Washington May 11th 1861

My Dear Sir

I received yours of the 9th today, too late to acknowledge by this evening's mail. Your previous letter has not reached me.

In conversation with a person in authority he made use of the following expressions. I do not pretend to quote his words but his ideas.

"What you have to guard against first, is corruption in the War Department. Mr Secretary, Mr Cameron, cannot forget his former [illegible] civilities" This was returned. I could not misunderstand the allusion, as I had previously been informed of something which had happened. You doubtless saw the attack in the Times a few days ago in reference to the beef contract. That was unjust, as the writer probably knew at the time, but it was, I believe, a feint, intended to let Mr C. know that he was watched. There were other things which could not be alluded to without exposing the authority, which were of the same character as that charged there. The beef contract, I believe, was made in the proper department, and the details were not represented correctly in the paper.

He proceeded: "Gen. Scott's health is feeble. He still performs the principal duties of his office, but is incapable of attending to details. Those are arranged by Col Thomas, (Quartermaster General) Major McDowell (Adjt. General) & Capt Franklin (Topl Engineers) all of whom