XXII

Not Yet!
1861
(LETTERS 1190 TO 1253)

O COUNTRY, marvel of the earth!
O realm to sudden greatness grown!
The age that gloried in thy birth,
Shall it behold thee overthrown?
Shall traitors lay that greatness low?
No, land of Hope and Blessing, No!
—"Not Yet," July 1861

At the beginning of January 1861, in an editorial leader captioned "The Fifty-Ninth Anniversary of the Evening Post," Bryant summarized the public measures advocated by the newspaper over the past fifteen years, "often against most discouraging adverse influences." This policy, he maintained, had "finally received its most suitable national vindication in the choice of Abraham Lincoln . . . for President of the United States." And he made it immediately clear that he would employ his most forceful arguments to persuade the President-elect to implement that policy.

On January 8 Charles H. Ray, editor of the Chicago Tribune and an early Lincoln supporter, urged Bryant to visit the new President who, he wrote, "has profound respect for your fidelity to the cause and for your disinterestedness, and will be greatly influenced by your advice." He concluded, "I think you are greatly needed here, to make sure all will go right." Bryant himself did not travel to Springfield, Illinois, but a delegation had just left New York in his stead, and Bryant wrote Lincoln asking a "kind reception and an attentive hearing" for these men who represented, he said, "the anti-corruptionists of the Republican party in our state." It was the intent of this "Bryant faction," as it has been called, to forestall the appointment of William H. Seward as Secretary of State and Simon Cameron to the Treasury, by urging instead that Salmon P. Chase be given State and Gideon Welles either Treasury or another key post.

Even before his associates left for the West, Bryant had made Lincoln aware of his opposition to any Cabinet appointment for Cameron. There was generally, he wrote the President-elect on January 3, "an utter, ancient and deep seated distrust of his integrity—whether financial or political. The announcement of his appointment . . . would diffuse a feeling almost like despair." The next day he enlarged upon his objections to Cameron, while implying his opposition to Seward by characterizing, without naming, the Weed–Seward combination in New York as "the men who last winter seduced our legislature into that shamefully corrupt course by which it was disgraced." But Cameron had been promised a Cabinet post by one of Lincoln's aides, in return for switching
support of the Pennsylvania delegation from Seward to Lincoln at the Chicago nominating convention, and the Seward–Weed faction, in an attempt to bar Chase from the Cabinet, were supporting Cameron for the Treasury. As for Seward, Lincoln had long intended to appoint his defeated rival to the Secretaryship of State, and Seward had accepted his invitation before Bryant's friends left for Springfield.

As early as the beginning of December Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, after seeing Bryant and like-minded New Yorkers, had reported to Lincoln their opposition to Seward. Early in January Lincoln assured the senator that Cameron had not been offered the Treasury; that it must go to Chase, for "he alone can reconcile Mr. Bryant and his class, to the appointment of Gov. S. to the State Dept." But after Bryant's friends had seen Lincoln at Springfield, one of them wrote Bryant that though the new President considered Chase the "ablest man in America," and preferred Welles as the representative of New England, he intended to postpone further Cabinet choices until he reached Washington in mid-February. When at length he named a full Cabinet, Lincoln favored neither New York faction, for while Seward was given the State Department and Cameron that of War, Chase became Secretary of the Treasury and Welles Secretary of the Navy. With these selections Bryant had to be content.

The *Evening Post*'s editor soon found himself generally thought to be "personally and intimately acquainted with Mr. Lincoln," and thus the dispenser of political patronage in New York, although Bryant himself complained to Gideon Welles a few weeks after Inauguration day that former Democrats in the Republican party were not receiving a fair share of appointments in the new administration unless they had "made themselves speedily acceptable to Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward." Bryant's successful nomination of Hiram Barney to be the collector of customs at New York made him the inevitable target of countless applicants for work in the custom house—especially since, as George W. Curtis reported in seeking a job for one man, Barney "said he must know what you thought of it." To Orville Dewey Bryant complained on March 13 that even at home in Roslyn "I am teased with constant applications to help people to offices under the new administration. I want to run away from them," and "give these office beggars the slip." By April 1 the pressure was so great that he printed in his newspaper a card stating that he had recently found pleas of this sort "so numerous and importunate that he has been obliged to go out of town to avoid them." As late as October Frances Bryant wrote her brother-in-law Cyrus that her husband had that day been "so be-set by office seekers—and beggars, that he came home in quite a fever."

Bryant's escape in April took the form of a visit with old friends in Boston and Cambridge, the Danas, Deweys, Waterstons, and Willard Phillips. His relief from pressure was evident in Longfellow's comment, "Bryant has been here; very gentle and pleasant, with his benign aspect and soft blue eyes. He looks like a Prophet of Peace, amid the din of Civil War." But this interlude was brief, and he returned to pressures of a more troubling nature. Soon after joining the Cabinet, Salmon Chase had written John Bigelow, "If Mr. Bryant wd. go to Europe (say Paris), & take Mr. Godwin as Private Secretary he should have my voice." The belief that the senior editor of the *Evening Post* expected, or would be offered, an ambassadorship or other high office under the new ad-
administration was voiced so often in other journals that on April 1 there appeared in his paper, under the heading "Mr. Bryant's Case," the firm disclaimer, "Those who are acquainted with Mr. Bryant know that there is no public office from that of President of the United States downwards which he would not regard it as a misfortune to be obliged to take. They know that not only has he asked for no office, but that he has not allowed others to ask for him—that he has expected no offer of any post under the government, and would take none if offered."

Though Bryant asked no favor for himself, and was troubled by the solicitations of others, he had, as his disclaimer put it, "cheerfully borne his testimony in writing to the merits" of such claimants. Many of his suggestions were acted on favorably, not only in the custom house, but also in diplomatic appointments and elsewhere. Different from these, however, was his successful appeal to the Commissioners of Central Park early in 1861 to prevent Frederick Law Olmsted from being downgraded from the superintendency of the park to an advisory position. Once vindicated, Olmsted took a leave of absence to become secretary to the United States Sanitary Commission, under the direction of Bryant's pastor Henry W. Bellows, and left in June for Washington to inspect conditions in the military camps about Washington. From there, after the First Battle of Bull Run in July, he wrote Bryant for the Evening Post a letter which described the ignominious retreat of Union regiments on the capital in appalling confusion, with many officers leading the rout and drawing from private soldiers the contemptuous epithets of "cowards and fools." Olmsted's was one of many direct accounts of conditions in the field sent Bryant as the war continued, a number of them from senior military officers who, like himself, chafed at the slow progress of campaigns and the apparent incompetence of army commanders.

At the close of 1860 Bryant had faced, for the second time in two years, the prospect of having to assume the daily management of his newspaper, when John Bigelow expressed a wish to divest himself of his interest in the Evening Post in order to resume literary writing. The partners agreed to sell his interest to Parke Godwin, who had worked for the past two years at the city desk, and to let him pay for his share gradually from dividends. On January 16 Bigelow left the paper. But Bryant soon found a managing editor in Charles Nordhoff, a successful writer of sea tales based on his own experience before the mast, who had more recently served as an editor for the Harper Brothers. Throughout the war, and during the rest of the decade, Nordhoff proved an able adjutant to the senior proprietor.

With the advent of war, Bryant found little time or inclination to compose poetry. Of the half-dozen poems he wrote in 1861, only the meditative verses in "The Constellations" and "The Third of November, 1861" (his sixty-seventh birthday) were not explicitly concerned with the conflict. In January he was revising his Cooper oration of 1852 as a preface to the first collected edition of the novelist's works. During the year translations of his poems were made by two German scholars. He declined an invitation to deliver the annual Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard, where, forty years earlier, he had read his long poem, "The Ages."

In May Cullen and Frances traveled by rail to Illinois, to find their relatives
well, but the state in financial confusion, with its residents rejecting local bank
notes as worthless. Earlier that spring Bryant had made, through his brother
John, his last purchase of farmland in the West, one-hundred-sixty acres near
Princeton. Soon after their return the couple were visited by Cyrus Bryant and
his wife, who had come on to see their son Cullen at West Point. Two weeks
after the attack on Fort Sumter the first-year cadet had written his aunt of the
great excitement at the military academy when, after most southerners had de-
parted, the whole corps had cheered two regiments of volunteers, "wild with
enthusiasm," as they steamed past on the way down the Hudson River.

Though not yet openly committed to emancipation, in late August the
Evening Post applauded the declaration by General John C. Frémont in Mis-
souri that the slaves of known southern sympathizers throughout that state
would be freed, calling this "the most popular act of the war." When Lincoln
revoked the general's order, Bryant condemned his action. In October he all
but called for emancipation when, in a leader headed "Playing at War," he
termed slavery a "prodigious wrong which ought to be abrogated," asking,
"Shall we deal with these barbarous wretches as though they were friends? Shall
we withhold our hand from the very blow which they fear the most?" He
answered the question himself: "The masses will tolerate no playing at war; . . .
if it becomes necessary to extinguish slavery in order to put down this most
wicked and wanton rebellion, it will be swept from the board."

Though Bryant did not, during 1861, admonish the President directly on
his conduct of the war, writing him only to introduce visitors to Washington,
or to recommend office seekers, he began to express through his newspaper the
cautions and exhortations which he would continue throughout the conflict,
and which—though some called them journalistic generalship—drew from one
source the comment that his editorials were worth as much to the North as an
army corps, and from another that they were "of more use to the Union than
some of its armies." Between Fort Sumter and Bull Run many timid norther-
ers, especially those in finance and trade, urged that the issue of secession might
be negotiated. "Grant anything that looks like compromise," he wrote on June
25, "and you only minister to the arrogance of the rebels. . . . In the present state
of things, therefore, compromise is only an encouragement." In July he antic-
pated by eight months the appearance of John Ericsson's Monitor at Hampton
Roads, by suggesting the construction of "half a dozen thoroughly shot-proof
gunboats, of light draft," which could silence southern forts, or run past them
to dominate the principal ports. After the rout at Bull Run, he urged that it
would have a salutary, sobering effect on the Union; it was, Frances Bryant
quoted him as saying a few days later, the "best thing that could have happened
to us—that it will take the conceit out of us . . . and . . . will give the contest so
serious a character that when we do settle it we shall insist on so crippling the
slave interest that it will never lift its head again."

Toward the close of the year Bryant gave much space, both in letters and in
editorials, to the misconceptions held by the British government and press of the
nature of the rebellion and the conflicting aims of the Union and Confederate
administrations. Indignant at charges in British newspapers that the national
administration was under the domination of a "reckless and brutal mob, which
compels the government to do its bidding," while the Confederate leadership
was composed of gentlemen, and that "in the southern states all is quiet, order and respect for the law," he at first expressed his approval of the seizure from the British mail steamer Trent by the American naval commander Charles Wilkes, of two Confederate emissaries, Mason and Slidell, and their arbitrary imprisonment at Boston—contrary to the long-maintained American insistence on freedom of the sea. But reflection soon tempered this momentary concession to American chauvinism; before Washington had acceded in December to British demands for release of the men, Bryant printed a sober argument for impartial, binding arbitration of the case.

In August John Bigelow was appointed American consul at Paris, and by the end of the year he was sending his former partner confidential reports of European political attitudes toward the United States government and the armed conflict in this country. Another successful applicant that year for a consulship was William Dean Howells, of Ohio, who had published a campaign biography of Lincoln. In August, before going to Washington to seek a post, Howells called at the Evening Post office with a letter from James T. Fields, who wrote that the young writer's stories and verses already published in the Atlantic Monthly had given its conductors so high an opinion of his talents that "if we could keep him we would." Howells, he said, hoped to find literary employment, adding, "He chooses The Post of all papers in the Union." But that newspaper was not yet ready for a regular book editor, nor could a place be found on its small staff for a writer of belles-lettres; so Howells went on to Venice, where he wrote his first significant books.
To Abraham Lincoln

New York January 3d 1861.

