks again; but if my feet continue as they are even this will be out of the question. I have quite a list of friends who helped me to distribute the things sent me for the soldiers—i.e., who take them to the men in bed and give them to them, without trusting to surgeons nurses or any one else. Then I have become acquainted with some surgeons, chaplains, nurses and ward masters that I can trust and to whom I give things for sick men when they come or send.

5 The soldier referred to was Joseph B. Kendall, son of Dr. s. b. Kendall of Mantorville. He enlisted in the Fifth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry and was wounded at Fredericksburg. See the *Mantorville Express*, May 15, July 31, 1863, and *post*, 283. 240

Supplying several thousand sick and wounded men with all the nourishment and care they need is a gigantic undertaking, and no matter how many agents are employed, there appears to be room for more. The Sanitary Commission has done an immense amount of business amount of business and yet after having been through all but two of the Washington hospitals I have never seen a sick or wounded man who had received a spoonful of any delicacy from the Sanitary Commission. They give out nothing except on a written order from a surgeon in charge. Then whatever comes thus, goes into the dispensary or Commissary's room. One finds sheets, shirts, towels etc., marked "Sanitary Commission" but I have never been able to trace one spoonful of jelly or canned fruit or any other delicacy to the Commission. In fact I have never known a wounded or sick soldier get anything of the kind unless it were given to him by the agent of some State Commission or some visitor, and in every hospital there is more or less positive demand for fruit, pickles, liquors. Thousands of men die for want of them. A man after the exhaustion of a battle, generally fought when he is in need of food, of the loss of blood from a wound, or amputation and the debilitating effect of intense pain, needs wine,

## Library of Congress

brandy, whiskey, tea, coffee &c. These stimulants are always scarce, it appears as if no human liberality and ingenuity can make them otherwise. So long as well men or those able to walk are read to sell soul and body for the means of getting drunk, so long will it be next to impossible to supply dying men with enough brandy to sustain their sinking life. The testimony of nearly all wounded men agrees that army surgeon generally get drunk during the time of a battle or just after it—that they drink the liquors sent for the patients and so unfit themselves for duty. So the amputations performed on the battle field 241 or near it often require double the length of time to heal of those amputated here.

But never mind that. Eight days have now passed since Meade defeated Lee at Gettysburg and we hear nothing of the crushing blow by which the army of the Potomac and the Pennsylvania army were to destroy the invading forces. An enormous silence rests over the movements of the opposing forces and I fear our accounts of a Federal victory were greatly exag[g]erated and that at the next Lee will be compelled to make a “masterly retreat.” I fear that invasion is to be a lasting disgrace to Pennsylvania. An attack on Washington was certainly Lee's plan, and whether he will get near enough to let us hear the boom of his cannon remains to be seen. Large bodies of troops are stationed here and a whole brigade of cavalry passed from the northward a few days ago going in the direction of Bull Run.—A regiment of colored troops are camped on the opposite side of the Potomac near Georgetown. Their officers appear to have been very carefully chosen and are men who are anxious they should succeed. In addition to military tactics they are learning to read and may be seen, in the intervals between their drills, in little groups with primers and spelling books conning over their lessons. People here are becoming accustomed to see them in the United States uniform, and they are more frequently hailed with signs of approbation than with sneers of scorn. In Philadelphia, that abode of pro-slavery conservatism, a company marched down Chestnut Street, while I was there two weeks ago, and were received with cheers and waving of handkerchiefs. When Government gets on to the point of calling Fremont to head these dusky freedmen in their struggle to maintain the boon it has tendered them, secession will soon die.

## Library of Congress

242

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, August 6, 1863 ] Washington, July 27th, 1863

Dear Will. —One of the celebrities of Washington is Rev. [William H.] Channing,<sup>6</sup> a nephew of the great Dr. [William E.] Channing. He is an Unitarian and the pastor of a congregation here. His church is a brown stone edifice of moderate dimensions, built much in the style of Episcopal churches and resembling them in the internal appointments—an organ in the gallery over the entrance, stained glass windows, frescoed walls, a marble font in front of two dark mahogany pulpits, carpets, cushions and quiet. To complete the resemblance he preaches in a voluminous black gown, but here the comparison ends. In the Episcopal service my intense old Presbyterianism has always found something congenial and impressive, as the strict discipline of the Reformed Presbyterian church binds its ministers in so close a union of faith and manners that the services are almost as much alike as if bound in a liturgy. There is no young Americanism in it. It does not partake of the varying fashions of the hour and particular passions of the preacher; one can listen to the prayers or join in them without being kept on a *qui vive* of criticism and caution lest the next petition should be one to which one might wish to utter a solemn protest. Mr. Channing's prayers and sermons are a curiosity, as combining the individuality, speciality and present application of a truly Cartwrightian with a literary culture and elaborate style of composition of the genuine Emerson stamp. His reminiscences and personal sketches of prominent reforms and sketches of the war, outdo, in familiar illustration, the anecdotes of the most illiterate historian and <sup>6</sup> Channing was chaplain of the House of Representatives in 1863—64. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 4:9. 243 itinerant preacher, while his quotations are from the highest literary sources, and his style of composition as elaborate as that of the most polished of New England's writers.

In the winter, or during the sessions of Congress, the church is filled; for up to a very late date he has been the only anti-Slavery preacher in any fashionable church in this city. On the last Fast Day Rev. Sunderland, Presbyterian and Chaplain of the Senate, “came out”

## Library of Congress

in favor of emancipation. Mr. Channing has always been a strong abolitionist, preaching, lecturing, talking, working and praying for the oppressed as a man who felt that for the sin of oppression our nation was to be judged.

His faithfulness on this subject draws many to hear him who differ entirely with his theological views. I, for one, go sometimes, but no earnestness in enforcing our duty to man can take away the feeling that something is wanting. Christianity without a *Divine* Savior—the great example of Christ's life, without that atonement which “taketh away the sin of the world,” is like the play of Richard with the part of Richard left out; and one comes away from his impressive lessons of duty with an oppressive sense of the unattainable.

Once, in talking of Christ's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, he said that “He, (Christ) having studied the signs of the times, knew that the crisis of his fate was approaching!” It was the first time I heard him. I was listening very attentively, and the sentence struck me like a blow, so that I came near calling aloud “My Lord and my God,” as poor Thomas did when he saw the print of the nails in the hands of the risen Redeemer. One who has ever been on the midnight waves of a deep affliction and sinking, has cried like Peter, “Lord save me I perish,” gets an idea 244 of a Saviour that no mere mortal can fill. Dr. Channing himself appears a living realization of the unsatisfying nature of his faith. With a high sense of the perfection of the Divine law, and a single minded, earnest desire to reach and see the world reach a state of excellence thus far beyond the capacity of poor fallen nature, he evidently feels the want of that perfect righteousness which can only be ours by imputation.

A large spare frame, a head which realizes the idea of “a dome of thought,” with the great, broad, high forehead, the brown hair thinly sprinkled over the top, eyes large and gray, the straight nose with the delicate nostrils and the whole face tapering almost to a point at the chin, he appears to be without all the grosser human instincts; but there is a strange want of softness, of happiness, in his whole expression, and altogether he impresses me as a thinking machine—a piece of mechanism for evolving ideas, and one that has nothing

## Library of Congress

to do with human loves and human joys, yet his lip is full of the labors of love, of acts of benevolence and self-sacrifice. I wish he knew “that peace that passeth all understanding,” and which alone can ever bring him the meaning of his yesterday's discourse of the Love of God.

It was his farewell sermon before a trip to England to visit his family where they are for education.

The battle between Meade and Lee's armies which has been daily expected for weeks has not come off yet, and if the parolled prisoners from Vicksburg do not reinforce Lee so that he can attack Meade it is probable that all will be quiet on the Potomac until the time of the three years men run[s] out and the army of the Potomac is disbanded. Poor fellows, how bravely they have fought and how they have fallen in thousands; and so far as we can see, with so little result; while there is a thousand of them left they will fight if the 245 leaders so decide; but there is always some jealousy or some treason in high places which deprives them and the nation of the fruits of their valor.

There is no longer any fear of an attack on Washington. The copperheads did not come up to their engagements, about aiding Lee in his invasion of the North and that project has failed. There is no doubt that the riots in New York were the result of a plan between secession sympathizers at the north, and Jeff Davis' crew and that a general rising in resistance to the draft was to be made at the time which should most aid Lee's daring attempt to isolate and take Washington. Had he defeated the Potomac army, as there was every reason to fear he might, these Northern traitors would have risen with the pretension of stopping the war and kept loyal men busy east, while Washington should be taken and the Confederacy be proclaimed as *the* government of the country. Lee's unlooked for defeat at Gettysburg spoiled the programme.—The fearful cost at which that defeat was secured, Minnesota well knows. Our glorious First was immolated, but if ever men died for a purpose, it was those who fell on that field.<sup>7</sup> If ever a government was saved by a single battle, it was there and then. Had Washington fallen, as it wo'd have done

## Library of Congress

had that army been defeated, as I expected it to be, and New York and Pennsylvania copperheadism taken the form of open insurrection, as it is now evident they intended to do, foreign recognition of the Confederacy was a matter of course and the destruction of our government would have been a fixed fact to-day. Let those who mourn their dead who fell there remember that they died that Human Liberty might live—that by their death man's right to self government has been vindicated 7 On the famous charge of the First Minnesota at Gettysburg, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:308-313. 246 and Republicanism preserved as our permanent form of government.

It will appear strange to you all that I have not been with the Minnesota wounded. The great uncertainty as to when the battle would be fought, brought me here after waiting in Philadelphia to go to the field. After it was fought the understanding was that most of the wounded would be brought here. While we were expecting them hourly I was summoned to go to work in place in the Department, for up to that time I had been waiting for them to get rooms ready and notify me. When we found they would not be brought here I went to Gen. Meigs [Meigs] and begged leave of absence to go to Gettysburg, but he looked at me kindly and quietly told me it was not my duty to go and that he *could* not give me the required leave.<sup>8</sup> The question then was, should I give up my means of living and go in such a state of health that I did not hope to be able to keep on my feet more than two weeks longer, and my doubts were solved next day by my taking sick with an attack closely resembling cholera. For one day I scarce expected to recover and from then until now have been so that I dare not expose myself to contagion. When I was quite worn and thin in the hospital waiting on wounded men, the evacuation of Falmouth sent up a great many old typhoid fever and chronic diar[r]hea cases, and working over them I must have contracted a tendency to disease as I have been strangely affected. This, with a slight paralytic affection of the feet, brought on by so much walking and standing, makes it that even now when I feel well enough to go every day to the Department and write my hours, and to spend the mornings and evenings in taking care of hospital stores and sending them out as well <sup>8</sup> Meigs was quartermaster-general of the army. 247 as I can, it would

## Library of Congress

be simply suicide for me to start off on an expedition of hunting up and mourning even the wounded of our glorious old First. I should certainly be with as many of them as possible, at any pecuniary sacrifice, but I know I could not take care of them even if I could get to them. It is time to go to work and I must close.

*St. Cloud Democrat, August 13, 1863*] Washington, Aug. 2d, 1863

Dear Will. —Last evening the *Democrat* came just before time to go to bed and lighting my lamp to read it, the first thing that caught my eye was the news of Wesley Miller's death. It was the first intimation I had of it, for, finding it impossible to go to Gettysburg to look after the wounded, I have carefully abstained from looking at any. The strain of keeping up spirits and talking cheerfully to men of whom there, was hope will others were dying around me, has told on my nervous system almost as much as the excessive walking has on my feet, and I could not bear the accounts of suffering I could do nothing to relieve, so that all the particulars I have heard of the Gettysburg fight have come through the *Democrat* or have been forced upon me by some one who did not know how I felt about it. —The news of Wesley's death is none the less a shock that it came late, and all night long sleep refused to settle on my eyelids as I ran backward over the events of the years in which I knew him, from the bright Sabbath morning in which he presented himself and won my heart by his careless, boyish grace, by the unmistakable signs of want of calculation, and that easy politeness which marked him the inborn gentleman, until the day I saw him last, going down, from the office, through the grove. It was evident, from the first, that he never would save his money if anybody needed it, that he never would take care of his clothes, and that no one need expect him to have a change of coats if any one near was coatless. If generosity can be a fault it was one of his, and his bravery had something of recklessness in it. I have been going back over that winter when I cooked for him and S[tephen Miller] in that little back room behind the office, said *back* room lying across the main entrance, where Wesley made the fires in the morning and I baked griddle cakes, when I must needs go through the room in which you three slept to get to my own, and used to go in cold nights to cover you all better and tuck you in, when Wesley always had



## Library of Congress

a button to be sewed on or a rent to darn; when he used to go to the Post Office in the evening, get interested in some discussion and stay until after time to be in bed and I had to wait up of get to let him in, and the evenings when he was in time and read the chapter at family worship. He never failed to do that with a quiet reverence very unlike the easy indifference which marked his usual manner. In all these years of familiar intercourse he exhibited so much of the higher and nobler qualities, showed such a genuine veneration for all that is truly great and good that when in his forgetfulness he made us a piece of "pi," we could not eat at dinner, the trouble was much less than if some one else had made it. He was singularly calculated to make friends and win affection; but had he lived, the world would have taught many a bitter lesson to his unsuspecting, generous self-forgetfulness. In the army he found full employment for his peculiar gifts and having his faculties fully employed as nothing else could have employed them, he became a model soldier.— With his highly cultivated intelligence and keen appreciation of the good and true he could not do otherwise than fight for a principle—the principle of self-government, and the Father who doeth all things well, has no doubt chosen wisely in selecting him as one of those whose blood should wash this guilty nation and establish the hope of down-trodden humanity. It is a sublime mission to be one of those who die for the people and he was worthy of it. In fifty years, very few of those who mourn these fallen heroes will be here; and in the great record if discontent with ones appointed lot could be right, the mourners might weep for themselves, living and dying without any evident purpose or result. In reality it is we who shall die "Like a dull worm to rot Cast foully in the earth to be forgot"— who should weep for ourselves and one another. Those who have died for a great purpose and gone directly to their great reward are the favored few. I loved Wesley with something of a mother's love, and, I think, if he were my son, I would not wish him back to walk his threescore years and ten to reach his present home.

The weather yesterday (the 1st) set in hot and to-day keeps it up. Thus far summer has been rather cool except a few days occasionally, and lately we have had a good deal of rain; but old inhabitants are expecting very hot weather through this and next month.



## Library of Congress

Notwithstanding the absence of Congress the city is crowded. Rents are very high and not a house to be got. Boarding is enormous, as provisions are mostly brought from a distance and there appears to be no city regulations to restrain pedlars who buy up and retail, at their own prices, completely controlling the market.

It is said that the Confiscation Act has been strictly enforced in some cases and will be in future. If the lands of rebels in this immediate vicinity were confiscated and offered for sale 250 with the assurance of permanent titles, the present state of affairs would soon change, for negroes and eastern farmers would purchase, cultivate and supply the market; but so long as the lands just around the city are barren wastes, and our potatoes, cabbages, beets, lettuce, butter, eggs, &c., must take a railroad or steamboat ride to get here, so long will living in Washington be expensive and poor at that.

I know men with fine appointments here who are at present, paying their entire for board for themselves and families, yet there appears to be a general belief, through the country, that if a man can get a place in Washington, his fortune is made; and, so they come crowding, crowding, and stand begging, begging hat in hand for clerkships at \$1,200 or \$1,400 per annum, when they might get plenty of places, with western farmers, at \$15 per month and board. It is perfectly surprising the number of people, generally women, who write to *me* even, to get them places, people I never saw, never heard of, will refer me to people I never saw, never heard of and ask as confidently as they would ask for a glass of water of one who stood by a pump—send their letters marked “in haste” bidding me get their places immediately and drop them a line when they will come on at once. If I undertook to answer these letters I should be obliged to give up my business or hire a secretary. Yet it is very painful to disappoint their expectations.

The draft will begin here to-morrow and will be apt to pass off quietly. The Contraband Camp is guarded by a heavy detachment from the black regiment stationed across the Potomac. As the inmates of the camp are principally infirm women, children and sick men, this shows that the government appreciates the spirit of resistance to the draft, as it

## Library of Congress

has shown itself in the burning of the New York asylum 251 and the butchery of helpless people.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Joseph Holt, formerly, of Champlin opposite Anoka, is Superintendent at the Contraband Camp and his wife is one of the teachers. They have a very large school and the teachers are paid by Freedmen's associations. All the Government does is to furnish miserable barracks, built like elongated railroad shanties on the site of an old graveyard, in a marshy place, without any means of ventilation, without shade or verdure and with water so impure as to smell badly. These accommodations with rations of bread, meat, beans, &c., is what our government provides for these destitute recipients of its bounty. Even the right to commute rations, i.e., to draw what they needed and get money for the balance so as to be able to buy milk for the children has been denied them. Secretary Stanton gave the order for this right of commutation as soon as the case was laid before him; but some underling, who fancied his manhood depended on showing his superiority and the superiority of white men generally to what such folks call "niggers," continued to defeat his intentions and the case went on until a week or two ago when some arrangement was made by which the old people and children can have suitable food. When one remembers that these people have created so great a portion of our national wealth, that they have been rendered perfectly destitute by this war, waged to rivit the chains which have held them for centuries, and that all the able-bodied are sent to work and support themselves almost immediately after arriving at the camp, we may estimate the meanness of these politicians who croak about the expense of supporting <sup>9</sup> On the New York draft riots from July 13 to 16, in which about a thousand people were killed and more than fifty buildings—including an asylum for colored orphans—were burned, see David M. Barnes, *The Draft Riots in New York*, 6 (New York, 1863). 252 contrabands.—The demand for their labor is so great that they are engaged in advance, but all show great unwillingness to go north.

There is rumor to-day, brought by a man, who has come up from Warrenton where Meade's army now is, that there was a great battle going on yesterday.—If this is so the fight must have been forced upon Meade, for the army was regularly encamped and requisitions had [been] made out for new clothing. I do not believe the story, for so many

## Library of Congress

gentlemen just from the army tell so many things. Still I cannot help uneasiness about our Potomac Army. The parolled prisoners from Vicksburg will no doubt reinforce Lee. Our army is greatly reduced and there appears to be no hope of immediate reinforcements. If Lee can get any considerable number of fresh troops, now is his time to bring on an engagement, and we may have a short turn in the tide of affairs.

