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The Nashoba Plan for Removing the Evil of Slavery: Letters of Frances and Camilla Wright, 1820-1829

Cecilia Helena Payne-Gaposchkin

Early in 1974 Professor Payne-Gaposchkin deposited in the Houghton Library a collection of thirty-three letters from Frances Wright and her sister Camilla to Julia and Harriet Garnett. Those portions of these letters that are printed below — approximately two thirds of the whole collection — are concerned with the reaction of the Wright sisters to slavery and with their attempt, at Nashoba, to develop a plan for an *immediate* remedy.

Ed.

INTRODUCTION

THE GARNETT FAMILY were well-to-do citizens of Bristol, Somersetshire, in the eighteenth century. John Garnett (1750-1820) was the son of Henry Garnett (described in the Bristol burgess roll of 1766 as a "merchant venturer . . . admitted into the liberties of the city") and Wogan his wife. After an apprenticeship of seven years to his father, John Garnett was himself "admitted into the liberties" of Bristol in 1773. By family tradition they were importers in the China trade.

John Garnett was Sheriff of Bristol in 1782-1792 and Master of the Merchant Venturers in 1794-1795. He married Mary Gordon (1762-1848), and she bore him seven children, of whom five survived: Anna Maria (1783-1865?), Henry (1784-1826), Frances (1792-1873), Julia¹ (1793-1852), and Harriet (1794-1874).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century John Garnett grew dissatisfied with the situation in England. Family tradition holds that the fate of Joseph Priestley contributed to his decision to leave the country

¹ John Garnett was great-great grandfather, and Julia great-grandmother, to the present writer.

and begin life again in the United States. He opened a correspondence with General Horatio Gates (1728/9-1806), who had been his friend and "Mentor" in earlier years. With help from this old friend he found and bought the estate of Whitehouse in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The house, known today as the Buccleuch Mansion, is now a museum. The family moved into their new home in 1797.

The children grew up in the society of New Brunswick and New York, which included a number of expatriates, such as Hyde de Neuville. In 1819 and 1820 the Garnett family were hosts to Frances and Camilla Wright.* These sisters had been orphaned in infancy and their only brother Richard (born 1793) had died in a naval battle. Frances was born in 1795 and Camilla in 1797, thus they were near in age to the younger Garnett sisters. A close and affectionate friendship grew up among Frances, Camilla, Julia, and Harriet; they had dreams of spending their lives together. After the Wright sisters returned to Europe in 1820 they began the correspondence of which substantial portions are printed below.

From 1820 until her death in 1852, Julia corresponded with many friends — the Wrights, Frances Trollope, Lafayette, Sismondi, Julia Smith, and others. She seems to have kept most of her letters, and after her death they passed successively to her husband, his second wife, her daughters, and their niece, from whom I finally received them. Besides these letters, Julia (after her marriage separated her from the rest of the family) also kept virtually all the letters written to her by her mother and sisters. Unhappily only few of Julia's own letters to her mother and sisters have survived.

The whole correspondence presents a broad and fascinating picture of interweaving thoughts and destinies. The present selection, from the letters that Frances and Camilla Wright addressed to the Garnett sisters, traces the Nashoba venture from its first stirrings through its planning, execution, and abandonment.

Commentary seems unnecessary, and I have confined myself to brief

* Fanny Wright is usually to be found in library catalogues and biographical dictionaries under her married name, Frances Wright D'Arusmont (or Darusmont). See *Frances Wright* by William Randall Waterman (New York: Columbia University, 1924 — *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, ed. by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, Vol. CXV, No. 1). A more popular — but somewhat unreliable — biography is *Frances Wright, Free Enquirer: The Study of a Temperament* by A. J. G. Perkins and Theresa Wolfson (New York: Harper, 1939).

clarifying notes. A synthesis of the whole correspondence must be reserved to a later time.

Note on the Transcription

The text of the original manuscript has been followed in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling; unorthodox spellings, such as "seperate," have been reproduced without annotation. The editor has divided the letters into paragraphs when their authors did not do so; most of the letters — even the longest — were written without any paragraphing.

Words and letters that were crossed out in the manuscript have been enclosed in pointed brackets; when such words or letters could not be deciphered, they have been indicated by a dash within pointed brackets: {——}. Words and letters inserted above the line have been enclosed in slashes: /thus/. A few words that were not deleted are illegible and a few others are missing because the paper is torn; gaps of this sort have been indicated by leaving a blank within square brackets: [].

Addresses, when present, have been written at the head of letters; for letters not dated by their authors, postmarked dates, when available, have been indicated in square brackets.

Several of the letters bear no signature, though the writer is undoubted; these are letters that also lack an address, and presumably the signature may have been on the cover.

ENGLISH MISERY AND AMERICAN SLAVERY

The first letter in the series was written to the Garnett sisters by Fanny Wright after her return from her first visit to America. The date and address are indecipherable, but the time was probably during October 1820. There is a discussion of the possibility of settling on the Continent with her "English friends,"³ but she doubts that they would "find comfort in a foreign country." The letter continues:

... if you then continue in America, I shall seek you there, & follow the bent of my heart in becoming (the) /a/ citizen of the only country to w^{ch} I acknowledge an attachment. To this I think my two English friends secretly look forward. They have always known my aversion from England, from its climate, its government, its society, & the recollections w^{ch} make all these doubly offensive to me. Do not think me madly prejudiced against this island, I know it contains much of good & something yet of happiness, but vice & misery are

³ The "English friends" were Mrs. Robina Craig Millar and her sister, Margaret Cullen. Mrs. Millar, Fanny Wright's great-aunt by marriage, was the daughter of William Cullen, Professor of Medicine at Edinburgh University, and widow of John Craig Millar of Whitburn, County Durham. She and her husband had made a trip to the United States in the 1790s. The Wright sisters spent much time with her when in England; Fanny refers to her as "loved mother."

heavier in the scale, & without pretending to more sensibility, or even to as much, as many are possessed of, I cannot see begging in our towns & villages, & read of injustice in every paper I cast my eye upon, & {witness} /meet/ political & religious hypocrisy wherever I turn without feeling pain, indignation or disgust.

You will say that I sh^d find the same probably on the Continent of Europe. It is true; I sh^d not expect even Switzerland to be free from these evils, but I doubt if I sh^d find them in the same excess, or resent them with the same intensity of feeling /that I do here./ Whatever be the condition of the nations on the Continent they are at least (in) *improving*; Here all is *retrograde*. England had once public spirit, she had dignity, she had, to a certain degree, freedom; — where is all this now? In the lower classes there is discontent because there is misery, there is a considerable body among the middling classes where (is) /you will/ still /find/ principle; but these /chosen bands/ seem to be forsaking their country in disgust, & planting their domestic hearths in the wilds of your America. Our excellent friends are more sanguine. They still think there is strength in Israel, & are sometimes angry with me for hoping so little. But I think they themselves bu/i/ld their expectations on little less than revolution; but who but must dread a shock like that in so *corrupt a community*! The long submission to an unjust government has deadened moral indignation, the undermining influence of a rich & squander/i/ng treasury has destroyed public spirit, honor & disinterested patriotism, the frequent or rather continued consideration of misery has blunted human feeling; the wealth & patronage in the hands of the nobility & gentry, by rendering them either the objects of servile adoration, or of envy & hatred to the people, have at once corrupted & divided the community. Class is opposed to class, the higher detest & despise the lower, & the lower detest & envy the higher — But I will leave this picture, as far as I have drawn it I fear it is but too accurate.

My Harriet I love your feelings towards your country. You may well be proud of it; you may well exult in its prosperity & its freedom, & you may well too sigh when you throw your eyes Southward, & see liberty /mocked & outraged/ & that by a race of free men, who while they have her name in their mouths, ay and her energy in their souls, grasp the chain of oppression in their hands, denying to the wretched sons of Africa that holy birthright w^{ch} they themselves declare man holds of God. When my thoughts turn to America the crying sin of her slavery weighs upon my heart; there are moments when this foul blot so defaces to my mind's eye all the beauty of her character that I turn with disgust from her, & in her from the last & only nation on the globe to w^{ch} my soul clings with affection, pride & hope. From a misanthrope I then find myself a Cynic; my heart is at war with man, I loathe his nature & his name & attribute his (being) /creation/ to a malignant demon, rather than /to/ a beneficent God.

Reflection however makes me draw back the curse with the acknowledgment of my own injustice, I remember that the better half of those great republics are unprofaned by this crying sin — this reconciles me to the name of the

United States. I recollect that some of the *free* were once *slave* states — this reconciles me in part with my species, & makes me hope that other states will follow this example, & that all those republics, nay that all that great Continent, *North & South*, may exhibit the perfection of freedom.

Man has in /his/ nature much evil to balance against the good; he is capable of generosity but his generosity is seldom disinterested; his own good must be connected, or must seem to be connected, with that of those he befriends. & his own passions must be interested /in the injuries that he/ resents; his pride must be wounded or his cupidity have promise of gratification ere he will engage in any difficult enterprise, & when he foregoes an advantage it is usually in the expectation of a greater. I acknowledge that this is not an interesting view of human nature, but I believe we shall find it a true one; not that I deny the existence of disinterested virtue, I have seen it in others & I think I have felt it in myself, but I speak not of *an individual man*, but of *man taken collectively*, the rule applies to *him*, w^{ch} in the other we sometimes find an exception. But tho' this view of human nature will somewhat lessen our interest in our species, it need not lead us to despair of its improvement. I grant the means by w^{ch} it is effected are not *poetically pleasing*, but if improvement comes we must rejoice in it without greatly quarreling with the causes that have produced it. Blessed is the order of things w^{ch} renders virtue the chief good, indeed were it not so — i e if virtue did not tend to produce order & happiness it w^d neither command love nor admiration. But man ever finds sooner or later, in every nation & every clime that that only w^{ch} is just & right & virtuous is lastingly for his advantage. Nations as well as individuals are gradually forced to see the truth of the proverb that *honesty is the best (proverb) /policy/*. When they see it I grant they do not always act upon it; many causes may combine to prevent or *delay* this.

