

S. M. Breckenridge

Oct 8 rec'd 13. 1864

Abt judgeship.

St. Louis Oct-8th 1864



Hon: Edward Bates

Washington City

Dear Sir,

I rec'd several days since your kind letter of the 28th ult^o & yesterday I rec'd yours of the 4th inst^o. I am very to be obliged to acknowledge the justice of your kindly reproof for the illegibility of my writing & so far as possible will improve it.

I need not say that I thank you very much for your kind offer to aid me in the matter of the Judgeship. After such thought as I have been able to give it, I have deliberated & am minded to make the application, & to take the office if it shall be offered me. I would however that after saying this much, I am somewhat at a loss to know what more I

can or should do. I am a little afraid you
will consider me unduly sensitive, when I
say that I have an unconquerable aversion to
resorting to the methods usually adopted
to secure appointments, and that while I
do not doubt I could by such efforts secure
recommendations very numerously signed,
I should feel unwilling to enter upon such
a course. I presume the influence of
Brown, Below, Loan, Mr. Clegg, Boylston, Knott,
did some genius, has already been, or will
soon be, secured for some one of their
co-factionists, & certainly I can not ask
their aid for myself. What course
Henderson would take in the matter
I do not know. I have mentioned it
to Mr. Stone, Shapley, your son Barton,
and a few others, and I have no doubt
they will all take some action; & I shall

mention it to a few others with whom my
relations are such, or will make me feel
that I can properly do so. Beyond this
I do not see that I can go. Of course
I do not wish to make application
unless with good chance of success, & if
after what I have said, you think it
will be proper, I shall hope to have
your advice to that effect for my
guidance.

Meanwhile, if without embarrassment to
yourself, you can aid me in securing
the appointment I shall be greatly obliged
to you.

I wish, when I first wrote you, to Judge
Blair, and have received a very kind
reply from him. I write to him also
to-day, to the same effect, and shall be
glad if you and he can confer with

Each other.

I think you know me too well to suppose that the course I propose, results from any exaggerated notion of my own claims or merits; but that you will appreciate my unwillingness to enter upon a struggle for recommendation & influence, from those upon whom I have no claim, or those whose public action, & it has been repeatedly to the administration of Mr. Lincoln, has been condemned by me.

I hope ^{sufficient} measures are being taken here to overthrow of Spanish Power, but we are kept very much in the dark - For the safety of the State, & the speedy overthrow of the Rebel, we seriously need large & prompt re-inforcements -

Always very truly
your friend

Edw. Van Ness

P.S. My proposed visit to the East is necessarily delayed by the disturbed
state - & I cannot now say when it will be possible for me to go on