People have become so hopeful, so confident that the Rebellion is almost crushed, that any reverse will be keenly felt, but it does not appear to me as if we were so nearly through as is generally imagined. The bitter, inextinguishable hate which the Southern people bear to those of the North is their real strength and this is stronger now than it ever was. The idea that the common soldiers are generally tired of the war and ready to get back into the Union is all a mistake as is shown by their throwing down their arms and plunging into the swollen Potomac where they were drowned by hundreds rather than remain in Pennsylvania and be taken prisoners. To me it looks as if the war is likely to assume a new and terrible form. If they hang Capts. [Henry W.] Sawyer and [John M.] Flynn [ *Flinn* ], as they are pledged to do and continue to enslave or murder colored soldiers 253 taken prisoners we must either yield to their demand or carry on the war as we never have done.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Sawyer and Flinn, prisoners of war in Richmond, were sentenced to death in retaliation for the execution as spies of two Confederate officers captured by General Burnside. Two other Confederate officers, one a son of General Lee, were in turn held as hostages for Sawyer and Flinn. They remained under sentence of death until February, 1864, when a general exchange of hostages was made. In May, 1863, the Confederacy authorized the punishment by death or otherwise of white officers of colored troops captured in arms against it. The troops were to be delivered to the authorities of the state in which they were captured, to be dealt with according to its laws. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 2, vol. 5, p. 556; vol. 6, p. 991; series 3, vol. 3, p. 1130; McPherson, *Political History of the United States*, 283.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, *September 3, 1863* ] Washington, Aug. 20th, 1863.

## Library of Congress

... On Monday afternoon, coming home from the Department in the cars, I met —— of the Minnesota First, Co. G. I had seen him before at Center Hospital and now sent word by him to a Massachusetts cavalry man that his shoes were waiting for him. I had got him such a pair as he wanted a week before and could not get them sent. —— told me there were other Minnesota men there who had never had anything from any commission, a man from Maryland and a Pennsylvania who needed clothing to take the place of that lost in battles, marches or sickness. I told him to make a list and bring [it] to me. At the Judiciary Square Hospital I saw a New England man who has lately been brought from Gettysburg and talked with him a good while about the treatment the people of Pennsylvania gave the wounded soldiers. He was enthusiastic in describing the liberality and kindness of the people generally. Told of the house he had been in for six week, filled with wounded who were nursed and provided for at the expense of the host, and of other houses he knew of that had been filled with 254 wounded who had every comfort provided by the private benevolence of their entertainers, of people who deprived themselves and families of butter and fruit to send them to the sick. He could not tire talking of the great-heartedness of the people in Gettysburg and vicinity, and you may suppose I was glad to listen.

Then there was another poor fellow, all wasted to a shadow, who lay and looked up to me with his great, pleading gray eyes, as I tried to encourage him. The nurse from that ward had come to my room that day and got a bottle of wild-cherry brandy for him, and two others, and I always like to find out very soon what becomes of a bottle of brandy. He thought it had done him good and he wants more when that is done. God bless the great, warm-hearted people who never tire supplying the wants of these suffers! I feel so guilty that I cannot better apply their gifts. It is so hard to get the right thing to the right man in the right time. If I had more order and system I could do better, but I cannot get the order.

... The First Minnesota is ordered to New York, where the 5th Wisconsin and several other Western regiments have gone, whether they are to enforce the draft or go South is not

## Library of Congress

known.<sup>11</sup> I suppose Minnesotians have sent stores and funds to some one here for the use of her soldiers, and I will try to see some of our State people and learn to help any stray who may be left in hospital and need assistance. The best possible care should be taken of every shred of that glorious old true and shattered "First." The two who were here this evening, Joseph McDonald, of Otsego below Monticello, a corporal, and Morris [ *Maurice* ] F. Leonard, both of 11 The First Minnesota was ordered to New York on August 15 to enforce the draft. Lochren, in *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian War*, 1:38 255 Co. G [C], are fine specimens of manhood, full of courage and anxious to join the regiment. Says one: "The old First has stood a good deal and those who are left of it can stand a good deal more." The name of the "First Minnesota" is spoken here with a hush or reverence.

... At the house of a friend, I met Mrs. Sampson, of the Maine Relief Association, lately returned from Gettysburg, where she was with the wounded for six weeks. She, too, gives a most glowing account of the kindness of the Pennsylvania people.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, September 17, 1863 ]

I have many letters from ladies asking how they may be able to devote themselves to the care of sick and wounded soldiers; and many more asking questions about the management of hospitals. For answer, I can only "tell my experience."

I had my appointment and was receiving my salary; but for want of rooms, the Government was not ready for me to go to work. When room was ready I was to be notified.

About the first of May, when the rumors first reached the city that the army of the Potomac had crossed the Rappahannock and that a battle was in progress, I went to Miss [Dorothea L.] Dix and tendered my gratuitous services in helping to take care of the wounded either here or at the front.<sup>12</sup> I had previously visited her to call her attention to the dirt and destitution of the regimental hospital of the 2d Vermont artillery, and then, as now, found her very urbane and anxious to do, and have done, all in her power to mitigate <sup>12</sup> Miss Dix was superintendent of women nurses under the war department.

## Library of Congress

Some enmity developed between Miss Dix and Mrs. Swisshelm after their first meeting. Brockett and Vaughan, *Woman's Work in the Civil War*. 85; Swisshelm, *Half a Century*, 239-242. 256 the suffering of the sick and wounded; but she informed me that their arrangements were complete and there was nothing I could do.—The points were all supplied with efficient experienced nurses; and the diet list, supplied by Government, gave the patients everything the surgeons deemed proper and anything more was not permitted.—The sending of supplies she looked upon as a mistake and as likely if not certain to be resented by surgeons, as an impertinent interference. I had and have no doubt she said what circumstances justified her in believing to be strictly true; and felt that there was nothing for me to do; but, to make assurance doubly sure, I went to the Sanitary Commission and tendered my services. Here too I was assured that all arrangements were complete in as far as laborers were concerned. They would receive any amount of contributions in stores and money, but their officers, agents and distributors of every class are employed at liberal salaries and gratuitous services are not in the programme. So I settled down to *wait, as labor was not supplied*.

For some days after the battle—the last of Fredericksburg, I was kept in my room by illness. When the wounded were brought up and the list of names appeared, Mrs. [David M.] K[elsey] found the name of a friend in the 5th Wis., amongst those taken to C[ampbell]. She proposed we should go to visit him, but it was Sabbath and the street cars were not running. Could I possibly walk the distance? After putting on the taking off my bonnet several times I concluded to try, and went.—While waiting in the office for my friends to look over the books and find in which war lay their friend, I inquired of the officers for work, but like the poor prodigal hunting husks, “no man gave me any.” Once in the wards I soon noticed that almost every face of the sufferers 257 on the beds brightened at the sound of a few words of interest in their welfare. In one ward lay a man, apparently dead. He had had one leg amputated that day, midway above the knee, and was not yet from under the influence of chloroform. The other leg had been taken off below the knee, some days previous. This was J. Snare of Allegheny City, and there was nothing any one could do

## Library of Congress

for him. His table was loaded with untasted delicacies and a nurse sat fanning him. Of all the long rows of beds almost every one had wounded men. Some of them were frightful, and I walked almost as useless as a chip on a stream. There were none there from our Minnesota Regiment, and I took pains to hunt up those from Wisconsin. Of one of these, Robert Bride, I inquired before leaving if there was anything I could do for him. After some hesitation he replied, timidly:

“Well, nothing, we are very well taken care of—and I don't know anything you could do unless—to bring us something to quench thirst.”

“Something to quench thirst? Why, do you not have everything you wish?”

“Oh, we get what is very good, but it gets very warm in here in the afternoons and we cannot get out in the shade. We drink so much water it does not agree with us and if we had something sour to drink or some kind of fruit it would taste very good!”

“But, will the surgeons permit me to bring you anything? I have understood they would not.”

“Well, I see people bringing in things, oranges, lemons, apples and the like and giving them to the men and no one objects, and we send out to the suttlers and buy, but most of us lost our money on the field, and—”

But never mind, here was work. Next morning I wrote a 258 note to the *New York Tribune* stating this circumstance and my determination to spend the afternoons in giving cooling drinks if I could get the means.<sup>13</sup> That day Miss M——, a niece of Judge [Charles] M[ason], of Burlington, Iowa, and myself bought what lemons and sugar we could and went, at noon, to give these heroes drink—most of them were Sedgwick's men and I should have deemed it a great privilege to be allowed to go, on my knees, if necessary, to have washed and bound up the wounded, festering feet which, in health had charged up Mayer's [ *Marye's* ] hill.<sup>14</sup> To avoid giving trouble to attendants and so being expelled as a

## Library of Congress

nuisance we had squeezed out the juice of the lemons, mixed it with the sugar and taken a glass; for, from this hospital, in particular, women, as nurses, have always been rigidly excluded, and I expected to be ordered off.

13 This was the letter that was published in the *Tribune* for May 13, 1863. See *ante*, 233n. 14 These men were soldiers of the Sixth Corps who had been wounded during the Chancellorsville campaign on May 3, 1863.

She soon began writing letters for the disabled men while I went round with drink trying, my very best, to say something suitable and pleasant to each one. Very soon a nurse offered me the use of a pitcher to save the many steps necessary in running to the water cooler for each glass; and, when about done, I came into the ward where Mr. Snare lay. The nurses were dressing his thigh stump; and he was in an extremity of agony. I felt that the man who held the stump held it badly and setting down pitcher and glass I went and placing my hands on each side of his held it up and asked him to remove his hand. He did so and the agonizing groan of the patient stopped instantly. I asked him if I held it easier, and he replied so earnestly:

259

“Oh yes, oh yes!”

“Then, I shall always hold it up for you while they dress it!”

“You could not. It would be too much trouble,” was the sad, despairing answer.

“But I *can* a great deal easier than not, for I have not anything in the world to do.”

“Oh if you could, but you won't be here!”

“I'll come.”

I held up the other stump while it was dressed and the nurse, who was a very superior one, said “how easily and tenderly you hold it!”



## Library of Congress

To me this was a voice from God. I had never, during the whole course of my life, helped dress a dangerous wound; and if I could so lessen the pain it was a divine commission. I told the nurse I should be there early in the morning to help dress those wounds; and at six o'clock I started, but the street cars had not yet begun running and I had to walk the entire distance a full mile and a half. When I went to his bedside I thought him dead. His wounds were dressed, his clothes and bed changed and he lay almost as white and still as the sheet thrown over him. I went to the nurse and asked why he had not waited until I came to help him. He appeared confused[,] stammered, and looked away then said:

“You see, sister, he has another wound in a situation that would be unpleasant for you to see.”

“Do you mean to say that he is wounded in the groin?” He appeared relieved and answered:

“Yes, that's it, I did not like to tell you last evening and knew you would not want to be there.”

“But,” I persisted “that man has scarce one chance in a hundred of living. The surgeons must have thought he had 260 some chance, else they would not have amputated that second leg. Now, it is *your* business to give him the benefit of every hope and every chance. He has not strength to bear much more pain and you saw how much I saved him last evening. Do you think I should permit any false delicacy to stand in the way of saving a man's life? You could have dressed that wound and covered him. Then I could have come and helped dress the stumps.”

“I am glad you feel so, sister, and I know you are right, but I was in a hospital with the sisters once and they never came when we were dressing wounds; but if you will help me I will be very glad.” He had mistaken me for a sister of charity; but that man died before noon, when his wounds would have required the next dressing. I was with him at the

## Library of Congress

last, but while he slept, I left a young man to fan him and taking a bowl of wine panada went to give it to patients who might need it, as it would spoil there. Going to the door of a ward, I had not yet been, I encountered a tall, commanding-looking gentleman whom I supposed to be an officer visiting the hospital. I had thought so little on the subject as not to remember that surgeons wore shoulder-straps; and simply because he looked kind, I inquired if there was any one on that ward who needed wine panada.

“I think it very probable, madam,” was the courteous reply, “as it is a very bad ward.”

I went in and had given out most of the panada and a familiar greeting to each occupant of a bed, when I came near the middle of the ward, where a group of four or five men were standing around a bright black-eyed, boyish fellow who sat in a chair and was having his shoulder dressed. A shell had carried the arm clean off without the aid of a knife. I barely glanced at the group, as close beside them on a cot, lay a young man with a great shell wound broader than the entire face of my hand, on the outside of the leg just above the knee. It was uncovered and a nurse was washing it with a sponge while his suffering appeared extreme. I sat down the bowl and hurrying forward caught the nurse by the wrist saying,

“Do take care. You are hurting that man. Let me dress that wound.”

He rose at once saying “he should be very glad, as he was a green hand.”

I took his place and touched the sore with a bit of rag; as the first drop of water fell on it the flesh quivered and I asked him if the water was not too cold. “It does feel cold,” was the timid reply and I inquired of the nurse for warm water, but there was none. I insisted that there certainly must be warm water someplace in an establishment of that size when some one suggested that there was plenty in the kitchen, but the cook would not give him any. I inquired the whereabouts of that favored spot and was directed. Before starting I told nurse I wanted castile soap, and the man dressing the arm stump in the passage told him to go and get a piece. Finding the kitchen I asked the first man I met for a basin of hot

## Library of Congress

water to dress wounds. Every man in the room dropped his work and stood and stared, but the one I addressed got the water. I hurried back and offered little black eyes warm water to temper that used on his shoulder.

“No thank you,” was his pleasant reply, “I like cold water best; would like it with ice in it!”

“Then” I rejoined “the cold is best for you, but for this man it is not.”

I know enough about sickness to know that it is best to keep the mind occupied with cheerful conversation and finding that the boy whose wound I was dressing was one of Sedgwick's men, I told him how saucy he would be by 262 and by when he got well and had scars of glory to show, and how they would all be taking airs over undistinguished civilians, &c., &c.—In the course of the talk the little black-eyed patient, whom I soon learned to call Charley, introduced me to the gentleman dressing his shoulder, Dr. L., the surgeon of the ward, and I apologized for interfering with his business. He is a young French gentleman and with the politeness of his race informed me he was very glad of such interference. When that wound was dressed, I asked him what more I could do and he gave me an open commission to find work, saying that some of their nurses had been called off and put on guard as guards had been sent to their regiments. Almost every bed in that long ward was occupied, but to this day I have never taken time to count the beds or learn the length of a ward. I know it is all a man can usually do calling at the top of his voice at one end to make himself heard at the other, and all the way on both sides the beds stowed as close as convenience will allow, yet not more than half a dozen were without a seriously wounded man. There was a large proportion of thigh wounds. Two young Irishmen lay, side by side, both shot through the head, one above the right eye, the other above the right ear. Beside them an old German, shot through the breast. The ball having come from one side and gone in and out just below the collar bone while another had passed through his leg. Further up an Irishman, not less than fifty-five years old.—The ball had passed in at the right groin, he and the surgeon said, and out through the thickest part of the left hip. There were days when the business of wetting the wounds fell almost

## Library of Congress

entirely into my hands as the nurses were kept on the alert lifting, changing and doing the many things that I could not do. This poor, old man and I arranged it that I should leave him 263 water and he should keep that would wet that he could reach and I should wet that one out of his reach.—The delicacy he evinced, in the midst of his greatest agony, and the care he took when he saw me coming with the basin, to arrange his clothing so that the bandages and sheet should cover him entirely, was so marked that it increased one's respect for the race. Through my hospital experience the delicacy and tact with which men keep themselves presentable was to me a subject of wonder and admiration. All that a lady visitor or female nurse has to do is to attend to her own business and she will have no occasion for blushing. Close beside my old Irishman lay a young man with a bullet in his left eye. His face was frightful but he knew my voice and step in the midst of his painful darkness, and it was very pleasant too, when the other eye got so that he could see a very little to have him take pains to bring me to a proper position so that he could see and say,

“I have known you a long time but never saw you before.”

In the Wardmaster's little room at one end was a man so wounded that he could not be kept in the ward, and him I never saw, but this terrible shrieks, and groans, and ravings were audible often to the other ward where lay one shot through the body, mortally wounded and raving in wild delirium. Of all the others there was some hope, but the saddening influence of their continued moan was hard to overcome. To many it appears inhuman that there is not more show of sympathy with the dying, but the hope of saving the living makes it important to keep up a show of cheerfulness, and the constant activity which I found necessary made cheerfulness come with scarce an effort.—So, I could run or sit and wash wounds all day and talk like a politician the day before election.

264

## **XI. Opinions and Comments**

## Library of Congress

[ *St. Clouds Democrat*, September 24, 1863 ] Washington, Sept. 7th 1863

Dear Will. —I do wish the *Faribault Republican*, *Mantorville Express*, *Owatonna Plaindealer* and *St. Cloud Democrat*, &c., &c., all and sundry, would be kind to that poor Reverend Mister Williams.<sup>1</sup> Poor fellow! if any editor, or gentleman, or man of any kind, were condemned to stay where he is, in a town minus fences, trees, flowers, verdure, gardens, running water, well water, cistern water, soap and all other appliances of civilization, he would be just as across as Williams. That poor, miserable, dirty college with its general appearance of smear and grime, and its President in his soiled linen, with narrow, penurious face, is *the one* doleful, dismal, dirty picture which haunts my memory in the entire picture gallery of reminiscences of the end of sparkling waters. No man could be amiable under such a chronic hydrophobia and soap-phobia as had evidently settled on the poor President and his woebegone skeleton of 1 In an address before his student body at Northwestern College at Wasioja, Minnesota, Williams referred to Mrs. Swisshelm as “a cross between a woman and a tiger.” The address was published in the June, 1863, issue of the *Free Will Baptist*, a monthly paper edited by Williams. The editors of the newspapers that Mrs. Swisshelm mentions at once denounced him for his attempt to “malign Christianity, humanity and womanhood.” See *ante*, 148; the *Mantorville Express* for July 24, 1863; the *Central Republican* (Faribault) for August 5, 1863; and the *Democrat* for August 6, 1863. 265 a college, at the only time I ever saw them, and a man so situated has a right to be cross. Then, again, he shows just the appreciation of my poor self which is most complimentary to me; for, from childhood I have chosen to claim forbearance, protection, respect from all manly men, all good men or great men—all men who in any way commanded my respect; while by the mean and low and wicked I have desired to be regarded as something dangerous and unapproachable. To be thought of by such as a tigress is a compliment of the first water, and the name is not original with the unwashed President of the nasty college; for I have been similarly flattered long years ago by droves of such men, who like this President, sent their compliments at second hand. He

## Library of Congress

is harmless and would be kind of amiable if he were clean. So friends Bancroft, Brown & Co., must not say anything cross to him any more. He tries to be good.

