

men. We have more than ten times  
the number of politicians and consequently  
while the number of the offices of the General  
Government remain comparatively  
the same the "struggle" for office has  
become ten times more fierce.

This is one cause of the frequent  
disruption and must tend unless  
checked to further dismemberment.  
Three confederacies will give  
three times as many offices for hungry  
politicians. There at present  
100 thousand applicants for office  
and but a small part of these will  
be supplied - the remainder or rather  
the great majority will turn against  
the party now in power and endeavour  
by all means in their power to cripple  
the administration. I have not time  
to develop my views but must close with  
saying that you have not a day of your  
life of peace and the request that you  
will give my kind regards to Mrs. Gray & yours truly  
G. L. H. H. H.

Smithsonian Institution

April 29<sup>th</sup> 1861

My Dear Dr.

In answer to your letter  
of the 26<sup>th</sup> just received I write  
to say that we shall be pleased  
to obtain the package you men-  
tion as soon as the city is again in  
a proper connection with the north,  
by means of the express. We can at  
present transmit small packages  
at a cost of four times that of the  
usual charge.

For nearly a week we were in  
a state of isolation, cut off in every di-  
rection from the outside world; with no other intelligence than that  
of threatened invasions from various  
quarters. We experienced however  
no bodily fear although I felt at



and time somewhat anxious that Mrs. N. and the girls should leave, but they refused to go without me and therefore remained until they could not get away even had they desired to do so.

The city was at one time in considerable danger of an attack. The successive flags could be seen from the high towers of the Lustration waving over the adjacent portions of Virginia while war was waging in Baltimore. But now that there are nearly 20 thousand troops at hand ready for action there is no fear of an invasion for the present. I think it probable however, from all I can learn, that an attack will be made as soon as Davis can collect what he may consider a sufficient force unless congress makes so arrangement with the assistance of the Southern confederacy is officially acknowledged.

I would like to have a good long talk with you on the present condition of our country and its future prospects. To consider the subject properly it would be necessary for us to elevate ourselves above the excitement of the present hour and view the facts from a scientific and unprejudiced position.

I have come to the conclusion that our Union as a whole cannot be permanent and that it will be far better to separate peacefully than to deluge the country with blood, and then in the end be as far from a harmonious union as we now are. I think the South will be more harmonious and enabled to amend the constitution than with the North. We have become too large. We have ten times as many people as we had at the beginning of the government, and ten times the number of bad



Henry, Joseph. 1861. "Henry, Joseph Apr. 29, 1861." *Joseph Henry letters* –.

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