

Chicago Sept 30 1861

My dear friend Annie

I am sorry that I have <sup>not</sup> been able to answer your letter before, for it was a real good cheerful letter, more like yourself than some of your former ones, and I should be sorry to hear you think I failed to appreciate it. But I have been so continually on the jump for the past week that I could find no time to write, and even now I am afraid you will have to be satisfied with something less than the long letter you asked for.

I am very glad to learn you have got into some settled employment, it is so much better for both body & mind. I think I see evidence of its effect upon your mind in the tone of your last letter. I don't know how permanent you consider the arrangement but if it agrees with your health, is congenial to your tastes, & remuneration to your pocket, (what a host of conditions) I trust you may continue in it at least till something better presents itself. My future prospects are about as uncertain as all other military matters. I am now enlisted in the 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment Illinois Volunteers called the Chicago Legion just organized in this city. It has mainly for its basis the home organizations already existing in this city & has it to be attached to it a company of Cavalry and Battery of artillery which will add very much to its efficiency. It was organized under very favorable auspices and promised well on the start and I hope it may realize our highest expectations but I tell you Annie this filling up Regiments in this state after we commence the second

Fifty Thousand is a slow process. In addition to the ordinary difficulties we have to encounter the widespread disaffection toward the administration is relation to its treatment of the Western Department. The west have had a strong faith in Gen Fremont and they at least want to give him a fair chance to do something before he is sacrificed. The interference by the President with his Proclamation was a staggering blow and it may be taken as good evidence of the loyalty of our people that they submit with so good grace as they do but a great many say they don't feel disposed to enlist their services till they know what they are fighting for. I very much fear our government have not yet come on to the right ground and perhaps we are to continue to suffer disasters till we place ourselves right in the sight of God. I cannot believe we shall achieve any permanent success so long as we fight for the interest of slavery. My only hope is that God will so order events that we shall be forced to take a just position and believing that this work is to be accomplished through the Government, I can only see my duty clear to sustain it.

We are awaiting here with much anxiety the result of the pending conflict in Missouri. It is felt here that this will decide the fate of Fremont and though the Rebel forces outnumber his two to one, I have strong hopes that he will succeed in routing Price and will drive him out of the state. I have great faith in Fremont's Artillery still everything is uncertain in war. To speak further in regard to our own Regiment - taking the most hopeful view of the case it will probably take a month or six weeks to fill up and it is not impossible I may become

tired of waiting so long and look for some more immediate answer

I don't see that it will be possible for me to gratify your desire for a visit from me this season, although it would afford no less gratification to me than yourself. I should particularly like to be with you on the occasion of your S. School celebration & festival - from the programme you give I have no doubt it will prove a very pleasant affair but even if my engagements did not prevent I could hardly afford the expense of another Eastern trip at present. I very often take a delightful trip to your city in imagination and picture bright visions of the good time thus enjoyed. This is rather of a poor substitute but I find it much cheaper & more convenient than the reality.

So Charly Strong wishes you to find him something to do. If I were you I would offer to find him a chance to enlist in some good Regiment. I think all such as he can be found as well as not. Do you get much news from Florence? I wonder what Ed Beige is doing? I should think business must be very dull there. Do you ever hear from Mrs. Mills? I should like to know where she is now. It is very seldom that I hear anything from Italian friends excepting through you.

I presume you have heard that Mr. Canning has left us and we are again without any settled Pastor. He went East in the Spring to recruit his health and finally decided not to come back. His health was the ostensible reason but I suspect there was something more

lying back of it coming just at this time the effect  
was very disastrous and it is worse for us than  
as though he had never come

Our Young Men Christian Association are doing  
very well in a very successful work in the various camps  
located about the city Prayer meetings are held nightly  
and with the most happy results This separating such  
masses of young men from all former influences and  
associations, seems to open a large and fruitful field  
for operations of this nature and it devolves upon Chris-  
tians to be more active and earnest in their labors

But somehow Annie for a long time I have not enjoyed  
a satisfactory religious experience. I suppose it may be  
somewhat owing to the present condition of the country  
and the exciting scenes we are continually passing through.  
It seems almost impossible for me to concentrate my  
thoughts upon any subject but the war. I want  
a stronger and more trusting faith and Annie I want  
you should pray for me every day that I may acquire  
strength for every duty which I may be called upon  
to perform. I want to brought nearer to Christ and live  
and act more in his strength

You must excuse this Stationery for I am writing this  
in a Recruiting office and it is such as there happens to be  
here I don't think this letter will answer your requirement  
but its the best I can do this time Let me hear from  
you often as possible & let me see you soon Your Friend

Olive M

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