Many I see at present that operate in y^r southern States to *delay* the annihilation of Slavery; but this I rely on — that they can only *delay* it. It is not in the selfish passions of the masters, it is not in their shortsighted views of their immediate interests to do more than *defer the day of emancipation*. It is not in their authority to hold the African much longer in darkness, already he feels the chain, & he who *feels* will soon *snap* it, especially in a country such as yours where all that meets the eye or the ear breathes of freedom & “prates of her whereabouts”; — It is not in the strength of their self deception to shut out the conviction that slavery impoverishes as much as it degrades a community; that slaves are unprofitable servants, & that slaveholders are unthriving masters. These are my views my loved Harriet these are my hopes & my belief. In these only am I patient under an evil at w^{ch} the earth groans, & in /the/ consideration of a crime w^{ch} cries up to Heaven. —

The second letter, dated “Whitburn Nov^{br} 22nd 1820,” is addressed “Miss Julia Garnett, to the care of (Thomas Thornely Esq.) Brunswick N Jersey,” with the notation “(Liverpool) forwarded by CW. 31 Jan

1821." Only about one quarter of this letter, toward the end, deals with America:

I agree with you Harry in your observations upon Walsh's book.⁴ You must bear in mind however that it is rather a refutation of the erroneous /& affected/ praise bestowed on England by British writers in opposition to America, rather than a vindication of his own country that Walsh entered upon. When the English cry out aloud that they are the wisest freest & most humane nation in the world, it is perhaps fair that a foreigner sh^d call in question the truth of the epithets & *useful* perhaps that some one or other, whether foreigner or native, sh^d do this, were it only to prevent the credulous from taking such boasters at their word & yielding admiration to what perhaps were more deserving of reprobation. I (hope) /wish/ my dear Harry this last sentence may not read nonsense, for my good friends have made me talk all the time I was writing it.

Positively you must not expect much from my book⁵ w^{ch} I see you are disposed to do. I grow more doubtful of my fitness for the task every day. "I must screw my courage to the sticking post" however for our dear friends will not let me off. Indeed I see it were vain to propose it. Their hearts are set upon it, so I must set my head to it.

By the by did you ever hear that Walsh was, till within a few years past, what used to be termed among you a *federalist*; so far as to be quite English in feeling. It was the illiberality of English writers when treating of his country that first woke in him strong national feeling, & their wilful or ignorant misrepresentations of the character of his (fellow m) /countrymen/ as well as of the history & political institutions of the States that roused him, not merely to resentment of their injustice, but to admiration of the history & condition, moral & political of his own nation. Perhaps in his book he is a little too angry, but his indignation seemed to me honest & just & I forgave it.

I told you I think in my letter from Edinburgh that I had received a long folio from the Thompsons.⁶ Cam tells me I must give you a passage from it, & I consent as I think it will interest you — as I believe any passage w^d that had me for its subject. You see how conceited you have managed to make me. You may remember that we were present in Washington at the debates upon the tariff question.⁷ It chanced one morning that we sat (somewhat impatiently I remember) listening to a young member who was opposed to the bill. He

⁴ *An appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain Respecting the United States of America*, by Robert Walsh (1784-1859), published in Philadelphia (1819) and in London (1820).

⁵ *Views of Society and Manners in America; in a Series of Letters from that Country to a Friend in England, during the Years 1818, 1819, and 1820*. By an Englishwoman. London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821.

⁶ The context suggests a Congressman, but no one named Thompson was a member of Congress in 1820. Smith Thompson (1768-1843) was Secretary of the Navy at this time.

⁷ Daring April 1820.

was fulminating against manufactures. & his arguments tho' often ingenious were ill digested, ill worded & ill delivered. It seems (I say *it seems*, for I sh^d never have retained the observation, had it not been fixed in my memory, by Mr. Clay's⁸ adverting to it in the evening when I met him at the Neuville's⁹ saying that it had been repeated to him in the House by a Senator who had been with me in the gallery) It seems then /that/ I turned laughingly to Mr Dickerson¹⁰ (for when Mr Clay recalled the circumstance to me I remembered that the Senator was Dickerson) & observed of the Gentleman that was speaking *that there was in him no lack of the raw material, but that it might be turned to more account (by being) /were it/ more skilfully manufactured.* You will agree with me that the observation was barely worth repeating & most certainly not worth quoting, tho it appears that Mr Dickerson & Mr Clay were not of that opinion. Thompson writes thus. "I must tell you that a day or two after you left us Mr Clay quoted you in the Hall of Representatives in reply to Mr. Harding¹¹ who was opposed to the encouragement of manufactures. Mr. Clay "wondered that []norable gentlemen was opposed to manufactu[]ng that a distinguished foreign lady who had []nored them by attending their discussions had []d of the Gentleman *that he possessed much of the raw material w^{ch} w^d be rendered much more valuable by being properly manufactured.*" I must observe that I can conceive no way in w^{ch} the said foreign lady c^d merit the epithet *distinguished* unless it were as having been distinguished by Mr Clay's notice — And I *do* confess that any individual honored by the attention of that able statesman & energetic patriot is very highly *distinguished*.

I am greatly indebted to you for Brackenridge's Louisiana.¹² Yes I had commissioned Mr Wilkes¹³ for his South Am^{ca}¹⁴ & received it with the books by Rogers.¹⁵ . . .

⁸ Henry Clay (1777-1852), Speaker of the House of Representatives, 1811-14, 1815-20, and 1823-25.

⁹ Jean Guillaume Hyde de Neuville, baron (1776-1857), a French expatriate then living in New Brunswick, N. J. Later he returned to Paris and he and his wife were friends of the Garnetts there. His *Mémoires et souvenirs* have been published (Paris: Plon, 1890-92).

¹⁰ Mahlon Dickerson (1770-1853) was Senator from New Jersey, 1817-33; he had been Governor of New Jersey, 1815-17, and later served as Secretary of the Navy, 1834-38.

¹¹ Benjamin Hardin (1784-1852), Representative in Congress from Kentucky.

¹² Henry Marie Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana*, published in Pittsburgh (1814) and in Baltimore [1817].

¹³ Charles Wilkes (1764-1833) was first Cashier and later President of the Bank of New York. Fanny Wright dedicated her *Views of Society* to him; an old friend of the Garnetts, he wrote them an "annual letter" until his death. He was a nephew of John Wilkes (1717-1797), the English agitator and reformer.

¹⁴ Brackenridge's *Voyage to South America* (2 vols.) was published in Baltimore (1819) and in London (1820).

¹⁵ James Rogers, Captain of the *James Monroe*; see Robert G. Albion, *Square-Riggers on Schedule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1938), pp. 21-22, 341.

IN AMERICA WITH LAFAYETTE AND JEFFERSON

After a gap of nearly three and one half years in the correspondence there is a brief letter from Fanny Wright to Julia Garnett, postmarked "My 1 1824 Sunderland," which need not be reproduced here. Then, six months later (dated "Richmond Va 30th Oct^r -[18]24"), comes a report on Fanny Wright's second visit to the United States:

Our anxious expectations have not been disappointed. On our arrival here a packet from the Gen^l enclosed y^{rs} . . . On rejoining the loved Gen^l¹⁶ here I find a cloud over his sweet mind the first that has visited him since his arrival here — The vessel w^{ch} brought y^r letters brought him the intelligence of one of his oldest & dearest friends M^c d'Henin¹⁷ — He writes me that he has need of solitude & my sympathy & that he w^d give much to make the journey to Monticello quietly with us — But such preperations have been made that he must e'en move on in public. —

I see already that we shall find here as in Norfolk much pleasing and polished society — but my thoughts & feelings ever wander from it contrasting the condition of the proud & accomplished master with /that of/ the debased & injured slave (who) to whom that master's will is law — Amid all the politeness I see & attention I receive my heart is sick — I have not yet seen my fellow creatures sold in the market place & God forbid I sh^d see it, for I really cannot answer for what I m^t say or do, but I have seen them manacled when sold on board a vessel bound for N.Orleans — Our steamboat brushed past her swiftly w^{ch} perhaps prevented my committing what e^d only have been folly. But I cannot write on this subject & yet it preys so continually on my mind that I find it difficult to write on any other. The enthusiasm triumphs & rejoices exhibited here before the countenance of the great & good Lafayette have (no) /no longer/ charms for me — They who so sin against the liberty of their

¹⁶ Throughout this correspondence, "the Gen^l" is Lafayette. Fanny Wright met him in 1821 as a result of his interest in her *Views of Society and Manners in America* (note 5 above). Their friendship, in Waterman's words (*op. cit.*, note 2 above, p. 65), "ripened into real affection, upon her side almost to infatuation and upon his to a paternal tenderness delightful in its sympathy and feeling." Frances and Camilla frequently refer to him as their "father." Later, however, a "somewhat mysterious crisis [arose] in the Lafayette family in consequence of the General's intimate friendship with Miss Wright . . . [She] seems to have hoped to become his adopted daughter. To such a step the family of Lafayette was strongly opposed, and the position which Miss Wright occupied at La Grange, became in the spring of 1824, an impossible one. An illness of the General's . . . seems to have caused the family to seek a reconciliation, and even to urge Miss Wright to make the visit to America with him" (*ibid.*, p. 79).

¹⁷ Adélaïde-Félicité-Étiennette de Guignot de Montconseil, Princess d'Hénin (1750-1824), with whom Lafayette had corresponded while he was imprisoned during the French Revolution.

country — against those great principles for w^{ch} their honored guest poured on their soil his treasure & his blood are not worthy to rejoice in his presence — My soul sickens in the midst of gaiety & turns almost with disgust from the fairest faces or the most amiable discourse. — With all the intelligence & virtue w^{ch} yet lingers in these states their present condition is wretched & their future prospects worse. But enough & too much of this now — . . .