I am very sorry to hear of the severe illness of Hon. H[enry] M. Rice.<sup>2</sup> He is one of Minnesota early, steadfast friends.—So fully identified with her interests and so able to promote them that his permanent illness or death would be a State calamity. His political record, of course, I do not like; but otherwise the traces he has left in Washington—his “footsteps on the sands of time,” are highly creditable to himself and the State he so long and ably represented. I have not once heard him charged with any of the vices which are reckoned common amongst public men here and which, like festering wounds, blur the reputation of more than one of the men to whom I have looked upon as patriots and statesman. Morally, Rice stands with such men as Sumner and Julian, though politically they are so widely opposed. <sup>2</sup> Rice represented Minnesota in Congress as territorial delegate from 1853 to 1857 and as senator from 1858 to 1863. <sup>266</sup> May he repent of all his political sins, do works mete for repentance and live his three score years and ten.

I am ever and ever so glad of Col. Miller's nomination for the Governor's chair. I can think of no one so suitable to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor (for Ramsey is my model Governor, minus his failure to hang the Sioux, nil or will, Uncle Sam to the contrary notwithstanding, and in this sin of omission the Col. is implicated.) As a military officer, sworn to obey his superiors, I suppose it would not have been easy for him to hang or shoot the miscreants; and, knowing him as I did, I did not expect him to obey his officer's oath in the letter and break it in the spirit; did not expect him to *appear* to guard them, while by neglect, intentional or unintentional, he should permit others to execute justice upon them. I knew that having once assumed a position he would do his best to maintain it in perfect good faith, without mental reservations or quibble of any kind, and no doubt when he undertook to act as jailor to the monsters, he believed justice would be legally meted out to them. As Governor, his position will be different from that of a mere military commander, and I have confidence that he will bring his indomitable energy and perseverance to bear on the Indian War and bring security to our territory.<sup>3</sup> I look upon

## Library of Congress

his election as certain, and in it see a future of substantial prosperity for our State.—With [David] Blakely, [Charles] Scheffer and [Gordon E.] Cole in the positions for which they are named, our State Administration will have few peers and no superiors in the galaxy of 3 Miller was in command of the Seventh Minnesota when it was stationed at Camp Lincoln, near Mankato, in December, 1862, and January, 1863, to guard the three hundred Sioux prisoners condemned to death by the Minnesota court martial. Thirty-eight Sioux were executed by order of the president on December 26, 1862. Baker, *Governors of Minnesota*, 134, 135.

Stephen Miller [From a photograph in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society.]

Jane Grey Swisshelm [From a photograph of an oil painting made by Mrs. Swisshelm about 1838. The original painting is in the possession of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and the photograph is in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society.]

267 states.<sup>4</sup> The other gentlemen I do not know but hope they are worthy the places into which the people intend putting them.—Miller stands high with the soldiers, and I trust every arrangement will be made to have their votes fairly taken and counted. If any man has a right to vote, it is he who has shown himself willing and able to fight for the government of his choice. The men and the party who would deprive such men as Lieutenant Freeman, for instance, of his vote, are dangerous to the very spirit of self-government. Let the people of Minnesota remember that the so-called Democratic party has everywhere opposed and voted against the soldier's right to a voice in the choice of officers and in the making of laws he was sworn to maintain at the peril of his life. But, Lieut. Freeman! What a harvest Death is gathering from the small circle of my personal friends!<sup>5</sup> St. Cloud could better have spared a dozen ordinary men than that one staunch, upright, Christian soldier. His name will surely never be spoken there without profound respect, and to be honest as Ambrose Freeman may well be a reputation any man might be ambitious to win. The manner of his death is another illustration of the insane folly of fighting Indians by the rules of civilized warfare. A people who use the flag of truce as a means of getting near enough their victim to murder him, are strange animals to be treated

## Library of Congress

as prisoners-of-war. Had the rebels done so, even President Lincoln would have felt the necessity of meeting them on their own ground.

4 The men mentioned were Republican candidates for the offices of secretary of state, state treasurer, and attorney-general. *Democrat*, August 20, 1863. 5 Freeman was killed by the Indians at Big Mound, Dakota Territory, on July 24, 1863. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:275n; *Democrat*, August 13, 1863.

There are but two trades in Washington that are zealously followed just now, office hunting and house hunting. It is a mystery where the people are going to stay when Congress meets, for the houses are all full now. The First Minnesota is gone to New York and it is said will be stationed on Governor's Island. I saw a picture of Fort Sumter from a photograph, showing it a mass of ruins with the rebel flag floating over them. A great sale of confiscated property was to have come off a few days ago. A crowd of thousands had assembled, but it was postponed and they dispersed in bad humor. I learned from what I thought good authority some time ago that the Confiscated Act was to be construed to mean something and that property seized and sold during the life of the rebel owner was finally alienated as completely as his own act of sale could alienate it; but this would have been too sure and short a way of ending the rebellion. To avoid that catastrophe, Congress passed a bill as a kind of primogenitive enactment to secure to the heirs of traitors the estate which might otherwise have passed out of the family and so have wounded the feelings of the F.F.V.'s [ *First Families of Virginia* ], and their intention is to be strictly carried out.<sup>6</sup> The sales therefore of confiscated property are only for the lifetime of the rebel owner, and when the rebel heir chooses to swear himself into the estate he has only to "take the oath" which the entire confederacy prides itself on taking and breaking whenever there is any hope of making anything by it. It is no difficult matter to get some one to swear that the "old man" is dead. In some cases the rents or proceeds of sale, during the time of confiscation, will be handed over to the heirs, and Brother Jonathan will pay expenses.—This act and its enforcement is a grand swindle on the loyal people who are to foot the bill of this war.

6 This is explained *ante*, 172n. 269



## Library of Congress

The streets and open spaces in Washington are plentifully besprinkled with dead horses, dead dogs, cats, rats, rubbish and refuse of all kinds. Many thousand horses are buried in the immediate vicinity of the city some five or six inches deep. The street in front of the President's house and War Department has the gutter heaped up full of black, rotten mud, a foot deep and worth fifty cents a cart load for manure. It appears to be a matter of national pride that the President is to have more mud, and blacker mud, and filthier mud in front of his door than any other man can afford. Five Points, when I saw it, was clean compared to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the Executive mansion; while the statue of Washington stands on one side and that of Jackson on the other, guarding this national mud, even as great and honored names are used to sanction and sanctify the moral slough which has nearly engulfed the Government.

270

### **XII. Red Men and Rebels**

*[St. Cloud Democrat, April 7, 1864]* Washington, D. C. March 26, 1864

Editor Democrat. —The Red Lake Indians create somewhat of a sensation here as a deputation of Indians always do.<sup>1</sup> The popular sympathy of Washington is in favor of Red men and Rebels, and individuals of either class are apt to be feted and get good places.

<sup>1</sup> The Chippewa chiefs Hole-in-the-Day and Misquadace had been brought to Washington to negotiate a treaty with the commissioner of Indian affairs. By its terms the Minnesota Chippewa were to be removed from scattered reservations to a single reservation on Leech Lake. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 3:25-27.

It is perfectly appalling to reflect on the amount of treason safely ensconced and well-sustained in Government employ. Men take the oath of allegiance and get, or retain, places while their wives and families are open and avowed secessionists and champions of the Rebellion, yet dependent for their daily bread on the salary of the father and husband or brother, who modifies his conversation to suit the occasion. I know of one such man in a clerkship at \$1600 a year, whose wife, son and daughters openly and persistently

## Library of Congress

defend secession in his presence, unreprieved, while dependent on his salary for support, and when a Northern lady boarder replied to the invectives against the government of a Southern guest, interposed, declaring that he could not have a guest of his insulted in his house. The insult consisted in saying that the 271 South had brought on the war by firing on Sumpter. What kind of service can be expected of such men when official position puts him in possession of facts which might be useful to the enemy.

But is it not only in the Departments that treason holds her sway. Who now doubts the McClellan is and always was a traitor? What right has any one to expect enthusiastic loyalty from Gen. Halleck when all his old political connections tend to disloyalty and he still in favor with the so-called Democracy? Butler—an old Democrat, is certainly loyal, but how stands he with the Democracy of to-day? How stands any old Democrat who has energetically aimed to crush the Rebellion? He is simply regarded as a renegade if he has heartily and earnestly approved the policy of the Government in that class of measures most feared by the Confederacy. We have reason therefore to be doubtful of all Union officers who are in good odor with the Cox and Wood Democracy; and, tried by this rule, a fearfully large proportion of civil and military officers are dangerous friends.

General Meade is so intensely Democratic that it was thought necessary by members of Congress, to approach him very gingerly when it was desired to have as many as possible of the New Hampshire volunteers go home to vote. He is understood as quite opposed to soldiers' voting. The investigation of his conduct at Gettysburg, which is now going on before a committee of Congress certainly prove[s] that it was in defiance of his orders that even a partial victory was won there, and that he appeared careful not to molest Gen. Lee any more than he was compelled by the ardor of his troops. A sister of his lives at Georgetown and is an avowed secessionist.

To my mind the future of our country looks very dark. 272 The first ardor of the people on the breaking out of the war has burned itself out and the nation has partially settled down to Mr. Lincoln's mild policy of half war, half conciliation. The prospect now is that

## Library of Congress

that policy will be continued and the war indefinitely prolonged. If so our currency must go down, down, down.—Whether this, in the end, is safer than a more rigorous policy is for the people to judge.

A strong move is being made to bring Fremont on to the stage for the Presidency as the representative of complete emancipation and a short, sharp war. Many think that he or Butler will be the man and McClellan the peace candidate in the coming campaign.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, October 31, 1864]* Washington, Sept. 28th, 1864

Dear Democrat. —Severe and protracted illness is my apology for not keeping your readers posted as to the doings of this, the center of excitement during the past summer, of rebel raids and other copperhead amusements too tedious to mention. When Breckinridge expected to sack the city, the joy of the original inhabitants was past their power of concealment, and not a few of them openly boasted that in so many days, (all designating the same time,) the public buildings would lie a mass of ruins. Some thought it a pity, but to their mind the necessity of sustaining the Confederacy by making the Capitol valueless to the Yankees did more than justify the prospective and predetermined blowing up and burning down of the buildings in which so many millions of the National wealth have been invested. Nothing but that Providence which is surely guarding this Republic notwithstanding the gross errors, the sins and mistakes of rebels and people, ever prevented the taking and destroying of Washington at the time of that first invasion last summer.

273

Had Breckinridge been able to get his guns in position on the day he intended to make the attack, 2000 men could have taken the forts on the Northern side of the city and shelled it at leisure. With the number of traitors and prisoners here, any successful defense by the loyal inhabitants would have been impossible; but the invaders were detained by their

## Library of Congress

plunder and much sooner than they had thought possible, the Sixth corps was brought from City Point and thrown into the exposed forts.

2 2 General Jubal A. Early appeared before the Capital on July 11, 1864. Had he acted promptly, he might have sacked Washington without difficulty, for there were no large bodies of troops to oppose him. In the evening, however, the veteran Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac under Sedgwick arrived, and Early's attack was easily repulsed the next day, Rhodes. *Civil War*, 326-328.

The Administration never perhaps acted with so much promptitude and skill as at that critical time, and when the arch traitor thought the Capitol he had sought to enter as its chief magistrate lay at his mercy, defended principally by his scout allies, lo! he looked, and the Greek cross, the badge of Sedgwick's heroes, looked defiance over the ramparts of Fort Reno.

I never could account for it, but that apparent danger of the Capital was the first thing which for three years has given me a hope of salvation to the Government. The Administration has fallen so far short of my idea of justice, and the people have given so little sign of repentance under the terrible chastisements of God, visited upon us for our National sin of oppressing God's suffering poor, that I have felt as a people we deserved and would receive destruction. But, our dwelling is in the Northern part of the city where the thunder of the cannon at Fort Reno was very plainly heard, and when the poor contraband women, all hanging in rags, with faces and voices full of wretchedness and fear, 274 their babies clasped to their breasts and little ones clinging to their knees, came to me to say, "What do you tink Missus? Will de Yankees be able to keep dem out?" I could answer with a feeling of perfect certainty, "They will never throw shell or ball inside the corporate limits of this city!"

I realized the unprepared state of our defenses, but I knew that the wheels of God's Providence could not turn backward. He had delivered these poor oppressed out of the hand of the oppressor and he would not again give them to the spoiler. Thousands of them are His not only by creation but by Redemption, and for years have besieged His throne

## Library of Congress

with the prayers of faith taken up from the lips of dying fathers and mothers, for the day of deliverance. There has been a wide spread belief in the present generation that they should sing the songs of that jubilee which their ancestors have been praying for for two centuries. To their minds, there is no doubt of the final success of that cause now linked to their new-found freedom. Looking at their anxious faces as the din of battle was borne to their ears in this their ark of safety, I feel that for their sakes the Union arms *must* succeed not only then but finally.

When in returning from the Department one afternoon, our way was blocked by troops of the 6th corps, I knew how the present deliverance was to come. I had seen the heights of Fredericksburg and knew that the men who took Marye's [ *Marye's* Hill could defend Washington from the Confederacy and its grand ally, the arch fiend.

One would think that the men who sough to place this Breckinridge in the Presidential chair might have learned a little modesty and have lost some confidence in their judgment of a candidate. It does appear as if they had for their present aspirant one who certainly not march upon 275 Washington with fire and sword when defeated. His constitutional dread of gunpowder will forbid all danger of seige guns; but should he combine his forces and attack simultaneously with his two favorite weapons the spade and pen, we will send to Manassas and bring up a supply of wooden guns and so hold him at bay for any given length of time.

The friends of that great mud turtle, George B. Napoleon, had their day of rejoicing last summer, when it became apparent that Grant would not take Richmond as his friends thought, and when the rebel cannon were thundering within three miles of the nation's capitol; but now their amusements are varied by an anxious season. The very people who failed to conceal their joy at the prospect of their last candidate for the Presidency blowing up the White House, are now hoisting McClellan flags and making McClellan speeches. At one of their clubs last week, one anxious friend of Little Mac, dolefully exclaimed, "Aren't we having a d——l of a streak of luck? The gunboats at Mobile, then Atlanta, and now the

## Library of Congress

darned victory in the valley,”—meaning Sheridan's—“they are knocking us higher than a kite.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Mobile was captured by Farragut's fleet on August 5, the news of the fall of Atlanta came to Washington on September 3, and the week of September 15 witnessed Sheridan's brilliant campaign in the Shenandoah Valley. Rhodes, *Civil War*, 336-338,

So, McClellan stock is going *up* kite-fashion.

I was sorry to see that there had been a strong effort amongst Republicans to defeat Donnelly. Do the Republicans of Minnesota intend to taint themselves with a suspicion of Indian frauds, that system of iniquity, which, in the minds of Eastern people fully justifies the massacres which have desolated our homes, and set our State prosperity backward twenty years?<sup>4</sup> —Even if Mr. Donnelly were mistaken and <sup>4</sup> The reference is to Donnelly's opposition to the appropriation of what he considered inordinately large sums of money for the removal of the Chippewa to the Leech lake Reservation, under a treaty of 1863. The secretary of the interior thanked Donnelly, who was a presentative in Congress from Minnesota, for exposing an intended fraud. In his campaign for renomination on the Republican ticket, Donnelly asked for support on the basis of his exposure of the “Indian swindle,” and on that issue he won the nomination. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 3:22-25. 276 the appropriation he opposed were just, it is best the should be sustained to show that our people prefer to err on the opposite to the old plan of robbing Government and defrauding Indians to enrich traders and endanger the lives of frontier settlers.

I trust, for sake of justice and the prosperity of our State, that Mr. Donnelly will be endorsed with a unanimity and enthusiasm which shall stimulate members to Congress and resist the lobby influence of speculators, contractors and traders. Let the people look calmly at the matter, think how their best interests have suffered by the swindling of Indian traders and give Donnelly such a majority as will be a warning to evil doers. Apart from this question, he is an honor to the State. He has already acquired a position in Congress which surprises his friends.—More than once, persons who have attended

## Library of Congress

exciting debates in the House have expressed their surprise to me at “that new man from your State.”

He is always in his place, always sober, alert and ready. A first class parliamentarian, an able and ready debater and an enthusiastic, backbone Republican. We could ill spare one such from our National councils. I trust the people will make no change in the present delegation until this whole question of war, peace and reconstruction is definitely settled. Of course you will give Uncle Abraham such a majority as is worthy of the North Star State when he stands as the representative of Freedom and an undivided country—of a peace that shall last as being founded on Justice. Let not the 277 people of Minnesota cast contumely on the graves of her glorious dead by failing to sustain at the ballot box the cause they have sanctified and sealed with their blood.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat, November 3, 1864* ] Washington, Oct. 22d, 1864

Dear Democrat. —Last evening there was a fine torchlight procession here in honor of the Union election victories. It was very good for Washington, where nineteen-twentieths of the fixed white inhabitants are in sympathy with Southern rebels and, of course, in favor of McClellan. These stood at the corners and groaned, and hissed, and hurraed for “Little Mac;” these saloon and hotel keepers, fat and sleek, who loafed around their doors while the thunder of rebel cannon reverberated around the National Capital threatening it and our national archives with destruction, stood last evening and hurraed for McClellan, as the Union torches past. It was significant. In the procession were hundreds of heroes, from our hospitals, who had sealed their devotion to their country with blood, and who are impatiently awaiting a return of strength to go back and fight it out. On the pavements were men too cowardly to defend their own homes against invasion, reviling the very men who came, post-haste, from the trenches on the southern side of Richmond, to hurl back the Democratic hordes who would fain have laid our public building in ruins and blotted our Government from the family of nations. Here we are surrounded by Southern men known to be in sympathy with secession men who are only deputed out of the rebel army

## Library of Congress

by cowardice and a wish to preserve their property, and to a man they are in favor of McClellan. How any loyal man—any one really in favor of preserving these States under 278 our Government—can act with them is more than I can comprehend.

