

City of Mexico, 29 Feb., 1848

My darling Annie,

I was much pleased with your nice letter of December and anticipate great pleasure in the correspondence of my little daughters. The next pleasure to seeing them, is to hear from them, and as I cannot have the first, I am sure you will give me the Second. Winter here has past. The trees are in leaf again, and the flowers are in bloom. Indeed the latter might be said now to have ceased to bloom, unless the more delicate kind. The roses, violets, running geraniums, large white lilies, and the various varieties of running geraniums have been in bloom under my window all Winter. The peach trees are in blossom, and the vines and the vines and creepers are coving the arbours with their foliage. The little humming birds are returning to their haunt, but as the vine on my balcony is not yet in bloom, I have not yet had a visit from Annie and Agnes. I think I have seen them at a distance peeping into my window however, which is what I expected from such saucy(?) little harpies, and I have no doubt they will soon return to their playground.. I shall be very glad to see them and only wish I could have their namesakes at Arlington instead. I should have nice times then and could feel as well as look at their bills. I am glad to hear that your Grandpa's cats are so sleek and fat. But I should like to know, Annie, how they keep so fat, if they do not catch mice? Do you children feed them or do they live on air? Answer me that Annie.

There is a large yellow cat that belongs to a tailor down the street, and every day when I pass there, I see him on a stool, half asleep, with his forepaws doubled under him, close by his master, who is sitting on another at his work. He does not understand a word of English, but is just the color of your Grandfather's cat and just as tame. I think too he is rather larger. There is an English Gentleman here, with whom I dine very often, who has a cat very much like my Tom at Ft. Hamilton. He is very fat and lame and plagues his master at table, until he gives him his dinner. So as soon as he finishes up his soup, he cuts him up a chop or cutlet, or some nice thing, in a clean plate and sets it by his chair. When he has eaten that up, unless he has had enough, he is sure to ask for more. The Gentleman tells me, that his home is so filled with rats that they eat the corks out of his bottles to get at the Cordial They are quite a dissipated set. If I had Speck here, he would soon clear them out. He would also put a stop to the mice frolicking about my

room. They live in my dressing room and every morn by light they come rushing out, with as much glee as children jump out of bed, and take their way down into the kitchens and garden. Seeing that I am a quiet man, and all by myself without even a cat or dog, they eat up my candles, bananas and impose on me in every way. I think I must bring little Saucer up here, to see if he can't stop them. But I will now bid you good bye, with many prayers for your health and safety. Your affectionate father,

Robert E. Lee

I want to hear those little tunes you play so well very much.