Two weeks later, Fanny Wright was at Jefferson's home:

Monticello 12th Nov^r 1824.

We have now passed several days on the top of this little mountain commanding one of the finest prospects I ever remember to have seen & consecrated by the residence of the greatest of America's surviving veterans. I found the venerable patriot & statesman much what I expected to see him perhaps rather from (what) the description I had heard & read than from any portrait I had seen — all of w^{ch} except one exquisite drawing of Stuart's in possession of the family, are decided caricatures. His face has nothing of that elaborate length & breadth of chin invariably attached to it in all the prints & drawings that have come under my observation but exhibits still in its decaying outline, & fallen & withered surface the (——) forms of symmetry & deep impress of character & intellect. He is just reviving from another severe illness, w^{ch} has I fear lastingly increased the debility of age. Still tho' this weakness is painfully evident in the low voice, & occasional languor of the countenance, his tall well-moulded figure remains erect as at the age of 20, & his step is as light & springy as tho' it c^d bear him without effort up the steepest sides of his favourite mountains. This appearance however is deceptive. He still takes much exercise on horseback but is fatigued by a walk of (two) /a/ hundred yards. The mind seems to retain its full power but he is evidently often unequal to the exertion of speaking. Some of his present debility may perhaps again disappear, but the lamp is evidently on the wane nor is it possible to consider the fading of a light so brilliant & fine without a sentiment of deep melancholy.

14th — Cam was seized yesterday with a bad cold w^{ch} although better today must detain us here some days longer. This I fear will throw us into decided & naked winter so soon as we shall have crossed the mountains. The country between the blue ridge & the Alleghanies where our course lies being some degrees colder than the lower country. Finding ourselves so late in the season we have determined to /relinquish our/ visit to Mr Madison's & to set out direct for the Natural bridge about 90 miles to the westward across the blue ridge (by Staunton & Lexington if you have a map of the state) from thence returning to Staunton we strike across to Harper's ferry with the scenery of w^{ch} you will be familiar as described in Mr Jefferson's Notes on Va¹⁸ — It will take us about 10 days to reach Washington by this route.

The Gen^l in the meantime will make a short visit to Mr Madison & must then attend some agricultural meeting in Maryland w^{ch} will amuse him very little I

¹⁸ Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, first published in 1784-85.

take it, as he seems to envy us much our journey on the mountains. We shall meet again in Washington the first week in Dec^r for the opening of Congress.

Mr Jefferson is very anxious that some steps w^{ch} he considers as preparatory to the abolition of slavery at least in this state sh^d be adopted this winter. You will find his plan (that w^{ch} he proposed, in the V^a legislature at the time of the revolution) /sketched/ in the Notes. God grant it be acted upon & that shortly. I am not without hopes that the urgency of the case — the great pressure of the evil upon the industry & prosperity of the country will enforce on the public mind the necessity of a remedy. The near vicinity of Hayti affording a safe & convenient haven for the black population of the U S & its President offering to advance money for its transportation affords great facilities for emancipating gradually the slaves of the South. The prejudice whether absurd or the contrary against a mixture of the two colors is so deeply rooted in the American mind that emancipation without expatriation (if indeed the word be applicable) seems impossible. (at least) In time indeed it w^d in spite in spite of prejudice take place — but how many years of suffering & what a time of evils including probably a servile war must ensue before that amalgamation c^d (take effect) /be effected./ The apprehension of this amalgamation will I think operate as not the least powerful incentive towards active measures.

I forget if I mentioned that I had an interview with the Haytian agent, Granville,¹⁹ in Phil^a — He had then despatched 4 vessels from different ports charged with black families to Port au Prince. The plan adopted is this. The Haytian Gov^t advances the passage money lands are apportioned to the emigrants immediately on arrival, the necessary tools are supplied, & the debt is afterwards to be gradually cancelled by the proprietors — This serves as an incentive to industry & enables the Haytian Gov^t to afford the means of transportation to any extent.

Mr Granville served for some years in the french army in Europe (not an uncommon thing among the Haytians of education) & has the air & manners, information & conversation of a polite European — His color very dark mulatto features good & countenance pleasing. I had heard that such a person was in the country & upon enquiring found he was about to (leave it) /sail/ with a ships cargo of emigrants. I felt anxious that he sh^d first see the Gen^l & applied to a friend of Mr Granville to write to him on the subject. He came immed^{ly} to Phila He was delighted with his interview with the Gen^l w^{ch} he first had in private in his bedroom — The Gen^l afterwards purposely conducted him into his receiving room crowded with visitors & there took a second affectionate leave of him conducting him to the head of the stairs in sight of all who crowded the passages.

The visit of this amiable man, whose char^r is peculiarly suited to the occasion, has I think already been of service; a little more intercourse with men of his nation will I trust soon rub off (I speak of the Northern States) the degrading

¹⁹ Jonathas Granville (1785-1839); see [Jonathas Henri Théodore Granville], *Biographie de Jonathas Granville*, par son Fils (Paris: E. Brière, 1873).

prejudices against the color of their skin — He prudently forbore all unnecessary contact with American society. His friend Mr Currie²⁰ in whose family he resided when in Phil^a proposed that I sh^d meet him in his house to avoid any unpleasant mistakes likely to occur in a crowded boarding house. Mr Currie observed that when business first led him to St Domingo he went with the usual prejudices of his color & nation, but having resided there the better part of 6 years he (agreed) /added/ with a smile that he had gained some better sense & better feelings, & that all complexions were to him alike.

It was with real pleasure that I found the amiable Haytian making one in an American family & saw my warm shake of the hand repeated by a visitor of the family who entered after me. I know not if I sent you the anecdote regarding him w^{ch} has I believe appeared in the papers. His mission being understood & his claims as a gentleman being additionally enforced by his exterior he passed thro the country taking & receiving the place of such until on board the steamboat between Trenton & Phil^a placing himself at the dinner table a young man to whom his character was unknown roughly accosted him with an enquiry how a person of his color presumed to seat himself among ladies — Mr Granville quietly & gravely rose & left the cabin. The greater part of the company acquainted with the name & mission of Mr Granville then rose in confusion & called for the Capt of the boat, who addressed an explanation to the young man & called for an apology. The offender immedi^{ly} ran up on the deck & made his excuses as he c^d. — Mr Granville having heard them to the end, replied Benefits I engrave on marble, insults always upon sand. & returned to the table. — . . .

The first portion of the next letter was by Fanny Wright (signed "F W."); the second part is by Camilla. Relevant passages of the first portion read as follows:

a Mad^{lle} Julia Garnett
aux soins de M: Beazeley Consul Americain
au Havre. —

Washington 21st Dec^r 1824

I see by the day's paper the arrival of the *Stephania* & on the return of the d^r Gen^l this afternoon shall receive y^r precious letters my sweet friends. . . . If in Eng^d you cannot fail however to see the accounts of the Gen^{ls} reception by Congress — the most solemn & beautifully impressive scene w^{ch} has marked his presence in this country. . . . Yesterday the house of representatives voted unanimously 200,000 dolls (about a million of francs) to the Gen^l & a township of (as is understood) of equal value — The same will pass thro' the Senate today. The dear Gen^l has been absent for some days on a visit to Annapolis. We expect him back this afternoon. . . .

²⁰ Granville's correspondence (note 19 above) gives the name of his Philadelphia friend as "Correy," but no further identification has been found.

Camilla Wright, in her portion of the letter, quotes an account of Lafayette's reception which her sister had sent to another of their friends:

. . . Fanny . . . tells me . . . she omitted to give you the details of the Gen^{ls} reception in the chamber of Representatives w^h I regard as by far the most grand & impressive scene that has passed since his arrival in this [co]untry & feel therefore tempted to quote for your sa[tis]faction the acc^t she has given of that imposing ceremony in a letter addressed to our dear Mrs Trollope²¹ — "You will have read ere this reaches you the address of the eloquent Speaker of the house²² & my father's²³ beautiful reply. But how shall I convey to you the deep silence the breathless attention of the crowded hall — The galleries thronged with both sexes & the floor behind the seats of the Members filled with ladies for that day only the audience being admitted below. The respectful attitude of the national assembly when (ushered) /ushered/ in by the Committee, the venerable patriot was presented to the House; the still solemn pause that succeeded that introduction — the (suppressed) /impressive/ tho altered tones of the Speaker, the subdued emotion of grey haired veterans — the simple dignity so blended with modesty of him before whose virtue the representatives of a free people stood uncovered, & then after the moment, in which the object of such veneration mastered his emotion & fixed his eyes on the chair & then threw them round on the assembly & commenced his reply in that foreign accent w^{ch} told at once the story of his life — (No) No my dear friend no pen or pencil c^d pourtray that moment" —

THE SOUTH

The beginning of the next letter is missing, but it is signed "F W" and addressed "Miss Garnett a Mad^{le} J Garnett (Pavillon Chardot sur la Cote au Havre) R Baley Esq^r Basinghall Street No. 4 — London." Evidently it was written during January or February 1825. The relevant portion reads:

I intend employing my days during the descent of the western waters in preparing an article²⁴ for our glorious Westminster review on the subject of American Negro slavery — Alas! Alas! The more I consider the subject the more I shudder the more I tremble! This plague spot so soils the beauty of the robe of American liberty that I often turn in disgust from the freest country in the world — But south of the Susquahanah it deserves not this praise — Am: industry — morals — enterprize all is benumbed — The heart is hardened —

²¹ Frances (Milton) Trollope (1780-1863) figures largely in the Garnett correspondence; she was to accompany Fanny Wright to Nashoba in 1827.

²² The Speaker of the House of Representatives was then Henry Clay.

²³ "My father" is General Lafayette; cf. note 16 above.

the char^r depraved — Our course is still to be thro the benighted & guilty regions — I c^d hardly execute the project did I not purpose to turn my observations to account —

We shall (wite) write from hence the first week in March — & then in April from New Orleans —

The collection does not include a letter written “during the first week in March.” It contains two versions of the letter from New Orleans, both in Julia Garnett’s handwriting. One is considerably abbreviated, and even in passages that coincide there are small discrepancies. In one version she seems to have left out all references to Lafayette. Everything to be found in either version has been incorporated in the following transcription:

Copy of F.W. letter from New Orleans. 12th April. 1825. — received 1st July. — Clifton.