In the north people do not realize how truly he is the southern candidate. They have been told that the rebel armies cheered on hearing of his nomination but do not believe it. Here we know it to be true. Men heard the cheers, and have heard the rebel pickets, at Richmond, taunt our pickets with their confident expectation of his election and the recognition of their confederacy, men whose word I cannot doubt and who have assured me of the fact. His war letter is only a trick to catch the votes of war democrats.<sup>5</sup> The peace men understand this and support him heartily.

<sup>5</sup> This was McClellan's letter accepting the nomination as Democratic candidate for the presidency. In it he repudiated a resolution, incorporated in the platform adopted by the convention, declaring the war a failure. McPherson, *Political History of the United States*, 419, 421.

This southern rebel city, which is kept in the Union and compelled to obey the constitution by Northern bayonets, is all of a flutter with McClellan flags. One of these was burned by coming in contact with a torch in the procession, and there is much ado about Northern vandalism, although the club in which the torch was carried disclaim the act as at all intentional and offer to replace the flag. I saw it two days before hanging so low that it trailed on the backs of horses passing under it and boys were pulling it with their hands. As it was in the middle of the streets and must have been near twenty feet broad it would have been strange if so many torch could have passed without firing it.

In the procession minnesota appeared with a fine transparency bearing the State Seal on one side; "North Star Union Club," on another; "Our climate Kills Copperheads!" and "Treason cannot survive our Winters!" on the others. Our old friend, will Kinkead, was one of the Committee 279 [on] Arrang[e]ments and is, I think, responsible for the mottoes. As he has gone to St. Cloud on furlough, the people can call him to account if they do not suit



## Library of Congress

their ideas. He has a civil appointment in the War Department, is steady as an old Dutch clock, and is a rising man.

I see that Gen. Sibley is getting up a plan for more appropriations to buy garden seeds and guns for his unfortunate erring brethren, the Sioux, to settle them on Devil's Lake, *for the security of the frontier settlements*. Is Minnesota entirely given over to Sibleyism? Is she never to be delivered from the dominion of Indian traders? Just think of any sane man talking of gathering a horde of those savages together for the government to feed them through Indian contractors and Government agents sent with more plows to rot and blankets to steal! Think of collecting them within a week's walk of our settlements to go over the old programme of theft, and plunder, and massacre and horrors!

When will our people learn that an Indian has *just as much* right to life, [ *blank in the Democrat*] that each head of a family be ensured an inalienable homestead—protection for the persons and property and punishment for the crimes of all alike?

Mr. Donnelly has taken a step in the right direction; let him be sustained and urged to go forward. As I see the ground from this stand-point, it appears to me that his defeat or even a failure to give him a triumphant majority above his ticket will be a declaration, on the part of our people, of a desire to return to the “good old times” when Sibley ruled the State by votes of unclad Indians. It will be so regarded in the East, and must greatly retard the settlement of our State. People do not care to make homes in reach of Sioux settlements, if there is no radical change in the Government policy toward them.

280

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, November 17, 1864 ] Washington, Oct. 31st, 1864

Dear Democrat. —Your readers doubtless like to hear from our tall President, and although they are not generally of the stamp called “radical,” they must rejoice in every evidence of his increasing earnestness in the suppression of the rebellion.

## Library of Congress

The War Department has recently been very active in ferreting out and arresting the aiders and abettors of treason. Amongst others, a wealthy German Jew clothing dealer, of Baltimore, has been arrested and imprisoned to wait his trial for furnishing goods to blockade runners. This arrest has created quite a commotion in the Monumental City, and the President is literally beseiged by deputations, delegations and petitions for his parole. The Mayor of Baltimore has been there—a deputation of Baltimore merchants, and influential persons not a few. On the 29th a delegation of Jew tailors tried their luck with an eloquent German as spokesman. A round dozen of them, in shiny new coats, and thoroughly pomatumed hair, were marshaled into the presence, and ranged themselves in a semi-circle, looking “meek as Moses,” while their spokesman harangued his “Excellency” on the impolicy of keeping a “good Union man” in prison, away from his business, his wife and his children. The thing was likely to affect his election. Uncle Abraham ran his long fingers through his hair, thrust his hands into his pockets, twisted his long limbs into all the awkward positions imaginable, as he walked backwards and forwards, or stood and listened, and stepping suddenly in front of the speaker, assured him he “couldn't help it. They couldn't put down the rebellion if the practice of furnishing goods to rebels was not broken up,” and he added:

281

“No matter whether I am re-elected or not, I shall want the rebellion put down all the same.”

One orator persisted. Our President told him that the business belonged to the War Department.

“But your Excellency *can* do it.”

“Yes, I know I *can*. I can stop the war and Jeff. Davis have his way; but,” and he turned his head on one side with his peculiar look “I'm not going to do it.”

## Library of Congress

This called out applause from the few present, all except the automaton delegation, who persisted in holding their sleek heads forward with the air of humble reverence they had at first assumed.

“See here,” broke in Father Abraham, “if this man is innocent, as you say, why does he not patiently await his trial, and make his innocence appear? Why do his friends presume in taking up my time urging his release? If I was arrested for a crime, I should await my trial, look for justice, and ask no man for mercy.”

Orator then gave a statement of the amount of money the prisoner had given to the Union cause.

“If he gave a few hundred to the Union cause, as a cover to the thousands he has contributed to the rebellion, by furnishing supplies, it does not help the case,” urged Mr. Lincoln.

“But he has not done this!”

“Make it appear on his trial. I tell you what it is, my friend, we have a big job on hand, putting down this rebellion. The War Department says to me plainly, we will not support your plank, if, every time we catch a rascal you release him!”

“But, my friend, Mr. —— is not a rascal!”

“Beg your pardon, but I think he is.”

282

“Our merchants have vouched for him, your Excellency. The Mayor of Baltimore has vouched for him. I vouched for him. He is a good union man. We all voted for him [ *you* ]. We wish to vote for you again. Here is a letter to show that I am a Union man.

## Library of Congress

“No, no, I do not want to see the letter. I can trust you as well as the writer.”

“I have spent thousands in the Union cause, your Excellency. I once paid three hundred dollars for knocking a man down.”

The President started back with a mock look of alarm, exclaiming: “I hope you will not try that on me!”

After the laugh had subsided, the orator persisted.

“Even your enemys, your excellency, say you have a kind heart.”

“Now not another word. I have no time for this, and I tell you, once for [all.]”

The pleader then begged a permit to visit the prisoner. This was granted and on taking leave, he said:

“I will come again your Excellency and show you—”

“No. You must not come again. I have no time for this, and will not see you”—and the professed Union man who had spent thousands and would aid a rogue to escape, was forced to yield space to the petitioner, for the wife of a negro soldier who lay dangerously ill was that day to be turned out of her poor dwelling for non-payment of rent.

His firmness in resisting petitions regarding the late arrests of rebel sympathizers, has given new hope to that class of his friends who have lamented the influence which these Border State pseudo Unionists have heretofore had on him, and his disposal of the case stated[,] which I have from an eye and ear witness, is one of the hopeful signs of a sterner and more effective policy.

283

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, January 5, 1865 ] Washington, Dec. 20th, 1864

## Library of Congress

Editor Democrat. —Though very much pressed with work at our Department—clerks are all working like beavers to bring up the public business—I must take time to drop you a line. I learn that Dr. [F.W.] Kelly is Surgeon in charge of the U.S. General Hospital at Prairie du Chien, and that some one has reported, through Minnesota, that he does or will appropriate to his own use the supplies sent to his men. The large Doctor has been so long in the service, as a medical officer, that it might be arrogating superhuman excellence for him, to assume that he will not or does not steal, but, if he does it is *for* and not *from* his patients.

I know him and his wife well. He was executive officer in Campbell Hospital all the time I was there in '63. He was the first officer of the hospital to whom I spoke after I went in, contrary to the rule of the Surgeon in charge, took off my bonnet and went to work. After the first ten days my headquarters were in his ward. When I found a man, in another ward, who needed special care, I applied to the Surgeon in charge and had him carried to Dr. Kelly's. Thus I had a good opportunity of learning his stealing propensities, and I certainly know no other army surgeon whom I would more implicitly trust. As a surgeon he is unsurpassed. He was the chief operator in removing the bone from Jo. Kendall's thigh. Joe. Kendall is "our Joe," of Olmsted Co., Minn. He was wounded in taking Mayree's Hill at Fredericksburg. The thigh bone was shattered up to the hip joint, and when he was on the table for amputation it was found useless to attempt that operation; but Dr. Kelly took the responsibility of removing the bone. My attention was called to Joe. the third day after the operation, but he was in another ward I had him carried to Dr. Kelly's; and jointly, we undertook 284 to bring Jo through. A letter from him last summer, written at his home in Bear Grove, Olmsted Co., Minn., told me he was walking without crutches. Since that he has been thrown from a buggy and had that new bone broken, so that is stuck out through the flesh. Joe was under Dr. Kelly's care a year. His is the most wonderful resection case of the war, an almost miracle of surgery. Let any one ask him if Dr. Kelly will let a patient suffer for anything he can command.

## Library of Congress

I wish I could tell you a very little of the scenes through which Dr. Kelly and I have passed together; of his enthusiastic, large-souled co-operation in all that would contribute to the comfort of his men; his total lack of professional assumption; of the benediction his genial face was to the sufferer; and the prompt, unfailing skill with which he met every emergency. Let no one fear to entrust. Dr. Kelly, of the Prairie du Chien Hospital, with any stores for the benefit of sick and wounded men.—For, unless he has sadly changed, they will be faithfully appropriated. This I say in justice to him, and to the men under his care, that they may not lack for comforts through misapprehension or misinterpretation.

285

### **XIII. The End of the War**

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 27, 1865 ] Washington, April 14

Editor Democrat. —To-day the old flag is once more raised on Fort Sumpter by order of the President; and, by the man who, four years ago, was obliged to pull it down at the demand of rebels—to-day the Secretary of War announced that drafting is stopped in the loyal States—to-day we virtually have peace after our terrible four years of such a war as the world has never seen—to-day the Commander-in-Chief of the rebel hordes, who raised their matricidal hands to destroy their mother country, waits, quietly, in the metropolis of that country to take passage for any part of the world he may choose as his future residence; and on this favored day the sun shines gloriously, after a long season of clouds and rain.

On this day of days—the same which is observed by so large a part of the Christian world as the anniversary of that death on Cavalry which brings redemption to a lost world—my most prominent thought is the superiority of the nation and Government founded by those Christian philosophers, male and female, who left luxurious or comfortable homes, for conscience sake, and came, in that old Mayflower and with Penn, to found states where they might worship God, over the reckless adventures who came to seek gold in the old

## Library of Congress

Dominion, and bought with a few 286 pounds of tobacco, the wives scraped up in the purlieus of European cities and sent over to them, as articles of merchandise. If any one ever doubted that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation and shows mercy unto thousands of them that love Him, let him look at this piece of history where the sins of the fathers, pride extravagance, idleness, drunkenness, debauchery and all manner of unbridled passions, became the inheritance of the children, and far more than counter-balanced all the physical advantages of the highly favored land they were permitted to inhabit, and which converted it almost into a distant waste, while the ignorant people sat on the bubble of their own false pride obstinately blind to the superiority of those who, inheriting the virtues of their self-denying ancestors, had made the desert hills of New England to blossom as the rose.

17 th. —I had written thus far when compelled to stop, before describing the rejoicings of the evening—of the week previous, and, alas! what a close was reserved for that bright day! Ere midnight every city and town in the land was startled by the news of the fearful crimes perpetrated in our midst. Of these crimes and every incident connected with them, the telegraph has informed your readers long before this can reach them, but in no other part of the country perhaps, is it so felt as here. The large proportion of rebel sympathizers believed to be implicated in the conspiracy of which Booth was but the tool, gives to all a feeling of distrust, horror and dread which cannot be realized elsewhere. It is sickening to pass the White House and adjacent Departments so recently all gorgeous with flags and all manner of festive devices blazing with many colored lights, and reverberating with triumphant music, and witness the change to 287 the sable emblems of woe. It is sadder than these outside changes in other cities, for just behind that draped wall lies the mangled body of our sainted, martyred President, and this visible presence adds greatly to the sorrow and gloom.

Anthony asked the Romans to look at Cæsar's wounds, the “dumb mouths” that should condemn his murderers, and the sight of that broken chamber of thought late so filled with kindly purposes towards his murderers, awakens a feeling which no word-painting can do.

## Library of Congress

Then the presence of the thousands of Freed-people who regarded Abraham Lincoln as their Moses, adds to the impressiveness of the scene. With tears and lamentations they lean their faces against the iron fence around the Presidential Mansion, and groan with a feeling akin to despair lest now, that their friend is gone, they shall be returned to their old masters. Old men and women lament, and pray, and ask in such a hopeless way what their fate is to be—while young men clench their hands and exclaim,

“If the North would just leave *us* to finish this war!” “They have done enough, just let them leave the rebels to us!” and other expressions of like import which shows the temper of the men who have a Fort Pillow to avenge.<sup>1</sup> One poor black woman stood out on the street quite near our house lamenting that her “good President” should be murdered in his own city, after being down to Richmond where all the danger was supposed to be, and weeping bitterly she stamped her feet and exclaimed:

<sup>1</sup> On the Fort Pillow massacre, see John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History*, 6:479 (New York, 1890).

“My good President! My good President! I would rather have died myself! I would rather have given the babe from my bosom! Oh, Jesus! Oh, Jesus!”

288

The mourning for President Lincoln is no mockery of woe, but the impassioned outburst of heartfelt grief; and it is touching to see, on every little negro hut in the suburbs, some respectful testimonial of sorrow. Many deprived themselves of a meal to get a yard or two of black to hang above their poor door or window. Was ever mortal so wept by the poor?

But these particulars you will learn from other sources. What I would say is, that joining in the general sorrow as I do, I do *not* look upon this death as a National calamity any more than I do that of John Brown. Knowing the South as I have long done; after studying their institutions and residing amongst them, I have never ceased to fear the destruction of our Government through the leniency and magnanimity of President Lincoln.—Honest, upright, single-minded and living in a community where crime is the exception, he was utterly



## Library of Congress

unable to realize the total depravity and vindictive barbarism of slaveholders as a class, and I have always feared that his long-suffering with these irreclaimable sinners would prolong the war until the patience of the North would be exhausted and a disgraceful peace be made. I could not understand why God did not give us a leader who understood the nature of Secession and would deal with it accordingly. But I see it all now.

The world at large—the masses of the Northern people—had no more just idea than had Mr. Lincoln of the *animus* of this most fiendish Rebellion, and he was the instrument chosen to show to all the experiment of heaping coals of fire on the head of that enemy. He was the one to test generosity, magnanimity, Christian charity and all that class of virtues to the utmost limit, and we have the result. As Christ was murdered by those He came to save, so has President Lincoln 289 been sacrificed by the wretches he would have shielded from the just punishment of their crimes.

What other event could have so opened the eyes of the world to the true character of the Southern people? Who now will stand between them and the reward of their two centuries' of crimes against our common humanity, the thought of which makes the blood curdle in one's veins? The leaders of rebellion themselves have placed in the Presidential chair a man who stands pledged to "arrest them, try them, convict them and *hang* them!" and who will not bid him God-speed in this good work! Should he fail to carry out his plan, they will assassinate him, and some one else will be called to fulfill the Lord's purpose of visiting, upon these people, the accumulated sins of many generations of evil-doers. Nations have no hereafter, and National sins must meet their punishment in this life. That they and we, for our complicity in their sins, have only begun to drink that cup of retribution which we must drain to the dregs, is the old conviction forced back upon me after a short season of hope that repentance had brought remission of sins.

[ *St. Cloud Democrat*, May 4, 1865 ] Washington, April 25

## Library of Congress

Editor of the Democrat. —Did it ever occur to you that ‘the Devil is a fool? Certainly the Bible might teach us to think so; for in it Righteousness is spoken of as “Wisdom.”

The folly of sin never, perhaps, was more strikingly exemplified than in the whole history of this Rebellion, and the climax of that folly is the assassination of President Lincoln. If we admit that the Prince of Darkness inspires his followers with plans and purposes to further the interests of his kingdom, we must regard him as little less than idiotic 290 when contemplating his achievements in attempting to spread and perpetuate his pet “institution.” The means devised to spread the dimensions of slavery over the continent will certainly result in its entire expulsion from the face of the civilized world.—So, according to promise, God is making “the wrath of man to praise Him,” while the remainder of wrath he will restrain. In permitting the murder of the President, He allowed “the man who is Thy sword” to hasten his departure to that better land for which his late acts have shown he was rapidly ripening. God has thus removed from this important place one who was totally incapable of understanding, or believing in, the wickedness, the cruelty, and barbarism of the Southern people, or rather of that portion of them who inaugurated and prosecuted this rebellion, in defense of their right to whip women and rob cradles. Without this understanding it was impossible he should mete out to them that punishment which divine justice demands; and his death places one in power who knows them thoroughly and has every disposition to reward them according to their work. I can think of no other blow at Satan's kingdom, which could have been so telling as this, struck by his anointed servant and special emissary. Who would want to serve under a leader so stupid—one who so turns his resources against himself? Yes; let it hereafter be written down and read by all men that—the Devil is a fool.

On the day we received news of the capture of Richmond, Vice-President Johnson appeared on the steps of the War Department and addressed a dense crowd. He repeated what he had said in U. S. Senate at the breaking out of the Rebellion, of those who were

## Library of Congress

then concocting it: "I would arrest them, I would try them, I would convict them, and I would *hang* them."

291

To those who did not hear him, I could convey no idea of the earnestness with which he uttered those words. There was no rant, no bluster; it was deep, calm, conscientious conviction, and made me shiver; and when he added, "Leniency for the masses— *halter's* for the leaders," I thanked God that President Lincoln stood between those sinners and the just reward of their crimes; for, just then, in the hour of victory, I had a fit of relenting. Believing they had surrendered or would surrender, I felt like Uncle Toby for the fly, that there was room enough in the world for them and us, and that they were no longer foes worthy of pursuit.

