

Charles Pettit McIlvaine Letters

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1-28-1862

## Letter from C.P. McIlvaine to S.P. Chase

Charles Pettit McIlvaine

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instincts of our Gov<sup>t</sup> - a suspiciousness which, pro-  
- easily as they feel in regard to all the  
- French Emperor's words, leads them to interpret  
any words of Mr Sedgwick in the most unfavorable  
- sense they can possibly be made to bear, or to  
- favour. I will say a little as to the causes  
- of this suspiciousness or the parabola it feeds on,  
- Mr G. goes back any further than Mr S's alleged  
- conversation with the Duke of New Castle - I have  
- heard of that very where - It was (his own adaption)  
- the staple of the talk - "What are we to under-  
- stand when Mr S. would say or do?" How  
- odd I am of the question - Mr Sedgwick the  
- Duke's account of that matter had a very  
- great deal to do with the strong idea here  
- for a long time that the Brent affair was  
- an intended insult on our part - & with  
- the party bristling up for this Gov<sup>t</sup> to  
- be ready for war - And now it is known  
- here that Mr S. denies the whole thing - says  
- there is not a word of truth in it - That he  
- never met the Duke, but once & then  
- only in going from the Holborn Albany to the  
- Nation - Mr Henry Allcock tells me to day  
- of a long letter from Mr Everett - as Mr Wood  
- had previously rec<sup>d</sup> one from Mr S. then  
- denying all - But the Duke is very positive  
- & particular - I know three persons at least to  
- whom he told it - & one of them heard it of him  
- twice - I have heard nothing of the Duke since

By Mr Sedgwick  
London Jan 28 1862  
London Jan 28 1862  
My dear friend,  
Thank you for a good, long  
- letter - begun Dec. 17 - & continued & ended  
- two weeks later (with the worse for that) - It  
- gave me the evidence of how early - before the  
- facts here about the Brent affair was heard  
- of at home, your mind had taken the view  
- of it, which was afterwards acted on - & I have  
- not failed to see it, in answer to the idea  
- which one hears or often hears, that had it  
- not been for the prospect of the war - conse-  
- quence of a contrary course, the capture  
- would not have been delivered up. The  
- case would have been in our hands - (see American)  
- by the French Emperor's speech - or different as to  
- our matter from what was expected & a week  
- ago was almost certain - There was every expecta-  
- tion that he would have held out certain  
- signs that our ports were to be opened by him  
- Mr Wood, who returned from Paris yesterday &  
- had interviews with the Prince Louis, De Moroy,  
- & I believe Tharverel, says he was informed  
- by the two former that "better information" had  
- changed the Emperor's mind for the present -  
- I suppose information as to the status part of  
- the blockade - I rather think it was a

Our last news is the sailing of Burnside's force  
& some success about Romney &c -

I have just heard of the treason of the Rev Mr Williams whose  
20 trunks & whose papers were searched on his way to V<sup>ts</sup> I found to  
contain so much treason - I saw these boxes or trunks at Barnum  
the day before I went last to Wash<sup>ton</sup> & he was there & talked a  
moderate sort of Unionism with me - I am sorry he was not  
dealt with at least as severely as any layman would have  
been - He should or intended to abuse the confidence placed  
in a clergyman & my doctrine is that no layman should  
have no benefit of clergy -

Chas M

movement from the side of the Council - that, as he was before induced by their Gov<sup>t</sup> to press his wish to force our ports - so now a second application to their Gov<sup>t</sup> for a contemporaneous movement to that effect he failed & he has been prevailed on again to wait - From all I can learn, <sup>the</sup> wait a while longer, is the best aspect of the views of the two Gov<sup>ts</sup> on that point - There is in the bulk of the reasoning, thinking, & especially the religious, part of the middle class, <sup>here,</sup> a strong opposition to any interference with the blockade, because it would do help a slave-ocracy & because it would lead to war with us - But there is certainly in many others a disposition, which whether it seeks to, or not, would have no scruple to await itself of a good manifest protest to interfere & would be none the less willing because of the war that would follow - This party is variously compounded - There are in it - first - the people that have been persuaded against us & in favour of the South, by the active, & insidious efforts of Southern agents - whose hands are every where - & whose influence the press so widely shows - What wonder that Dudley Mann was received in high places - & then with him, when he was next to our delegation, under the former Ministry - Secondly of those, especially among

the politicians, who desire to see us divided & the weaker, because of our increasing ~~dis-~~ <sup>dis-</sup> ~~importance~~ <sup>importance</sup> in the world's affairs & what they think our dangerous tendency to use our influence injuriously & unwisely - Thirdly - of those who, whether under the feeling of the two other classes or not, are inclined to us because they look on us as a begging people, disposed to hold our heads on a con- temptuous defiance of other nations, especially England - & to think that whatever we may do to England, she dare not go to war with us - These people say - "It is true we had made them feel our power - 'let us humble them - war will come some time with the whole people - Now is as good a time as any" -

