A letter such as
affixed the heart
of Salmon P. Chase

E. N. Chester

Confidential.

New York, June 22d, 1863.

Dear S. P. Chase,

My Dear Sir,

If I thought that a word which I am
decked of saying to you would for an hour distract your
attention from the various demands eating up your time, I would
forebear. You know that my wishes were in regard to a
candidate to be preferred at the last presidential election.
I fully saw that divisions in Ohio would prevent these wish-
es from being gratified. Hence I forbore to trouble newspa-
pers with what I contemplated saying to the public.

Know too, after the election of the present execu-
tive, how desirous I was that you should occupy your pres-
cent position. Of my anticipations of the expectations you
might achieve. The opportunity & success have vastly out
shipped my anticipations.

I have now one word to say to you as to the
future—if delicate you will pardon it on two scores, first
of old friendships—secondly, in the view of an inescapable
current drive for the best interests of the nation.

Until very recently I have suffered in common
with many others, that the next President must be taken
from among our prominent Generals. I anticipated that
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I have learned that some of them would become so prominent that the nation would spontaneously take him up for that position. It is now nearly certain that he cannot be. The very number of those whose particular friends would look upon it as the proper thing, will destroy the chances of the whole class. And the rivalry that will exist will make each of his friends rather look to a civilian than endure the success of a rival in military life. So looking forward therefore I feel pretty sure that a civilian must be taken up.

I was greatly pleased to learn by a letter from my brother now in Washington, who has made himself much more active in political matters than I have been, of his intimacy with the Western leaders, of his cordiality and efficiency, since in the late campaign in Illinois that my views, quietly formed in my own bosom, were not singular. Without consultation on the subject we have independently come to the same conclusion.

It cannot but be gratifying to me that in all the present circumstances of this war, our old friend has been regarded by the truly patriotic as the back-bone of the cabinet. It naturally qualifies my previous to find my judgment at the outset was not at fault.

I have only to say now that I hope you will hold yourself in a position that if you, in his presence, should give the way, you may occupy a position where I confidently...
believe, you can promote the best interests of our common country. May God bless & guide you; and at last forgive those in this nation. In all the circumstances of this war, not less under defeat than in the house of victory, I have felt an earnest confidence that we are held by a bond that would secure us to a safe course. The end of war, & the moral elevation of this nation, my courage has been sustained. If I have felt depression it has been more on account of the corruption seen in the gigantic frauds of the employees of the government here & elsewhere, than from any disasters in the field. But I may not close this letter. Forgive this & believe me as ever,

Your Father

E. D. Chester

P.S. Perhaps to make sure of this reaching you & not falling into other hands as I had better send it under cover to my brother to be handed you.

In your position you have many friends & many to occupy your attention. Where in the city? I am forbidden to be in their way. If the time ever comes when you would spend a quiet night or two, I need not tell you that you would gratify me much by spending it under my roof – No. 32 W. 32d St. You would find, I think, a not disagreeable lady to welcome you.