New Orleans. — April 12th 1825

Surely this is the Babilon of the revelations, where reigneth the great Western slavery mud & musquitoes. These are the first objects that greet your senses. And did the English journal writing travellers see no more of Am^a than this city contains I should seldom object to their ill temper. Slavery I expected to find here in all its horrors, and truly in all its horrors it is found. The clank of chains from the [] & gutters — poor wretches thus wearing out their existence — gracious God & for what — for disputing the will of some iron hearted tyrant or the yet worse crime of disputing a master’s right to his power and services or for having essayed — fruitless hopeless enterprise — to run away. For every man’s hand is against the hapless slave & every law of man’s creation. The first fellow creature with a white skin stops, questions & arrests the Runaway. In proportion as you travel south the features of slavery grow harsher, until they find their *ne plus ultra* in New Orleans.

The bad weather & my consequent increased debility keep me still a prisoner, but the little I have seen and what I hear makes me little regret the disability of examining farther the appearance of the streets. We have innumerable visitors — some very pleasing. —

14th The weather is improved & I also. We have lost our interesting companion Miss C[] (whom Cam must have introduced to you) but we shall see her again at Natchez. When you can divert your eyes from slavery & all its concomitant horrors there is something curious & withal interesting in the mixture of population exhibited in this city. The strongly lined Physiognomy of France, the Spanish hue & countenance of the longer settled Creoles (Creole is applied to the french born in the Colonies & here in Louisiana) the bronzed olive & yet darker eyes & hair of the real descendants of Spain. (Louisiana previous to the

²⁴ Apparently this article was not published; no article on American Negro slavery is to be found in *The Westminster Review* during this period.

cession had been for some years a Spanish possession) the more placid & milder features of Amⁿ the jet black of Africa & the *mazzo tinto* thro' all its shades. — The creole ladies are remarkably graceful & very often handsome. The natural countenance has much improved by transplanting. They are decidedly more pleasing than in France.

It is curious also to mark the varying rates of progress in the ideas among the french natives. Some yet speak of U.S. as of a foreign country. Such understand only the tongue of their fathers and can hardly translate *bon jour* into english. — and following up the popular information through all its grades you arrive at men (of course among the young) who retain little of the old Colony but a foreign accent in speaking the new tongue & a more profound bow in making their salutation. — I had this morning a good specimen of the 2 Phisiognomics presented to me in the *Etat Major* of the City militia & neighborhood. The style of presentation indeed was somewhat appalling for the Governour having brought at his heels some 30 citizens, officers in full uniform (as they had just paid their respects to the d^r Gen^l) passed them by name before me one by one. The first glance in most cases sufficed to distinguish the original nation but in case of doubt the bow decided it. —

Throughout the State the American population rather preponderates, but in the city the french still form 2 thirds. This has hitherto much impeded the progress of the City, w^{ch} still has but little appearance of wealth & none of order cleanliness & beauty. American innovations are now however gaining ground. These are chiefly evident in the commenced operations of paving, & in side walks of brick owing to the nature of the soil which seems to be in a sort of amphibious state between land and water. No stone, not even a pebble is to be found in all the alluvial soil bordering the Mississippi. At the depth of 3 feet water is always to be found & in the city the dead are drowned rather than buried, holes being made in the coffin to admit the water w^{ch} rises in the grave to the surface. Notwithstanding this precaution the bodies are said frequently to be washed out of the soil in seasons of rain.

The fashion of the [] & most of the habits of the people are of course french rather than english. — I must not omit to speak of one class of people already important from their number & destined in all probability to influence strongly the future history of the place. I was prepared to observe this portion of the community with curiosity as well as interest, & the information I had previously rec^d is fully confirmed by my own observation. Had I more time before me or better health I sh^d persue my enquiries or rather push my observations farther than I have found possible.

The french have invariably borne the character of being the worst & the best slave masters. I believe we may receive both accounts for true. They are worse than the english & Amⁿ in that their temper is naturally more hasty & especially when compared with the more wealthy planters of the latter nation. — the Am^{can} their minds dispositions less improved by education. Again they are better in that they more frequently admit their slaves to familiarity and acknowledge the claims of their own illegitimate progeny. It has been common

(more formerly than at present) for a creole planter to have two regular families, a legal white & an illegal colored — The latter have been in many cases educated & provided for as well as emancipated, & where no legitimate wife or progeny existed, the whole fortune of the master & father has devolved by testament to the enslaved children. It is in that manner that our independent land holding, & what is more curious *slave holding* body of mulattoes has been formed, & in the streets it is not rare to see some elegant women attired in all the simple elegance of creole taste, & shewing eyes, features & shape far surpassing the grace & expression of creole beauty. The attractions of these dark eyed rich complexioned damsels are such, that it has been judged advisable to prevent by law any contract of marriage between them & whites

At the attack of N.O^r by the British, the free men of color offered their services to Gen^l Jackson, who incorporated a company w^{ch} served with distinguished bravery. Their story forms a parallel to that of the N^o Irishmen. They were afterwards deprived of the arms with w^{ch} they had cooperated in defense of the country! This indignity has cut more deeply than any other. The whites by the jealousy continually evinced & by the insolent bearing always shown, have lost the good will of the party w^{ch} m^t have formed a barrier between them & their slaves, or have added to their strength against them. For their vulgar interests (being themselves mostly planters & slaveholders) w^d have been one with those of the whites, & have in fact incurred for them the suspicion of the blacks! Still as they are more or less thrown from the other party they naturally acknowledge more sympathy with their oppressed half brethren. They frequently provide education for their servants, & favor or effect their emancipation.

The state of things in Louisiana yet more than in any other slave states is precarious in the extreme. The alarm of the more reflecting whites is extreme & some have confessed to me that they only considered the schemes for gradual emancipation (w^{ch} had occurred to me & w^{ch} I ventured to hint at) as impossible because they w^d come too late & that the power must be wrested by force from the hands of its possessors before any systems c^d be organized for its relinquishment. The very physical position of this state, independent of the strength of its black population, exposes it to peculiar danger. On one side Hayti, the report of whose liberty, & by what means it was established, as well as of its growing strength spreads every day farther; still nearer — Cuba expecting [] from her deliverance from Spanish thraldom by the intervention of Columbia or from the constrained intervention of the U.S. [] — a deliverance however effected w^{ch} must be simultaneous with emancipation — & touching the boundary line the territories of Mexico thro'out w^h equal liberty reigns for all colors. Thus pressed in by opposite principles as was the empire of Mexico between free [] like that empire but effected by more terrible means must the slave systems fall here.

The more wealthy American planters have in prospect (I have reason to believe) very generally a removal from the country before many years elapse. One indeed confessed to me he considered *three* from this date as a full portion

of time for w^{ch} property m^t be held with safety. — These apprehensions are not distinctly admitted by any but the more reflecting — a small portion in a slave state. Property now of all kinds stands at its highest value. The Stock w^{ch} we purchased in L. State Bank at Par w^d sell now at a profit of 14 p^r C^t. Taking the view I do of the position of the country I sh^d think sale in the course of a y^r or so prudent.

C^d you my d^r friends find any good placement for y^r little sum perhaps y^r profit upon it now is as high as it is likely to be. I intend renewing enquiries in N.Y. but to place money now at good interest is very difficult. The shares of the L. Bank are bought up very fast in London like the shares in the Mexican mines &c. — For reasons above given my loved mother,²⁵ for I address this letter to Whitburn as well as Havre trusting to our d^r Garnetts to forward with or without frank as they can, are why I do not counsel y^r resorting to the placement we have tried. The rise of the stock (this information for Havre) is expected to produce an equal rise of interest. from 9 to 10 p^r c^t.

This year Mr Nolti²⁶ is to send you his account. We left N.O. at an hours warning & had no time to write & enclose his letter as I promised. I left him y^r address. Whenever you decide for sale you will only have to send him a power of attorney for that effect. — with directions where to remit the money. Mr. Beazely will render all this clear. You will understand that the stock is 14 above par. the interest now proportionately favorable. — equally good for sale or for the keeping of the Stock. I will write you again the result of my enquiries in N.Y. I shall myself leave my money there until I decide where to place it.

I have written a greater part of the above at a later date than I commenced on board a crowded steam boat in the Mississippi.

We parted from the d^r Gen^l at Natchez. He goes up to St. Louis & then follows the course of the river to Wheeling. We intend making a 2^d journey to Illinois: & a 2^d visit to Harmony²⁷ where we shall now find Mr Owen²⁸ & his plan in operation. I shall leave my letters in the letterbox of the boat. On leaving Harmony we shall again seek the shores of the Ohio & ascend to Louisville by steamboat, from thence send in by water Hannah²⁹ & our luggage to Pittsburgh & traverse ourselves by land to the richest part of Kentucky & the Herculean infant Ohio, then cross the western part of Pennsylvania & New York to Albany & cross the north eastern states to Boston, where we hope to

²⁵ "My loved mother": Mrs. Millar, cf. note 3 above.

²⁶ Vincent Otto Nolte (1779-1856); his *Funfzig Jahre in beiden Hemisphären* (Hamburg, 1853; 2^e Aufl., 1854) has been published in English translation as *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres; or, Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (London: Trubner, 1854; also New York: Redfield, 1854); a reprint, entitled *Memoirs*, was issued in New York by Watt, 1934.

²⁷ For Harmony, see Karl J. R. Arndt, *George Rapp's Harmony Society, 1785-1847* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965).

²⁸ Robert Owen (1771-1858); see *Dictionary of National Biography* and his *The Life of Robert Owen, Written by Himself* (originally published 1857-58).

