

Wheatland, near Lancaster 19 November 1851

My dear Sir/

I have received your kind letter on behalf of Dr. Gilbert & hasten to answer it. I am well aware of his high character professional, personal & political & should gladly serve him under a different state of circumstance from that in which I am now placed. I verily believe, however, that were I to select a candidate for each of the Philadelphia offices & urge his claims, I would thereby commit political suicide. The applicants are numerous beyond all former example & many of them in the City, County & State have been my active personal & political friends. – how then, in my present peculiar position, can I decide between them & thus make enemies of the disappointed & all their friends. This would be an act of injustice to my friends as well as myself; & some of them have already written to me & cautioned me to beware. Besides, before Dr. Speer had written to me in behalf of Dr. Gilbert, I had committed myself so far to an ardent & active friend as to promise that should I interfere at all in the appointment of Port Physician, it would in his favor.

I often wish I had a person such as you were near me. My correspondence is overwhelming. Indeed I cannot, with all my diligence, keep up with it.

I truly rejoice that your lines have been cast in pleasant places & that you are now happy, useful & contented. You have chosen the better part. For myself, I look forward with agreeable anticipation to the Baltimore Convention, no matter what may be the result. If again defeated, thereafter, should a kind Providence prolong my days, I trust I may pass the remainder of my life in tranquility & in preparation for another & a better world. I shall be perfectly content with his decision of a kind & merciful Providence, whatever this may be.

Please to give my love to Mrs. Hutter & inform her how happy I should be if you & herself would pass a few days with me in my now solitary abode. The Summer Birds have all flown away; Harriet is in Pittsburg [sic] & Miss Hetty and myself are left. She desires to be kindly remembered to you both.

from your friend  
very respectfully  
James Buchanan

Rev. E. W. Hutter.

[On back of page 4: Nov. 19 1851/ James Buchanan/ In regard to Dr. Gilbert.]

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