My dear sir,

I have this moment received your note. 1 Nothing could be more fair or more satisfactory than the principle you lay down in regard to the formation of your council of official advisors. I shall always be convinced that whatever selection you make it will be made conscientiously.

The community here has been somewhat startled this morning by the positiveness with which a report has been circulated, reaching this city from Washington that Mr. Simon Cameron was to be placed in the Treasury Department. Forgive me if I state to you how we all should regard such an appointment—I believe I may speak for all parties, except perhaps some of the most corrupt in our own—The objection to Mr. Cameron would not be that he does not hold such opinions as we approve, but that there is among all who have observed the course of our public men an utter, ancient and deep seated distrust of his integrity—whether financial or political. The announcement of his appointment, if made on any authority deserving of credit would diffuse a feeling almost like despair. 2 I have no prejudices against Mr. Cameron except such as arise from observing in what transactions he has been engaged and I have reason to suppose that whatever opinion has been formed respecting him in this part of the country has been formed on perfectly impartial and disinterested grounds. I pray you, again, to excuse my giving you this trouble. Do not reply to this letter—Only let us have honest rigidly upright men in the departments—whatever may be their notions of public policy.

I am, dear sir,
very truly &c

W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: LC ADDRESS: Hon A. Lincoln.

1. See 1188.4.
2. Simon Cameron (1799–1889), Pennsylvania manufacturer, railroad builder, political boss, and twice a United States senator, had switched his support at the Chicago nominating convention from Seward to Lincoln, in return for a promise from one of Lincoln's aides of a position in the cabinet. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 257; Hendrick, Lincoln's War Cabinet, pp. 78–76. Bryant's opinion of Cameron, a former Democrat, had long been shared by leaders of his own party. Andrew Jackson had called him a man "not to be trusted by anyone in any way." President Polk thought him a "managing tricky man in whom no reliance is to be placed." And his fellow-Pennsylvanian President Buchanan considered him "a scamp" and "an unprincipled rascal." Hendrick, Lincoln's War Cabinet, pp. 65–66.
1191. To Abraham Lincoln

New York January 4th 1861.

My dear sir.

I wrote to you yesterday concerning the rumored intention to give Mr. Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania a place in the Cabinet which you are to form. I had then scarcely spoken to any body on the subject, but since that time I have heard the matter much discussed and I assure you that the general feeling is one of consternation.

Mr. Cameron has the reputation of being concerned in some of the worst intrigues of the democratic party a few years back. His name suggests to every honest Republican in this state no other than disgusting associations, and they will expect nothing from him when in office but a repetition of such transactions. At present those who favor his appointment, in this state, are the men who last winter seduced our legislature into that shamefully corrupt course by which it was disgraced.1 If he is to form one of the Cabinet, the Treasury Department, which rumor assigns him, is the very last of the public interests which ought to be committed to his charge.

In the late election, the Republican party, throughout the Union, struggled not only to overthrow the party that sought the extension of slavery, but also to secure a pure and virtuous administration of the government. The first of these objects we have fully attained, but if such men as Mr. Cameron are to compose the Cabinet, however pure and upright the Chief Magistrate may himself be,—and it is our pride and rejoicing that in the present instance we know him to be so,—we shall not have succeeded in the second.

There is no scarcity of able and upright men who would preside over the Treasury department with honor. I believe Mr. Gideon Welles of Hartford has been spoken of.2 There is no more truly honest man, and he is equally wise and enlightened. We have a man here in New York whom I should rejoice to see at the head of that department, Mr. Opdyke, the late Republican candidate for Mayor of this city a man who has made finance the subject of long and profound study, and whom no possible temptation could move from his integrity. If a man from Pennsylvania is wanted, that state has sons whose probity has never been questioned—so that there will be no need to take up with a man hackneyed in those practices which make politics a sordid game played for the promotion of personal interests.

I must again ask you to pardon this freedom for the sake of its motive. It has cost me some effort to break through my usual reserve in such matters, but I feel a greater interest in the success and honor of your administration than in that of any which have preceded it.3 I am, dear sir, truly yours,
MANUSCRIPTS: LC (final); NYPL–GR (partial draft) ADDRESS: Hon A Lincoln. Published (from draft): Life, II, 152–153, under date of February 5.

1. See 1119.4; Letter 1134.
2. Like Bryant, Welles (353.1) admired Salmon P. Chase and vigorously opposed the Seward–Weed combination.
3. Without question, Bryant influenced Lincoln’s choice of cabinet members, although he was not yet fully aware that the President-elect had already made some critical decisions concerning them. Dr. Charles H. Ray, an editor of the Chicago Tribune and an early Lincoln supporter, wrote Bryant on January 8, 1861 (NYPL–BG), “Mr. Lincoln has profound respect for your fidelity for the cause and for your disinterestedness and will be greatly interested in your advice.” And on January 7 Lincoln wrote Lyman Trumbull (Chicago Historical Society), “Gen. C[ameron] has not been offered the Treasury, and, I think, will not be—It seems to me not only highly proper, but a necessity, that Gov—Chase shall take that place. His ability, firmness, and purity of character [pronounce?] the propriety; and that he alone can reconcile Mr. Bryant, and his class, to the appointment of Gov—S[eward] to the State Department produces the necessity.”

1192. To Abraham Lincoln


My dear sir.

Two friends of mine and I may say of yours,—Mr. Opdyke, whom I have spoken of in a previous letter as one of our most sterling men, and Judge J. T. Hogeboom, a gentleman of high character and plain outspoken honesty, are now on their way to Springfield. It is possible that they may be joined in Washington—which they will take in their way—by Hiram Barney Esq. who you may know was very efficient in conducting the proceedings of the Chicago Convention to its final result, and who is highly esteemed here by all to whom he is known. It is their desire to confer with you on certain matters of public interest in regard to which we all feel confident that you would desire the fullest and most trust worthy information before coming to a final decision. I should have given these gentlemen a letter to you had I been at home when they left town. I write this to say who they are and whom they represent, though who they are you may possibly know already as well as I. They represent the anti-corruptionists of the Republican party in our state; they speak for that class of men who thought it unsafe to nominate Mr. Seward for the Presidency on account of his close associations with a class of men of whose want of principle our state legislature last winter gave most melancholy proof.

I am glad these gentlemen are on their way to your residence, and feel that I have no need to bespeak for them a kind reception and an attentive hearing.

I am, sir,
very truly yours
W. C. BRYANT.


2. Barney, a former Democrat, had been instrumental in forming the Republican Party. In 1861 Lincoln appointed him Collector of the Port of New York. See Letter 1202.

3. After their meeting with the President-elect, Barney reported to Bryant from Chicago that invitations to join the cabinet had gone to Seward, Edward Bates, and Cameron, though, "In regard to the latter-named, . . . Mr. Lincoln became satisfied he had made a mistake, and wrote him requesting him to withdraw his acceptance or decline." Lincoln "wants and expects," Barney continued, to have Chase and Welles in the cabinet, but "is advised . . . not to conclude further upon the members of his Cabinet until he reaches Washington." Barney to Bryant. January 17, 1861, NYPL-BG.

1193. To Frances F. Bryant

New York Wednesday
January 16th 1861—

Dear Frances.

I think I shall not return till Friday. I want to finish the revision of the Memoir of Cooper,¹ and this I must do from materials furnished by "Pages and Pictures from Cooper," a big book, too large to be conveniently brought out to Roslyn. The publisher Townsend the same who published the Forest Hymn is waiting for me.

All well here. The E. P. is virtually in Godwin's hands, and he begins to breakfast earlier. Only some papers are to be executed as soon as they are drawn up.²

Yours ever
W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. A revision of his "Discourse on the Life and Genius of Cooper" (783.6), done as a preface to a new edition of Fenimore Cooper's novel Precaution (New York, 1861).

2. On this date, January 16, 1861, John Bigelow sold his one-third interest in the EP properties to Parke Godwin. See Letter 1223.

1194. To Charlotte Dana

New York January 21, 1861.

Dear Miss Dana.

I came to town this morning and found your note. I shall return to the country this afternoon or I should call to see you. My wife will come in on Wednesday unless prevented by very bad weather, or some other obstacle,
and will be at No. 82 East Sixteenth Street. I shall give her your address—and perhaps I may be able to come to town with her.

Yours very truly,
W. C. BRYANT.


1195. To Abraham Lincoln

New York January 22, 1861.

My dear sir.

At the risk of being deemed somewhat troublesome, yet with the greatest respect and deference, I take the liberty of addressing you once more on the subject of your cabinet appointments.

I believe that you do not differ with me in regard to the importance of giving Mr. Chase a place in the Cabinet, as one whose wisdom, rigid integrity and force of character would make him a safe counsellor and efficient coadjutor of the Chief Magistrate, not to speak of the need of his presence as a counterpoise to another member who, to commanding talents, joins a flexible and indolgent temper, and unsafe associations. The appointment of Mr. Chase would give a feeling of security and confidence to the public mind which the rascalities of Mr. Buchanan's cabinet have made exceedingly sensitive and jealous, and would, it seems to me, settle the point in advance that the new administration will be both honored and beloved. For some time to come, the federal government must depend largely upon its credit for its resources, and how potent is the effect of placing an honest and economical man at the head of the Treasury Department, is shown by an example now before our eyes. General Dix, with all his mistakes, is a man of unquestioned integrity, and his appointment as Secretary of the Treasury has already greatly raised the credit of the government brought so low by the misconduct of Cobb.1

Now, according to what I learn from Mr. Opdyke, who has just returned from Ohio, it is nearly certain that Mr. Chase would not take a place in the Cabinet, unless it were offered him early. He is not inclined to do it at all, preferring a seat in the Senate, but this preference he would forego; yet there are, I am told, some personal reasons, as well as others connected with the choice of his successor in the Senate, that will, if the offer be delayed, induce him to remain where he is. I am not a judge of the force of these reasons; it is enough that they exist.

The only motive for delay is the hope of pacifying Mr. Cameron and his friends.2 It is thought here, by some who know him to be very tenacious of his purposes, that there is no probability of doing this effectually, whether the offer to Mr. Chase be postponed or not. If, however, it be possible to satisfy him, it is to be considered, whether it will not be as easily done after Mr. Chase shall have been fixed upon as now, and whether the hope of ob-
taining better terms may not lead Mr. Cameron to affect to spurn any reconciliation, as long as the appointment which he expected is kept open. One thing, however, is perfectly clear, that by failing to secure the services of Mr. Chase in the Treasury Department, both the country and the Republican party will lose infinitely more than the incoming administration can possibly suffer from the enmity of Mr. Cameron and his adherents.

I leave this subject here, that I may say a single word on another. From Mr. Opdyke, I learn, that, in a letter written to you some weeks since, on the subject of “protection,” I did not make myself fully understood. It seemed to me that I had clearly expressed my meaning when I said, that those who thought with me were “willing that this should be an open question.” I wished merely to express a hope that the administration would not throw its entire influence on the side of protection. The Republican party not being agreed among themselves on this point, the cabinet policy as it seemed to me, should be so moderate as not to disaffect the friends of free trade.

I am, dear sir,
truly yours.
W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPTS: LC (final); NYPL–GR (draft) ADDRESS: Hon A. Lincoln PUBLISHED: Life, II, 150–152 (from draft dated January 21).

1. Following the resignations as President Buchanan’s Secretary of the Treasury of Howell Cobb (1815–1868, Georgia 1834) of Georgia, on December 8, 1860, and his short-lived successor Philip Francis Thomas (1810–1890), of Maryland, on January 11, 1861, John A. Dix of New York (388.8, 519.1) succeeded to that cabinet post. Nevin, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 359, 380.

