I dont speak of those who could hope to succeed him — I believe truly they think we have no one. See of Virginia who has deserted us, Johnston of ~~Arkansas~~ Texas (now in California) who is expected to, were the main stays of the army. We must look to men junior in years & rank. All unite in praise of McClellan of Ohio. Some say that Sherman, an elder brother of Senator S., formerly in the army, and afterwards in business in California, is a man of reliable force. Meigs of the Engineers, all acknowledge to be able, but say that he is already puffed up beyond his size, with vanity and self importance.

McClellan has now a high command, that of Major General, not only of Ohio forces, but in the U.S. Service. He is clearly laying out his work, not for the first battle, but for the war, & when he comes down, it will be at the head of "an army with banners".

You have with you probably the abbot of the former class of Engineer Captains in the U.S. Army, unfortunately tainted with filibustering and it is understood its concomitant, secessionism. I mean Gustavus W. Smith, Street Commissioner. It is a great pity that you can't trust him. Ten years ago he was spoken of as the man of most genius in the army & even then, capable of any command.

This administration is either so deep as to be unfathomable, or it does not appreciate the true state of things — either the feeling of the north, or the intentions of the south. In my opinion the latter is the case. Very deep waters are not often so obscure. Not possessing the faculty of clairvoyance, I dont understand why the mails and