I had just been talking with an old colored woman standing in front of the War Department beside her bundle of soiled linen, and gesticulating violently, weeping, shouting and thanking God that Richmond was not burned. When I corrected and said "You mean, Aunty, that Richmond is taken," she continued: "Oh, yes! Missis, I tank God for dat, but I tank Him dat dey surrendered an' dat de town isn't burnt. De precious souls am not lost. Dey couldn't 'a' burnt it, Missus, 'out killin' great many people, an' I tank my Jesus dat de precious souls am not lost. I feared dey would burn de town an' many souls 'a' been lost!"

"But, Aunty, they are rebel souls!"

"I knows dat, Ma'am, I knows dat; but hell am too bad for cat or dog. I don't want anybody to go dar, an' I tank my Jesus dat Richmond isn't burned."

"Were you ever a slave, Aunty?"

"Yes'm! yes'm! All my life! All my life! an' lost all my chilen dar—all my chilen dar, got none lef now, an' tank my Jesus Richmond isn't burnt. De precious souls am not lost! I can go home an' wash now!" And taking up her heavy bundle she went weeping and praising God

## Library of Congress

for His 292 mercy to those enemies of humanity who had robbed her of her life's earnings, her children, and all that makes life dear, and left her thus—old, shrivelled and lame, to toil for the bread she must eat alone.

After this lesson, Mr. Johnson's remarks grated on my ear, and when I met him a few moments after, I insisted that he could reconsider his position. He listened very politely to all I had to say about the folly of taking life when opposition to the Government ceased. I urged that the punishment appropriate to the age was to confiscate their property to pay the debt they had forced upon the nation and that they should be prevented taking part in the Government they have labored to destroy. To my conclusion, "Let there be no hanging! Disfranchise them," he answered, with a sternness which even his kindly smile could not conceal, "Mrs. Swisshelm, a very good way to disfranchise them is to break their necks!"

There was the end of the matter and now I can see how right he was and wrong I was. It is so long since I have lived South that my convictions of the irredeemable depravity of the people have been wearing out; but he has just arrived from the other side of the border and felt the difference between an honorable vanquished foe and a frozen viper; and now, may God strengthen his hand in ridding the world of the reptiles who can only resign the use of their deadly-envenomed sting with the functions of their natural lives. The nation can never be safe while these, her implacable and wily foes, are above the grounds.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, May 11, 1865]* Washington, May 1st

Editor of the Democrat. —Truly "the way of the transgressor is hard!" The miserable actor who thought to make 293 himself a hero by assassinating his Government in the person of her chief magistrate, has met a fate at which all human instincts shudder—which one involuntarily pronounces eminently just and appropriate, and which yet does not satisfy an outraged people.

It is not enough for the people to know that this few days intervening between his crime and his death were days of physical torture from the bone broken by his leap to the

## Library of Congress

stage; that his accomplices failed to give him the aid he expected, and that thus he must have endured acutest mental torments; hunted like a wolf, hungry and faint; traced to his lair; burned out a rat; shot like a dog; lingering for hours in agony; dying without a word of repentance or hope of forgiveness; dumped into a Virginia farm wagon, than which no wheeled machine can be more contemptible; tied to the rickety old bed to prevent his being tumbled out by the motion over such roads as could not be conceived any place outside of Virginia; drawn by an old horse-frame, driven by a poor old negro who shuddered with honor at being near him, and who in helping to lift him got his hand smeared with blood and with wide rolling eyes exclaimed: "Gorra, Massa! dat's murderer's blood! Neber come off! Neber come off!—Wouldn't 'a' got dat on me for a fousan' dollars!"—in this manner brought back to the capital of that country which he had plunged into mourning, and then disappearing into oblivion. Even this fate does not satisfy the people, and crowds gathered in hope of being able to seize the carcass and tear and trample it.

The wretch sought immortality in his profession, and as the ruling passion is strong in death, he *acted* to the last. His dying words were part of the play—heard with contempt, repeated with derision. Was ever so poor a paymaster as the leader he followed? It is not true, that old proverb, 294 "The devil is good to his own." No good master would so reward a devoted servant.

On Saturday, Generals Grant and Meigs arrived at the 6th Street Wharf, walked up to 7th street, took a street car and went to headquarters. A Custom House officer who saw them and told me, said they had no attendants, and remarked that if they had been Second Lieutenants or Assistant Surgeons they would have taken a carriage at least.

I wonder where we are to get that emperor which the London *Times* says will be required to settle matters after this war is over! Sherman has lost all possible chance of getting the place, even if he would have accepted it; and I do believe President Johnson would rather be a tailor than an emperor; while Grant would decline the office for that of tanner. We may

## Library of Congress

live to see him Mayor of Galena, but if we *must* have an emperor, we shall have to look elsewhere.

It is believed here now that the reported intoxication of Vice President Johnson on Inauguration day was the result of an attempt to poison him.—This view of the case explains what otherwise is a great mystery; for President Johnson looks as little like intemperance as any man you could name. He looks like Gov. Miller; and is the Joshua to succeed our Moses called from Mt. Pisgah to the Mount of God. Let no lover of his country fear for her in President Johnson's hands. He is the Jackson the people have been calling for—not seeing that God was testing the rebels with a dispensation of mercy under his predecessor.

Sherman's army and the Army of the Potomac are on their march to Washington, probably to be discharged, but I do hope we will keep enough men in arms to send Maxmillian home.

The expenses of the Government on last Friday, the 28th 295 ult., had been lessened \$100,000 per day, and the retrenchment goes on.

Our citizens have proved to the world that freemen can leave their offices, plows and work shops and become the best soldiers that ever wore a uniform, and it now remains for them to show that they can return to office, plow and shop, and make unequaled civilians—showing that large standing armies are worse than useless. God bless our native land!

P.S.—The investigations going on are likely to prove the truth of what I have said and urged and believed so long, viz: that Presidents Harrison and Taylor were assassinated by the conspirators who have for thirty years been plotting the destruction of our Government that they might build in its place a slaveholding dictatorship; and that poor old Buchanan was poisoned for the same reason at the National [Hotel], but was poison proof.

*[St. Cloud Democrat, May 18, 1865]* Washington, May 9th

## Library of Congress

Editor of the Democrat. —Of course you have seen the Proclamation of President Johnson offering \$100,000 for Jeff. Davis, and other sums for other leaders in the Rebellion, against whom he has proof of actual complicity in the assassination of President Lincoln. The fact that President Johnson says there is proof, is sufficient. He is not one to jump at conclusions. That assassination was planned by the same men who plotted the destruction of the Government, I never for a moment doubted. They murdered Harrison and Taylor, and tried to murder poor old Jimmy Buchanan; for, this plot of secession is of long standing. Had Mr. Lincoln passed through Baltimore in coming here, before his first 296 inauguration, the plan was to murder him there. Assassination has been a polite and manly accomplishment down South for the last century; and we have reason to thank God and take courage that he has brought home to the true authors of this last crowning crime its guilt and responsibility. The English aristocrats who were so anxious to shake hands with slaveholders, over the prostate form of Free Labor, will not fancy the company in which they now find themselves. The world will learn that those who rob and murder the poor, will not hesitate to use their arts against those of higher degree.

It has long been common for Southern masters to offer rewards for taking runaway slaves, “dead or alive;” thus proclaiming themselves a community of murderers, and all these political assassinations are but the natural outgrowth of their daily habits; for, when the life of the humblest member of society ceases to be sacred, the highest has lost all security against the assassin's knife or bullet.

The investigation now going on is likely to bring to light the whole plot. Eight of the conspirators are confined here in separate places. No one knows that any other is taken. As a last means of self destruction, [Lewis] Paine [*Payne*] tried to knock his brains out against the wall to which he is chained. Now all are kept in thickly wadded caps, and solitude is having its natural effect, for they are making very free revelations, and the Southern aristocracy will soon stand in the hideous light of truth before a horror-stricken world. It will then be seen that the hard names applied to them, by anti-slavery fanatics,

## Library of Congress

fell far short of their true character. I sometimes feel almost inclined to pity the F.F.V's of this city, who have not hesitated to express sympathy with their friends engaged in trying to break up 297 the Government, while they themselves are holding lucrative places under it. The morning after the President's murder, many of them either openly exulted or found it impossible to conceal their joy. They had not counted on the resentment of the Northern people being anything very serious, and supposed it was a damaging blow to freedom and the cause of the Union. Now they are beginning to realize about where they are, and calculate the chances of keeping their places, and the efforts they make to show that the crime was committed by a Northern man and instigated by Northern copperheads is amusing. They cheerfully cut off "My Maryland" and give her to the North to be rid of the odium of their crime, and any complicity of Davis or Lee is not to be believed on any amount of evidence.

I wonder how long this Government will continue to feed its enemies in preference to its friends! The wives, widows and children of Northern soldiers, now in the armies, or who have died there, are often left to suffer, while rations are freely dealt out in Charleston and Savannah to the families of those now engaged in the rebel army.

Do the Northern people know that whenever our armies take a city, rations are regularly dealt out to the inhabitants thereof; and that the women who spit upon our flag and insult our soldiers are generally paupers dependent on our bounty, and curse our Government while going with their baskets for their share of bread and pork? In Charleston, the people drew rations from Government after Sherman took the city, and many of them took Union officers to board, charged exorbitant prices, and fed them off the rations supplied by the Union commissary departments. They did so in Fredericksburg last summer after the battle of the Wilderness. I was there taking care of the wounded, and while 298 these lay on dirty floors without any apology for a bed, Union soldiers guarded straw, hay or shucks belonging to rebels, and we could not get a pound of it, while I used bricks, by the hundred, in lieu of pillows.<sup>2</sup> There the people drew their rations, boarded officers at high prices, and not one of them was known to give a wounded man a drink of water.



## Library of Congress

Conciliation was the policy then, and thus we conciliated the vipers. Thank God, the day is past when treason was safer than loyalty, when Freedom's martyrs suffered and died, that traitors in arms against her cause might be conciliate. They have shown the effect of clemency on creatures of their class, and fully prepared the public mind for the stern justice which Andrew Johnson will absolutely mete out to them—that justice which alone can ever establish this Government on a sure foundation.

2 Mrs. Swisshelm relates her experiences in the hospitals at Fredericksburg in *Half a Century*, 306-340.

[ *st. Cloud Democrat*, August 3, 1865 ]3 Washington, Tuesday, July 11, 1865

3 This letter was reprinted from the Pittsburgh *Commercial Gazette*.

In all the mass of testimony taken before the Military Commission, little has been elicited showing the extent of complicity in the assassination plot. My own impression and that of several western people with whom I conversed, in the northern part of the city, the morning after the murder of President Lincoln, was that it was an event not unexpected to a large number of the native inhabitants. The news was certainly received with an exultation which quickly disappeared as the temper of the "Yankees" became apparent. From what I saw and heard that morning, I thought that if Booth were arrested, any attempt at trying him here would be a farce, from the probability of getting one or more 299 conspirators on any jury which might be empaneled. I have seen no such haughty insolence on the faces of women, or triumphant chuckle on that of men, since the Early raid, when young men rushed out to aid him, and old men and women chucked at the prospect of his taking Washington.

I have talked with an intelligent colored woman who says "She was in the crowd at Secretary Stanton's door on the evening of the assassination; that she was in charge of several children; and to prevent their being hurt placed them in the angle formed by the steps and wall of the house, so that she and they were almost behind Mr. Stanton while he stood on the steps speaking to the people; that a man in a heavy dark coat, with his hat drawn over his face, edged his way in amongst the children, and kept his head moving

## Library of Congress

from side to side as if trying to get a good look at Mr. Stanton, while he kept his right hand down at his side, and she thought he had a pistol in it. She became alarmed, and spoke aloud to a colored man near, asking him to come and stand between her and that man, for he had a pistol. The colored man came and took the position she desired, and the other moved off. The story was hard to believe, but her daughter stated that she came home that evening quite excited, saying there was a “spicious character in the crowd, and she thought he wanted to shoot Mr. Stanton.” I have reason to believe Mr. Stanton knew of this, and expected to the last that she would be examined by the Commission.

On a visit to Mrs. Lincoln, the day she left for Chicago, I said to her that I had always expected slavery would poison Mr. Lincoln, as it did Presidents Harrison and Taylor. The idea appeared new to her, and recalled the fact that her husband had been very ill for several days, from the effects of a dose of blue pills, taken shortly before his second 300 inauguration. She said he was not well, and appearing to require his usual medicine, blue pills, he sent to the drugstore in which [David E.] Harold [ *Herold* ] was employed last, and got a dose, and gave them to him at night, before going to bed, that next morning his pallor terrified her.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Herold was one of the conspirators in the plot to assassinate Lincoln.

“His face,” said she, pointing to the beside which she sat, “was white as that pillow-case, as it lay just there,” she exclaimed, laying her hand on the pillow—“white, and such a deadly white; as he tried to rise, he sank back again, quite overcome!”

She described his anxiety to be up, there was so much to do, and her persistence and his oppressive languor in keeping him in bed for several days; said he and she both thought it so strange that the pills should affect him in that way; they never had done so before, and both concluded they would get no more medicine there, as the attendant evidently did not understand making up prescriptions. Could this have been the time spoken of in that letter produced on the trial, in which it is said the cup had failed once?

## Library of Congress

I know an officer's widow who spent some time with her husband in Georgia while Gen. Mitchell was in command. She has told me of a pretended Union woman, in a small town where they were stationed, who kept a boarding-house for Union officers; of the large number of invalids among her boarders, and her especially remarking the excessive and peculiar pallor of these invalids; soon the number of deaths attracted attention, and an investigation was ordered on the charge that this female fiend has been poisoning her boarders. While the case was pending some order changed the troops occupying the town and my informant never learned how the matter ended, but her description of the parlor of the victims so coincides with Mrs. Lincoln's account of our 301 Martyr's appearance after the taking of the blue pills, that it has occurred to me those monsters may have some peculiar method of poisoning. Moreover, it is highly probable that our political assassinations are not yet over.

A conversation was overheard, the latter part of last month, on a dark night, between a knot of men, who distinctly detailed a plan for shooting President Johnson on the 4th. The speakers were to station themselves at different points in the crowd, and while he should be speaking at Gettysburg, at a signal, fire simultaneously. This conversation was promptly reported to Col. [Lafayette C.] Baker by Judge Day, who told me of the fact.<sup>5</sup> The person who heard it was a colored woman, late a slave, who knew of Judge Day as the slave's lawyer, and unburdened herself to him of her great secret. After he had reduced her statement to writing, he sent her with it to Col. Baker. An intelligent white woman, on the evening after the execution, overheard one man say to another that "the d—d blue legged Yankees had not made much of the conspiracy out," and were not done with it yet.

<sup>5</sup> Baker was chief of the secret service. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1:523.

Such conversations have been by no means uncommon here during the past four years, and that against Mr. Lincoln's life attracted but little attention here once, but such threats seek the cover of darkness now.

## Library of Congress

You know, of course, the speculative philosophy which claims to trace a resemblance between every human being and some species of animal; I never saw three people together who so strongly illustrate this philosophy as the three male assassins who were executed last week.<sup>6</sup> I think I could not <sup>6</sup> Payne, Herold, George A. Atzerodt and Mrs. Mary E. Surratt were executed on July 7. <sup>302</sup> have passed Harold on the street without mentally exclaiming “ape.” I have been often in the drugstore he attended; and once, as he was putting up a small package for me, I became so interested in noticing his apish ways, that I caught myself on the eve of saying aloud, “You monkey,” and found it necessary to make some remark to hide the thought I had so nearly expressed. When on trial before I had recognized him as one I had seen elsewhere that same thought came, “What an ape!” And strange his character, as given on trial, had the fidelity and ready cunning of the ape.

Payne, on the other hand, was all bovine. Once a party of hunters described to me a Buffalo hunt, in which they had been engaged in three days before, in Dacotah.—They were eloquent in their account of a fierce, old bull, who stood to defend his dominion, while his family fled in dismay.—They told of his charge first at one and then another of his would-be captors, and of the disdain with which he shook their bullets out of his matted frontlet. I had not thought of the scene for years until I saw Payne sitting erect and fearless among his captors, and the whole picture then came up like a flash. The swell of the powerful muscles of the neck, spreading out to the shoulder, tapering in the jaw—the form of the spinal column from the waist to the top of the head straight as an arrow, without that swell behind the ear which is said to indicate the social affection in the human head—the large projecting jaws—the jutting brows, sloping forehead and the prominence above, and a little back of the ear; but especially the large grey eyes, with their spot of white light, was the monarch of the prairie. His peculiar motion in tossing aside his hair added greatly to this resemblance, and I could well believe his assertion of no malice against Mr. Seward. He simply had a fierce delight in conflict, had been trained to believe that Mr. Seward was <sup>303</sup> trespassing upon his grazing lands—his divine right of owning and flogging his own slave, and charged at his pursuer like the wild buffalo of the plain.

## Library of Congress

Atzeroth [*Atzerodt*] was a panther; the form and carriage of the head, the small, green eyes, the motion of his hands, the very atmosphere around him, spoke craftiness, deep and low, cruelty, cowardice. Whatever he did, or proposed to do, was for some immediate personal benefit. He could only spring for prey when he felt assured of success.