2. In his letter of January 17 Hiram Barney had told Bryant that Cameron had been “greatly offended” by Lincoln’s suggestion that he decline a cabinet appointment, and that “Mr. Lincoln has thus a quarrel on his hands.” See also ibid., 441–443; Hendrick, Lincoln’s War Cabinet, pp. 132–133.

3. Letter 1188.

1196. To Abraham Lincoln

New York January 24, 1861

My dear sir.

I write this to introduce to you Richard C. McCormick Esq.\textsuperscript{1} a young gentleman of fine talents great maturity of mind and excellent character, who desires an interview with you as the representative of the Young Mens Republican Union of this city, a numerous and most respectable association, which did the country good service in the late election.

Mr. McCormick wishes to express to you the desire of the Republicans who form the Young Men’s Union, to see Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky at the Head of the War Department. It has been suggested to me that in introducing my young friend I should say a word or two as to the manner in
which such an appointment would be received here. The manly bearing of Mr. Clay in his visits to our city has prepossessed the people greatly in his favor, and throughout our part of the country his courage, disinterestedness, and generous unquenchable enthusiasm in the cause of liberty and humanity have given birth to a feeling of admiration that amounts almost to personal attachment. Whatever politicians may say his appointment would be exceedingly popular with the mass of the people, who think that his energy and spirit fit him in these perilous times in a peculiar manner for that place.

I have heard the remark made that if the War Department was not open for Mr. Clay, the mission to Mexico would afford a suitable field for the exercise of those qualities which have won him such general respect.²

I am, sir,
truly yours
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: LC ADDRESS: Hon A. Lincoln. Published: Spivey, Bryant Cautions and Counsels Lincoln, p. 6.

1. Richard Cunningham McCormick (1882–1901) reported from the Crimean War, and in 1861–1862 from the Army of the Potomac, for New York newspapers. In 1863 he was made secretary of Arizona Territory, and in 1866 its governor.

2. Cassius M. Clay was United States minister to Russia in 1861–1862, and again in 1863–1869.

1197. To Edward Everett

New York Jan 25, 1861

Dear Sir,

At the present period in our history, we feel that the life and character of the “Father of his Country” should be constantly held up for the reverence of the people. We respectfully but earnestly request you to repeat your Washington oration in this city on the approaching anniversary of his birth.¹

With great regard, We are,
Truly Yours
WM. C. BRYANT [and others]²

MANUSCRIPT: MHS ADDRESS: To the Hon Edward Everett.

1. This, the most popular oration by Everett (Letter 1081), had been delivered repeatedly in major cities throughout the country since he had first spoken it before the Mercantile Library Association of Boston in 1856. Apparently he did not speak in New York on Washington’s birthday in 1861; he did, however, address an overflow crowd at the Academy of Music in that city on July 4, 1861, his subject “The Present State of the Country.” Paul Revere Frothingham, Edward Everett: Orator and Statesman (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1925), pp. 373–385, passim; 422.

2. Bryant’s signature was one of sixteen of prominent New Yorkers on this letter, which is not in his holograph.
1198. To an Unidentified Correspondent

New York February 8th 1861.

Sir.

Freilegrath translated my little poem of the Winds into German, and it appeared in a small volume of his poems.1 There have been various other translations in newspapers and periodicals. Prof. Leo Romer of Detroit writes me that he is translating them all into German.2

I am, sir
respectfully yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

Manuscript: WCL.

1. The German poet Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810–1876), long a friend and correspondent of Longfellow’s, had published translations from the verses of that poet and others in his Englische Gedichte aus neuerer Zeit (Stuttgart, 1846). See Longfellow, Letters, II, 415, 417; IV, 525–526.

2. Letter unrecovered.

1199. To Robert Bonner

New York February 13th 1861.

My dear sir.

The bearer of this letter is Mr. F. F. de la Figanière, the son of my friend the Portuguese Minister Plenipotentiary.1 Mr. Figanière is a native of this country, but has resided in Portugal for some years past. He is devoted to literary pursuits, and desires to make his talents as a writer contribute in some degree to his support. I remember a well written description of a visit made by him to Portugal, printed some ten or twelve years since.

I am, sir,
truly yours
W. C. BRYANT.


1. Frederico Francisco de la Figanière (b. 1827) was the author, among other works, of Memorias das rainhas de Portugal (Lisbon, 1859). His father, Joaquin de la Figanière, was an early member of the Sketch Club. Information from James T. Gallow.

1200. To James Russell Lowell

[New York? cFebruary 13, 1861]

To the Editor of the Atlantic Monthly.1

The writer of the note which accompanies this is a native of this country, and yet is numbered among the authors of recent Portuguese literature.
He is the author of a work entitled Memoirs of the Queens of Portugal, and several other publications in the Portuguese language, one of which, a politico-economical tract, I have looked over, and was well pleased with its scope and the treatment of the subject.

Mr. Figanière is familiar with the modern literature of Portugal of which little is known in this country, and being a practiced writer in both languages, I have no doubt of his ability to give the American public sketches of the present state of that literature which would be read with general interest.

I am sir
very respectfully &c
W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: HCL.

1. The poet and essayist James Russell Lowell (1819–1891) edited the Atlantic Monthly from 1857 until the spring of 1861, when he was succeeded by James T. Fields. See 1175.1.

1201. To Abraham Lincoln

New York  February 20. 1861.

Sir,

My friend E. A. Stansbury Esq. of this city, being about to ask for the appointment of United States Consul either at Liverpool or at Paris, I take great pleasure in supporting his application.¹ I have been acquainted with Mr. Stansbury for more than twelve years, and have formed a high opinion of his personal character and his talents. He is in every way worthy of the post he solicits; his habits of business would enable him to discharge its duties with accuracy and dispatch, and his talents, accomplishments and gentlemanly manners would make him a credit to the government that appointed him.

He has been a zealous Republican from the formation of the party, and has rendered valuable service to the cause. Few persons it seems to me have equal claims in the distribution of public employments which is soon to be made.

Very respectfully &c.
W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: LC (copy, not in Bryant's hand).

1. A letter from the Office of the Historian, United States Department of State, dated July 21, 1981, reports that "A Check of the List(s) of Diplomatic and Consular Officers of the United States indicates that Edward A. Stansbury of New York [719.1] did not receive a consular appointment during the years 1861–1869."
1202. To Abraham Lincoln

New York Feb 25 1861.

Sir

The friends of Hiram Barney Esquire of this city are about to ask of you his appointment as Collector of Customs for this port. As one of that number I take this method of bearing my testimony to his merits and qualifications. Mr. Barney seems to me uncommonly well fitted by capacity, by mental constitution and personal character for the place. As a man of business, he has established himself in the confidence of the community; his profession which is that of the law has not made him captious or too observant of technicalities; his judgement is fair and equitable, his temper kind and obliging and in the performance of all private and public duties he is strictly and deeply conscientious. I am sure that the general voice of the community if he should be appointed will applaud the selection of so fine and competent a man. As a politician [he] has been uncommonly active and efficient in the support of principles which we deem essential to the well-being of the Union. He was one of the earliest members of the Republican party and never faltered in his fidelity to its doctrines.—

[unsigned]

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR (draft) ADDRESS: To the Hon Abraham Lincoln, &c.

1. Appointed Collector of Customs at New York in March 1861, Barney served in that office until 1864. See Letters 1209, 1463.

1203. To Robert C. Waterston

Roslyn February 26. 1861.

My dear Mr. Waterston.

A day or two since I sent under cover to you, by express a copy of my Discourse on Irving for Mr. Winthrop. ¹

I am certainly much obliged to you for the interest you took in procuring my name a place on the list of honorary members of the Massachusetts Historical Society. As a general rule I am, as you may suppose, indifferent to the compliment of being made a member of any literary or learned society but the Massachusetts Historical is so sparing of its honors that it is a great matter to obtain them—it is somewhat like the French Academy, a society of the few. I hope there is no suspicion that I wished to remind them of my merits when I sent my Discourse to be put in their collection.

What an interesting occasion that was when their eldest member reached the close of his ninetieth year, and they celebrated it as they would have celebrated the centennial anniversary of the foundation of their Society! One who has lived so long as Mr. Quincy and so happily preserved his faculties, is an Historical Society in himself, a living record of the annals of more than two generations. I hope he will see the dissensions of that
republic of which he saw the birth, happily composed. It would be too short a period for the life of the United States, if it should begin and end within the lifetime of even the oldest living men.

I have given a paragraph to your proposed lectures—as you may have seen, in the Evening Post.² I do not know any body who could treat the subject so well. Some who have talent enough for it, have not the taste and the knowledge; others who have both these are wanting in eloquence and literary skill. In your profession I know of nobody who has given these subjects the study that you have done—nor indeed in any other of the learned professions. Your review of Leslie's Autobiography I thank you for;³ is it written as you might be expected to write such things, in a vein of unaffected enthusiasm, which carries along the reader delightfully.

I am here at Roslyn, amidst the sunshine streaming into the naked woods and lying on the russet banks of greensward while the seagulls are shrieking over our little harbor—yet I cannot shut out politics but look every day with impatience for the arrival of the mail, that I may see what the madmen of the South propose to do next, or what new folly they have already committed. I hope the time will soon arrive when I shall not care a pin whether the mail comes or not.

I lay myself as the Spaniards say, at the feet of your excellent Señora. My wife desires her love to you both.

I am dear sir
Most truly yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: Scripps College Library ADDRESS: Revd R. C. Waterston.

¹. See Letter 1189.
². This notice has not been located in the EP.

1204. To Edward E. Richards¹

My young friend.

I have looked among my letters, but find nothing from “great men” which I can send you. It is not often that I trouble that class with letters, and they rarely give themselves the trouble to write to me; the consequence is that I have scarcely any thing from them which I do not wish to keep, and what I can spare is taken from me immediately by autograph collectors near home.

I am
truly yours
WM. C. BRYANT.
1205.  To Abraham Lincoln

Roslyn, Long Island
March 4th. 1861.

My dear sir.

At the desire of the Revd. Samuel R. Ely, who is about to visit Washington, I take the liberty of giving him this introduction to you. Mr. Ely is the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in this place, where I have my country residence. He is a highly respectable member of his profession, and much esteemed here, where he has distinguished himself by his useful and disinterested services.

I am, dear sir,
very truly yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

1206.  To Messrs. J. B. Lippincott & Co.

New York   March 4th, 1861.

Gentlemen.

I am glad to know that you are about to republish in this country, by an arrangement with the Messrs Chambers, their new Encyclopedia. The reputation of these publishers, and the many excellent works, designed for popular reading, which we have had from them, would naturally lead us to expect the most careful arrangements on their part for making such a work all that it purports to be—"a dictionary of universal knowledge for the people." In looking over the first volumes with this expectation I have not been disappointed. It is just such a book of reference as every man has occasion for. The different articles have the appearance of being furnished by writers possessing the most accurate knowledge of the subjects of which they treat; they are as free from abstruseness as may be, consistently with scientific exactness, and without being meagre, they are admirably concise.

I am, gentlemen,
respectfully yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

1207. To Abraham Lincoln

[New York? cMarch 5, 1861]

The name of the Hon. Bradford R. Wood of Albany will be placed before you as that of a gentleman worthy to be appointed our Minister to the Prussian Court. Mr. Wood has already distinguished himself in public life, having had a seat in Congress of which he was a useful and able member. He is a man of the purest character, of the most conscientious regard to the rights of others and of an independent judgment and as might be inferred from this, an original Republican. The appointment of Mr. Wood to the station which is asked for him would be a creditable one to the administration.¹

I am, sir,
respectfully yours.—
[unsigned]

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR (draft).

1. Bradford Ripley Wood (1800–1889, Union 1824), a New York lawyer and Democratic member of Congress, 1845–1847, was a founder of the Republican Party in 1856. From 1861 to 1865 he served as United States minister to Denmark. BDAC.

