

turning visitor by the most courtly and well expressed compliment. The crowd was very much of the same character that now attends the President's levees, but the dominance of the commonalty was not so conspicuous, as it has been since the opening of Washington to the outer world by means of the Railways.

The quarrel about the French Indemnity was now at its height, and I was summoned back to my Regiment, for some glorious exploit as I hoped, but in reality to be transferred with my Company across the narrows, to occupy Fort LaFayette, and there being but one Officer besides myself with my Company, my presence was required. Fort LaFayette was then a square of four brick walls, pierced with embrasures for two tiers of guns, the whole covered by a roof of cypress shingle forming a mass in as perfect a state for instantaneous combustion as the wit of man could devise. I believe it is now burned to the water's edge, if it is not, it ought to be. This and other similar works along our Coast, particularly those at Key West and Pensacola are said to have been designed by the great French Engineer, General Bernard, of Napoleon's era, but I cannot believe it unless he foresaw the demand Jackson was to make on Louis Philippe and wished to leave the portals to our Cities an easy conquest to his countrymen. These fire-traps were equally objectionable before the great improvement in modern Artillery, and I do not see how they can be made useful now unless they are filled up with solid earth and clad with iron, forming a solid work, upon which iron-clad turrets should be placed to hold heavy guns. We passed at this place, a winter of inexpressible dreariness, and our communication with the shore was frequently interrupted by running ice. The only visitor we had during the whole winter, was a gentleman I met on the mainland, who had walked from N. York for an appetite, and the boat being on hand at the wharf, I without much reflection asked him to go over and dine with us. This was Captn. Galt, then A.D.C. of Gen. Scott, and a bon vivant and gourmet