Cincinnati March 21st 1862

Dear Barratt,

Your last paper was duly received. In view of the development, regarding McPherson, I think the President erred in not removing him when he relieved him of the Chief Command of the Army; but I suppose he had good reasons for stopping short of that measure. As for public opinion, the people must have so much confidence in the head of the War Department, that the measure would have been fully sustained. Most of the people here try to keep up the appearance of a public sentiment in favor of McPherson, and arouse this all the quakers secessionists, with a scattering of well meaning people, rally; but the great masses are with the Government and would endorse the bowling of the hypocritical supporters of the Whig. If Hooker leads his army to victory, it may then be difficult to remove him. In fact I think it would be necessary to take a hand from the head of his army in the field, as was done in the case of McClellan; but still the masses of the people, as I have said, have lost confidence in McPherson, and the country would be satisfied with any measure Mr. Lincoln might adopt. In a letter some time ago I gave it as my opinion that the President had fallen in publi
instruction, beyond the hope of recovery. It seemed so
then; but his course lately has renewed confidence
and he is now getting to be very popular. His message
through existing practical men grows out of it at present, was
wise and timely. It was all well done. It seems to suit
both Radicals and Conservatives among the people.

What do you think about the government of the
seceded States? This, to my mind is the question now, and
it is the most perplexing one. Ashley's bill doesn't entirely
too far for a beginning, though even that extreme measure
may become necessary. I am beginning to doubt very much
whether an early development of strong Union sentiment
will be there and soon and the utter defeat of the Rebels may
bring it about; but at present we may not speak much in
that line. Nashville has disappointed me on this point; but
with continued successes on our part, the Southern people
will practically come around.

The Compromise schemes
I do have all been disposed of, having that matter with the
President, who can deal with it under the war forever. But
I suppose ought to provide for the President of the leading States.

If this is not done they may put the control of the Government
again,

There is one thing in the two bills that I wrote to Mr. Sumner
about; that I wish you could direct the attention of both of your
friends in Congress. A start of a few packages is hard on express
packages. We send our samples, a day for which the express
Co., charge more, or much nominal price; but if this kind
should break it would cost the Lyceum about $1,000 a year. I think
in view of the heavy tax on books, and advertisements, that
newsboys ought to be exempted from the same tax upon news-
Co. It might be construed in our favor, even if the law
should become its present shape, but we would be at the
discretion of officials, and we ought to have it settled clearly in
the bill. This tax would come up to Mr. Balfour's idea; but
it would ruin our agency business; and cut down our
circulation; for the P.O. could not do the business to
the satisfaction of subscribers. Will you be good enough to
think about this matter to some of the members?

Do you ever think of going back to the newspaper business?

I often wish you were with us. Reed is a good writer; but he
is so prone to preaching and pulling down, while he can do nothing
in the way of building up, that he requires constant watching.
and I am afraid to leave the job alone. I am almost
tired of him. You can appreciate the situation. This, of course
is strictly confidential. How would you like to come here?

And one thing more, and I shall close this tempest letter.

Have you heard of our new preacher, the talk of calling him to our
church and I want to know your opinion of him, as a
preacher. If you haven't heard him perhaps you can
make it convenient to go to his church and give me your opinion.
I understand he could be moved from Washington to San.
He is a good union man I presume.

Could we in any way get an advance copy
of the report of the Conduct of the War Core. or McPherson?
I would pay for having it copies and premiums &c. as
to publish him dismanteled with its deceiving to
Congress?

Wade may be nominated next week, though I
do not regard the prospect as encouraging. There are
tremendous influences at work to defeat him. We are
doing all we can, through the senate and house, for him.
His most dangerous opponent are those who want the
election postponed to next winter.

Truly yours,
Richard Smith

I have not been told you this. I longed to stay, but
could not ascertain without new trouble than asking you yourselves. Could you write me a letter or
two or three?