²⁹ Unidentified; Hannah is mentioned again in the letter of 20 June 1826.

meet the Gen^l on the 17th June, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker's Hill. This however will depend on my strength, if it revives but slowly we shall remain ten days instead of two at Harmony & relinquish seeing Boston in the day of her jubilee.

I had intended making this letter much longer, & write many more than I can now execute. But my time & strength has been engrossed since I came on board by a little creole boy going with 40 other little comrades in the charge of a catholic priest, quite ignorant of English, & of all, under heaven save his mass & missal, to a college in Kentucky. He still hangs between life & death, with an ulcerated throat. The apprehension now is gangrene. He was sick when we got into the boat at Natchez. There is luckily a young Physician on board who has done I believe all that c^d be done. The poor Priest is half out of his senses. Unfortunately the crowd on board obliged us to leave Hannah at Natchez to follow in other up to Louisville. The attendants on board are good for nothing but to struggle against & run over each other. — (always the case within the precincts of slavery) deck & cabin passengers all counted we started 500. Half a hundred french boys jostling & gabbling away morning till night, a poor little fellow dying in the middle of them. Ladies & gentlemen standing & sitting as thick as leaves on the trees. — you may conceive our confusion. My only respite is, as I sit now in my berth in a state room where two can just contrive to turn round, begging room for their elbows. I have said nothing of Natchez — of the lovely country w^{ch} surrounds it — of the Gen^{ls} beautiful reception there — of a thousand things w^{ch} we must talk over when we meet —

We are thank heaven at the entrance of the Ohio, in sight of Illinois — beyond reach of Snags. — I pray heaven of mosquitoes — such mosquitoes! — In size father long legs & in number the lice of Pharoah. The navigation of the Mississippi is even more hazardous than I had apprehended particularly in the ascent — But as is usually the case in this country the more numerous the perils the less the caution — so it appears to me at least — snags sawyers & planters foundered steamboats, lost cargoes & drowned passengers seldom inspire the precaution of lying to in a dark night, or of carefully firing the boilers, so as to prevent the addition of blowing up to the other perils of the navigation. I begin to understand now that we have followed such dead lines of forest for so many thousand miles, the passion of the first settlers for laying their ground clear of trees. In the unvarying shores of this gigantic river an open space is almost as great a relief to the eye as is an occasional bluff of 50 feet high — again in following the line of these forests the idea occurs of how much more rapidly the trees w^d fall & habitations rise did the waters flow through free states. The Mississippi indeed ever shifting its bed & flowing along a ridge formed by the washing of its muddy waters, presents peculiar difficulties but the richness of the soil & the water highway to a market w^d tempt the enterprise of thousands did not the curse of slavery lie in the soil & the waters!

How different the shores of the Ohio on free & slave states! but what startles the mind in traversing this magnificent country is the vast extent of the portion given over to this blight & curse! I c^d have wept when gazing on the lovely

face of nature in the state of Mississippi — such woods, such lawns, such gently swelling hills such glorious trees, such exquisite flowers, & the giant river wafting the rich produce of this unrivalled land to the ocean. I c^d have wept as I thought that such a garden was wrought by the hands of slaves — But when following the course of these mighty streams you traverse varying latitudes & climates marking an extent greater than the continent of Europe, & reflect that this plague that is gradually spreading under the cover of the forests & along the track of the rivers over this huge territory the heart truly sickens & curses the progress (comparatively slow as it is) of cultivation. But my paper is full & my time expended. Farewell my d^r Mother — Farewell dear Ju & Harry. F.W.

P.S. I leave to you dear Ju to add the address to d^r Mrs Millar — sh^d she have left Whitburn you will know.

THE PLAN FOR NASHOBA

The following letter, which is printed here in full, is in two parts, the first, by Fanny Wright, dated at Philadelphia, 8 June 1825, and the second, by Camilla Wright, written in New York three days later.

a M^(ad^le) /iss/ Julia Garnett
 (Pavillon Chardet sur le Cote)
 (au Havre)
 Mrs. Smith's
 Easton Grey
 Near Tedbury Gloucestershire

Read this letter in private.

Philadelphia June 8th 1825. —

Since I last wrote in ascending the Missi/ssi/ippi it seems my loved friends that we have lived half a life & seen half a world. We have traversed such an extent of country, seen such a variety of people made so many valuable friends, & decided on plans of so much importance that a folio volume c^d scarcely describe or explain all. — Y^r letters my loved friends (I cannot say of what date not having them at hand at the moment) were rec^d 7 days /since/ from the dear Gen^l at Pittsburg. How welcome were their assurances of sweet affection, their impatient expectation of our return! — If some sorrow mixed & still mixes with this pleasure it is I know, & I am sure when you understand the case you will also acknowledge, (is) not well reasoned sorrow since it promises to be made the source of more permanent pleasure. Still a short present seems always of more value than a long future, & had I less confidence in the generosity & benevolence of y^r hearts I sh^d hardly have courage to write the present letter.

You regret my dear Harry our then proposed visit to New Orleans, & wonder what led me to decide on it. I wished to see the very thing you wished me to shun — slavery in its worst form. I had not previously considered the subject with all the attention that my head & heart c^d bestow — procured all the information possible from every individual I came across — examined as far as

I c^d the laws respecting it in the different states & reflected upon all the possible means of removing the evil. Till I saw Louisiana & had conversed with some of its most intelligent & liberal citizens, I never thoroughly understood the system or (understood) /saw/ where or in what manner it sh^d be first attacked & until within the least 6 weeks (the best way) /an effective mode/ of proceeding against it had not distinctly occurred to me.

Seven of the 9 months we have now passed in the U S: have been spent almost entirely within slave states; during these 7 months I may say that my thoughts & enquiries have been engrossed by, & directed almost exclusively to, the subject of slavery — Various modes of procedure have during this season occurred to me, but it was not until I had visited for the second time the settlement of Harmonie in Indiana, considered attentively the practice of its original German proprietors, together with the system now commenced by Mr Owen ³⁰ that I distinctly conceived the only scheme w^{ch} I believe capable of being rendered *general* & consequently efficient in its effects. — The schemes hitherto adopted (in the way of emancipation & colonization societies &c) I have always considered as doing individual benefits at the expense of helping forward the general evil. They deliver the southern states of the free (slaves) /people of color of whom they are jealous/ or of the old or lazy slaves (who are a charge (or a trouble) to the owners (who may) /when humanity induces them to/ keep them or a trouble to the community when the owners turn them out in the high-ways to live by *picking* as it is called) & thus tend to lessen the inconveniences (in w^{ch} lie the only hope of a remedy) both to individual planters & to the states. Also where these societies raise money for purchase of liberty they help to swell the market for slavery & so long as the market exists the commodity will be encouraged. The chief export trade of the eastern section of Virginia (bounded by the blue ridge) that is old Virginia consists in human beings. They are raised to the East as cattle are raised to the West. They are (sold) /advertised/ in the same way, (——) /exposed & sold/ in the same way, driven in the same way & spoken of & treated in the same way. Virginia is the Guinea of the U^d States. & while her slave ships leave the port of Norfolk weekly for Savannah & New Orleans, her black population is increasing at home in a ratio greatly exceeding the increase of the white — & so it will until the market (is) /bc/ closed.

You will wonder when (as I stated in a former letter) the terror of the whites at the (preponderating) /increasing/ number of the blacks in Louisiana is at its height they sh^d still import more; I wondered also, until it was explained to me on the spot. It is found cheaper & *safer* to *import & work out* (——) slaves than to /{(——) &}/ take care of those born in the country — also tempted by the prospect of great immediate gains individuals from other states will clear new plantations /there/ & people them with slaves bought at a cheaper rate in the Virginia nursery — also we must take into (the) account the carelessness and wrecklessness of an ignorant & brutal people who never calculate conse-

³⁰ See notes 27 and 28 above.

quences even when they see danger, & who generally speaking never see danger until it (enters their) is converted into absolute (——) /ruin/ —.

I found several intelligent planters of Louis^a & Mississippi decidedly agreed with me in opinion /that these states together with Georgia & Florida/ must & will at no great distance of time be filled with a colored population. The only population by the way suited to the soil & climate. The probability is that this will be effected by the means resorted to in S^t Domingo. Before that fearful crisis it is highly important that a portion of that people be prepared for liberty; they may then be the means of civilizing the ignorant mass. — The whites of /the north at/ such a time, even supposing them willing c^d effect nothing, for they c^d never acquire the confidence of the color w^{ch} had been so long oppressed by theirs.

I have but very imperfectly sketched out the present state of this horrible ulcer w^{ch} now covers a large part of this magnificent country. In Maryland & Virginia (it) /slave labor/ is more than profitless it is absolutely ruinous. This ought to help out in its own remedy — But here again we are met by another difficulty — It is /the/ degradation of character the ignorance & inertness /al-ways more or less/ produced by the slave system (on) /in/ the /mass of the/ whites. — As in Spain or Italy (perhaps the comparison may be extreme) knowledge is confined to the few & enterprise to still fewer — Instead of (setting about) /seeking out/ a remedy for the evil, they cross their arms & let it take its course, & anxious only to relieve the (necessities) /difficulties/ of the moment seek in the slave traffic a support to their sinking fortunes. Here, as I have observed, this traffic stopped, they w^d be forced into a system of emancipation; Their slaves w^d /otherwise/ starve them to death.