1208. To Robert C. Winthrop

New York March 9th. 1861.

My dear sir.

I thank you for the kind terms in which you speak of my Discourse, and I place your letter among the favorable testimonies which I most value. Allow me, at the same time, to make my acknowledgements for the part you took in conferring upon me the honorary membership of the Massachusetts Historical Society.¹ I am fully aware of the value of the distinction, and only wonder that it should have been bestowed on one who had done so little to earn it.

I am, dear sir,
truly yours,
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: MHS ADDRESS: Hon R. C. Winthrop.

1. See 1189.4. Winthrop had written Bryant from Boston on February 27 (NYPL–BG) praising his Discourse on Irving and reporting Bryant's unanimous election to replace Irving as an honorary member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

1209. To Hiram Barney

New York March 11, 1861.

Dear sir.

You must not let the noise made by a certain set of men dishearten you. Take the office and it will subside immediately.¹ Your friends rely
upon you to carry out the original intention. In that there was no mistake; the mistake will be committed if you recede now. You must not back out; if you do the public service will suffer.

Yours truly
W C Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL ADDRESS: Hiram Barney Esq ENDORSED: Wm Cullen Bryant / March 11/61 / — / Urging me to allow / my name to be / used for the / Collectorship.
1. See 1202.1.

1210. To John H. Gourlie

New York March 12th 1861—

Dear Mr. Gourlie.

I should like to have the Sketch Club at No. 82 East 16th Street next Friday. Cannot this be done? If so will you be kind enough to let me know—and then issue the notices?—It would be a real convenience for me to have my turn this week.

Yours very truly
Wm C Bryant.

1. This meeting was held on March 14, 1861 at Fanny Godwin's town house. Gourlie had been secretary of the Sketch Club since 1851. Information from James T. Callow.

1211. To Orville Dewey

New York March 13th 1861.

My dear Doctor.

Somebody has written to a neighbor of mine at Roslyn desiring to know where to find the fastenings for window blinds which I got for you. They are the Mackeral Blind Fastenings, and I got them at the shop of A. T. Russell No. 137 Fulton Street. The purchaser must say whether they are for a wood or a brick house, for there is a little difference in their make on that account.

My wife desires me to say that it was her intention before this to have replied to Mrs. Dewey's letter—that she is ashamed to have neglected it so long, and other expressions of penitence, which I hope will be accepted, as intended, instead of a letter. The Frau is tolerably well for her—better, I think, than she was last winter. She has passed most of the season at Roslyn, where we have been fusing with certain improvements as we call them—a change of the road, and an enlargement and embellishment of the cottage
in which Mrs. Kirkland lived. The furnace which we have in the house is Leed's Water Furnace, and it brings in such a volume of new air from without, blowing a constant gale from the mouth of the register, that nobody's health suffers from foul air.

I want to come to Boston and would go this minute, but for these rascally improvements. Here in New York and even in Roslyn though there to a less degree I am teased with constant applications to help people to offices under the new administration. I want to run away from them, but the Paddies and the carpenters and masons keep me here in spite of myself. I have promised my old friends Judge Phillips and Mr. Dana a visit, and it shall go hard but I give these office beggars the slip when they little think of it.²

Your sermon on the Times—the thanksgiving or fast day sermon was it?—I saw it in the Christian Inquirer was well thought out and nobly said.³

Mrs. Bryant and Julia desire their love to Mrs. Dewey and you. They and Fanny's family are well. Kind regards to your Señora esposa.

ever yours

WM. C. BRYANT.

P.S. I am ready to tear out my hair. The Sketch Club meets to­morrow evening—Friday—and I knew it yesterday only—and failed to write im­mediately.⁴ It meets at Fanny's No 82 East 16th St.

W C B.

Manuscript: NYPL–GR Address: Dr. O. Dewey.–

1. Boston lawyer and former jurist Willard Phillips; see Vol. I, 13–14; 479.2. Phillips visited the Bryants at Roslyn the following summer. Phillips to Bryant, August 1, 1861, NYPL–BG.

2. Despite his apparent reluctance, Bryant recommended a considerable number of candidates for office during the early months of the Lincoln administration. His reasons for so doing are suggested in Letter 1218.

3. Dewey had left retirement in 1857 to take temporary charge of the New South Church in Boston. His pastorate there ended in 1861–1862, and the historic building, erected in 1717, was torn down in 1868.

4. Dewey replied on March 15 (NYPL–BG) that he was pleased to learn the Sketch Club was not dead—"I had given it up"—and would gladly come to New York on pur­pose to see "those dear old fellows."

1212. To Gideon Welles¹


My dear sir.

The bearer of this is Edward Walker Esqr. of this city, one of the firm of E. Walker & Sons, bookbinders in this city.² He has desired of me an intro­duction to some persons of influence at Washington, and as my acquaint­ances there are far from numerous I have taken the liberty to give him this note to you. His errand to the seat of government is a business one—to ob-
tain some portion of the government bookbinding. He is a highly respectable man both personally and in his vocation, in which he has acquired a deserved eminence.

Yours truly
W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYHS ADDRESS: Hon Gideon Welles / Secretary of the Navy.

1. In the face of strong opposition from his choice as Secretary of State, William H. Seward, President Lincoln had nominated Welles on March 15 as Secretary of the Navy. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 452–455.


1213. To Gideon Welles

New York, March 24, 1861.

... I am sure that you will not take my frankness ill when I say that numbers of our political friends here are perplexed to explain on what principle of fairness to the different classes of the Republican party the appointments to office have thus far been made by the present administration. The men of democratic derivation have been excluded from office, as if by design. The exceptions to this remark seem to be of those men who have made themselves speedily acceptable to Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward. We have great apprehensions that the remaining appointments may be made in the same manner. I write to you as an old political and personal friend ... to inform you of the feeling which has been awaked here; assured that so far as it is just, your exertions and influence will be used to allay it. I have written more fully to Mr. Chase on this subject, inasmuch as the important nominations for this city are to be made from his department.¹ I have no personal wish to be gratified in regard to any of them, desiring only to see them bestowed upon honest and competent men and with such a regard to equity in their distribution that no division of the Party will have reason to complain. It will require however, a great number of appointments to be conferred upon our wing of the Party in order to make it clear that no injustice was intended them. ... I am as much surprised as any body at the character of the appointments and have no desire to conceal my opinion that a grievous mistake has been made. ...


1. This letter is unrecovered, but a reply from Chase to Bryant on April 10, 1861 (NYPL-BG) indicates that in it Bryant had urged the appointment of a New Yorker named Briggs to government office.
1214. To Frances F. Bryant

Cambridge Friday morning
April 12th 1861.

Dear Frances,

I have told every body till now that I should go back to New York on Monday morning; but now I have yielded to Mr. Phillips's persuasions to remain till Tuesday morning. Mr. Parsons the law professor1 is very desirous to have me at his house on Monday and my host almost insists that I shall stay. I have been into Boston to see the Waterstons and Danas and Deweys. The Danas I saw both yesterday and the day before. They are all well, except Mr. Dana who is suffering with the influenza. I am to go to their house today and stay till Saturday when I come back to this place. The Deweys I did not find in on Wednesday and yesterday Mr. Dewey came out here to find me out also—so I was revenged. I shall try to see them today. Yesterday Mr. Waterston, on whom I had called the day before, and found him and Mrs. Waterston both well—took me to a meeting of the Historical Society where I saw a good many of the notables of Boston.2 I must try to get to Chester Square again today or tomorrow, or perhaps Monday. Mrs. Howe and Mrs. Ware3 I have yet to see. The days seem inconveniently short, and I am afraid I shall not get to Batchelder and Black's or Black and Batchelder's whichever it be.4 On Wednesday Mr. & Mrs. Sparks5 with Mr. Pickering the Reporter of the Supreme Court6 dined here, and yesterday Dr. Palfrey, who has just got the commission of postmaster for Boston.7 Tomorrow we dine with Professor Gray the Botanist.8 Last evening we went to Mr. spark's—a little tea party— There you have the journal of what I have been about, though I believe I have not set everything down in chronological order. You may suppose it was with a little reluctance that I changed my intention to return on Monday, but when I thought of the office seekers who are waiting for me I was reconciled to the change. A great many inquiries are made about you and Julia and every body is sorry you did not come—I among the rest.

Ever &c W C B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR.

1. Theophilus Parsons; see 94.1.
2. Among these was evidently Henry Longfellow, who wrote Henry Theodore Tuckerman on April 17, "Bryant has been here; very gentle and pleasant, with his benign aspect and soft blue eyes. He looks like a Prophet of Peace, amid the din of Civil War." Longfellow, Letters, IV, 235–236.
3. Sarah Lydia Robbins Howe, widow of Bryant's early law tutor Samuel Howe (Vol. I, 19; 8.1), and Mary Waterhouse Ware, widow of Rev. William Ware (100.7).
5. Jared Sparks; see Vol. I, 16; 110.1, 420.10.
6. Edward Pickering (d. 1876), co-editor with Willard Phillips of a treatise on the law of partnership, and author of Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts . . . by Octavius Pickering (Boston, 1833–1862).


8. Asa Gray (266.5) was then Fisher Professor of Natural History at Harvard.

1215. To Frances F. Bryant

Boston April 12, 1861
Friday morning.

Dear Frances.

I wrote you this morning from Cambridge where I have been staying with Judge Phillips,—giving you an account of all I have been doing since I arrived—and left the letter on the table. It will go probably tomorrow. I am to stay here at Mr. Danas till tomorrow—when I shall go back to Cambridge—They have persuaded me to stay till Tuesday morning next, when I shall set out for New York D. V.¹ Every body is well —All ask for you, and wonder why you and Julia did not come—

Yours ever

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. Deo volente (“God willing”).

1216. To Miss Newbold¹

New York, April 17th. 1861.

Madam.

I have no sample of the handwriting of Washington Irving in my pos­session, nor can I inform you where to procure one. Perhaps Mr. L. G. Clark the editor of the Knickerbocker, if he has not given away every thing of the kind might furnish you with one.²

I am, madam,
respectfully yours.

WM. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: BLR ADDRESS: Miss Newbold.

1. Unidentified.

2. Lewis Gaylord Clark (392.1) had published many of Irving’s writings in the Knickerbocker, which owed its name to one of Irving’s best known characters, Diedrich Knickerbocker.
1217. To Hiram Barney

New York, April 18, 1861

[Dear Sir?]

T. M. Burt Esq. of Kinderhook\(^1\) desires the place of Cashier in the New York Custom House. He is a most worthy man, laborious, exact, upright, faithful, a democrat, in better times of the Silas Wright\(^2\) School, an original free-soiler, and a Republican of the genuine stamp. He has done good service in the warfare lately crowned with victory.

If you appoint him to the place he asks you will bestow the office on a very competent man and gratify numbers of his friends.

Yours truly

W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL ADDRESS: H. Barney Esqre.

1. Burt is unidentified, except as described below.

1218. To Solomon Lincoln Jr.\(^1\)

New York April 18, 1861.

Dear sir.

I beg to make, through you, my best acknowledgments to the Literary Committee of the Phi Beta Kappa Society for the compliment paid me in the invitation to deliver the next annual Oration before the Society. Various reasons oblige me respectfully to decline it.\(^2\)

I am, sir,

truly yours

WM. C. BRYANT.


1. Solomon Lincoln, Jr. (1838–1907, Harvard 1861?), was later a public orator and historian of the town of Hingham, Massachusetts.
2. This would have marked the fortieth anniversary of Bryant's delivery of the Phi Beta Kappa poem at Harvard College in 1821. See Letters 71, 72. Lincoln’s letter of invitation is unrecovered.

1219. To Abraham Lincoln

New York April 20, 1861.

Sir.