[*St. Cloud Democrat, August 10, 1865*] 7 Washington, July 20, 1865

7 This letter was reprinted from the Pittsburgh *Commercial Gazette*.

The pall of silence which has fallen upon the grave of Mrs. Seward is still more remarkable than the unobtrusive quiet of her life, and I trust it is not idle curiosity which makes me more anxious to know her history than that of any woman whose name I have ever heard. If I mistake not her example is one which the women of this country cannot afford to lose; and in hope it may induce some one who knew her to give us some incidents in her honorable life, let me tell you the little, the very little, I know.<sup>8</sup>

8 Mrs. Seward died on June 21, 1865.

When I went into Campbell Hospital, after the battle of Chancellorsville, and called upon the public for fruit acids as an antidote to thirst and hospital gangrene; the first contribution I received was from Mrs. Frederick Seward. It was accompanied by a note asking me to send to her when anything special was wanted. Some one, that I supposed knew, told me that this Mrs. Frederick Seward was the wife of a nephew of the Secretary of State, who, being a bachelor, had this lady to preside over his home.<sup>9</sup> She afterwards called 9 Mrs. Frederick Seward was the wife of a son of William H. Seward. 304 at my rooms, and I at Mr. Seward's house, on hospital business. I supposing she was Mr. Seward's niece by marriage, until the following winter, when there was much trouble in the contraband camps. Among the teachers was a quakeress, from central New York, one of those women who left homes of wealth and refinement to live in camp, cabin, and barrack, to distribute clothing, books, encouragement, and instruction amongst those scattered and bereaved people. We were one day in troubled council on one of the many wrong which had stubbornly refused to righted. It was hard to ask Secretary Stanton to give the

## Library of Congress

time necessary to understand the case, while his anteroom was constantly thronged with persons waiting on important business. What to do, was the question. Folding her hands in her lap, and looking down thoughtfully, this lady soliloquized: "If Mrs. Seward was only here."

"What Mrs. Seward?"

"Mrs. Secretary Seward!" she answered abstractedly, and kept on thinking.

My exclamation of surprise aroused her, and her surprise at my ignorance was equal to mine at her information. A question as to the presentability of that lady, since such a person did actually exist, started her to talk as I had never before heard her.

She described Mrs. Seward as one of the excellent of the earth, a woman of wonderful intellectual power, and great breadth of attainment—the companion, confident counsellor of her husband—one who reads his written speeches before the printer saw them, and gave an opinion which he valued more than any other—one who read and digested long, tiresome documents, and gave him the substance in a few moments fireside chat, thus contributing largely to that fund of information which distinguished Mr. Seward. She was his "higher law" adviser, and whenever his policy fell below that standard he had differed with her in opinion. She ever regarded the right as the expedient; or, in other words, aimed always to walk in the narrow path straight toward "the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

In dress and manner this friend described her as simple, and unostentatious to singularity. A smart mechanic's wife would not have exchanged wardrobes with her, and milliners' apprentices looked at her in pitying wonder for her lost opportunities. A few days after this conversation Mrs. Seward returned from Auburn, but her arrival was not publicly announced. The contraband trouble was explained to her, and a short note of modest request from her to one in authority removed the difficulty before which we had been standing in dismay. After that, when I heard people remark that the Seward gave no

## Library of Congress

receptions I have thought of a little teacher of contrabands, in the magnificent costume of a mixed straw bonnet and brown ribbons, dark woolen dress and shawl, and heavy shoes having marks of "sacred soil," with a little traveling basket on her arm going to Mrs. Seward's house in the gloaming, weary, hungry, disheartened, and footsore; and finding a reception, a bath, a dinner, a bed, a breakfast, a long comforting talk, a note to remove her overhanging mountain, and saw her lightened step as she returned to her duties rejoicing. I never heard what kind of jewels her hostess wore at these receptions, but calculate they were not bought at Tiffany's.

A woman in Mrs. Seward's position, who simply remained outside that gilded pagoda, society, in which her majesty, First Family, with twenty-pound-of-tobacco-worth of 306 grandmother to stand upon—her Royal Highness' Official Position, with a wire-pulling husband to bear against—the Duchess of Shoddy with a pedestal or greenbacks for support—the Countess of Petroleum with a sea of light to illumine her diamonds and My Lady Bloomer, radiant in health and independence contend so fiercely for the precedence, she would have been worthy of study as a natural curiosity; but to know that she lived out of the world of fashion and in the world of duty from a high ideal of Christian obligation is to know that her example is one that the world cannot well afford to lose.

Mr. Seward's recovery from the double injuries of accident and the assassin's knife is a common wonder; and Surgeon [Joseph K.] Barnes has said that when he left Frederick Seward on the night of the assassination he little thought to find him alive in the morning—that for weeks, the quickening of his pulse, at any moment, must have been fatal. What secured that perfect repose of body and mind necessary to the recovery of both? The report of her death says it was caused by illness occasioned by the distress into which the family was plunged by the attempted assassination. In other words, the devoted wife and mother died that the husband and son might live. Those lives in which she had merged her individual being could only be reached through hers. The dagger of the conspiracy made a passage for her spirit out of its clay prison as effectually as if it had passed through her heart and in doing so was turned aside from its purposed victim. Nothing in the history

## Library of Congress

of remarkable women interests me so much as the little I know of this strong, heroic, unselfish, silent wife and mother of men whose names are known over the civilized world.

307

### **XIV. Women Workers**

[St. Cloud Democrat, December 21, 1865] Washington, Nov. 13, 1865

Washington is, perhaps, the very worst place in the country in which to make any great pioneer movement in reference to woman's social position. It is, to all intents and purposes, a Southern city, and the centre of snobism. Here is the focus of that system of education South which makes all labor degrading, and of our common school education North, which teaches that manual labor is at most to be regarded as a means of reaching the Presidential chair. As our boys and men are all expecting to be Presidents, so our girls and women must all hold themselves in readiness to preside in the White House; and in no city in the world can honest industry be more at a discount than in this capital of the government of the people. Perhaps two-thirds of all important places in the departments are held by Southern men, or men who, by long residence here, have become thoroughly Southernized. If the free labor system, for men, in the rebel States, meets its principal obstacle in the ignorance of the employers, what must be the difficulties thrown in the way of the free-labor system for women, by men whose entire habit of thought regards the sex as slaves, drawing-room divinities, or toys? Of the clerks employed here, there is not one in twenty who can go into a room where women are employed, and transact any business with one of them without in some way reminding her of her womanhood. They are "sorry to trouble the ladies," or they hope the ladies are quite well," or "it is a pity to have ladies shut up in offices such fine weather," or "it is bad for ladies to come out in such unpleasant weather." In some way the ladies are to be deferred to or encouraged, and their shortcomings excused because they *are* ladies. The idea of treating them as copyists and clerks, simply this and nothing more, is beyond the mental caliber of almost any man with whom they are brought into personal relations, while the "ladies," in their dependent



## Library of Congress

position, feeling no assurance of continued employment on any settled principle, naturally resort to personal favoriteism as a means of getting bread.

There is radical error in the manner of appointing women. It is not every man who is fit for any pioneer movement, and to expect that all women or even a majority, are fitted for this advance post on the picket line of civilization, is expecting superhuman perfection of the feminine half of humanity. Yet such is the system, or want of system, on which this grand experiment has been inconsiderately tried. To get an appointment no qualifications are required, except influential friends; and something near one-third of all the appointments are from the District or its immediate vicinity, and, of course, are women of the Southern idea that a woman's personal charms and decorations are her stock in trade—women who have as little idea of themselves as competitors for bread in the world's labor market, as have the men with whom they are associated of them in such a relation. Of the Northern women appointed, it is not always those whom the work wants who get the places.

Some Honorable Senator or Representative has a female 309 friend without visible means of support. He gets her a place, as she makes her appearance, perhaps a little piece of painted impertinence, who might have been stowed away in the catacombs in the days of the Pharaohs for all one can tell of her age, but who studiously assumes the airs of a miss of sixteen. Her wrinkles are filled out with pipe clay or some other kind of light-colored mud; her eyebrows are made of black lead or lampblack, or something in that line, her hair is dyed until it is dead enough to satisfy any respectable undertaker of the propriety of burial; and one wonders that she does not add a setting of green leaves to the magenta-colored roses on her thin cheeks. She comes tripping in on the toes of her infinitesimal gaiters, gets off her things, and displays a head which reminds one of a drop chandelier trimmed for a ball and undergoing the process of dusting, while her pins, chains, bracelets, frills, and other fixtures would set up a tin box peddler in trade. She establishes herself at her table, opens her basket, gets out her beads, and goes to counting and stringing; “one, two, three, four, and then a large one; one, two, three, four, and a knot;” for you see, she is a philanthropist, and kindly instructs the lady at the next table in the mysteries of

## Library of Congress

this becoming and lady-like employment. The superintendent gets fidgety, and brings this interesting toiler in life's workshop a piece of writing to copy. The lady looks injured, and as the superintendent is, of course, a Southern gentleman, who has been selected for that place with special reference to his amiability, he feels like "a horrid wretch." The dainty little hands take up the pen, and the dainty little brain keeps on, "one, two, three, four, and a large one—one, two, three, four, and a loop." "Loop?" Yes. Beg pardon! I said "knot," but [it] is a "loop" which comes after the second four.

310

The writing finished, it is sent off by a messenger, and presently a clerk appears with it in his hand. He looks weary, has found a mistake, and is directed to the little beadmonger, who drops her hands in her lap and her head on her left shoulder, cocks her right eye at him like a canary making prognostications about the weather, says something silly, and the poor man begins to scratch his head. The conference lasts some time. The man retires baffled and swearing "not loud but deep," the other ladies exchange glances and smiles, or perhaps see nothing wrong, while not one begins to comprehend the "deep damnation" of the whole affairs, or to know that then and there every woman in the room "felt flat" and richly deserved so to feel.

Another, pure as New England frost, "bright as a button," active as a bee, does as much work in the month and does it as well as any man in the department, but her book is wanted for reference. She wants to surprise some friend with a pair of socks for a new baby; and while her book is gone, whips out her knitting and goes nimbly to work. Some clerk comes into the room, goes out and reports that the women in that room do nothing but knit.

Still another comes sailing in at 9½ o'clock, gets off her wraps; sinks into her chair with the air of a willow wand cracked in the middle; languidly asks some one to call a servant; sends said servant, with her compliments, to the head of the bureau for the loan of his morning paper; reads it leisurely, with a running comment, loud enough to be heard all

## Library of Congress

over the room and in the one adjoining, on the houses to rent, the late appointments and removals; tells who built the house for sale on such a street and who live in it at such a time; gives an inventory of their furniture and history of their family in its lateral and collateral branches; 311 finds who is dead and who married, and does as much for their geneological trees; begins writing at 10½, but keeps up the stream of small talk until some other lady is through with her morning paper; when she reads that, gets several new texts, and goes on with the commentary until 2 or 2½ o'clock, when, being quite worn out with her day's labor, she gracefully retires. Of course, she is one of those favored mortals who can trace some root of their family tree back to some one of those excellent women who came to the Old Dominion, originally, as exchange for tobacco, and whose descendants wear the title of "F.F.V." with such proud satisfaction. Of course she is one of those Government employees who shrug their high shouldered dignity, and elevate their aristocratic noses at sight of "Lincoln's rabble," i.e. Union soldiers, and are shocked at the immoralities introduced by strangers, i.e., Northern people, into Washington, which has been so transformed by these vandals, that a native born gentlemen can no longer sell his own baby when it gets old enough, in order to gratify his lady friend with a drive behind a pair of fast horses. As she is "a law unto herself," and her fine lady airs make her monarch of all she surveys, is it a wonder that other women imitate her, and that a very few such do much to disorganize the working force of a department?

There is yet another class of appointees—the lady who must see the clerk for whom she is recording or copying, and who, when he comes, strikes a St. Agnes attitude, folds her hands meekly, draws her lips to a "prunes, prism, and potato" pucker, turns up her eyes like a duck in a thunder storm, or a juvenile bovine in the act of becoming veal, makes a pun and an impression, or several puns and as many impressions, grows witty, tells the unfortunate man that she 312 dreamed last nights she was married *to him*, self-satisfied and subsides in a simpler, while there is no one with the nerve or authority to order her out of the room and see that she never returns.

## Library of Congress

In the same bureau, where you find the assortment described, and that is most of them, there is perhaps a majority of female clerks with whose dullness and demeanor it would be difficult to find fault—women working like horses, scarcely taking time for lunch, making books of records second to none, and copies of importance papers with wonderful rapidity and correctness; some of them doing the same kind of work, and as much of it, as men at salaries of \$1,200, \$1,400, and 41,600 per annum, while they get \$820.

At the end of the month all get equal pay. Their chances of promotion are the same, and especial favors are for those who have done the least work. What wonder that the experiment is thought by many to be a failure?

It is for the people to say whether influential man shall close their door against honorable women by making these places accessible to women of bad character and no character. Will they pay men double or treble salaries for doing what women can do quite as well, and will do for a compensation so much lower? Will they not sustain heads of departments against that type of Congressional influence which carries corruption of the worst kind into the departments, and makes government offices places of assignation, or exclude honorable women from honorable and suitable employment? The exclusion of women from these places will not improve the morals of the city or the country, while their employment in them, under proper regulations could not fail to exercise a most beneficial influence. There are thousands of women perfectly able and willing to perform the duties of any first 313 or second class clerkship here; thousands who by the war have been deprived of their former names of support, and left with families dependent upon them; and it is mean and cowardly for the government to set the example of driving such from a class of occupations well suited to their capacity, as the shortest way of disposing of abuses for which government officials are responsible.

315

**Index**

## Library of Congress

Abbot, 68

Abbott, Mrs. Ezra, 68

Academy of Music (Brooklyn), 199

Acker, William H., 109

Adams, Green, 206, 207, 208

Addison, Anthony, 223n

Addison, James L., 223n

*Albatross* (Pittsburg), 5

Aldrich, Cyrus, 124, 125

Allegheny Mountains, stagecoaching, 160

Allegheny River Valley, oil wells, 94n

Ambulance, described, 229

Andrews, Christopher C., 55

Anoka, 47, 49, 51, 73, 84, 155; Lyceum, 47; Baptist Church, 47, 48, 127; lecture, 47, 126;  
New England House, 127, 155

*Anoka Republican*, 126

“Anson Northup,” steamboat, 95n

Antietam, battle, 214

## Library of Congress

Army of the Potomac, 171, 241,244, 245; movements, 139, 216, 235, 294; disbanding recommended, 172; under Hooker, 178; inaction, 230; at Chancellorsville, 255; Sixth Corps, 258n, 273, 274

Arthur, Timothy S., 40

*Arthur's Home Magazine*, 40

Ashland, 69n

Atheneum (St. Paul), 54

Atlanta, Ga., captured, 275

Atzerodt, George A., 301n, 303

Babbitt, William D ., 101, 128

"Babies & Co.," address, 149

Baker, Edward D., 213

Baker, Lafayette C., 301

Ball, Edward W., 123

Ball, John, 115

Ball's Bluff, battle, 213, 214, 223n

Baltimore, Md., 166, 235

Bancroft, John E., 70, 73, 147, 265

## Library of Congress

Bancroft, Mrs. John E., 70, 73, 147

Barnes, Dr. Joseph K., 306

Barnum, Phineas T., 184n

Barrett, Theodore H., 84

Bates, Edward, 56

Baxter, Dr. Jedediah H., 232, 234

Bear Grove, 284

Bebb, William, speaker, 204; governor of Ohio, 205n

Becker, Mrs. ———, 73

Beecher, Rev. Henry Ward, 185, 198n

Beeson, ———, 193

Belote, E. C., 53, 85, 168

Belote, Mrs. E. C. 53, 85, 168

Bemis, Dr. Nathan M., 60

Benson, George B., 44

Benson, Jared, 47, 48

Benson, Mrs. Jared, 47, 48

## Library of Congress

Benton County, 40, 50

Big Mound, battle, 267n

Bingham, James, 155, 156, 157

Bingham, John, 154, 155, 156, 157, 153

Birney, James G., 5, 6, 45, 60

Bishop Seabury Mission (Faribault), 63n

Bishop Seabury Universal (Faribault), 63n

“Black Gag” rule, denounced, 5

Blakely, —, 147

316

Blakely, David, 74, 147, 266

Blakely, Mrs. David, 147

Bliss, Mrs. Silas S., 189n

Booth, John Wilkes, 286, 298; death, 292, 293

Bowdish, Rev. Charles G., 143

Bowdish, Mrs. Charles G., 143

Breck, Rev. James L., 62, 63n, 64

Breck, Mrs. James L., 63, 64



## Library of Congress

Breckinridge, John C., Presidential candidate, 93, 94, 274; property in Minnesota, 134; plans to attack Washington, 272

Bride, Robert, 257

Brisbin, John b., 153, 154

Broker, Joseph, 82

Brooklyn, N. Y., 192, 200; lecture, 27, 185

Brott, George F., 10, 11, 17

Brown, John, of Osawatomie, 183, 205, 288

Brown, Orville, 64, 265

Brownlow, Rev. William G., 186

Brownsville, 78; lecture, 70, 76

Bull Run, battle, 236; First Minnesota, 112n, 213

Burbank, James C., express line, see Minnesota Stage Company

Burnside, Ambrose E., 223, 228, 253n

Butler, A. H., 76

Butler, Benjamin F., 271, 272

Butler Seminary (Butler, Pa.), 5, 53

Caledonia, 80; lecture, 76

## Library of Congress

Calhoun, Rev. Thomas, 20

Calhoun, Mrs. Thomas, 20

Cameron, Simon, removal, 128, 132n; instructions to Sherman, 131, 132; recommendations *re* slaves, 132n, 219

Camp Lincoln, Sioux prisoners, 266n

Campbell Hospital (Washington, D. C.), 28, 232, 233, 238, 256, 283, 303

Cannon, Mary S. Mrs. Swisshelm's mother, 4, 5

Cannon City, 62

Cannon River, 58, 62, 150; bridge at Northfield, 59

Capital punishment, articles on, 5

Carr, Dr. Ezra S., 138

Carrington, Edward C., 210

Caruthers, William A., 21

Carver Hospital (Washington, D. C.), 239

Casey, Silas, at Fair Oaks, 214

Castle Rock, 58

Cavanaugh, James M., 76

Cedar Valley Railroad, *see* Minneapolis and Cedar Valley Railroad

## Library of Congress

Center Hospital (Washington, D. C.), 253

*Central Republican* (Faribault), 64, 264

Champlin, 48, 128, 251

Chancellorsville, Va., battle, 255, 303; campaign, 258n

Channing, Dr. William E., 242

Channing, Rev. William H., pastor Unitarian Church, 242-244; chaplain House of Representatives, 242n; personal appearance, 244

Charleston, S. C., captured, 297

Chatfield, lecture, 75

*Chatfield Republican*, 75

Chester, Pa., 166

Chicago, Ill., 29, 71; lecture, 27, 159; Republican convention, 1860, 57; Tremont House, 87; Mrs. Swisshelm's visit, 162; newspapers, 163