In Kentucky & Tennessee they are approaching towards the same ruin. But as tobacco has not yet exhausted the rich lands of the one & (th) as cotton is the staple of the other, & as also they are both younger states, the evil does not as yet press (as) /so/ heavily. I sh^d explain that where the land yields corn & wheat only slave labor is found immed^{ly} ruinous. —

The first plan that occurred to me was that the slaves on a plantation sh^d be led to work from the incentive of working out their liberty /with a view to their being afterwards employed as waged laborers/ — With such a motive they w^d be found to work better, & some ruined fortunes in Vir^a repaired by this means, the example m^t be followed until the public attention c^d be generally awakened to the subject. The objection made here was always one & the same — the most foolish objection imaginable but not the less obstinately sustained on that account. It w^d tend to leave the emancipated slaves in the country — that they w^d in time assert equality (in) /with/ the whites & an amalgamation (betw) of the two colors be induced. — An impartial spectator opens his eyes in amazement at this wonderful attachment to a pure white skin (the purity of w^{ch} the climate destroys before the age of five & twenty) to w^{ch} predilection, the morals, happiness wealth & peace & finally the very lives of (men) a whole population are to be sacrificed — The fact is too that to remove the whole colored population of the country w^d be impossible & this all

rational & reflecting men admit; — the fact is also that the amalgamation is taking place slowly but surely under the present system — This is only being effected in the most degrading & most dangerous manner. When men acquire the blood & color of their masters without acquiring their protection /or their privileges/, they sooner (feel) /conceive/ resentment /& ambition./ — So it was in St Domingo — So it has been in Louis^a (& in) where some years since a frightful insurrection was (effected) headed by a young mulatto who had been outraged in the most brutal /manner/ by his half brother, the white & legitimate son of the master. Thus has it usually been in Jamaica, & so I believe will it be sooner or later in all countries cursed with this most odious of all human atrocities.

What I do believe possible is that the 4 northern slave states — Maryland Vir^a Ken^y & Tennessee may (under a proper system & if set about in time) throw off the *great mass* of their colored population first perhaps into the territory of Texas (the yet unpeopled portion of the Mexican states, w^{ch} touches the South Western frontier of *these* states) & finally into Louisiana Florida &c, when those countries, by revolution as is most probable, or by the natural course of things shall be inhabited by a free people of color — Had I more leisure than I have or am likely to have I c^d impart circumstances w^{ch} w^d enable you to understand the condition of the South much better than I fear you can from these few & hasty remarks — I must now proceed to explain in an equally imperfect manner the plan w^{ch} has occurred /to/ me, together with the means for putting it into effect.

When I first visited Harmonie in descending the waters a vague idea crossed me that there was something in the system of united labor as there in operation w^{ch} m^t be rendered subservient to the emancipation of the South. After my enquiries in Lou^a & Mississippi had convinced me more than ever of the imperative necessity of some *immediate* remedy being applied to the evil, I revisited Harmonie, then changed to *New Harmony*. We arrived to witness the opening of the new community by Mr Owen, we found also still there a large portion of the old occupants awaiting the return of their steamboat to take them to their new settlement in the neighborhood of Pittsburgh Penn^a. — We found also with these the active head of the society, Frederick Rapp³¹ (His father may be considered now in his old age as its religious head) F Rapp is a man of the most enlarged & liberal views & possesses more practical knowledge & experience, as an American farmer & settler, & also as a practical reformer & teacher of the human species than any other individual probably existing. After considering his system & practise together with those of Mr Owen — ascertaining from the double experience of the Harmonian first in Penn^a, afterwards in Indiana (their settlement at Harmonie was a 2^d experiment) that the effects of united labor are, even in a free state (& in a *new* free state as well as an *old* free state) so greatly exceeding those of individual labor, as to injure the latter when

³¹ Frederick Rapp (1775–1834), originally Friedrich Reichert, adopted son of George Rapp (see note 34 below).

found in the neighborhood of the former, it then occurred to me that if individual labor c^d not stand in competition with united labor in a free state how much less c^d it do so within the regions of slavery.

(Having) /I had/ already ascertained that /in/ from 4 to 6 years /it/ is considered a good negro will work out his value. Four years w^d certainly suffice on our improved system — Commencing at this calculation with 100 slaves in 50 years 188,800 parents, with the children born during that period w^d be redeemed, — Two such establishments w^d shorten the term for the redemption of the same no to 29 — four such to 16 & ½ years — exceeding the whole n^o of slaves in Kentucky in the year 1820.

My belief is that two or three plantations worked on the plan of united labor (where the confidence of the parents sh^d be won by kindness to the belief that their labor was for their personal redemption the relief of their race & the practical education of their children) w^d suffice to undersell & render wholly profitless all the slave labor of the state in (this) w^{ch} they sh^d be located. Upon consulting with F Rapp I found him decidedly of the same opinion & obtained from him the ready promise of his valuable assistance. Our amiable friend George Flower ³² of Illinois who has spent a large sum of money & injured his health by his exertions in repressing kidnapping on the frontier, together with Judge Wattel ³³ of that state who has worn out his time & patience in the same way, immedly volunteered their cooperation. The former engages to supply all the stock, cattle cows sheep & pigs, to rent out all his lands under cultivation & assist in the direction of the new establishment. — A very amiable young man originally a Minister of the Universalist church & who has conducted schools on an improved system, much similar to that of Mr Owen at New-Lanark, engaged to me immedly his services as schoolmaster — Another American volunteered immedly as physician. — (Other) Valuable assistance I found c^d be obtained every where, as much & more than w^d be requisite. —

Having laid thus much of my plans in Indiana, /purchased three horses & hired a black servant in Illinois &/ set on our way to Pittsburgh We traversed part of Illinois & the whole of Indiana & found the dear Gen^l in Louisville Kentucky. We there rec^d from himself the first news of the dangerous accident w^{ch} had occurred to his steamboat on the Ohio; He had rec^d no injury nor any other individual. The boat struck & sunk about 50 miles above the place we had appointed to rejoin him. (He) He found then more pleasure in our absence than we sh^d have found ourselves had (he) /we/ known his danger. I found no favorable moment to break /to him/ the subject w^{ch} occupied me at Louisville, we parted therefore under the engagement to meet again at Pittsburgh. I employed the few days I c^d spare in (—— some) finding out some intelligent & benevolent Kentucky planters. They were startled at the novelty & apparent efficacy of the proposed scheme; decline embarking in it themselves (w^{ch} indeed their political & social relations together with old habits w^d render im-

³² George Flower (1788–1862), one of the founders of the English settlement at Albion, Illinois; he was a Trustee of Nashoba.

³³ James O. Wattles, Judge of the Fifth Circuit, Illinois, 1824–1827.

possible) but wished to see it tried. One planter from conscientious religious scruples having been long anxious to manumit his slaves engaged to surrender (them) /his/ — They amount to 15. Another wealthy planter & most amiable & sensible man will I am pretty confident give up his or throw them into a similar establishment under our guidance when we shall have fairly succeeded. Another friend in that state has engaged to procure from well-meaning citizens from 50 to 100 slaves on a long credit — say 50 dolls paid the first year, so on the 2^d or 3^d &c until their value is given & in case of their death during that period the loss to (be with) /fall on/ the original master.

(The important poss) Altho' thus far my arrangements were made /they were only conditionally so/ until I c^d obtain the consent of the beloved Gen^l to our remaining in Am: — With steady travelling (our horses making from 35 to 45 miles for 15 (—) days) we reached Pittsburg by way of Economy (where old Mr Rapp³⁴ & three intelligent & distinguished members of his society joined our party) 12 hours before the Gen^l. — We passed there three very interesting days. I had a long interview with that good angel & rec^d his permission & his blessing. We then sent our horses & servant to Economy under charge of Mr Rapp to await our return w^{ch} will be my dear loves at the very season you hope to embrace us! You will feel all (the) that the dear Gen^l feels, who passed a sleepless night after our conversation. Let me compose you however with arguments similar to those w^{ch} composed him. With him I reasoned that it is uncertain if he remain in Europe, that sh^d he do so he will be for many months engaged with friends & strangers & that we sh^d be able to expend little less than twelve months in visiting friends &c Our beloved Mrs Millar & Miss Cullen w^d claim our presence — Our mutual affection w^d not be satisfied with less than months after such a separation — This w^d equally seperate us from the dear General & from you.

Well do I know the grief that this great decision will occasion in one view of it to the two angels³⁵ in the North of Eng^d & yet I know their joy will surpass their grief — I know their generous & benevolent hearts will expand at the prospect of such misery being alleviated as that w^{ch} disgraces & ruins a large half of this glorious country. I know when I tell them that I have rec^d encouragement beyond all that I had dared to hope or imagine; that I am assured that I am perhaps the only indiv^l (who mt) (with the exception of the beloved Gen^l) who c^d enter on or carry thro such an undertaking, that those who promise their cooperation will not embark on the undertaking without my presence & assistance — they will I know rejoice that I remain.

What I have just stated requires explanation. The only real apprehension entertained by all whom I have thought it advisable to consult is (the) of danger & personal risk to the first experimenters — The ignorant white population of the South who have so long prohibited the instruction & very generally the emancipation of the slaves may attack us thro' law or thro' violence — Having

³⁴ George Rapp (1757–1847); see notes 27 and 31 above.

³⁵ See note 3 above.

carefully weighed all the possible measures of annoyance, my friends are of opinion (they cannot) /we c^d not/ well /be/ reached (on) by laws — & against violence my very sex m^t be a defence, also I am very generally known & I think I may add looked upon, as a friend by the American people. One (— —) idea has occurred to me w^{ch} (sh^d my hopes prove correct as I am encouraged to believe by personal friends of the individual they will) (will) /must/ remove almost entirely the possibility of real danger. Sh^d Gen^l Jackson³⁶ prove favorable to the scheme, his countenance w^d ensure its success. — I c^d go rou/n/d by Nashville & arrive in time at Pittsburgh — also it was necessary to consult our beloved Gen^l before counselling with the other Gen^l — I had no opportunity in Washington of conversing with Gen^l Jackson on the subject, a personal friend of his however has assured me that I shall find him *right* — We shall see.