The bearer of this letter is Dr. J. Wynne,\(^1\) a most respectable gentleman of southern origin, but now resident in this city, who is going south-
ward on an errand of peace to which he is prompted by his love of our common country. May I ask for him the kind reception which his character and purpose deserve.

I am, sir,
most respectfully yours
Wm. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: LC ADDRESS: To Mr. Lincoln / President of the United States. ENDORSED:
Having known Dr. Wynne / most favourably, I concur in / the above. Wm. Curtis Noyes.

1. James Wynne (1814–1871), of Utica, New York, had practiced medicine in Baltimore before moving to New York City during the 1840s, where he had published several reports on public hygiene, the Asiatic Cholera, and legal medicine. ACAB.


1220. To Leonice M. S. Moulton

New York April 24. 1861.

My dear Mrs. Moulton,

I got your letter yesterday morning, and when I came up town in the afternoon I showed it to Julia, who, I learned, had already received a letter from you, and had attended to your request by writing to Josephine.

I wonder not that you should be concerned for your daughter and her little ones. You should, however, reflect that women and children are not in the same danger at such times as these, that men are. Their weakness and defencelessness are respected, and their safety cared for, even by the most excited and ferocious. It is very right in you to hasten her departure for the north, but I think that in any event she is much safer than her husband.

It is not improbable that Baltimore will be occupied by the government troops. It will be if the administration acts with proper energy and some reference to what the people expect of it. There is no measure which can now be taken too strong or decided for the public feeling here and all over the free states.

(I perceive that martial law has been proclaimed in Baltimore, and this will bring about a certain degree of order. Military rule is better than mob rule.)

In the hope that you will soon embrace your children safe in your quiet home at Roslyn

I am, dear Madam,
truly yours
Wm. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-Bryant-Moulton Letters ADDRESS: Mrs. L. M S. Moulton.
1. Mrs. Moulton's daughter Josephine, Mrs. John Stewart (965.1), lived in Baltimore.
2. From April 19 to 24 pro-southern mobs rioted at Baltimore, driving hundreds of Union loyalists from the city. Nevins, War for the Union, I, 81–84.

1221. To Robert Balmanno

New York April 29, 1861.

My dear sir

I thank you and Mrs. Balmanno for the moss roses and chestnut trees from Chatsworth. They are already in the soil of Roslyn, at my place in the country, where I hope they will not pine for the more uniform climate of Derbyshire.²

I am, dear sir,
truly yours,
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–Ford Collection
ADDRESS: R. Balmanno Esq.

1. Robert Balmanno (d. 1861) was an employee of the New York Custom House. When he died later that year Bryant tried to secure his job for his son Alexander.
2. In June 1845 Bryant had visited Chatsworth, home of the dukes of Devonshire, in Derbyshire, England. See Letters 539, 540.

1222. To Hiram Barney

New York May 9th 1861.

My dear sir.

I cannot help thinking of the state of distress in which the Bleeckers are plunged. To be entirely without occupation and without means of subsistence is certainly a hard case, and such I understand is their situation. Mr. A. Lispenard Bleecker, the son in law of Anthony J.¹ has I understand crept into some corner where he has received his father in law, and where they are trying to support existence with scarce any means for the present and little hope from the future.

I write this in sincere compassion for their situation, and only wish I had the appointment of weigher which is what the young man asks for, at my disposal that I might get the idea of their destitution out of my mind. This not being my good luck I can only again present their case to your notice.

Yours truly
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL

1. Anthony J. Bleecker (1799–1884), New York real estate auctioneer and former Democrat, was a founder of the Republican Party and in 1856 a candidate for mayor of New York City. Perhaps through Bryant's intercession, he served as an assistant in-
ternal revenue inspector during the Civil War. *EP*, January 18, 1884. His son-in-law has not been further identified.

1223. To John Howard Bryant

Roslyn May 10 1861

Dear Brother,

I was in town yesterday and got your letter¹ which Mr. Henderson after we had consulted together answered.

I am sorry not to be able to do better by you. If I had not laid out all the money I have, and made arrangement for paying out what you owe the firm I might have taken your debt to myself. But we have engaged to pay money to Mr. Bigelow of whom Mr. Godwin has bought a third part of the Evening Post² and cannot do without the money due from yourself and Mr. Dee.³ It was supposed that the note would without question be paid at maturity. I hope the sixty days will answer your purpose.

As to coming out, if I were to come alone I could for a day; but Frances comes with me and it is her whole convenience I must consult. I can only say now that we mean to set out sometime in the beginning of week after next, that is probably on the 21st (Tuesday) or the 22nd or 23rd—that we shall stop at Rochester the first night, and the next night somewhere else, and get to Chicago in three days, and Princeton in four.

So if you see us on the last day or last but one of [the] week afterward, it will be as early as we can expect to be there.

Perhaps I may write again to say more precisely what day we set out.

Kind regards to all

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: Mrs. Mildred Bryant Kussmaul, Brockton, Massachusetts

ADDRESS: John H. Bryant.

1. Unrecovered.
2. In December 1860 John Bigelow had expressed a wish to sell his share in the *EP* properties and devote himself to writing and other activities. Bryant and the third partner, Isaac Henderson, agreed to take Parke Godwin into the firm, letting him work out his debt to Bigelow from his share of the profits. The transfer of stock was effective on January 16, 1861, with the firm of William C. Bryant & Co. underwriting Godwin's debt of $111,457.06. MS Bill of Sale and Articles of Agreement in NYPL-BG; Bigelow, *Retrospections*, I, 319–325; *EP*, January 30, 1861.

1224. To Abraham Lincoln

New York May 14, 1861.

To the President.

Samuel J. Wood Esqre. of Peekskill in this state is one of those who suffered the loss of every thing they had by the destruction of Greytown.
This was the act of our own government, and Mr. Wood has a fair claim for reparation on the public treasury. Hitherto, however, he has asked for justice from the government without success.¹

While he is prosecuting his claim before Congress he must live and he desires to receive some office which shall give him a subsistence till Congress finds time to listen to his case and grant him the indemnity which the country fairly owes him. It seems to me that this is a very reasonable desire. Mr. Wood is an honest and worthy as well as an ill-used man and has a fairer claim on the patronage of the administration, than most of those who solicit it. I therefore cheerfully recommend his case and his application to the favorable notice of the Executive.

I am, sir,
very respectfully yours
WM C BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: University of Rochester Library.

¹. Greytown, or San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua, was in dispute between the United States and Great Britain as a center of trade, and as the potential Atlantic terminus of an isthmian canal. On July 13, 1854, after the American minister to Central America, Solon Borland, had been slightly injured by mob action, the commander of an American warship demanded reparation. When it was refused, he warned the population of Greytown to flee, and then destroyed the town by gunfire. Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 581. Wood has not been further identified.

1225. To Leonice M. S. Moulton

Roslyn May 17th 1861.

My dear Mrs. Moulton.

I thank you very much for the pretty fruit knife which you have been so kind as to send me. You have made it impossible for me to pare or slice an apple, which is what I am always doing, without thinking to whom I am indebted for the means of doing it in a becoming manner.

As I may not see you before you sail for Europe you will allow me to take this opportunity of wishing you a prosperous voyage, pleasant journeys on land and a safe and happy return to your country and home.

I am, dear Madam
truly yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-Bryant–Moulton Letters ADDRESS: Mrs. L. M. S. Moulton.

1226. To Fanny Bryant Godwin

Princeton Illinois
Saturday May 25, 1861.

Dear Fanny.

I write in some haste to say that we are here quite well, having arrived yesterday afternoon at about half past two. Your mother bore the journey
remarkably well. The third day we went by rail from Cleveland to Chicago a distance of 345 miles. Mr. Ogden came with a carriage and took us to his house from the Tremont House, and the next morning carried us to the starting place of the Burlington and Quincy Railroad which brought us to Princeton. All our friends here are in their usual health, Austin better than usual and somewhat stouter than usual. Your aunts Louisa and Harriet have been for several weeks at Dr. Hays’s water-cure in Cleveland, where they soak their patients comfortably in warm water, and they have come back all the better and quite portly bodies.

The money market here is in a terrible situation. Today nobody will take the notes of an Illinois bank; the people with one consent reject it, and there is nothing else yet in the state. No business can now be done. The produce of the country—such as can be taken to market—is sent to Toledo, in Ohio, where good notes can be had for it. I have talked with John about what he owes you. He must wait for the currency to improve before he can send it to you—there being now no currency whatever. Necessity must soon bring in the notes of other states. He cannot invest the money here better than by lending it at ten per cent which he can do if you wish it.

I hope Mr. Godwin is better before this. Your mother sends her love.

Affectionately yours

Wm. C. Bryant

P.S. We get the news by telegraph here as early as you do in New York. We have just got the news of Colonel Ellsworths death.¹

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Mrs. F. B. Godwin.

1. Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth (1837–1861), who had been Lincoln’s law clerk briefly before organizing and commanding a New York Zouave regiment, had fallen on May 24 during the occupation of Alexandria, Virginia, by federal troops. He was the first man of note to die in the Civil War. At Lincoln’s suggestion, Ellsworth’s body lay in state in the East Room of the White House before burial near his birthplace in upstate New York. Nevins, War for the Union, I, 145–146.

1227. To Julia S. Bryant

Princeton Illinois
Saturday, May 25th, 1861.

Dear Julia

We arrived here yesterday at half past two in the afternoon safe and sound after a not unpleasant journey. The second days journey brought us in good season to Cleveland, where we found good quarters in the [Angier?] House. The next morning, rising at four o’clock and setting out in the train at five, we reached Chicago, at six in the afternoon having travelled three hundred and forty five miles—the latter part of the day being unpleasantly warm and the car badly ventilated. We got a room up three
flights of stairs at the Tremont House, and after tea I called on Mr. Ogden, who immediately came with his carriage and took us to his house. Your mother was a little fatigued but after a good sleep was perfectly restored, and the next morning at half past eight we were at the starting place of the Burlington and Quincy Railway on which we came by a pleasant passage through a rich country to Princeton. Here we found every body well—or as well as usual—Your uncle Austin is particularly well having left off tobacco, and increased somewhat in rotundity. Louisa and Harriet have been passing a few weeks at the water-cure establishment of Dr. Hays at Cleveland, and have returned healthier and stouter. The season is late, but the weather is now soft and warm, and the vegetation makes rapid progress. Princeton has grown a great deal since you were here and is full of shops. But the people can neither sell nor buy for there is no money here now but Illinois money, and nobody will take it—the banks are not obliged to pay specie; and are in so little credit that the people with one consent reject their notes.—

Your mother sends her love.

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT.

P.S. The news by telegraph reaches us here almost as soon as it reaches you. We have just got tidings of Col. Ellsworth's death.

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Miss Julia Bryant.

1228. To John Howard Bryant

New York June 20, 1861.

Dear Brother.

I got your letter respecting Mr. Mather's proposal yesterday.¹ I can agree to every thing in it except sending out more money to build a house. When I put down $1500— for houses stables and so forth, and $1000— for your house I went to the furthest extent of my means.

If the house can be built out of the rents that are coming in I consent, but otherwise I shall not be able to do any thing in the matter. The times increase the circulation of the Evening Post very largely but cut off the advertisements.

All well. Kind regards to all.

Yours affectionately,

WM C BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: Chicago Historical Society ADDRESS: Jn° H Bryant Esq.

¹. Letter unrecovered.
1229. To John Howard Bryant

Office of The Evening Post
New York, June 28th, 1861

Dear Brother.

I have your letter of the 24th.1 I said nothing in my last about moving the Thompson House to higher ground, because I thought that you had concluded to do it, and I had no objection.

Your drafts will be duly honored. The difficulty of sending out money to build a house on the Clark farm I believe I fully explained in my last. If Mr. Mather insists on a house before it can be built with the rents, then I suppose that no arrangement can be made with him.

