From C. C. Felton. Διὰ τὸν πόλεμον Βορείων & Νοτίων Πολιτειῶν τῆς Ἀμερικῆς

Επ. 128

Cambridge Oct. 29. 1861

My very dear Friend, I have an extraordinary reluctance to write since our troubles began. A great many times I have sat at my desk and taken up my pen, to answer your friendly and most acceptable letters. But the wor of Aeneas to Dido — infandum jubes renovare dolorem — have deterred m Since I wrote you last we have lived whole ages. We are a different pe and what further changes are imminent God only knows. But first of other ma I have punctually attended to every matter of business that concerned you, and mad all explanations with regard to our excellent friend Contostavlos, whose affairs have been as well managed as possible, after so many years, and such confusion of accounts. I trust the Athenian Courts will not disgrace themselves by oppressing an honorable and patriotic citizen, merely because some documents may be missing, or some errors of memory may have happened. Pray remember me cordially to that venerable man. I have sent the lect to all the persons you mentioned, and several others: and I have written le on the subject to several leading men in the Church. — Our University is very prosperous and quiet. I have carried all the reforms in law and disc that I desired, and the order that prevails is now more exemplary than ev I occupy myself now with enlarging and improving the curriculum, and add to the efficiency of the professional Schools. I have strong hopes, that in spite of public troubles, we shall be able to hold a steady course forward. I remi our people of the example of Athens in the Peloponnesian War: and of the constancy with which she cultivated the arts of peace even when the enemy were in sight from the walls. Our numbers in the undergra ate department are as full as ever. When the war first broke ou there was a great excitement among the students, many of them being eager to rush to arms. Some actually entered the service: but most were satisfied with the opportunity we gave them to have a drill, connected with the gymnasium. Of our young graduates, nearly a hundred are in the army: and wherever they have been exposed to peril they have met it heroically. An army of University men would be, in my judgment, unconquerable. We shall probably organize a system of military training as a regular part of the College Exercises, to last at least as long as the war. So much for Cambridge matters. Nunc paullo majora canamus. I hardly know where to begin: but I may as well tell you what I think in general, of this war. In my judgment it is the most extraordinary in all history. It united in its inception the worst crimes and the wickedest purposes ever contemplated by rebels and conspirators. In the beginning, the Capital was to be seized by leagued conspirators in Maryland and Virginia. That having failed, a plot was laid to assassinate President Lincoln on his way to Washington: this plot was discovered by my brother, who is President of the Philadelphia & Baltimore Railroad, and who laid the evidence before the President, on his arrival at Philadelphia, and made the arrangements which the President adopted, for his safe arrival. When I next see you in Athens I will give you all the details of this secret history, and you will agree with me that it is a curious chapter. Meantime all the evidence is in my brother's possession and will be produced at the proper time. The march through Annapolis to Washington, after the attack upon our regiment in the Streets of Baltimore, was planned by my brother, and adopted by the military authorities, and all the provisions furnished our troops during those terrible days, when no communication with Washington was possible, were purchased and sent forward by my brother, on his personal responsibility. This is episodic: but I thought it would be interesting to you. The facts have not as yet been generally known.