The only other distinguished public char^r I was desirous to open my plan to was Gov^r Clinton.³⁷ The first statesman probably in the country & one the whole country seems to look to as a future President. I knew he had directed his attention to the subject of slavery & expressed his opinion well & strongly. As we heard he was travelling we feared some difficulty in finding him. The Gen^l taking the road to Boston by the New York waters he was if he met him to appoint some place & time where I m^t see him. — We took the road across Penn^a thro a most picturesque & lovely country (but I have no time to speak of that & must pass it over as I have done our western tour thro' Kentucky & the beautiful & wonderful Ohio) — Our object was first to see a part of the country we had never travelled & 2^{dy} to find F Rapp whom business had taken to Philadelphia — Also to see two or three leading philanthropists connected with emancipation societies &c. — In this city & in the very hotel we put up at we found De Witt Clinton, & just caught F Rapp before his departure for Baltimore in his way (north) /west/. This enabled me to charge him with my business in Baltimore — namely to see an efficient philanthropist there, to explain the intended experiment to him & to direct him to supply me with the names of some good planters in Tennessee. the state it seems in w^{ch} they are the most numerous & the most liberal. It is the state of Gen^l Jackson. I requested immed^{ly} an interview with Gov^r Clinton. He gave me an interrupted hour before breakfast; & having listened with great attention observed that I had given him a more correct view of the whole surface of Southern slavery than he had previously rec^d. That the plan (offered) /presented/ to his mind was so new & promised apparently in its results to influence so importantly the future destinies of a large portion of the country that he wished before giving me his opinion to weigh & digest the matter at leisure. Being about to leave Phil^a he appointed our next meeting on Saturday at Mr Colden's³⁸ in New York.

³⁶ At this time General Andrew Jackson had recently lost a presidential election to John Quincy Adams (Jackson had received more popular and electoral votes than Adams, but it was a four-man race, decided by the House of Representatives). Jackson became President in 1829.

³⁷ DeWitt Clinton (1769-1828) was Governor of New York, 1817-23 and 1825-28.

³⁸ Cadwallader David Colden (1769-1834) was Mayor of New York City, 1818-20, and Member of Congress, 1821-23; he was a Trustee of Nashoba.

But as his time & mine then promised to be short (we shall only be that day in New York on our way to Boston) (we) /he/ arranged to (meet) /see me/ again (at) /in/ Albany, in our return westward by the "New York" waters in August. Our route now lies therefore my loved friends — tomorrow to New York from thence /thro' Connecticut/ to Boston (thro Connecticut) where we have promised to meet the dear Gen^l on the 16th inst: round by Albany (where we shall make a short visit to the Henry's) to New York by the 4th July again to see the dear Gen^l & pass three weeks with the Wilkes' ⁸⁰ & Coldens.

The Gen^l then will pay his farewell visit to Mr Jefferson & Madison, we shall want to embrace him on his return & then instead of returning to you my loved friends must turn our faces westward in the first days of August. We shall see Gov^t Clinton in Albany go from thence to Pittsburg leave our luggage there or at Economy find there an Illinois /friend/ who will come to meet us & our horses, w^{ch} which convey us to Gen^l Jackson's residence near Nashville Tennessee. Sh^d he prove favourable our location will be in a great measure decided.

F Rapp who knows the whole of Kentucky & Tennessee, thinks we can find no public lands in the latter /so/ (unless Gen^l Jackson supply them) we shall probably cross the Alabama line & examine a country reported to be fine & healthy & where Gen^l Jackson has (we are informed) also property. There are reasons for & against every state — The best for the experiment w^d be Mississippi or Lou^a — But climate puts this out of the question. F Rapp will explore for the location — I cannot tell you the for & against of every state — I refer you respecting Vir^a to my remarks respecting the slave states. In Kentucky I have friends & we m^t probably find a good situation — but there the whole political machine is so disorganized that it m^t overwhelm us immed^{ly}. — A perfect mob being at the head of affairs.

From all I understand Tennessee is the best slave state in the Union & the north of Alabama may be considered as under its influence. We have calculated that with the assistance of live stock furnished by G Flower together with corn &c for the first year four thousand pounds sterling will purchase sufficient land (& /together with/ slaves on the terms above mentioned) & cover all the first expenses (of) /for/ a sufficient farm (we shall banish the word plantation)

Here is a most imperfect sketch of our plans, — & a far more imperfect account of all the information procured — I have thought talked, listened, more than I c^d tell or you imagine before I came to the result here given.

Let me now turn to a subject in w^{ch} all our hearts are interested — our future meeting. Next spring twelvemonth I shall I trust visit Europe — visit the loved (Children) /General/ & our loved mothers — Sh^d we before that have our establishment safely under weigh, you m^t perhaps come to us the preceding autumn; but if not I w^d then fetch you. We have already sketched out a place of life & occupations for you all. — Dear Sarah Bayley ⁴⁰ will accompany you — see our

⁸⁰ For Charles Wilkes, see note 13 above.

⁴⁰ Sarah Bayley's name recurs throughout the Garnett correspondence. She appears first as "Miss Baillie" in a letter of Robina Craig Millar, 21 December 1825; and as "Sarah Baillie" in a letter of Robina Craig Millar, 2 June 1827. Lafayette refers to her (31 December 1825) as "Miss Bailey," and (14 June 1827) as "Miss Bayley."

experiment & our *country* & — who knows? — The beloved Gen^l there is the affliction and yet for him & for us I believe the great object intervenes fortunately to prevent our return to France. I have never written & sh^d probably never have told you (as I never shall him) all that we have seen at work secretly in the mind of George.⁴¹ What he is the others we know are more. We have long foreseen that they will ever be between us & our revered friend. To leave *him* on *their* account I never could & yet to stay w^d make us wretched & him with all our care not happy — I cannot explain but you will conceive. This great object the only one w^{ch} e^d ever have brought his generous & tender nature to bear a separation renders it possible without giving pain or producing embarrassment.

I have given more time to this letter than I e^d have thought possible to find — I had intended for you & Mrs Millar, but its form must prevent its conveyance by post! Cam will therefore copy it to her tomorrow in the steamboat. It will find you returned from Eng^d with dear Sarah Bayley expecting our arrival. I must not think of this! Heaven bless you all & unite us soon! I will write again from Boston.

The sum I have fixed as that to be employed for our purchase I shall draw out of the New Orleans bank. I wrote to you on that subject & recommended y^r sale. I shall consult Mr Wilkes respecting an investment for y^r money. I wrote that you e^d sell now with a gain of 14 pr cent.

I trust the long letter I wrote on the Mississippi will reach safely. It is important that our proposed experiment sh^d remain for some time as secret as possible that the south may not rise against it before it is set going. I make known my object for remaining in this country only to those who can promote it, or to my more intimate friends such as Mr Wilkes to whom I have yet every thing to communicate. I have said that we go to Nashville from Economy (we shall leave the latter place in the first week of Sept^r — After that important visit we shall strike North again to Indiana, & await in Harmony the arrival of F Rapp who cannot join us before Nov^r. — Sh^d my interview with Gen^l Jackson have been favourable (we) I shall then return with F Rapp & Mr Flower to Tennessee, or otherwise bend our course according to circumstances — But of all this you shall hear in season. I do not nor w^d time permit me to explain our intentions or wishes respecting the future disposal of the people it is our object to redeem — I have said enough for the present & we have enough in view for the present.

I must leave you dear loves. At some future time I will speak to you of all we have seen of good & evil in the west — of my rides thro' the forests of Indiana after kidnappers, of the cruel scene I witnessed — of my unsuccessful efforts to recover a poor black boy whom I recovered for one moment to lose

She was a lifelong friend of the Garnetts, the last reference to her being in a letter from Harriet Garnett in 1844; her brother Robert was the Garnetts' lawyer. She announced his death to the Garnetts in a letter, probably written in 1851, which is included in the collection.

⁴¹ George Washington Motier de la Fayette (1779-1849), eldest son of Lafayette; cf. note 16 above.

him again — If you knew all the horrors connected with southern slavery — the extent of its demoralizing influence along the western frontier — the ruin with w^{ch} it threatens this country — its sin its suffering, its disgrace — you w^d rejoice dear loves in our loss since I do think it promises fair to pave the way for the destruction of this monster. Dear [] will be with you — she will share I know & soothe y^r []ment. Heaven bless you all & unite us soon!

F. W.

I say in general the truth but not all the truth — I stay in this country for a twelvemonth to see more of the west, to revisit Mr Owen's Society & to make other promised visits. You may state this also. Were it not for Capt K⁴² I w^d beg you to communicate this letter to Mrs Trollope⁴³ you will judge if that dear but infatuated friend (may be) can keep a secret from him. It is important for the success of our scheme that it be as little known as possible for the first twelvemonth. In the Southern states people know little of what passes beyond the fences of their own plantations. Sh^d my plan or object be known too much here or in London it w^d get into the newspapers; & the flame run from V^a to Georgia, from Kentucky to Loui^a —

I must speak another time of Mr Owen. He is working miracles & promises fair to revolutionize a 2^d time the North as I pray we may do the South. — I shall claim my citizenship in New York on my return from Boston. The 5 probationary years are expired. — How fortunate now I declared my intention as required by law! I find it is by no means necessary to have remained in the country during that period. — Since we left Washington in March we have travelled 5,000 miles & upwards. We have still half that (same) distance to make by the close of the autumn — Dear loves how I wish I c^d take Havre on the way! But when I think of you all my courage fails. I must *not* think of you. — But how arrive at that forgetfulness? —

Farewel fondly fondly — F W.

New York June 11th.

Mr Wilkes can place y^r money at 6 pr ct in a mortgage on lands here. — Send therefore immedi^{ly} Julia a power of attorney in y^r name to Mr Nolti⁴⁴ for sale of y^r stock in the *Louisiana State Bank*. Apply to the American Consul — Direct Mr Nolti to direct the money to Mr Wilkes who can let you have any you may want of it & vest the remainder at 6 pr cent.—

After the receipt of this dear loves direct to Mr Wilkes care, write on single sheet write on single sheet large paper & send no enclosures until we can make other arrangements for y^r letters coming thro' Washington w^{ch} I shall be able to do so soon as we are *fixed*. — Your letters for some time will probably have to follow us from place to place thro' the western country where the mail is irregular.

Would to Heaven my loved friends I c^d add aught to this letter to soothe

⁴² Henry Kater (1777–1835); see *Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁴³ For Mrs. Trollope, see note 21 above.