Cyrus and his wife reached here this morning and go to Roslyn this afternoon. They have been to West Point.

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT.

1. Unrecovered.

1230. To G. L. Colton

Roslyn July 4th, 1861.

Dear sir.

I re-enclose you Mr. Everett's letter which was put into my hands last evening.

It had never entered my thought that I should be asked to preside at the assembly which he was to address and I had made other arrangements for the day. You may not know of my disinclination to place myself in positions of the kind, but it is unaffected—Others preside with more presence of mind and more skill. When Mr. Everett speaks the seat of the Chairman should be filled by some person who to high distinction joins the power of presiding with a dignity worthy of the occasion. You will see therefore that want of respect for Mr. Everett and of admiration for his talents has no place in the motives which have made me decline the honor which has been offered me.2

I am, sir,
respectfully yours

Wm C. BRYANT.

1. Unidentified.

2. On July 4 Edward Everett spoke to "rapt attention" for two and one-half hours before a large audience at the New York Academy of Music, his topic "The Great Issues Now Before the Country." The meeting's chairman was Judge John Slosson of the New York Supreme Court. EP, July 5, 1861.
1231. To Hiram Barney  
New York July 5, 1861.

Dear Mr. Barney,

We do not get the Import and Export Tables at half past two under your administration of the Custom House as the public did under your predecessor. Every body looks for them and nobody gets them till the next morning, they are kept back for the benefit of the morning papers.

What we want is that the old way should be preserved in that the tables should be handed out to all the evening papers as soon as they are prepared and that they should be prepared as seasonably as they were two months ago.

We do not ask for any change of clerks, we only ask that the clerk in office shall be made to know his duty.

Your truly

W. C. Bryant.

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL ADDRESS: H. Barney Esq. ENDORSED: Enclosed is a letter / from Mr. Wm C. Bry / ant, dated July 5th / 1861 / Complaining of the / Import & Export Clerk / In neglecting to make / out his Report in / season.

1232. To Hiram Barney

Office of The Evening Post,  
New York, July 17th 1861.

My dear sir.

Your note of the 2 was duly received. We desire no change in the time of publishing the commercial statistics of this port. We only ask that the time of publication may be continued substantially as it has been for some years past.

The Evening Express and the Journal of Commerce in their afternoon editions, have on Friday published the statement of the Dry Goods Imports and on Saturday the General Merchandise Imports, and on Tuesday the Export Table. The figures have always been ready by 3 o'clock P. M. an hour convenient for us in the future, and which we should be glad to have continued.

The figures are not now published either in the Journal of Commerce or the Express, at three o'clock P. M. as they have been heretofore for some years. They are we have reason to believe, purposely kept back by the clerk under pretense of making them more complete by adding the later imports of the day—an evident trick to delay their publication. The custom of the desk has been to make them up in time for distribution among the newspapers by two o'clock P. M. and no material interest is promoted by adding another days figures.
You thus perceive that we ask no change. We ask that no change shall be made to favor a particular newspaper or class of newspapers, but that this important information heretofore obtained by the Express and by the Journal of Commerce at three o'clock in the afternoon for their later editions be now furnished at the hitherto accustomed hour to the Evening Press and the Morning Press simultaneously to be used by them in their afternoon editions which they all publish.

I am sir
very respectfully &c
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: HEHL ADDRESS: To Hiram Barney Esq. Collector of the / Port of New York.

1. Bryant mistakenly wrote "June."
2. The date is left blank: Barney’s note is unrecovered.

1233. To Abraham Lincoln

New York July 16, 1861.

Dear sir.

The bearer of this note is Ogden Haggerty Esqre.¹ who desires an introduction to you.

Mr. Haggerty is well known and eminent in the commercial world here. He ranks among our most intelligent and worthy citizens and I take pleasure in bearing this testimony to his personal merit.

I am, sir,
very respectfully yrs
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: LC ADDRESS: To Abraham Lincoln / President of the United States.

1. Ogden Haggerty (1810–1875) was a New York auctioneer with offices at 279 Broadway. New York Times obituary, September 1, 1875; Trow’s New York City Directory for 1861 (New York: Trow [1860]). There is no indication that Haggerty, who remained in business in New York until his retirement because of ill health in 1867, received any appointment under the Lincoln administration.

1234. To Leonice M. S. Moulton

New York August 8 1861.

My dear Mrs. Moulton.

Your letter was read by us all with great interest.¹ It was very kind of you to think of us when you had so many interesting objects claiming your attention. Your habit of close and attentive observation, and your tena-
cious memory will have made your mind, before you return to us a perfect treasury of facts and images to which you will ever after recur with pleasure. We were very glad to hear that you and your party were making your tour in so pleasant a manner, and that you in particular had been so little disappointed in what you expected from it.

If you are like the rest of the world, however the time will come when you will feel a certain satiety of interesting sights—a certain feeling somewhat akin to loathing when you come to a place in which there is a great deal to see. You will not I am sure yield to this feeling; you will faithfully see what is to be seen as a matter of duty; and you will always be glad to have done so, but at the same time, you will feel a high degree of satisfaction, as I once heard an Englishman say he did, when you happen to get to one of those charming quiet places where there is nothing at all to see.

Meantime, I suppose you are not quite indifferent to what is going on in your country and in the neighborhood of your home. The newspapers I doubt not keep you informed of public events and your husband of what does not get into the newspapers. He seems to be passing the summer pleasantly; he looks healthy and fresh and reads the newspapers as regularly as ever. With the Vandeventers he is agreeably domiciled, and reads the newspapers to the doctor's lady.²

At our own place there is little change. I have been going on with my changes which are now nearly completed. The public are settling down into perfect acquiescence in the alteration of the road, though one or two persons grumbled a little at first but now I believe nothing whatever is said.³

You will see that I have written the second page of the letter upside down, but you are too sharp to be puzzled with such a misplacement. To proceed: our island and all this neighborhood have suffered cruelly from a long continued drought. The roads have been deep with dust, the fields parched and red and many young trees newly planted have perished. This morning there has been a little rain, the first liberal shower that we have had for two months, and we hope it is the beginning of a series that will fill our cisterns again, which have been empty for weeks. I suppose you may have heard of the accident which happened to Mr. Henry Thorn, last year one of the Street Commissioners.⁴ He was in a store at Lakeville when a gun which his son had loaded and placed against the door fell by accident and was discharged. The charge was received in both his legs. One was amputated and he died of lockjaw.

The war occupies every body's thoughts. The women take a special interest in it. They are our most zealous patriots; they will hear of no compromises or patchings up of the difference between the North and the South. They make [haversacks?], they make shirts for the wounded in the
hospitals; they send on boxes of jellies and other little comforts for the sick. Roslyn does her part in these benevolent doings.

I have here written you a dull kind of letter. It seems to me that I have sometimes done better. Make my regards to Mr. Cairns and the rest of your party. Tell Mr. Ordronaux that I have his letter and thank him for the attention he gave to my business, which was afterwards properly completed. I left Mrs. Bryant and Julia this morning in their usual health, as well as Mrs. Godwin's family, with the exception of Minna who had some temporary indisposition. You are just upon the threshold of your travels and I suppose do not give any thought to the subject of your return. I only fear that you may find so many things to attract you from place to place that we shall not see you till another summer.

Yours very truly
WM C BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: Amherst College Library
ADDRESS: à Madame / Madame L. M. S. Moulton / aux soins de Messrs John Munroe & Cie / No 5 Rue de la Paix / Paris / France
ENDORSED: Rue Scribe / 1861.

1. Unrecovered.
2. Dr. and Mrs. Vandeventer have not been further identified, except that Bryant's frequent subsequent references to them in letters to his wife and Julia suggest that they were nearby neighbors.
3. These are the changes outlined in Letters 1172 and 1211. See also Goddard, Roslyn Harbor, p. 39.
4. Not further identified.
5. Unrecovered.

1235. To James T. Fields
New York August 9th 1861.

Dear Mr. Fields.

My brother, John H. Bryant, has composed some verses which if they suit your purpose, he would be glad to see in the Atlantic Monthly, and which I send you with this note.

He has desired me to offer them, and as you see I have sent you them in a copy which I have made, in order that if you reject them, I might have the original to return to him. If you do not print the lines, throw the copy among your waste paper.¹

I am, sir,
very truly yours
WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: UVa
ADDRESS: James T. Fields Esqre.

1. No verses identifiable as by John Howard Bryant have been located in the Atlantic Monthly during this period.
1236. To Salmon P. Chase

New York     August 20, 1861.

My dear sir.

At the desire of the bearer J. H. Hammond Esq.¹ I give him this letter of introduction to you. He comes recommended to me by one of our truest and most upright men, as a person ardently devoted to the Union and desireous of contributing his efforts to its service, for which he possesses some peculiar advantages, having though a native of New York lived many years at the south and having been educated at a southern literary institution. He has left California where of late years he has resided, with a view of taking some part in the struggle for the preservation of the Union. In this work he is willing to act in any capacity for which he may be found best fitted. I have no doubt you will readily give him such counsels as his case may require and point out the best way of employing himself in the service of his country.

I am, sir,
truly yours

WM C BRYANT


1. Unidentified, except as described below.

1237. To Gideon Welles

New York     Aug. 20th. 1861.

My dear sir.

Allow me to introduce to your acquaintance J. H. Hammond Esqre. a native of this city, educated at the South, and for some time past a resident of California. He has left San Francisco with the desire of serving his country in this emergency which he is willing to do in almost any capacity. I have the assurance of one of the truest men in New York, an old democrat, and a Republican of the present day that he is a patriot and a friend to the Union, and possesses qualifications for being of service to his interests. His knowledge of the South, its people and its country seem to give him peculiar advantages in some important respects. I commend him to your favorable regards.

I am, dear sir,
truly yours

WM C BRYANT

P.S. If you have time to question Mr. Hammond I am persuaded that he can give you some valuable information concerning matters in California of which it might be well for the administration to be apprised.

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYHS ADDRESS: Hon G. Welles.
1238. To John M. Forbes

Office of the Evening Post,
New York, August 21, 1861.

My dear Sir,

It does not seem to me at all indiscreet or imprudent to make the change in the Cabinet which you suggest. Indeed, I think that Mr. Cameron's retirement would, instead of being impolitic, be the most politic thing that could be done, by way of giving firmness to public opinion and strengthening the administration with the people. The dissatisfaction here is as great as with you, and I hear that at Washington it is expressed by everybody, except Cameron's special friends and favorites, in the strongest terms. If I am rightly informed, there is nothing done by him with the promptness, energy, and decision which the times demand, without his being in a manner forced to it by the other members of the Cabinet, or the President. A man who wants to make a contract with the government for three hundred mules, provided he be a Pennsylvanian, can obtain access to him, when a citizen of East Tennessee, coming as the representative of the numerous Union population of that region, is denied. There are bitter complaints, too, of Cameron's disregard of his appointments and engagements in such cases as that I have mentioned.

Mr. Lincoln must know, I think, that Cameron is worse than nothing in the Cabinet, and a strong representation concerning his unpopularity and unacceptableness, of which he may not know, may lead him to take the important resolution of supplying his place with a better man. I do not think the newspapers are the place to discuss the matter, but I make no secret of my opinion.

I am, dear sir, truly yours,

WM. C. BRYANT.

P.S. I open my letter to say another word on the subject of yours. It does not appear to me that H. would be the man for the War Department, for the reason that he might give us trouble on the slavery question. Cameron has managed that part of our relations with the seceding States very badly, and I feel H. would do no better. He would do very well in the place of Smith; but with the exception of making a place for him, it might not be of much consequence whether Smith were retained or not, though he adds no strength to the Cabinet. Some here talk of requiring the dismissal of Seward, but I fear this would be asking more than it is possible to get, and might endanger the success of the scheme for getting rid of Cameron.