This feeling feeds on the exasperating article which appeared in the Herald before the Trent affair was settled - on such a speech as that of Hale on the Senate & last, that of Lovejoy -

The feelings of the party and this compounded I cannot find are now rundered by the present aspect of the Trent question - On the contrary - in some of its components - it is the more bitter, because of disappointment - But outside of that party, & among those who really desire good things between us, high minded men, there is a very uneasy feeling - a great want of confidence in ~~our~~ the spirit &

save nothing to the contrary - though he is sh-  
wer de-emse & taciturn & to himself - The mt  
listened well - When we rose from table the  
host said to me - "You see - the news could  
have got from newspapers what you have  
told us - & all this will make a strong  
impression" -

I have preached nearly every Sunday & am  
overrun with applications to preach & visit  
here & there - I have consented, under the  
request of the Bp. of Lond. & Dean Milman,  
of St. Pauls - to preach in the Cathedral one  
of the Sunday night sermons, on the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Feb. The audience is usually about 4000 -  
I suppose it will then be near 5000. If it  
be called audience when so many can  
not possibly hear. It is under the great dome  
& the congregation mixed church - the whole  
length of the nave & fills the transepts.  
I was there last Sunday night when Dean  
Dresch preached - there is not such a spectacle  
in the world as that congregation in that  
church. Can I be heard? I shall preach  
with notes & I pray for a quiet mind, wholly  
divested of all care about the judgment of man  
& simply, humbly & wholly occupied with thoughts  
of the presence of Christ & his will & word & glory.  
Thank you that day & ask my Lord, & your  
Lord, to help me.

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The denial came - It is very awkward -  
Is it possible that any body could have been  
mistaken for Mr. D. by ~~the~~ the Duke? That seems  
the only conceivable explanation, short of the im-  
possible supposition that there is a resemblance be-  
in one or other side - Added to this alleged  
conversation (and by the way, when Mr. H. told  
- and told Lord Elgin of Mr. D.'s denial, the  
former said that he (Mr. D.) may years ago,  
when in some high position of the State of N.  
Y.) had said to him several things con-  
-cerning Canada) added to these causes  
of suspicion & apprehension, are the meeting  
in Boston (the dinner) composed as it was,  
& speaking as it did, about the Walker affair -  
then the clause in Mr. Waller's Report about  
it & the vote in the H. of Representatives -  
then all the talk in the papers at home  
about "one man at a time" - when we  
get the rebellion off our hands, the term of  
Eng<sup>l</sup> will come to us

Nothing <sup>letter</sup> shows the temper I am un-  
-willing to explain than the sharp hard way  
when on that sentence of Mr. D. to do & do  
"I'm coming to my conclusion, I have not  
forgotten that if the safety of the Union re-  
-quires the detention of - that is - those  
- up into awful proportions -  
Then the question - "If you God's name



We are looking most anxiously & impatiently  
by for great events at home from the position  
of the several armies. The Peace Constructor I  
hope will soon show his power. Unless some  
decisive events take place soon, the blockade  
will be forced or declared void - by France or  
Engl<sup>d</sup> or both. One great victory would settle  
that question -

I am glad to hear that my nephew  
has been called to work. It seems that  
the reason why my other nephew did  
not receive his commission was that it  
was sent to Lord Dundas and a drop  
which prevented it from being getting to  
my family. It is all right now. I am  
not sorry about the resignation of Mr  
Cameron - though I do not know the  
particular cause. I wish Smith might go  
also. Thanks again for your letter. I  
can do a great deal by letters from you -  
containing what you have no unwillingness  
to have, <sup>me</sup> prudently speak of, in conversation,  
not in print. Any private matter for me  
only - if written I should keep it.

Farewell. The Lord bless you & yours  
Affectionate remembrance to Katy - &  
kind remembrance to your Chief Clerk -

Narrington - Yours affectionately  
Chas. P. M. Shaw -