

Plaquimine, La. Dec. 10th 1863

Dear Elizabeth

It is sabbath evening and I know of no way in which I can employ a few moments more pleasantly than by writing a few lines to a certain particular friend of mine.

The last letter I rec'd from you was written the day before you expected to commence your school consequently you are undoubtedly engaged most of the time at present with the children. And you certainly occupy one of the most responsible and honorable positions in life. The teacher is intrusted with the training of our future lawmakers and whether they be honest upright men or notorious scoundrels depends more or less on their training and education received while in the common school. I notice a marked difference exists between the conduct of the youth that have the privileges of good schools at the north and those having no such privilege here in Dixie. A town of this size at the north would support as many as two or three schools, but here education is entirely neglected and groups of boys from eight to fifteen years of age may be seen at all hours of the day and any day in the week assembled on some corner of the street swearing and curousing? with as much gusto as men do in crime and I presume this is no more than a fair sample of the youth throughout the confederacy.

But Elizabeth you must excuse me I did not intend to commence an essay on education.

We are doing police duty in turn as usual and are having by far the best time we ever had in the service. There has been some talk of an attack being made here but it is not probable that the rebs will come very near. Our Col. says if they will wait another week or until he finishes the forts now in progress they may attack if they wish to.

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There are three churches in this place. The catholic prebyterian and methodist. The catholic is by far the most popular most of the inhabitants being french as is generally the case adhere to that church. The presbyterian has but a small congregation unless attended by the soldiers. Their Pastor was a _____ when the Yanks first invaded the town but I believe he is becoming converted from what motives I am unable to say I hope though from none other than pure motives.

Mon. morning. I was called on duty after commencing this letter last night and could not finish. This is a very pleasant morning having cleared off after a rain yesterday and the weather is quite cool today for this latitude. We have seen only two nights cold enough to freeze as yet, and the inhabitants tell us they scarcely ever saw snow fall here so that we shall not be apt to have many sleighrides this winter. Perhaps you would like to learn some of the prices we pay here for what at the north are hardly worth anything. Apples are 10 cts apiece for _____ ones. Potatoes 10 cts per lb. butter 50 cts per lb. eggs 65 cts per doz so you see that we cannot indulge very much in these articles. If some of our northern farmers had their produce here they could realize a pretty good fortune.

We were somewhat surprised to learn of the escape of _____ Morgan as we supposed it impossible for a man to escape from the Ohio penitentiary so much had been said concerning it. I believe they must have had assistance in some manner and there is no doubt in my mind that there are plenty of traitors in Columbus who would willingly _____ if possible. It is said they have captured two of his men but it is not probable that Morgan will be found again.

Elizabeth I have procured a supply of stamps and thinking it might not always be convenient for you to obtain them while in your school I will send you a few. Hoping that I may receive a letter from you by next

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mail. I will bid you Good Bye From

Leonard

to

Elizabeth