W. C. B.


1. In the spring of 1857, shortly before sailing for Europe, Bryant made the acquaintance of the Boston financier and railroad builder John Murray Forbes (1813–
1898). A former Whig, Forbes was a strong supporter of the Lincoln administration and the Union cause. See Forbes to Bryant, July 25, 1859, NYPL-BG.

2. Apparently this suggestion was made in an unrecovered letter.

3. Five months later, on January 14, 1862, President Lincoln finally secured the resignation of Simon Cameron as Secretary of War, and appointed in his place Edwin McMasters Stanton (1814–1869). Thomas and Hyman, *Stanton*, p. 137.

4. Joseph Holt (1807–1894), a Kentucky Democrat and Postmaster General, 1859–1861, also served as Secretary of War during the final two months of the Buchanan administration.

5. Caleb Blood Smith (1808–1864), a lawyer and former Indiana Whig congressman, 1843–1849, was Lincoln’s Secretary of the Interior, 1861–1862.

1239. To John M. Forbes

Office of the Evening Post,
New York, August 27, 1861.

... I do not much like the idea of putting Sherman into the Treasury Department. He would make, I think, a better secretary of war. The great objection I have to him in the Treasury Department is that, so far as I understand the matter, he is committed, as the saying is, to that foolish Morrill tariff. Yet I am very certain that it would be considered by the country an immense improvement of the Cabinet to place him in the War Department. The country has a high opinion of his energy and resolution and practical character.

Of Governor Andrew I do not know as much as you do, though I have formed a favorable judgment of his character and capacity—not a very precise one, however.

They talk of Holt here as they do with you, but I am persuaded that the disqualification I have mentioned would breed trouble in the end. The dissatisfaction with Cameron seems to grow more and more vehement every day. His presence taints the reputation of the whole Cabinet, and I think he should be ousted at once. I am sorry to say that a good deal of censure is thrown here upon my good friend Welles, of the Navy Department. He is too deliberate for the temper of our commercial men, who cannot bear to see the pirates of the rebel government capturing our merchant ships one after another and defying the whole United States navy. The Sumter and the Jeff Davis seem to have a charmed existence. Yet it seems to me that new vigor has of late been infused into the Navy department, and perhaps we underrated the difficulties of rescuing the navy from the wretched state in which that miserable creature Toucey left it. There is a committee of our financial men at present at Washington, who have gone on to confer with the President, and it is possible that they may bring back a better report of the Navy Department than they expected to be able to make.

Rumor is unfavorably busy with Mr. Seward, but as a counterpoise it is confidently said that a mutual aversion has sprung up between him and Cameron. This may be so. The “Times," I see, does not spare Cameron,
nor the "Herald." There is a good deal of talk here about a reconciliation between Weed and Bennett,\(^5\) and a friendly dinner together, and the attacks which the "Herald" is making upon the War and Navy Department, are said to be the result of an understanding between them. Who knows, or who cares much?

I have emptied into this letter substantially all I have to say. There are doubtless men in private life who would fill the War Department as well as any I have mentioned, but the world knows not their merits, and might receive their names with a feeling of disappointment.

P.S.—With regard to visiting Naushon,\(^6\) I should certainly like it, and like to bring my wife. I have another visit to make, however, in another part of Massachusetts; but I shall keep your kind invitation in mind and will write you again.

W. C. B.


1. As one of his last official acts in 1861, outgoing President Buchanan had signed into law a tariff bill sponsored by Vermont Whig congressman Justin Smith Morrill (1810–1898), and supported by John Sherman (1823–1900) of Ohio, who was chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. Nevertheless, this increased existing tariff rates only moderately. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 304, 448–449. Forbes had written Bryant on August 24 proposing Sherman as Secretary of the Treasury and Salmon P. Chase as Secretary of War. Forbes, Letters and Recollections, I, 241–242.

2. John Albion Andrew (1818–1867, Bowdoin 1837), Republican governor of Massachusetts, 1860–1866, was an anti-slavery leader and strong Unionist. In his August 24 letter, Forbes had said that, though Andrew had all the essential moral qualities of a good cabinet minister, he was perhaps too openly against slavery, and found it hard to delegate authority on small matters.

3. These were two of the most effective Confederate commerce raiders, commanded, respectively, by former United States naval commander Raphael Semmes (1809–1877), and a Nova Scotian mariner, Louis Mitchell Coxeter (1818–1873). Semmes was later captain of the Alabama in its losing battle against the U.S.S. Kearsage off the coast of France in 1864.

4. Isaac Toucey (1792–1869) of Connecticut, Buchanan's Secretary of the Navy, 1857–1861, had been much criticized for his apparent southern sympathies.

5. James Gordon Bennett (1795–1872), Scottish-born editor and publisher of the New York Herald from 1835 to 1867.

6. One of the Elizabeth Islands, a chain running southwest from Cape Cod and dividing Buzzards Bay from Vineyard Sound. Forbes had bought this island several years earlier and made it his summer home. He had first urged the Bryants to visit there in 1857. See Forbes to Bryant, July 25, 1859, NYPL-BG.

1240. To Julia S. Bryant  
Roslyn Friday August 30, 1861.

Dear Julia.

The cook we have does not expect to stay with us, and it therefore will be necessary to get one in town. Your mother, however, thinks that it will
not be possible to bring out one either on Friday or Saturday owing to some superstition which these sort of people entertain.

If your mother is well enough, she will go to Berkshire in the second week of September and I with her. At present, she is quite laid up with a very severe cold. This morning it looks like breaking up and I hope there will be an end of it before you get home. Her ailments come so frequently that she is always obliged to promise with an if. Perhaps too it may not be so convenient for me to go as I now think it will.

With this I send a letter which came to Roslyn three or four days since. It was not forwarded because we did not know when you might leave Berkshire.

Your mother thinks that you might as well come down on Wednesday with Mr. Mackie, and she will send in somebody on Thursday morning who will go to Fanny's and help you look up a cook who is to come out with you. She begs that you will not question the cook so closely as you did the girl at Eastman's,—since that sort of proceeding may discourage a servant.

Yours affectionately

WM. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1241. To Bradford Kingman

New York August 30. 1861.

Dear Sir,

It is a mistake to suppose that I was born in North Bridgewater, although both my father and mother were. They left it in early life, my mother in her childhood. I have never even lived in North Bridgewater.

I am glad to learn that the history of that place is to be carefully written and shall look for its appearance with interest. My time, however, is so fully taken up with other matters that I cannot make any such contributions to it as you suggest, nor is my information respecting its history such that I could communicate any thing worthy of insertion in your work.

Inasmuch as I was not born in North Bridgewater, the dates at which my writings were published will I suppose be of less consequence—perhaps of none at all. Yet as you have asked for them I give here the principal ones,

The Embargo a Satire 1808.
The Fountain and other Poems 1842
The Whitefooted Deer and other Poems. 1844.
Letters of a Traveller 1850
Letters from Spain 1859.
Hoping that you will receive every facility for the satisfactory execution of the task you have undertaken

I am, sir,
respectfully yours
Wm C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: Indiana University Library
ADDRESS: B. Kingman Esqre.

1. The addressee was then gathering information for his History of North Bridgewater, With Family Registers (Boston, 1866). No letter from Kingman to Bryant at this time has been located.
2. Bryant mistakenly wrote "1816."

1242. To Orville Dewey
Roslyn August 31st. 1861.

Dear Doctor.

I hear—or, truly and literally speaking, I read in a letter from Julia—that you are to be at home, that is in Sheffield—for one's real home is the country after all—all next week and the week after. My wife and I meditate an incursion into Berkshire week after next. We shall leave Roslyn on Monday Sept. 9th. and New York on Tuesday morning—but whether we stop at Sheffield in going or in returning, I believe is not yet decided. Will it be convenient for you and Mrs. Dewey to see us either at one time or the other? Do you pass the Sunday following the second week of September in Sheffield? I confess I did hope that you might have found your way with your better half to Roslyn this season, and there is time yet. I wanted you to look at the changes we have made here, in the principal one of which you took so kind an interest. The place has quite another look, and is greatly improved, though all the rubbish is not yet removed. It has quite an air of seclusion.

I hope you succeed in reconciling the present state of the country to your optimistic notions—not that I think it difficult to do so. Our old friend human nature, whom it is rather dangerous to praise, must I fear, bear the blame of the calamity which has come upon us. Yet I see a glorious sunshine behind this cloud and a plentiful harvest of good from these bitter showers.

My wife desires her love to all. Make [my] regards to the mistress and her daughters.

I am, dear Doctor,
most truly yours
Wm. C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR
ADDRESS: Dr. O. Dewey.

1. Word apparently omitted.
1243. To Julia S. Bryant
Sheffield Sept. 11th 1861.
Wednesday morning.

Dear Julia.

We got here safely at two o'clock yesterday afternoon and found Dr. Dewey at the station waiting for us. Your mother was somewhat tired but is very bright this morning. The Deweys are all well. Mary's school is in such esteem that she is obliged to refuse scholars.¹

I found at New York a letter from Mrs. Ware. She says that she will leave home on Monday and be in New York on Tuesday morning. If she should not arrive by the early train, send down somebody to the station in the evening of Tuesday to meet her and bring up her baggage. I have written to her to tell her how to come.

Your mother will not think of leaving Berkshire until Tuesday, so that Mrs. Ware may be at Roslyn first.

Yours affectionately
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR.

1. Orville Dewey's daughter Mary E. Dewey, then conducting a school in Sheffield, later edited her father's Autobiography and Letters (Boston, 1884).

1244. To Robert Bonner
Office of The Evening Post
New York, Oct. 5 1861

My dear sir.

An acquaintance of mine Prof. Walchner, a German poet¹ is ambitious of seeing in your Ledger, a ballad composed by him and respectably translated into English by James Nash.² I send it enclosed. Can you do me the favor to look over it and say whether you will print it and if not return it to me by the bearer as I have no other copy?

Yours truly
W. C. BRYANT.


1. Probably Friedrich August Walchner (911.1).
2. Unidentified.

1245. To Salmon P. Chase
Roslyn Oct. 22, 1861.

My dear sir.

I have a friend who is a first rate clerk quick and accurate in accounts and a good business man; and besides a man of good sense and unimpeached
integrity, and rigidly exact in his duty who would like the place of which you spoke to me in your letter. It is John Cockle Esq of this city who was for some time, Entry Clerk in the Naval Office under Michael Hoffman and was much confided in by that most able and upright man.¹

I have spoken with him and if the place is not bestowed I will convey to him any communication you may have to make.

With regard to a visit to Washington I find that it will not be convenient for me to make it at present, though I cannot refrain from again expressing my acknowledgments for your offered hospitality.²

I am dear sir
truly yours
W C BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR (draft) ADDRESS: Hon S. P. Chase / Secy of the Treasury.

1. Michael Hoffman (1787–1848) of Saratoga, New York, a Democratic congressman from New York, 1825–1833, later occupied several state offices before serving for the last three years of his life as Naval Officer of the Port of New York. BDAC. John Cockle has not been further identified.

2. Chase replied that Cockle should come to Washington at once, and urged Bryant to visit him as soon as possible. "In my house," he wrote, "you will find yourself at home." There was a strong mutual respect between the two men. A few days after Lincoln's inauguration, Chase had written John Bigelow that if Bryant would consider going to Paris as the American minister, "He should have my voice." Chase to Bryant, October 23, 1861, NYPL–BG; Chase to Bigelow, March 11, 1861, quoted in Bigelow, Retrospections, I, 348–349.

1246. To George Bancroft

Roslyn Nov. 5, 1861.

Dear Mr. Bancroft.

