

Send me some P.O. stamps - I shall be out before you can answer this.

Miserable and discontented person. With an assumed position like this I could presume any cheerfulness and independence, better than in any other which seems to be within my reach. Notwithstanding this change of views, I am not all sanguine. In the field and away from the point for effective effort, and with no judicious friend to work for me, it is not probable that I shall get a place towards which, no doubt, many longing eyes are turned. Were I there I am afraid I have not sufficient skill in crossing the many hedges of the race that thrift may follow farming. I might perhaps have succeeded better in the work if I had. There is however somewhat of the old Puritan leaven in me, and I could better live on Franklin's loaf with water from the street pump than do it, so far as I am personally concerned. When however one has, admet wife by his side and four dear little mouths to feed, one frequently wishes that his back-bone were more pliant. Enough of this - if it comes, let us try to make the most of it; if it comes not, we will try to make the most without it. —

Tuesday, April Fifth. So, this is your birth-day! Well, I have nothing but love and this poor letter to send you in remembrance of it. May we see many happy returns of the same! Perhaps some one of my frequent epistles may hope in on you this morning & remind you of me. Perhaps the one I sent on last Wednesday will be lucky enough to perform this kind office. — I shall be anxious to hear from you election of yesterday & hope the Copperheads have been decently cleaned out, but I am afraid not such good news will come to me. But I do not feel much interest in your ^{at} elections now - I lost interest about three years ago! Love to our little ones & Good bye, darling. L. B. B.

You may consider Herbert Spencer's book as my best. My offering, and if you find it as interesting and instructive as I hope you may, you will prize it as highly as I do. My own father for mine.

Nashville Tenn. April 3.

Dear Wife:

I sent you a letter yesterday and one to-day, therefore I won't write you one to-night, altho' I rec'd yours of the 29th but a little while ago. This is commenced merely for the purpose of saying something which I might possibly forget, if I do not write for a day or two. A notice of a book, entitled "Illustrations of Universal Progress; A Series of Discussions." By Herbert Spencer, — published by Appleton & Co, which I have just read in the N.Y. Tribune, has pleased me so much, that I wish you to buy the book and read it. I am afraid you are not reading as much as I would like you to, and I think you will find this book both interesting and instructive. I should buy it myself for my own reading, but I have no way of carrying it on the march and to tell the truth we have little taste for solid reading in the army. The same author has written a work on Education, which has lately been published by the same firm. As you seem just now to be exercised on that subject, I would advise you to get that and read it, also. If the books are not to be had at the book store, they can be sent for. Don't mind the expense, but buy them & then read them carefully.

Monday evening. I stopped writing at this point, because I had determined not to send this letter to-day, not caring to have you vexed too often by receiving

two letters in one day. I gave you
my "views" in a P.S. (post-scrap) to my last
letter, and, being a very reasonable per-
son, I have no doubt that you sub-
scribe to them heartily. We are having
more snow and rain to-day. The out-
look was so disagreeable that I have
scarcely ventured out of my canvas
house to-day, except to get my meals.
As a matter of course I feel lump-
ish and dull, and obey a natural
impulse to bestow these pleasant at-
tributes on one who is most poorly arm-
ed for resistance. I do not think
you need worry much over my hank-
ering for the Judge Advocate's Bureau.
Had not the Senate lowered its rank &
thereby also its emolument I might
have had my longing eyes steadfastly in
that direction. But when I saw the
Senate's amendment I turned them a-
way from it as a thing no longer de-
sirable and which I could not accept.
I must confess, however, that within a
few days I have begun to regard it with
a new interest. Spending my time mainly
in my tent, I have been thinking over my
prospects quite seriously, and have come
to look upon the place, tho' otherwise
not very desirable, yet as one which
would afford the greatest advantages to me
in preparing to leave the army. This step

~~which~~ I see every day, ^{more clearly} must come some
day, unless your happiness and mine is
to be shipwrecked. I mean of course by
leaving the army, only the strictly mil-
itary part of it, which involves frequent
separation from my family and a wand-
ering, unsettled and unsatisfactory life,
very distasteful to both you and me. The
Bureau of Military Justice is itself a part
of the army, but a part which is per-
manently fixed about the Capital of the na-
tion and which would not often com-
pel an absence from home. The duties ^{official} of
one belonging to it, would not to completely
engross his time that he could devote a
considerable part of each day to some con-
genial labor by which money and repu-
tation might both be earned. And it is
on this account that I have nearly arrived
at the conclusion that I would accept
the place even as a Major of Cavalry, hoping
that I can command the industry and res-
olution to do some literary work which
would pay enough, together with the salary,
to enable us to live comfortably and respect-
ably even in so expensive a place as Wash-
ington. I should get something more than
a thousand dollars per year more than I
do now, and on that I have no doubt ma-
ny of the quiet residents of that city live well
enough. I should feel satisfied that in any
event we had enough to live on, even if
I could not succeed in my other projects and
otherwise I feel I should become a most