Hamilton July 20th 1861

I rec'd yours of the 17th this afternoon, two or three hours ago, and have just taken my seat, my dear, to begin a long letter to you. — I called on Belle B. this afternoon, and had no difficulty in finding her. She was looking very well and smiling, to like Brooklyn very much. Her school is growing, and their prospects are good. Little Mary B. has grown finely; is quite pretty, tho' her mother says little. She is to have good boots by cutting off her long hair. — Last night we had a grand ball, a very different thing from what we usually see. We took up the band from the foot and had a dance. I danced three times, but it wasn't much fun. It will be better when you come. Barney Williams, the wife (actor) was there. She sang two or three comic songs which amused us very much. They live at Bath, two or three miles from here, in very good style, I believe.
Sunday night. I didn’t get very far in my long letter last night, and I think I shall do better to-night. — The suggestion came into my mind yesterday, that you had better bring things with you. I suspect we shall keep house! I was looking back at friends, the to-morrow, I will certainly, of my interview with Major LeRoy, who suspended me to-morrow, should prove fatal, for they. We are greatly mystified as to the position our regiment will be placed in by Congress, and are at present afraid that we shall be turned into volunteers. I think I shall hold that this prove to be the case, at least until I get my money back. The effect of such action on the part of Congress would be to drive the best officers back into their deserted places, and perhaps give me a chance of promotions, which I should most certainly try to take advantage of. Should be cordial to some extent for the change by getting an addition of thirty or forty dollars per month to my pay. — It was pleasant to spend a few months in the free state and perhaps we shall not have another opportunity very soon. We will take advantage of it then, so you may go on with your preparations. — If I am to have you into Madrid very useful, if you should choose to make her coast, I think we would feel much better satisfied than the two, were not abused, if she were in the house. The house I propose to live in has sitting-room, a pretty large salon & a bed-room of the same size; a cozy little dining-room, a kitchen & two other bed rooms. House are very scarce here, and the case-mate are too cramped to find you and the children so. I don’t like to bring you in there, because there are no other ladies, here now, and it would not be very pleasant to be surrounded by young officers, & have them watching all your movements.
If Robert does not want to keep the office open, he had better have the things moved out and give it up. I would rather, how ever, that he would do nothing until he ascertain what congress will do for our regiment. If we are made regular then their up shop. There is a man to be found at F. W. Lear's tailor shop who will do to superintend the moving. Jack Jordan has spoken for the office if he will give it up. I would not like to tell to J. Heisman unless he pay the money, I might as well give my house away. By the way, the feller has a German book in French which he ought to return ——— I have not thought of any thing to bring from my last but a coal oil lamp. I think we have a very good one at home which will come in play here very well. Please hunt it up & get it ready for use. — In second thought, I believe we two to use come or good one — but if we have cheap one, it will save the price of another.
So you thought I was coming home for you — so did I wish you write, you would prefer to have me go home with you. I would avoid the two trips, if possible, on account of the expense. You need not think of coming on alone. You need not give any one much trouble. Your baggage except a small trunk carpet back ought to be checked there to New York. You will there have no trouble with it. Prepare enough eatables to last you a day or longer, put a bottle & cup in your basket, so that you can give the children a drink whenever they wish one. Telegraph me when you start. By what route. I think better not give up your baggage check to the Express Man who will ask you for them unless he will send them to the Fort. Our Head Quarters are No 38 Broadway & if the baggage could be got there before 11 A.M. it would come right down to the Fort. I will write you further about this, before you start. — I do not think it likely that I shall be back on the Recruiting Service. Major never
I don't think you can do without a barn & think you had better bring it; I think I have explained the drawing question sufficiently, at any rate, if we live in our own house, we can do as we please. Our grocerie we can buy of the quartermaster & get them at the cost price, so that we can live quite as cheap, and a thousand times more comfortably then we could at a boarding house or the hotel. You can go out of the fort with the children as much as you please, if we live in it, d'oe-v if we live outside. Bank you manage to come each with your aunt Caroline? As to books, bring what you like, but not too many. You may bring Burns & Ben Johnson for me & a scrap book which you will find at the office, or one of the shelves on the north side — I believe I will have answered all your question, so I'll just kiss you & the baby & say good night.