I told Mr. Conway yesterday that I would come to the meeting in behalf of the North Carolina fishermen at which I am glad to learn that you are to preside, and that I might say a word or two to the assembly,—words for which you will be responsible as the instigator. But lest you might not see him again in season I write this. I shall not speak more than five or ten minutes—there is not matter for a longer speech for an intellect so unfruitful as mine and if there were I am not for tiring an audience.¹ Thanking you for the compliment you have paid me in asking me

I am, dear sir,
truly yours
Wm C BRYANT


1. On November 7 at the Cooper Institute, with Bancroft presiding, Bryant was one of several speakers at a meeting sponsored by New York merchants, whose purpose was to finance a shipment of food and clothing to North Carolina fishermen made destitute by their loyalty to the Union. Rev. T. W. Conway, organizer of the meeting
and a speaker, was chaplain of the Ninth New York Regiment. *EP* and New York Times, November 8, 1861.

1247. To John Howard Bryant

Roslyn Nov. 9th. 1861.

Dear Brother.

I got your letter yesterday¹ and immediately wrote to Mr. Wm. H. Osborn late of this city, now of Chicago and President of the Illinois Central Railroad, asking him to send you a pass over the road as the correspondent of the Evening Post.

If you should not get the pass within a very few days I wish you would write to him, mentioning, that it is done at my request, and stating the necessity of having the pass as soon as may be.

We are all well. William Snell has paid us a visit. He has come east for his health’s sake and for the sake of getting money to buy a bell for his church. He writes to me that uncle Thomas is not so well as usual being much enfeebled by “two serious turns of bleeding at the nose, and is subject to faint occasionally.["] His mind is somewhat affected.²

The season here has been wonderfully fine. The frosts held off uncommonly late, the fields are now in full verdure, and the trees retain at least half their leaves. Some of them are in full foliage.

I find that the list of apple trees I took down at Princeton does not answer for our region. The Jonathan which succeeds so well with you is apt to die at the root here and is a poor grower. By the root I suppose is meant the insertion of the graft which is near the root.

The feeling that it will be necessary to get rid of slavery before we can hope to obtain any very decided advantages over the rebels is greatly on the increase here and manifests itself particularly at the public meetings whenever any allusion to the subject is made.

Kind regards to . . .³

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–BFP ADDRESS: Jnº H. Bryant.

1. Unrecovered.
2. Rev. William Wingate Snell, then apparently settled in California, was a son of Bryant’s maternal uncle, Rev. Thomas Snell (1.4), who died at North Brookfield, Massachusetts, the following year at the age of eighty-eight.
3. The conclusion and signature have been cut from the manuscript.

1248. To John Howard Bryant

Office of The Evening Post,
New York, Dec. 9th 1861.

Dear Brother.

Mr. Godwin has received a letter from Mr. Bigelow in Paris, in which he desired him to say to me that if the letter to you has not been forwarded, I should withhold it, and if there is yet time to countermand the order for
the survey that I should countermand it, as he has no occasion for the survey.¹

I hasten to give you the information that if it be not too late you may refrain from proceeding in the matter. If you will tell me how the thing now stands I will write to him, or if you will send me a letter for him I will forward it. All well.

Yours affectionately,

W. C. Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: Newberry Library
ADDRESS: Jn° H Bryant Esq.

1. In August Bigelow had been appointed consul general at Paris, whence he wrote Parke Godwin on November 11, 1861 (NYPL-BG) that he did not need at present the money he had apparently invested earlier in Illinois land through the agency of John Bryant.

1249. To Cullen Bryant

Office of The Evening Post,

Dear Nephew.

I am sorry to say that just now we are neither in town nor out of town. I should like to see you at our house in town if we had any, but we have none, and Fanny who has just been confined entirely fills up Mr. Godwin's house with her family.¹ We had expected to be in town during the holidays and are looking up a boarding place for the purpose. My wife and daughter are now with a friend at Astoria, a little without the city and I am here for a day or two for the same purpose sleeping in a little back room at Mr. Godwins. Our house, however, is open at Roslyn, and still warmed with a furnace, and if you think you could entertain yourself there for a day or two or longer, as much longer as you please, without us, the place and the table is at your service, and it may be that we shall be down there a few days yet, before finally coming in—but we expect to pass the holidays here.—

Yours truly

Wm. C. Bryant.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-BFP
ADDRESS: Mr. Cullen Bryant / Military Academy / West Point / N. Y.— POSTMARK: NEW-YORK / DEC 21.

1. Fanny Godwin's eighth child, Walter, was born in December 1861, and died in 1867.

1250. To John Bigelow

New York, December 23rd, 1861.

Dear Mr. Bigelow:

... The case of Mason and Slidell makes an infinite deal of talk here and I suppose the excitement in America is quite as great as it is in England
in regard to that subject. The mercantile feeling is a little timid as regards
the prospect of a war with Great Britain, but even among the mercantile
class, there is an undercurrent of indignation at the insolence of Great
Britain in perverting into a cause of quarrel an act copied directly from her
own example, and in perfect accordance with the law of nations as her own
jurists have expounded it. Nothing but having another war on our hands
prevents a violent outbreak of resentment. Unless the demand made by the
British Government be exceedingly moderate in its nature, a feud will be
created which can never be so healed as not to leave an ugly scar.¹

With regard to our quarrel with the Southern States the general feel-
ing is one of impatience suppressed with some difficulty at the tardy pro-
ceedings of those who have the direction of affairs. People wonder and won-
der what is the reason for keeping such an immense army at Washington,
an army now admirably disciplined and perfectly equipped, and ready for
any expedition on which they may be sent—when it is clear that the seat of
government might be defended with a quarter of the number.

My own view of the matter however leads me to be contented with
these delays, and I can see that good may grow out of the encouragement
which the rebels will derive from the differences into which we have got
ourselves with Great Britain.

General Scott’s letter was very much liked here and whether justly or
not the credit of its authorship was given by many to you.²—Best regards to
Mrs. Bigelow and believe me,

Truly yours

[signature not printed]


1. On November 8, 1861, the newly appointed Confederate diplomatic commis-
sioners to Great Britain and France, James Murray Mason (1798–1871) of Virginia, and
John Slidell (1798–1871) of Louisiana, had been forceably removed from the British
steamer Trent by United States marines from the warship San Jacinto and taken to
Boston for imprisonment. When the news of this “Trent Affair” reached London, there
were immediate British threats of war against the Union government. But before the
end of December conciliatory efforts on both sides of the Atlantic brought release of
the prisoners. Nevins, War for the Union, I, 388–393; Van Deusen, Seward, pp. 306–
317.

2. A letter from General Winfield Scott, recently retired as general-in-chief of the
United States army, to Bigelow, printed in Paris and London newspapers, as well as one
from Bigelow to Secretary of State Seward on December 5, urged surrender of Mason
and Slidell to ensure the preservation of freedom of the seas. Van Deusen, Seward, pp.
315–316. On December 2 Bigelow wrote from Paris to Isaac Henderson (NYPL–BG)
that Scott’s “tranquilizing” letter might extricate Washington from the affair with
credit—which was, on the whole, the outcome.
1251.  *To John Howard Bryant*  

Office of The Evening Post,  
New York, Dec. 23, 1861

Dear Brother

I do not see that you have any reason to return any part of the money received from Mr. Bigelow, and I shall write to him that I have said the same thing to you. He employed you in a matter of business and will expect to make you a fair compensation as his agent. It is not at all likely that he would consent to receive back any part of the $50.

If in consequence of your expenditures on your house you become at all embarrassed you must let me know. We have been obliged to order a new press which will throw a heavy expense on us and we expect to feel something of the pressure of the times between this time and next May, but as I urged you to make the alterations, I should be sorry to see you brought into any difficulty by it that is in my power to prevent.

I have not heard a word from Mr. Olds since he left us for the west. He promised to write and let us know how he got on, but we have not heard a syllable concerning him, even from your letters or those of Arthur and know not whether he be dead or alive, better or worse.

Yours affectionately  
WM. C. BRYANT

**Manuscript:** BCHS published: “Bryant and Illinois,” 645–646.

1. Bryant’s comment on this was probably omitted from the printed text of Letter 1250.
2. Arthur Bryant; see Vol. 1, 12.

1252.  *To Ferdinand E. Field*  

New York, December, 1861

... It is some satisfaction to me to know that, if you and I took the same view of the facts, we should not differ so much in our conclusions as you suppose. The British newspaper press has not given all the facts to its readers. In all the States in which the civil war was raging, at the date of your letter to me, there was an ascertained majority in favor of remaining in the Union. These States are Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri. These States the rebellion attempted to wrest from us. You will agree that the war on behalf of the majority of their citizens was a just one on our part.

We claim, also, that there is a majority in favor of the Union in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas; in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, and perhaps in Mississippi; in short, that there is no State in which the secessionists possess a clear majority, except it be South Carolina. In none of the slave States was the question whether they desired to remain in the Union submitted to the people. We of the North said to them: First show that your
own citizens are in favor of separating from the Union. Make that clear, and then bring the matter before Congress, and agitate for a change of the Constitution, releasing you in a peaceful and regular way from your connection with the free States. There is no hurry; you have lived a great many years in partnership with us, and you can certainly now wait till the matter is thoroughly discussed. They refused to do anything of this nature; they had for the most part got their own creatures into the State legislatures, and into the governors’ seats; they rushed the vote for separation through these legislatures; they lured troops; they stole arms from the government arsenals, and money from the Government mints; they seized upon the Government navy yards and Government forts; in short, they made war upon the Government. Taking the whole of the Southern States together, this was done by a minority of the people.

You will agree with me, I am sure, that we could not honorably abandon the friends of the Union in these States. You would not have the British government, if a minority in Scotland were to seize upon that country and set up a mock parliament at Edinburgh, give up the country to the insurgents.

As to the Star blockade, it strikes everybody here as singular that the British government and public should be so ill-informed in regard to that matter. Several rivers find their way to the ocean in the channels that lead to Charleston Harbor. Some years since, the channels being too numerous, and becoming more shallow, the Government was at the expense of filling them up, which made the others, particularly Maffit’s Channel, deeper. The Government has now filled up another channel, which makes Maffit’s Channel still deeper, which is an advantage to the harbor; but, in the mean time, the blockade is more easily enforced, because there is one channel the less for us to watch. If the obstructions we have placed do any mischief, they may be removed. The rebels are doing the same thing at Savannah, yet your press make no complaint. They have obstructed one of the channels leading to their city, and we have just taken them up. Set that against what we have done at Charleston.2

You see, then, the entire groundlessness of the unfavorable conclusions formed in England. As for the Trent affair, that will be settled, and I will not say what I might concerning it, except to remark that the preparations for war with which your government accompanied its demand have left a sense of injury and insult which, I fear, will not soon pass away. But none the less do I cling to my pleasant memories of England and the excellent people I met there. . . .


1. Unrecovered.

2. A blockade of all Confederate ports proclaimed by President Lincoln on April 19, 1861, ineffectual for the first few months, had by the end of the year seriously crippled the South’s foreign commerce.
1253.  *To Abraham Lincoln*  

[1861?]

We the undersigned Citizens of the United States beg leave to recommend to your consideration Barent Vanderpool of Fort Hamilton\(^1\) as a fit and proper person to be appointed a Lieutenant in the Army of the U. S. He is a young man of unblemished character and firmly attached to the Constitution and government of which your Excellency is the Head. His grandfather was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and with the army at the surrender of Gen. Burgoyne. His uncle was also engaged in the War taken prisoner and died in the Prison Ship.

WM. C. BRYANT [and others]\(^2\)

**MANUSCRIPT:** Boston University Library  
**ADDRESS:** To His Excellency / Abraham Lincoln, / President of the United States.

1. Not further identified.  
2. This petition, signed by Bryant and a dozen others, including Generals John A. Dix and Winfield Scott, is in an unidentified handwriting.