⁴⁴ Vincent Otto Nolte: see note 26 above.

the bitter feelings of disappointed hopes w^{ch} I (knew) know too well will so cruelly wring your hearts, but when you reflect on the great & important object w^{ch} detains /us here/ you will I feel persuaded rejoice with me in the new & glorious career thus opened to our heroic Fanny by the energy of her own powerful intellect & indefatigable mind, & if you could foresee in it as I do (in the event of succeeding in our object) the certain prospect of our being reunited & that in a manner far more desirable than ever c^d have been effected by a residence in Europe you w^d so far from lamenting our temporary separation hail it as a harbinger of future good & happiness /to us all/ — I have not time or space fully to explain my meaning but will take an early opportunity of doing so on our return from N. England where I cannot hope to find the leisure requisite for that purpose — I am at present busily engaged in copying the above interesting details to send to our beloved Mrs Millar who is at this moment as little prepared as yourselves for such a sudden and unforeseen change in our present plans & future prospects — for my part I am so delighted with the western woods that the idea of quitting them forever w^d have been inexpressibly painful to me & sh^d all my hopes regarding this interesting this important experiment be realized I shall indeed bless the hour that we first crossed the Alleghany mountains! —

Oh my loved Julia & Harriet that I c^d have but one hours conversation with you for I know you w^d think & feel as I do, but alas! I cannot (——) save you the cruel blow of learning our protracted separation at the very moment you expected to fold us to your hearts, & the thought dear loves has often made us lament the train of circumstances w^{ch} prevented the possibility of our (——) gradually preparing you for (the) /a/ result w^{ch} six weeks ago had not occurred to our own minds —

You will I know rejoice in the midst of your sorrow to learn that our 600 miles ride on horse back has entirely restored Fanny's health & in a great measure her strength & the heat w^{ch} appears to oppress & overpower every one else imparts to her new life & energy — But I must bid you Adieu for the present my dearly loved Julia & Harriet intreating you as you love me to moderate your sorrow nor think unkindly of friends whose hearts bleed at this moment at the thought of paining yours — dear (Sah) Sarah Bayley how painfully do I think also of her disappointment but it is some comfort to me that she will be with you at the moment these unlooked for tidings (will) reach you for while she shares she will also soothe your sorrow — Heaven bless you my loved friends & believe ever in the fond affection of your tenderly attached friend & sister

Camilla

In the letter I sent you from N. Orleans I believe I mentioned Mr Owen's property at Harmony as consisting of but 5000 acres in place of 35 thousand 3 thousand of w^{ch} are in a state of cultivation I think it necessary to rectify this absurd mistake of mine as I know a great portion of the English public will take a great interest /in his/ prospects & Proceedings here —

The next letter, unsigned, but in the hand of Camilla Wright, is dated "New York July 9th [1825]." It is printed here in full:

When I tell my Julia & Harriet that I have but very lately risen from a bed of sickness & suffering they will no longer wonder or murmur at my silence and will believe that no other cause could have made me fail in my promise of imparting to them as speedily as possible my views & feelings respecting our future plans — but I must first speak of our visit to Boston where the dear Gen^l had set his heart on our arriving in time to witness the great show of the 17th — this we effected & I (can) /shall/ only say respecting it that the military parade (was) /was/ brilliant the crowd immense M^r Webster's oration⁴⁵ w^h we heard distinctly by no means equal to my expectations at least he did not produce in me at any one moment (that) /those/ thrilling sensations which true eloquence never fails to excite, nor c^d he (as a yet farther criterion of his powers) render me for an instant insensible to the severe pain I was at the time enduring *from a boil in my back* w^{ch} I had foolishly regarded as too trifling an evil to keep me at home on such an occasion, till the irritation produced by the crowd & heat rendered my sufferings almost insupportable & convinced me when too late of my error & you will marvel to learn that for the space of a fortnight I never left my bed & so great was the inflammation that the application of 24 leeches failed to give me relief & for five nights I got no rest save through the means of opium — The physician who attended me with unremitting care pronounced it the worst of the kind he had ever seen, *approaching* somewhat to the *caruncle* — he had no doubt it was occasioned by the pressure of my corset bone during our long ride on horse-back in the western country —

In this way I of course saw nothing of the Boston society & I c^d only prevail on my Fanny to go to two of the numerous parties to w^h we were invited nor w^d she have consented thus much had not our loved friend Nancy Vail⁴⁶ been present to take her place as sick nurse — this sweet girl we most unexpectedly met in N York on her way to Providence (N.England) there to pass the summer with her relations Gen^l Thomas⁴⁷ & his niece — They at once proposed our joining parties to Boston where owing to the immense flux of strangers we with difficulty procured lodgings in the same house — Gen^l Thomas & niece being obliged to return home, (with) /where/ they expected visitors our dear Nancy w^d not consent to leave us & her tender care & constant efforts by her lively & entertaining conversation to divert my mind during my severe sufferings have forever endeared her to my heart — you will remember (of) our speaking of this interesting family as our chief favourites in Washington — As soon as I was able to bear the motion of a carriage we (—) returned by short stages to Providence where we were most kindly rec^d by the good Gen^l Thomas & his pretty niece & during the five days we passed under their hospitable roof my strength was sufficiently recruited to enable us to return to this city (—) /some/ days ago but three weeks have not sufficed to heal the wound in my back w^h is still a

⁴⁵ For the text of Daniel Webster's "Address at the Laying of the Corner-stone of the Bunker Hill Monument," see his *Writings and Speeches* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1903), I, 235-254.

⁴⁶ Possibly one of the daughters of Aaron Vail, whose family lived in Washington after his death in 1815.

⁴⁷ David Thomas (1762-1831); see *Dictionary of American Biography*.

running sore w^h I endeavour to bear with patience as it no longer gives me pain & I am persuaded prevents me having others of the same kind — but enough of my back w^h sh^d not have been thus long fixed on your attention were it not to explain the cause of my silence —

And now my loved friends let me thank you for the dear & pleasing letters (your first from Eng^d) w^h we found awaiting us here — I am delighted your visits to our mutually dear friends have been so agreeable & how consoling is the reflection that *we* have /on this occasion dear Julia/ cast no alloy into your cup of pleasure for the cruel disappointment w^h our last is to inflict on your affectionate heart will find you returned to Havre where I learn from your mother's letter rec^d yesterday (&) for w^h I beg my warmest thanks) you will not return till the middle or end of the present month. In the first bitterness of (your) /their/ sorrow my beloved sisters will perhaps exclaim; "they might at least have announced in person & explained otherwise than by letter the plans that are to part us for another twelvemonth" — to this I can reply that the loss of a twelvemonth w^h such a measure (w^d) /must/ have occasioned, w^d have rendered our scheme from a thousand reasons *forever* impracticable; one of w^h will suffice to convince /you/ of this truth; it is that all the persons who have volunteered their services & who are at present free agents w^d by that time /necessarily/ have engaged in other pursuits not to mention the too probable abatement of that ardor & enthusiasm for the cause w^h Fanny's eloquence has so powerfully excited in their astonished minds — I know too well your generous & feeling hearts to suppose for a moment that you w^d ultimately regret our engaging in a scheme w^h promises to bring relief to thousands of oppressed & suffering (beings) human beings but I pretend that you shall see in it as *I do* a prospect of future happiness to yourselves such as (you) /we/ mg^t not otherwise have known for many years — and first let us suppose (no such (idea) /plan/ having occurred to our minds) our return to Europe, the joy of our first meeting over, what w^d have been our prospects for the future? - - a life of constraint & endless solitude; from w^h we sh^d have occasionally sought relief by a *visit* to those who c^d not in return make *our home* theirs — unless you had witnessed as we have done the many proofs of the encreasing influence of certain persons over the mind of him for whose dear sake we have resolved to make every sacrifice, you cannot understand the change that has taken place in Fanny's mind & feelings, for as to my own they are the same as they have ever been — suffice it, that she now acknowledges that to return to L.G.⁴⁶ — as to a *home* w^d be a sacrifice to w^h she is no longer equal & w^h circumstances no longer require her to make — I w^d /not/ hereby infer any reproach to our venerated friend, he is himself too guileless to suspect duplicity in others — Unfortunately the last to perceive that the advance of years as gradually bedims the mental vision as it does that of the external — you will appreciate the motives that have induced us to soften the bitterness of parting by speaking of our stay here as temporary that is only so long as our presence shall be necessary

"La Grange, the country seat of Lafayette, near Rosnay, Seine-et-Marne.

for the formation of the establishment, & you know how readily he believes what he hopes! — But in the event of our plan succeeding of w^h I entertain not the slightest doubt so far from our presence being (no longer necessary) /thereby rendered unnecessary/ it becomes doubly /so/, as in the *extension* of the plan *ad infinitum* lies our dearest hopes — in a twelvemonth from the time of our commencing our operations this fact will be ascertained & then it is, *but not till then* that you my loved friends may & I trust with advantage to /your/ *real interests*, come & join us in our *American home* — Till we shall have a cabin to (co) shelter us from the storm we cannot offer to share it with our friends but the thought of then meeting to be parted only by the irresistible fiat of our destiny as mortals, will I trust help to reconcile you to this painful interval — This is a hope w^h we cannot extend to our loved Mrs Millar & Miss Cullen, their age & state of health alike prevent the possibility of a change of country & of climate & if we meet once again on this side the grave it will be a meeting so fraught with sadness it were perhaps better it sh^d never take place — it is such reflections as these that come to darken the otherwise (——) /cheering/ prospect before us, (——) /yet/ you must not imagine my loved friends we have entered on these schemes from a momentary feeling of enthusiasm without well weighing the difficulties with w^{ch} we shall have to contend (——) /while I may/ tell you that not one of those persons whose opinion Fanny has thought of sufficient importan(t)/ce/ to consult, but have pronounced the scheme []ically new & important & entertain not the slightest doubt of our ultimate & permanent success.

(*To be concluded*)

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