Chicago and North Western Railroad, 161, 161, 162, 169

*Chicago Journal*, 218

Chicago Zouaves, 90-93, 177

Chickahominy River, 214

## Library of Congress

Chippewa Indians, uprising feared, 26; agency, 153; marauding expedition, 160n; Crow Wing, Red Lake, and Pembina bands, 179n; Leech Lake reservation, 270n, 276n

Civil War, Mrs. Swisshelm's attitude, 24, 25; report of committee on conduct, 211, 213, 214, 224; conduct 317 duct criticized, 221, 237; ends, 285. See *also* individual battles

Clay, Cassius M., 23, 57

Clearwater, 43; described, 44; lecture, 44

Clephane, Lewis, 182

Cogswell, Amos, 66

Colburn, Mary Jackman, 48, 49

Colburn, Samuel, 48

Cole, Gordon E., 60, 148, 266

Cole, Mrs. Gordon E., 60, 61

Colfax, Schuyler, 179

Coloney, Myron, 153

Columbus, Christopher, Goodrich's estimate, 55

*Commercial Journal* (Pittsburgh), 5; combines with *Saturday Visiter*, 8

Committee on the Conduct of the War, *Report*, 211, 213, 214, 224

Company A, First Minnesota, 118, 122n

## Library of Congress

Company B, First Minnesota, 118

Company C, First Minnesota, 108, 113, 118, 255

Company D, First Minnesota, 108, 109, 118

Company F, First Minnesota, 115, 118

Company G, First Minnesota, 118, 122n, 253

Company H, First Minnesota, 118

Company I, First Minnesota, 118

Company J, First Minnesota, 118

Company K, First Minnesota, 111, 115

Confederates, 211, 212, 245; property confiscated, 134, 172, *see also* Confiscation Act; confiscate property of Unionists, 134; property in Washington, 172, 173; punishment of prisoners, 253n; reward for capture of leaders, 295

Confiscation Act, 133; of 1861, 134n; of 1862: 134n, 165n, 171n, opposed by Democrats, 170, criticized, 172, enforcement, 249, 268

Contrabands, camp in Washington, 250, 251

Cooper Institute (New York, N. Y.), 199

Copperheads, 205, 224, 297; alleged plots against Union, 211, 212, 245; influence, 212, 215; denounce confiscation of Confederate property, 221. *See also* Disloyalty

Cornell, A. B., 65, 66, 67n

## Library of Congress

Cowan, Thomas, 55

Cox, Charles B., 162

Cox, Samuel S., 271

Crawford County, Pa., 70, 73, 147

Croffut, William A., 135

Crow Creek Indian Reservation, 228n

Crow Wing, 73

Cullen, William J., 127

Dakota County, 58, 62

Dakota Territory, 95

Darrow, J. F., 38

Davis, —, 98

Davis, Jefferson, 173, 221, 238, 245, 281, 285, 297; reward offered for capture, 295

Day, George E. H., 181, 193, 301

Delaware River, 166

Demmon, Dan M., 193

Democrats, 56, 93, 173; in northern Minnesota, 12, 21, 22, 24, 42; and slavery, 13, 170; attitude toward Lincoln, 24; national convention, 1860, 94; accused of disloyalty, 167, 212,

## Library of Congress

271; attitude toward Confiscation Act and Emancipation Proclamation, 170; appointed to office, 187; oppose soldier voting, 267

Devil's Lake, N. D., proposed Indian reservation, 279

Dike, William H., 105, 112, 113, 120

Disloyalty, among government employees, 223, 223n, 270; in Washington, 236, 238, 270, 296, 298, 301; Lincoln's policy, 280-282; government policy, 280, 298. *See also* Copperheads

318

Dix, Dorothea L., 255

Dodge County, 69n, 70, 71; described, 73

Dole, William P., 225, 228; in St. Cloud, 179

*Dollar Newspaper* (Philadelphia, Pa.), 5

Donaldson, Nicholas M., 148

Donnelly, Ignatius, 136, 137, 168; exposes Indian frauds, 275; nominated for Congress, 1864, 275; characterized, 276; Indian policy, 279

Donnelly, Mrs. Ignatius, 136, 168; sketch, 137

Douglas, Stephen A., debates with Lincoln, 23; presidential candidate, 93, 94, 97, 102

Douglas County, 153

Early, Jubal A., attacks Washington, 273, 299

## Library of Congress

East St. Cloud, 52

Edelbrock, Joseph, 82

Edgerton, Alonzo J., 55

Edwards' Ferry, Md., 128

Ellsworth, Elmer E., 90n, 117

Emancipation, *see* Slaves

Emancipation Proclamation, 171n, 215; opposed by Democrats, 170

Emerson, John, 52

Emerson House (East St. Cloud), 52

Evans, D. M., 228

Everett, Edward, 93, 97, 198n

Fair Oaks, battle, 214n

Fales, Mrs. Almira, 229

Falmouth, Pa., 246

*Family Journal and Visiter* (Pittsburgh), 8

Faribault, Alexander, 64

Faribault, Mrs. Alexander, 64



## Library of Congress

Faribault, 58, 59, 61, 67, 68; lecture, 60, 64, 148; vicinity described, 62; schools and churches, 62, 63n; population, 1860, 62, 74n

Farragut, David G., captures Mobile, 275n

Farrell, Wilson B., 109

Fell, Dr. Vickers, 48, 50, 175, 181, 185, 198

Fifth Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, 239, 256; in New York, 254

Fillmore County, 75, 80

First Regiment Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, 135n, 257; recruits, 25, 128; at Fort Snelling, 104-125; ordered to frontier forts, 107, 108n; leaves for Harrisburg, 108n, 123, 124; equipment, 111, 112, 114, 122, 123; at Edwards' Ferry, 128; at Ball's Bluff, 213; at Bull Run, 213; at Gettysburg, 245; in New York, 254, 268. See *also* individual companies

Fiske, Rev. A. S., 56, 126

Fletcher, —, 44

Flinn, John M., 252

Florida, Hunter's proclamation *re* slaves, 219n

Foote, Andrew H., 204, 209

Fort Abercrombie, dakota, Territory, 108; attacked by Sioux, 26

Fort Donelson, Ky., battle, 132n

Fort Pillow, Tenn., massacre, 287

## Library of Congress

Fort Randall, S. D., 238n

Fort Reno, Md., 273

Fort Ridgely, 108n, 131, 133n

Fort Ripley, 84, 102; garrison withdrawn, 9; detachment of First Minnesota, 108n, 122

Fort Snelling, 104, 108n; First Minnesota, 104-123; described, 105, 106, 109, 114, 123

Fort Snelling Reservation, 106

Fort Sumter, 271, 285; captured, 24, 25, 211; ruins, 268

Foster, Charles, 48, 49, 51

Fredericksburg, Va., hospitals, 217, 232; captured, 228, 239n, 256, 274, 283; roads near, 230; Mrs. Swisshelm's visit, 297, 298n

*Free Will Baptist*, 264n

Freedmen's association, support school for Contrabands, 251

319

Freeman, Ambrose, 139, 267

Frémont, John C., 180, 272; personal appearance, 176, 209; characterized, 177; popularity, 177, 199; emancipation proclamation, 177n, 205, 219; dismissed, 177n; influence over Negroes, 222; advocated leader of Negro troops, 241

Fremont City, 44

Frost, David H., 145n

## Library of Congress

Gaylord, Rev. Noah M., 234

Georgia, Hunter's proclamation *re* slaves, 219n

Gettysburg, Pa., 246; battle, 237, 241, 245, 247; treatment of wounded, 254; investigation of Meade's conduct, 271

Giddings, Dr. Aurora W., 127

Giddings, Aaron, 54, 168; estimate of Columbus, 55; author, 55n

Goodrich, Joseph, 138n, 139

Gorman, Willis A., commands First Minnesota, 104, 106, 107, 108, 110, 112, 119, 120, 122, 124; military bearing, 105; quarters at Fort Snelling, 109, 113; horsemanship, 113

Gorman, Mrs. Willis A., 106; sketch, 110

Graham, Sylvester, 49n

Grant, Ulysses S., 275; in Washington, 294

Great Western Railroad, *see* Chicago and North Western Railroad

Greeley, Horace, 24, 26, 198n, 200

Grow, Frederick, 179

Grow, Mrs. Frederick, 179

Grow, Galusha A., in St. Cloud, 22, 179; holds reception, 178

Gull Lake, 103n

## Library of Congress

*Half a Century*, 30

Halleck, Henry W., 215; resignation advocated, 218; accused of disloyalty, 271

Hamlin, Edward O., 40

Hamlin, Hannibal, 23

Harper's Ferry, 108, 235

Harrisburg, Pa., 235; objective of First Minnesota, 108n, 111, 118

Harrison, William H., 295

Hastings, 78, 149, 153, 161, 162; lecture, 76, 151; described, 149; Herndon Hotel, 151; vicinity described, 152

*Hastings Independent*, 151n

Haven, William S., 166

Hawkins' Hill, Pa., 159

Hawley, C. M., 162

Hays, Samuel L., 21, 39, 40n

Herndon Hotel (Hastings), 150

Herold, David E., 300, 301n, 302

Hoag, Richard A., 145

Hole-in-the-Day, Chippewa chief, 270n

## Library of Congress

Holley, Henry W., 75

Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 198n

Holt, Joseph B., 48, 49; enlists, 128; superintends Contraband camp, 251

Holt, Mrs. Joseph B., 48, 251

Hooker, Joseph, 222, 223, 224; commands Army of the Potomac, 178, 217; at Fredericksburg, 228, 230; tactics criticized, 229

Horicon, Wis., 139, 140

Hospitals, Washington, 217, 229; Fredericksburg, 217, 232; Prairie du Chien, 283, 284. See *also* Campbell, Carver, Center, Judiciary Square, and Lincoln hospitals

Houston County, 76, 80

Hudson, Wis., lecture, 76

Hungry Point, 152; vicinity described, 153

Hunter, David, 226; emancipation proclamation, 219n

Illinois, 183; compared with Minnesota, 83

“Indian Massacres of Minnesota,” address, 21, 159n

320

Indiana, compared with Minnesota, 83

Indians, Mrs. Swisshelm's attitude, 26, 27, 279; capacity for civilization, 63; government policy criticized, 63, 160, 226; attitude of easterners, 181, 191-194; lecture on, quoted,

## Library of Congress

182-184; methods of warfare against, criticized, 267, *See also* Chippewa, Pillager, Red Lake, and Sioux Indians

Inman, Rev. Thomas E., 19, 231 “International,” steamboat, 154n

Johnson, Andrew, Mrs. Swisshelm's estimate, 28, 294, 295; governor of Tennessee, 186n; speaker, 210; attitude toward Confederates, 290, 292, 298; offers reward for Davis, 295; alleged plot to assassinate, 301

Judiciary Square Hospital (Washington, D. C.), 239, 253

Julian, George W., 265

Kansas, 43n

Kelly, D. F. W., 283

Kelly, Mrs. F. W., 283

Kelsey, David M., 181, 234

Kelsey, Mrs. David M., 256

Kendall, Joseph B., 239n, 283, 284

Kendall, Dr. S. B., 239n

Kennedy, James F., 139

Kentucky, Lincoln's policy, 25; influence on Federal war policies, 132; attitude toward Union, 132n, 183

Ketcham, Charles, 52

## Library of Congress

King, William S., 181

Kinkead, Will, 278

Knights of the Golden Circle, 223

Kossuth, Louis, 46

La Crescent, 161

La Crosse, Wis., 71, 85n, 86, 118, 140, 160, 161; lecture, 76

La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad, 87, 98, 100, 161; injunction, 98

*La Crosse (Wis) Republican*, 161

Lake City, 141, 144,; lecture, 143; described, 143

Lane, James H., 135

Leach, William B., 118

“Lee, Minnie Mary,” see Wood, Mrs. William H.

Lee, Robert E., 223, 234, 238, 244, 252, 297; invasion of Pennsylvania, 235, 237, 241, 245; at Gettysburg, 241, 271

Leech Lake Indian Reservation, 276n

Leonard, Maurice F., 254

Le Sage, Joseph H., 103

*Letters to Country Girls*, 8, 70

## Library of Congress

Lewis, Joseph, 54, 85

Liberty party, 5

Lincoln, Abraham, 97, 132, 194n, 203, 229, 267, 285, 287, 288; presidential candidate, 23, 57n, 276; calls for volunteers, 24; political policies, 24, 187, 218, 219; conciliatory policy, 25, 28, 187, 194, 218, 272, 291; Mrs. Swisshelm seeks interview, 27, 30, 180, 224, 228; policy *re* arming Negroes, 132n, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 218; emancipation policy, 132, 205, 219n, *see also* Emancipation Proclamation; confiscation policy, 135; characterized, 173, 188, 288, 290; interviews Stanton and Frémont, 178; holds reception, 186, 188, 190; attitude toward Sioux prisoners, 192, 225, 227; personal appearance, 207, 210; dismisses McClellan, 215; attitude toward disloyalty, 280—282; death, 286, 287, 289, 290, 295, 296, 298

Lincoln, Mrs. Abraham, loyalty questioned, 132, 188; personal appearance, 189; characterized, 190; discusses husband's death, 299

Lincoln, George B., 185, 186, 200

Lincoln, Mrs. George B., 185, 186

Lincoln, Thomas ("Tad"), 208

321

Lincoln Hospital (Washington, D. C.), 239

Little Crow, Sioux chief, 194, 195n, 225, 227

Little Falls, 43; lecture, 41; Methodist Church, 41; Lyceum, 41; described, 101-103

Little Falls Manufacturing Company, 102



## Library of Congress

Littlefield, Arsanius, 233

Long Prairie, 160n

Lottridge, Leonard, 161

Lottridge, Mrs. Leonard, 161

Louisville, Ky., 3, 4

Lower Monticello, 46

Lowry, Sylvanus B., 20, 43n; sketch, 12-19; controversy with Mrs. Swisshelm, 12-19, 30

Lufkin, J. B., 155

Lufkin, Mrs. J. B., 127

Lyon, Charles W., 142

Lyon, Mrs. Charles., 142

Lyons, Mrs. —, 44

McCartney, Rev. Joseph, 137, 148

McClellan, George B., 172, 217, 223, 229; accused of disloyalty, 167, 173, 212-216, 271; removed, 167, 215; rumors of restoration, 178; unpopularity, 199, 200; army support, 224; tactics criticized, 226; presidential candidate, 272, 275, 278; Washington supporters, 277

McDonald, Joseph, 254

McDowell, Irvin, 235

## Library of Congress

McKune, Lewis, 122n

McNair, Dunning, 117

Madison, Wis., 133, 137; lecture, 138

Maine Prairie, 26, 219

Maine Relief Association, 255

Mankato, 266n

Mann, Charles H., 145n, 149

Mann, Mrs. M. H., 149

Manney, Rev. Solon W., 62, 63n

Mantor, Peter, 71

Mantorville, 67, 73; lecture, 74, 147

*Mantorville Express*, 70, 264

Marye's Hill, 258, 274, 283

Maryland, 166, 167; Lincoln's policy 25

Mason, Charles, 258

Maximilian, Archduke, 294

Maynard, Horace, 208, 209

## Library of Congress

Meade, George G., 235, 244; at Gettysburg, 237, 241; at Warrenton, 252; conduct investigated, 271

Medary, Dakota Territory, 95n

Meeker County, 127

Meigs, Montgomery C., 246; in Washington, 249

Merchant's Hotel (St. Paul), 53, 85

Metropolitan Hotel (Red Wing), 77

Mexican War, 7

Mill Springs, Kv., battle, 134n

Miller, Rev. Dan H., 39

Miller, Stephen, 124, 248; speaker, 43, 44; delegate to Republican convention, 57; personal appearance, 104, 294; at Fort Snelling, 104, 105, 107, 111, 112, 118, 119, 120, 121; lieutenant colonel, First Minnesota, 104n, 266n; horsemanship, 113; characterized, 266; candidate for governor, 266, 267, guards condemned Sioux, 266

Miller, Wesley, 119; death, 247; sketch, 247-249

Mills, E. P., 64

Milton, Wis., 138; lecture, 139

Milton Academy (Milton, Wis.), 138n, 139

Milwaukee, Wis., described, 87

## Library of Congress

Minneapolis, 104, 111, 126, 150, 154, 160; lecture, 21, 34, 74, 128, 132, 133n; Winslow House, 35, 37, 38; Company D, First Minnesota, 108; Free Will Baptist Church, 128, 132, 148

Minneapolis and Cedar Valley Railroad, 106

Minnehaha Falls, described, 105, 106

Minneiska, 141

Minnesota, 43; political situation, 1869, 22; natural advantages, 36, 37, 62, 71, 72, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 322 150, 163; lakes, 69n; railroads, 72, 80, 153; panic of 1857, 80; compared with Pennsylvania, 90; speculators, 96; wool growing, 127; mail service, 144; roads, 152, 153, 163; Frémont's interest, 178; Indians, see Chippewa, Pillager, Red Lake, and Sioux Indians. See also Democrats, Republicans, Stagecoaching

*Minnesota Advertiser* (St. Cloud), 9, 11

*Minnesota Conserver* (Hastings), 151

Minnesota Junction, Wis., 161, 162

Minnesota River Valley, Sioux massacres, 26

Minnesota Stage Company, 141, 153, 160

Misquadace, Chippewa chief, 270n

Mississippi River, bridge at St. Paul, 58; steamboats, 78

Missouri, 153; Lincoln's policy, 25

Mitchell, —, 168

## Library of Congress

Mitchell, Eleanor, 16n

Mitchell, Henry Z., 9, 25, 105n

Mitchell, Mrs. Henry Z., 1. 9

Mitchell, Jane Grey, 105

Mitchell, Ormsby M., 300

Mitchell, William B., 28, 53n

Mitchell, William H., 145, 168, 169

Mitchell, Mrs. William H., 145

Mobile, Ala., captured, 275

Montgomery Hotel (Lake City), 143

Monticello, vicinity described, 44; Lyceum, 45; schoolhouse, 45; lecture, 45; title to lands, 46

