

82-39-100
Paris (France) December the 5th A.D. 1866.

To the Honourable Chauncey Stevens Esq.

Chairman of the House of Representatives
in the Congress of the United States
Washington City.

(D. C.)

Respected Sir,

I come to you, unknown and unauthorized,
because I think that I have something very important
to tell in behalf of the American people and that knowing
your unbounding convictions and fearless energy together with
your sincere devotedness to your country and to the great
principles of the republican party, besides the high official
position you occupy, you appear to me the very man that
I ought to choose as a confidant.

Four years ago, when the news came on this
side of the Ocean of the fight between the rebel "Merrimac"
and the loyal little "Monitor" I felt greatly interested in,
nay fearful of the probable results of the conflict if the
rebels should push on the building of these floating fortresses
and my mind being strongly excited I contrived some
means that I thought would prove very effective in
the defence

the defense of forts against the attacks of these new and formidable vessels. Accordingly, I wrote on the subject to the U. S. Consul in Paris, W. B. Bigelow. W. B. engrossed with his "official" obsequiosities towards the french tyrant, had neither time nor patriotism enough to answer my communications.

As you recollect well, Sir, in these gloomy days, the prospect of a speedy restoration of peace was faint indeed, and the true friends of republican principles were anxious to see the triumph of liberty and right, viz: the victory of the North. Two letters to the U. S. Consul in Paris, being left unanswered, I wrote to the noble and lamented Lincoln. I don't know if he ever received that letter, but he had so much to do, that I don't wonder he could not give to my communications the attention self esteem taught me they deserved.

Not a bit discouraged by that silence, I wrote to the then mayor of New York, honourable Geo. Opdyke and from that patriotic gentleman I got an answer, a very amiable and polite answer that I preserve with care and pride.

Subsequently I went over to the "Land of the free" and the "home of the brave", there to live and die
at least

at least, I thought so at the time; during my
 sojourn in the United States, I had opportunity to
 contrive a new invention and I proposed it to the Navy
 Department. Hon. Gideon Welles acknowledged my
 communication; but, Sir, it is a great sin, methinks,
 to be poor and disinterested; I offered my invention
 out of love towards the Worth and the principles
 advocated by it, and almost gratuitously. Of course,
 they thought that my contrivances were worth what
 I asked for them, that is to say: nothing, and
 they despised them accordingly. That is, not quite
so, for I learned, through the newspapers and with a
 good deal of satisfaction, that one of your admirals
 (I don't recollect his name now, but he was a Dare-
 Devil) availed himself of one of my suggestions
 (the linking together of two ships) to cross with his fleet,
 between rebel strongholds.

Circumstances compelled me to come back
 to France, and here I am, reading in the newspapers
 that the Yankees have invented guns so powerful
 that no fortifications, however thick and strong, can
 withstand their destroying missiles.

Now, respected Sir, I come to the object of

my letter. If the Americans have such guns, the proud english and the glory loving french will try their best to supersede them in that way, and if they succeed, that may prove, some fine morning, very disastrous to the American sea-ports. I think I have hid upon a new system of fortifications, cheaper and a great deal stronger than the one now in use, and I offer it to the people that seems to me the best, nay the only safeguard and bulwark of human liberty and human progress.

One might say that I ought to have offered my invention to the head of the great american nation, that is to say her President; but sir, I don't believe in Andrew Johnson, never did since the murder of the martyr president, never, never. He has been brought up as a Democrat, and worst of all, as a southern Democrat. I hate the democrats (as a political party), since they have proved so false to the true principles of democracy, and I have no more confidence in them than I would have in Napoleon or any other representative of tyranny and oligarchy. Besides that, I always entertained the idea that Congress is the best, nay the only true representation

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true representative of the American people.

Consequently, respected Sir, I offer through you to the Congress of the United States, a system of fortifications that I think very effective and not costly, and I will develop it, either orally or in writing, whenever you think it opportune (I

would explain it now, if I were sure that this letter will safely reach its destination.)

Although, I say in this letter that spontaneous and gratuitous offers are generally considered worthless, and that to be consistent with that saying, I should ask something for the giving up of my invention, I cannot do it, on account of the deep regard I entertain for the United States. They are to me a "Seconde patrie" and I consider it ~~my~~ patriotic duty to offer on their altar, what love and patriotism suggested.

It may prove to be a small affair; it may even prove to be, for the time being, a useless and worthless gift (I doubt that very much, though), yet I feel constrained to do it, to show that although I am only an adopted child, I am a dutiful and loving

and loving one.

Please, Sir, accept the assurance of the sincere sentiments with which I remain

Very respectfully yours

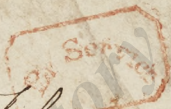
Ludovic Lechaut

(Signature)

Here is my address: Monsieur Lechaut
Dauvic, près le Havre
(Seine-Inférieure) France.

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Hon. Chaddes Stevens

member of Congress
House of Representatives



Washington city
(D. C.)

Etats-Unis.



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