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Temple London (47)

16 December 1880

My dear friend

Your two letters of 1<sup>st</sup>  
and 17<sup>th</sup> Oct. have remained  
unanswered longer than they  
should have done - But you are  
not perhaps aware how great  
a sufferer I have been for  
the last 7 or 8 months - In May  
last I met with a very severe  
accident by which my shoulder blade  
and the forehead over the right eye  
were fractured and my right arm  
pulled out of the socket lacerating  
the muscles nearly down to the  
elbow - after recovering in some three  
months from the direct injuries, the

Consequences of the Conception began to develop themselves and my whole nervous system was disordered, as well as other organs, so that I was attacked with pains so acute that for several months I could not get an hour's sleep without the aid of powerful narcotics. I am, thank Heaven, now rapidly recovering, but it has cost me a great effort to do a part only of my current work, so as not to break up entirely my professional connection

and now answering

Your inquiries as to my recollection of the interview with Genl Johnston I must confess that I have none whatever as to Greensborough - My impression is that I was not present

at that meeting and was only informed after the interview that Genl Johnston was about to have a conference with Genl Sherman —

with reference to the meeting in March 1862 at Richmond, the case is very different — I remember perfectly well the profound feeling of surprise and distrust excited by his announcement of the peril to which he conceived his army to be exposed, whereas nothing had come to our knowledge from any quarter indicating the existence of such peril — I also remember the indignation and alarm caused by the precipitation of a retreat (apparently without necessity) involving the loss or destruction of the supplies and munitions which it cost us such infinite pains to accumulate, and above

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all his acknowledgment that he was too ignorant of the topography of the [4] Country to take the responsibility of selecting the position to which he was expected to retire - I am positively certain that ~~the~~ <sup>any</sup> statement that the withdrawal was ordered by you or that instructions emanated from you rendering withdrawal necessary is entirely erroneous, as no one was more chagrined than you were at the news of what was occurring -

My life has been so absorbed by other avocations since the war, and I am so totally without papers for reference that I fear I am not of much service to you, but there are scenes and recollections which no time can efface, and amongst them is the Richmond interview to which you refer -

Ever yours faithfully  
(4) J. P. Benjamin

P.S. Pray present my best memories and regards to Mrs Davis -