For thirty years, this wicked conspiracy has been preparing. Its real origin is in a profound hatred of republican institutions, generated by the despotic principles of Southern Slavery. Abolition Societies, and antislavery oratory have furnished the pretence, and only the pretence. A new theory of the government which falsifies all history, and defies all common sense has entered into the political education of the South, and corrupted whatever of loyal sentiment existed there when the Constitution was first adopted. This has been taught in congressional debates: from the pulpit: from the professor's chair: in the Schools. The loyalty of the people thus weakened, the most atrocious calumnies have been circulated against the North, for the purpose of inflaming the Southern mind. The animosity thus created is perfectly fiendish. The election of Mr. Lincoln was the preconcerted signal of the outbreak. South Carolina led the van, and the other Cotton States followed. Sumter was reduced. Until this base act of treason was consummated, there was a lingering hope at the North, that peace and unity might be restored. There was nothing short of the actual abandonment of all our cherished principles of liberty, that we should have hesitated to do, to bring back the seceded States. When insult to the Government was consummated, nothing was left but war. We started like one man, and flew to arms. Here the Southern leaders had made a fatal error in their calculations. They thought the North would not sustain the Government. Their arch-traitor Davis, said in a speech addressed to an immense concourse, in one of the Southern Cities, on his way to Mississippi from Washington, "You have nothing to fear from the North. I have lately visited those States" (as he had)" and I tell you that one half of the people are your friends, and the other half unprepared and afraid to fight. I will march an army of fifty thousand men through them and subsist the troops on the products of the North. The only opposition you have to fear is that of three thousand petticoated priests."" They had no idea of a serious resistance; and when the uprising from the North first reached them they were astonished and confounded. They have done the best they could to meet such an unexpected movement. They had the advantage of the North in the military habits of the people; in the time they had had for stealthy preparation; in the possession of the arms & munitions of war [illegible] and transferred there by the detestable Floyd, while he was Secretary of War. Our fleet was dispersed all over the world; our forts were dismantled. And everything seemed, at first, to be at their mercy. Our government lost precious time in testing the possibilities of avoiding a civil war. But they have not put forth their powers. We have had partial defeats, as was to be expected. Bull Run, Big Bethel, and Ball's Crossing, are sad reminders of lives sacrificed by blundering inexperience. But the great movement is going on. An army of more than 500.000 men is in force: 250.000 are along the Potomac, well supplied, well disciplined and eager. General Scott and General McClellan — the Nestor and Achilles of the Camp — form an admirable union of wisdom and bravery. This army is furnished with ~~with~~ about 600 pieces of artillery. This stupendous force is moving slowly and securely upon the enemy. Either the rebels must soon retreat from Virginia, or they must hazard a battle at Manassas: and it will be a battle of Gods and Giants. We may expect it any day. I have great confidence that victory will crown our arms, and that the strength of rebellion will be nearly spent. I do not believe the war will be finished by it; probably hostilities will continue for years; but I do not believe the rebels will be able to raise another great army. Then will come the inevitable conflict between the blinded and cheated people, and the men who have led them to their ruin — the would be dukes, earls and lords in the new order of things which they have attempted to establish. Woe to the conspirators when that shall come to pass. This is the only probable future shown to my feeble ken —

the only possible solution of our great problem. One result will be the abolition of Slavery in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri – and the absolute prohibition of its extension elsewhere: another will be the utter overthrow of the dogma of Secession: another the establishment of a large standing army: another the military education of American youth – another, the participation of the higher classes in political action as a moral duty. There, I think I have given you prophecy enough for once.

To go back. I was in Washington at the end of May and made the rounds of our army, as it was then constituted. I shall go again soon:– and I [illegible] a war in ~~[illegible]~~ that will write you from the scene of the war. I dined with Lord Lyons with an agreeable party, and saw the President and his cabinet. I took my daughter Mary, to let her see how history is made: and after a most interesting week returned to my peaceful occupations here. Some of my relatives are in the army. A brother in law is captain: ~~Cousin~~ one of my cousins has been disabled by a rifle ball through the lungs. From my immediate circle of friends, many have been wounded and some killed: and I expect daily to hear of many more. Yesterday a military funeral consigned to his grave at Mt. Auburn a young man from a family of our friends – the only son – a noble, pure minded youth – who felt it his solemn duty to enter this war. He was killed in the act of helping a wounded comrade. Capt Schmitt, our German teacher received five balls, but will

interruption. Pray offer my most sincere thanks to Madame Argyropoulos for the excellent photograph of her lamented and illustrious husband. I shall prepare a little notice of him for the N.A. Review. I wish I could get all his published works. Remember me, with kindly regards, to Mr. Pantazè – Mr. Rangabé – Philippos Johannis – especially with respectful salutation to Asopios – to all others who remember me; and with affectionate greeting to Mr. Hill Mrs Baldwin, Dr Bessie, [illegible], Kalliga [illegible] C. C. Felton

It was in excellent taste and feeling to name your church. I rejoice that you did it. — One word now on business. Will you please inform me whether the money for the periodicals is not exhausted, and whether I ought not to send you more. Also, please forward half a dozen jars of Hymettus honey, with the bill. I want to be supplied regular with that delicious product of Attica. Also, I want a copy of all the laws upon Naturalization: I cannot make out exactly what are the conditions by which ἑτερόχθονες become possessed of the rights of citizenship. Also, I want all the new photographs of Athens and every other part of Greece. Also new books, — history, poetry — education &c &c &c &c

I see Dr Botting often. He always inquires after you. He is anxious to know whether Dr Roeser received a parcel from him. I believe the Dr surpasses me in the virtue of not writing, or ἀγραφία as Plato would probably have called it.

In speaking of the grand movement of our army, I believe I have said nothing about the fleet. The Government have made unheard of efforts, and they have succeeded in creating a fleet of giganti proportions, which is just started on a secret expedition. A heavy blow will be struck, at some vital point or points, before many days. The victory that is to be at Manassas, and the success of our naval expedition, which I venture to anticipate, will give you, I think, a different feeling soon. You must not despair of the republic. I believe God is subjecting us to a fiery trial, whi will purify our character as a nation, and establish our governm for a long career of prosperity and renown.

I must now close this hasty and disjointed letter, written in the midst