Moritzious, town site, 46

Morrison County, 101

Moss, —, 153

Nash, Mrs. Z. E. B., 64

National Hotel(Wabasha), 142

National Hotel (Washington, D. C.), 295

## Library of Congress

*National Republican* (Washington, D. C.), 182

*Neal's Saturday Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pa.), 5

Negroes, school, 4; in Washington, 164; attitude toward whites, 164; enlistment, 171, 172, 173, 175, 218, 220, 222, 231; as soldiers, 22; in Union army, 241. See also Slavery, Slaves

Neill, Rev. Edward D., 118; sketch, 122

Nelson, Rev. Andrew J., 41

New England House (Anoka), 127, 155

*New Era* (Sauk Rapids), 40n

New York, N. Y., regiments, 224; Copperheads, 245; draft riots, 245, 250; First Minnesota, 254, 268

*New York Herald*, 212, 213

*New York Tribune*, 29, 258

Newton, Rev. Ezra, 41

Nicolay, John G., 225; in St. Cloud, 179

Nicollet Island, 35

Nininger, Mrs. John, 168

North, John W., 59

## Library of Congress

North, Mrs. John W., 59

“Northern Belle,” steamboat, 118, 124

Northfield, 57, 144, 151; vicinity described, 58, 61, 62; described, 59; lecture, 59, 149; newspapers, 145, 146; American House, 149; Lyceum, 149

*Northfield Journal*, 145n, 146

*Northfield Telegraph*, 145, 146, 149

Northup, Anson, 95, 96

Northwestern College (Wasioja), 148, 264n

Northwestern Railroad, see Chicago and North Western Railroad

Nourse, George A., 53, 55, 85, 154, 168; politics, 56; home, 137

Officer, Harvey, 154

Oil Creek Valley, Pa., 94n

Olmsted County, 283, 284

*Olmsted County Journal* (Rochester), 228n

Other Day, John, 193

323

Otsego, 254

Owatonna, 65, 66, 68, 71, 148; described 69; lecture, 69; Morford's Hall, 69

## Library of Congress

*Owatonna Journal*, 65, 66, 67n

*Owatonna Plaindealer*, 264

Page, Zeno B., 73

Page, Mrs. Zeno B., 73

Pahen, Dr. —, 127, 128

Palmer, Dr. Benjamin, 15, 16, 19n

Palmer, Rev. Lyman, 47, 48, 127

Palmer, Mrs. Lyman, 47

Parker, L. N., 160

Payne, Lewis, 296, 301n, 302

Paynesville, 127

Peake, Rev. E. Steele, 103

Peale, Rembrandt, painting, 65n

Pemberton, John C., 133

Pennsylvania, 136; compared with Minnesota, 58, 82, 90; political situation, 1860, 93; oil wells, 94; roads, 152; Lee's invasion, 234, 237, 241; Copperheads, 245; treatment of wounded, 253, 255

Pennsylvania Railroad, 87, 159, 161, 166



## Library of Congress

Pettit, William F., 67n, 68

Philadelphia, Pa., 166, 234, 235, 246; lecture, 27, 159, 199; Abolitionists, 186; reception of Negro troops, 241

Phillips, Wendell, 199

Pillager Indians, 63n

*Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul), 17, 107, 108n

Pittsburg, Fort Wayne, and Chicago Railroad, 87, 169

Pittsburgh, Pa., 30, 54, 85, 87, 129, 147; described, 88, 89; lecture, 89n; Presbyterian Church, 137

*Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter*, 1, 7, 10, 44; established, 6; unites with *Commercial Journal*, 8

Pope, John, 223, 236

Portage, Wis., 98, 161

Potomac River, encampment of Negro troops, 241

Potter, John F., 223n

Prairie du Chien, Wis., 118; hospital, 283, 284

Prescott, Wis., lecture, 76

Preston, 80; wool factory, 75, 76; lecture, 75; described, 76

Princeton, 48, 175; location, 47; described, 50; lecture, 50

## Library of Congress

Pusey, Edward B., 63n

Putnam, Henry R., 108, 109, 123

Racine, Wis., 71, 162

Raguet, Samuel T., 109

Railroads, 146; 161; Minnesota, 72, 80, 153; and land values, 99; claims against, 99, 100.  
*See also* individual roads

Ramsey, Alexander, 54, 85, 107, 133-137, 194; offers troops, 24; and First Minnesota, 108n; home, 136; characterized, 206

Ramsey, Mrs. Alexander, 54, 112; dress, 135; sketch, 137

Rappahannock River, Hooker's movements, 229, 231, 255

Raymond, Rev. —, 231

Read's Landing, 78, 142; lecture, 76

*Reconstructionist*, 29n; established, 28; suspends publication, 28

Red Lake Indians, in Washington, 270

Red River, steamboat, 95, 154

Red Wing, 78, 151, 152; lecture, 76, 79; Metropolitan Hotel, 77; vicinity described, 153

Republicans, 94; Mrs. Swisshelm named mother, 22; radical, and Mrs. Swisshelm 26; platform, 1856, 42; Philadelphia platform, 42n; and slavery, 45; Minnesota; 53n, St. Cloud and vicinity, 24, 25, 179n, southern and middle, 42, state committee, 47, St. Paul, 131,

## Library of Congress

133, elections, Morrison County, 102, 103, and Donnelly, 275; policies criticized, 56, 57, 170; Pennsylvania, 1860 campaign, 93; and McClellan, 215

324

Rice Edmund, 96

Rice, Henry M., characterized, 265

Rice County, 61, 62

Rice Lake, 69

Richardson, Nathan, 101, 102, 103

Richmond, Va., 111, 149, 167, 223, 275, 278; captured, 290, 291

Riddle, Robert M., 5, 74

Riggs, Rev. Stephen R., intercedes for Sioux, 27

Roads, southern Minnesota, 150, 152, 153; Virginia 230; near Washington, 230

Robbins, Nathan B., 228n

Robertson, Daniel A., 54, 55

Robertson, Mrs. Daniel A., 55

Robinson, Eli, 151, 152

Robinson, Mrs. Eli, 152

Rochester, 142, 144, 145, 228; described, 74, 146; lecture, 74, 144n; population: 1860, 74n, 146n, 1865, 146n

## Library of Congress

*Rochester City Post* 74, 146

*Rochester Republican*, 145, 146, 168

Ruggles, George D., 84

Rum River, 48

St. Anthony, 39, 84, 101n, 155, 181, 193; lecture, 21, 34; Winslow House, 35, 37, 38; St. Charles Hotel, 84, 95

“St. Anthony Anti-Slavery Committee,” 33

St. Anthony, Falls of, 35

St. Charles Hotel (St. Anthony), 84, 95

St. Cloud 1, 9, 29, 72, 88, 90, 128, 154, 163, 234, 235n, 267; proprietors, 11, 12, 142; ability to support newspaper, 13; First Methodist Church, 19; land office, 21, 39; Grow's visit, 22, 179; militia, 24, 25; Republicans, 25; volunteers in First Minnesota, 25; Indian depredations near, 26; Miller's home, 43; *Democrat* office, 64, 197, 248; ox teams, 94; detachment of First Minnesota 108n; “company programme,” 136; growth, 147, predicted, 10; Soldiers' Aid Society, 179; visits of Dole, Colfax, Nicolay, White, 179; living conditions, 202; celebration, July 4, 1862, 239

*St. Cloud Democrat*, 19, 20, 22, 51, 52, 57, 60, 61, 86, 182, 198, 247, 264; established, 18; financial aid, 21; sold, 28; Mrs. Swisshelm's letters, 32; office, 64, 197, 248

*St. Cloud Visiter*, 12, 13, 14, 15, established, 10; policies, 10, 11; financial condition, 11; press destroyed, 16, 43n; resumes publication, 17, 18; sued, 18; suspends publication, 18; financial aid, 43n

## Library of Congress

St. Croix House (Stillwater), 79

St. Mary's Hall (Faribault), 63n

St. Paul, 1, 58, 79, 96n, 112, 128, 148, 154, 160; Winslow House, 35n; Merchant's Hotel, 53, 85; lecture, 53, 54, 57, 74, 133; Atheneum, 54; Company C, First Minnesota, 108, 113; gift to Gorman, 113; Republicans, 133; roads near, 153; International Hotel, 168

St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, 36

St. Peter, Winslow House, 35n

Sanitary Commission, supplies distributed, 241, 256

Sauk Center, Indian depredations, 26, 160

Sauk Rapids, 40n, 73; Presbyterian Church, 38, 39; lecture, 38

*Sauk Rapids Frontiersman*, 17

Sauk River Valley, wool growing, 127

Sawyer, Henry W., 252

Scheffer, Charles, 266

Schweitzer, Mrs. Barbara, 76n

Seabury Divinity School (Faribault), 63n

Second Vermont Artillery, regimental hospital, 255

Sedgwick, John, 258, 262, 273

## Library of Congress

Seventh Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, 104, 226n

325

Seventh United States Infantry, 119

Seward, Frederick, 306

Seward, Mrs. Frederick, 303

Seward, William H., 302, 304, 305; advocated for presidency, 23, 57; Mrs. Swisshelm's attitude 23, 24, 56, 57, 218; supports McClellan, 215, 216; resignation advocated, 218; attempted assassination, 306

Seward, Mrs. William H., death, 303, 306; characterized, 304-306

Shattuck School (Faribault), 63n

Shaw, E. P., 51

Shaw, Mrs. E. P., 51, 127

Sheetz, Hiram M., 65

Sheetz, Mrs. Hiram M., 65, 66, 67n, 68

Shepley, James C., controversy with Mrs. Swisshelm, 14-19

Shepley, Mrs. James C., 15, 17

Sherburne House (Monticello), 47

Sheridan, Philip H., 275

## Library of Congress

Sherman, Thomas W., 131, 133

Sherman, William T., 294, 297

Shippensburg, Pa., 235

Sibley, Henry H., commands expedition against Sioux, 192; conduct of Sioux War criticized, 192, 194, 195-197, 226; at Wood Lake, 194-196; made brigadier general, 194n; plan for Indian reservation, 279

Sinclair, Daniel, 143

Sioux Indians, Spirit Lake massacres, 11; outbreak of 1862, 26, 179n, 194; punishment urged, 27, 30, 182-184, 192, 194, 227; convicts executed, 27, 183, 266n; bill for relief of victims, 169n; number of victims, 183n; campaigns against, 192n, 224; trial, 193; surrender, 194, 195n; battle of Wood Lake, 194, 196; flee to Dakota, 195n; release captives, 195n; prisoners suggested as hostages for white captives, 225, 226; removed to Crow Creek, 227, 228n; Sibley's plans for reservation, 279

Sixth Corps, *see* Army of the Potomac

Skinner, George E., 58

Slavery, Mrs. Swisshelm's views, 1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 20, 25, 34, 40, 59, 61, 290, 296; in Louisville, Ky., 3; articles on, 5; lectures on, 21, 54, 57, 75n; public sentiment, 40, 41, 205, 206; attitude of Democrats, 93, 94, 167, 170; government policies criticized, 129

"Slavery as I Have Seen It in a Slave State," address, 21, 54, 57, 57n

Slaves, emancipation: Lincoln's policy, 132n, 205, 219n, *see also* Emancipation Proclamation, Cameron's recommendations, 132n, 219, in District of Columbia, 164, 165n, Frémont's proclamation, 177n, 205, 219, sentiment for, 205, Hunter's proclamation,

## Library of Congress

219; fugitive; 296, capture denounced, 6, policies of Lincoln and Lane, 135n. *See also* Contrabands, Negroes, Slavery

Slidell, John, property in Minnesota, 134

Smith, A. E., 233

Smith, Bernard, 45, 46

Smith, Dewitt C., 109, 121

Smithsonian Institution, closes hall to lecture association, 198n

Snare, J., 257, 258

Somers, E. W., 69, 71

Sousa's marine band, 147n

South Carolina, threatens to secede, 24; secedes, 184; Hunter orders slaves freed, 219n

Southworth, Emma D. E., 202

*Sparta (Wis.) Herald*, 162

Spirit Lake, Ia., massacres, 11

*Spirit of Liberty* (Pittsburgh), 5

Stagecoaching, Minnesota: 58, 75, 96, 126, 141, 144, 150, 154-158, 160, coaches described, 59, 67, 75, 126, 160, schedules, 78, 149, 151, 152; overland, 153; Allegheny Mountains, 160

326



## Library of Congress

Stansbury, Howard, 112

Stanton, Edwin M., 26, 180, 207, 215, 232; aids Mrs. Swisshelm, 27, 29, 30; characterized, 129, 130, 176; interview with Mrs. Swisshelm, 130, 175, 199; interview with Lincoln, 178, 224; allows Contrabands to commute rations, 251; announces end of draft, 285; rumor of attempted assassination, 299

*State Atlas* (Minneapolis), 182n

Stearns, Charles T., 229

Stearns County, 72, 82, 138; political situation, 1860, 24; courthouse, 101

Stebbins, Columbus, 151

Steele, Franklin, 106

*Steele County News Letter*, 67n

Sterry, Rev. De Witt C., 143

Stevens, N. E., 142

Stewart, Rev. A., 88

Stewart, Dr. Jacob H., 109n

Straight River, 62

Sumner, Charles, 265

Sunderland, Rev. Byron, 181; chaplain of Senate, 180, 204, 243

## Library of Congress

Superior, Wis., 153

Surratt, Mrs. Mary E., 301n

Swisshelm, Henry, 43n

Swisshelm, James, 2, 3, 4, 43n

Swisshelm, Jane G., biographical sketch, 1-32; editor, 1, 6-8, 9-29; personal appearance, 1, 31; pen name, 5; author, 5, 8, 30, 218; lecturer, 21, 31; clerk in war department, 27, 185, 197, 239, 246, 255, 274, 283; hospital services, 28, 229, 232-234, 237-240, 247, 253, 254, 255-263, 283, 297, 303; autobiography, 30; characterized, 30, 34n, 60n, 75n, 133n, 159; suggested "surveyor-general of logs and lumber," 54, 79; hostility toward Indians criticized, 193n

Swisshelm, Mary Henrietta ("Nettie"), 1, 8, 29, 105, 197, 198, 234

Swissvale, Pa., 29, 85, 90

Taylor, Zachary, 189n, 295

Temperance, Mrs. Swisshelm's views, 7

Tenvoorde, John W., 82

Third Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, at Wood Lake, 195, 196

Thomas, Lorenzo, 218, 223

Thompson, Clark W., 168

Titusville, Pa., oil well, 94n

## Library of Congress

Treason, see Disloyalty

Tremont House (Chicago), 87

Union Party, 93

U. S. Congress, policies criticized, 133, 135, 172, 174, 192; frees slaves in District of Columbia, 165

Usher, John P., 225, 228, 229

Van, Buren, Martin, 6

Vebber, M. L., 85

Vicksburg, Miss., 171; paroled prisoners, 244, 252

Virginia, secedes, 184; roads, 230

Wabasha, described, 142; lecture, 142, 144n

*Wabashaw County Herald*, 142

Wait, —, 161

Waite, Henry C., 168

“War Eagle,” steamboat, 118, 124

Ware, Dr. W. A., 68, 69, 148

Warrenton, Va., 223, 252

## Library of Congress

Washington, D. C., 139, 159, 164, 169, 185n; Mrs. Swisshelm's visit, 1850, 7, 189n; lecture, 27, 181, 182-184, 193, 198; shortage of nurses, 28; Negroes, 164-166; disloyalty, 170, 173, 174, 223, 236, 238, 270, 272, 277, 296, 298, 301; Confederate property, 172, 173; attitude toward Indians, 193, 270; street cars, 197; weather, 197, 201, 217, 222, 249; Frémont's visit, 199; living conditions, 202, 203, 249, 250, 267; Union eeting, 203-210; McClellan in, 212; danger of attack, 214, 215, 223, 327 235, 236, 238, 241, 245, 272, 274; army officers in, 216; hospitals, 217, 229, *see also* individual hospitals; Negro enlistment, 220, 231; forts, 229, *see also* Fort Reno; roads, 230, 269; celebration, July 4, 1863, 237, 238; Union troops, 241; Unitarian Church, 242; defended by Sixth Corps, 274; election celebration, 1864, 277; National Hotel, 295; women workers, 307-313

Washington Monument, 237, 238n

Wasioja, 72, 147; described, 71, 264; lecture, 73, 148; Northwestern College, 148, 264n

Watab, 73

Webster, Daniel, 7

Weed, Thurlow, 215

Weissberger, Baron Moritzious, 46

Welch, Abraham E., 195

West St. Paul, 58

Wheeler, Levi, 102

Whipple, Bishop Henry B., intercedes for Sioux, 27; in Faribault, 62, 63n

White, Ashton S. H., 179

## Library of Congress

White, Rev. James, H., 72

White, Mrs. James, H., 72

Whitford, Rev. William C., 139

Whitney, Rev. C. M., 151

Wilderness, battle, 297

Wilkin, Alexander, 122

Wilkinsburg, Pa., 2, 3, 118

Wilkinson, Morton S., 175

Williams, Rev. Alvin D., 148, 264, 265

Williamson, —, 73

Williamson, Rev. John P., 27

Wilmington, Del., 166

Wilson, Thomas, 140

Wilton, 148

Windom, William, 182

Winona, 70, 78, 138, 140, 143; lecture, 76, 141, 144n; Company K, First Minnesota, 111, 115; gift to First Minnesota, 112n; wheat market, 142

*Winona Daily Republican*, 143

## Library of Congress

Winslow, James M., 35n

Winslow House (St. Anthony), 35-38

Winston, Eliza, 101n

Wisconsin, wounded at Campbell Hospital, 257

“Woman and Politics,” address, 21, 33, 53, 75n

“Woman's Wages as Wife and Mother,” address, 133

Women, legal status, 1, 4, 7, 129, 132, 176; rights, 5, 10, 11, 38, 59; suffrage, 8 workers: 307-313, attitude of men, 308, manner of appointing, 308, salaries, 312

“Women in the War of the Rebellion,” address, 21, 182

Wood, Fernando, 271

Wood, William H., 40

Wood, Mrs. William H., 40

Wood Lake, battle, 194-196

Woodman's Hall (Minneapolis), 34

Woodsworth, Hiram, 44

Wright County, 46n

Young Men's Christian Association (St. Paul), 137