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THE AARON BURR EXPEDITION

**LETTERS
TO
EPHRAIM BROWN
FROM
SILAS BROWN
1805-1815**

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COPY 1978

These letters of Silas Brown, Cousin of our Grandfather Brown, were found by Aunt Elizabeth and Aunt Anne about twenty-five years ago among Grandfather's papers. They were shown to many of the family, and later were given to me. I had typewritten copies made then, as the original letters were very brittle. After Aunt Elizabeth's death, Aunt Anne asked for them, with the understanding that they were to be returned to me later. This was done last Fall, and in January last I submitted the typewritten copy to Mr. Gaillard Hunt, Chief of the Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington. I did this feeling they were of National importance, not State. After reading them, Mr. Hunt wrote me twice, asking that they be left in the custody of the Library, and expressing his feeling as to the historical and geographical value of these letters. Mr. Hunt's letters were unfortunately burned. After reaching home I sent the original Silas Brown letters to Mr. Hunt, receiving from him the following letter acknowledging them:

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, }
MANUSCRIPT DIVISION. }
Washington, May 28, 1915. }

My Dear Mrs. Harter:

I have directed that the copies of the Silas Brown Letters be sent to you, and that a regular acknowledgment be made for the originals, which have arrived safe and sound, and are to be a deposit, subject to recall at your pleasure.

I assure you that the Library appreciates very highly your generosity, and its usefulness to historical writers will be apparent as soon as the papers come to be used.

I shall hope to see you again next season, and am,

Very Sincerely Yours,

GAILLARD HUNT.

I hold also the following paper:

[No. 168]

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, }
Washington, D. C., June 2, 1915. }

The Library of Congress has received some sixteen letters of Silas Brown—1805-1817, from Mrs. Michael D. Harter, 381 Park Avenue West, Mansfield, Ohio, for deposit under the following conditions: "Loan, subject to recall at the pleasure of Mrs. Harter."

(Signed) HERBERT PUTNAM,

Librarian of Congress.

By FRED. W. ASHLEY,

Chief Order Division.

These papers I shall preserve with care, and I trust you may enjoy going back into the past of our common ancestors as much as I have.

To Ephraim Brown, Jun., Esq.,
Westmoreland, N. H.

Keene, May 3rd, 1805.

Dear Sir :

As I have a number of things to attend to next week, and considering the expense of going to Boston more than the profit, I have thought best not to be at the expense of hiring a horse for that purpose. If I can carry all my plans into effect, I shall expect to be concerned in Business at Westmoreland with you as we agreed when I saw you last. Nothing new in particular. I am Sir, with Regard,

Your humble Servant,

Silas Brown, Jun.

—:o:—

Mr. Brown,

Albany, 15th July, 1805.

Sir :

I arrived in this City on Friday last and shall tarry here 15 or 20 Days, and perhaps longer. I should be extremely happy to inform you what I shall do respecting Business, but I declare to you, I do not at present know myself—But from what Encouragement I have had from a Gentleman in Schenectady, I am induced to believe that it will be more to my Interest to continue this side of the Green Mountains than to go to New Hampshire or Vermont.

Were it as much for my Interest to go to Wadsboro as to stay this side the Hudson River, I would with the greatest pleasure take hold with Capt. Stevens in that place ; but I am sensible here is a much greater Field for Speculation than in any part of New England with which we have ever been acquainted.

I do not expect to be positively engaged in Business, short of 3 or 4 weeks ; therefore it is my earnest Desire that you write me directly to this place, pr. first mail after this comes to hand. Do not understand me that I am determined not to go to Vermont: I wish to convince myself where I can do best, in this line of Business. On this account, I cannot give you a direct Answer in this Letter.

Do not forget to write and mention where my Father is, and what he is doing. With Sentiments of Esteem,

I am, Sir, your humble Servant,

Silas Brown, Jun.

N. B. Compliments to Capt. Stevens.

Note—Letter mailed at Albany, postage on same being 12½ cents and went to Walpole P. O.

Onandaga, 20th April, 1806.

Dear Sir :

I have omitted writing until a late period, but I hope you will excuse my negligence a second time. Since I have been in this Country, I have been employed as a Clerk at 20 Dollars pr. month and expect to continue so, until some opportunity more favorable offers for Business. I am now doing better than I have ever been before in any place whatever. But as I was so unfortunate about getting into Business last year, besides being to a great expense in going from one place to another, I assure you it drives me into pretty close Corners.

On this account I wish to ask the favor of you not to call for the money on the Note I gave you last May, until Sept.r or Oct.r next. Yet I am sensible that the Land will be forfeited provided the money is not paid, when the Note is out—but if you can comply with this request and write me on the Subject I shall trust to your honor and rest as safe as if it were in writing. If you will put it off till the first Oct.r next, I will pay any pr. Ct. which you shall say under twenty from time the note becomes Due until the above money mentioned time. If you can do this it will greatly oblige me, and will be much more to my interest than perhaps what you know. I thought best not to fetch the Bond with me, therefore left it with John Robbins. If you comply with the request herein made, I wish you to let Mr. Robbins know it immediately after this comes to hand, that he need not be to the trouble to raise the money at the Bank. Uncle Aaron passed by here about seven weeks since, on his way to the Gennessee Country. I saw a man a few days since who told me that he had bought two Lots, excellent Land, in the same town where he lived. Please write me without delay.

Sir, I am with Esteem,

Yours etc.,

Silas Brown, Jun.

Mailed at Moulins April 22 by way of Northampton and Brattleboro P. O. in Putney. Postage 17 cents.

(State of Pennsylvania.)

Beaver, Wednesday evening, Octr. 1, 1806.

Dear Sir :

I arrived in Pittsburg from Onandaga the 6th Septr., last, and have since been to the north part of the State of Ohio and New Connecticut, and returned back to this place, which is 30 miles down the Ohio River from its head. I shall leave this Town soon for Marietta—200 miles from this place—from there I shall proceed to the Southward 2 or 300 miles and perhaps further.

From the tenor of a Letter directed to my Father, dated at Onandaga in Aug. last, you must have been apprised of the Business I was then about to undertake antecedent to the Date of this Letter, as I requested him to communicate my intentions contained in that Letter, immediately after it came to hand. It is no small mortification to me that I could not return and settle my Affairs in New England before I engaged in this Expedition. But had I done that, this Opportunity must have escaped, which never could be obtained hereafter. Until about 20 Days previous to my Departure from the State of New York, I had not the least Idea of going to the Southwest nor of leaving that State—I had made Arrangements to be in Keene in the Course of this Fall, and of seeing you and several others with whom I am concerned. You will see by the Letter I wrote my Father, what my wishes were, respecting my Business with you—It is not my wish that you should be Injured by my Absence, one cent—have therefore requested him to disclose the whole Business to you, and hope it is completed before this time. If not, please to call on him for the perusal of the Letter and let the Business be done without reserve.

I am sensible that I shall not escape without censure from almost every person in New Hampshire with whom I am acquainted, for engaging in the Pursuit now before me. This will undoubtedly lead to an inquiry what this pursuit is, and what my intentions are for going into the Southern States. All I can say is this: there are several Gentlemen in Company with me from the State of New York who are concerned in making a Settlement on a large tract of Land down the Ohio at a certain place which at present I must not mention. But this is not altogether the Object with me—a disclosure of any further Business will be imprudent at this time. Respecting my concerns in New England I have left property enough

to settle all if rightly managed. The property is mentioned in the Letter to my Father. I do not expect to return short of two or three years, and I flatter myself that you possess a spirit of Friendship enough to pay some Attention to the request made in that Letter, and not let my property be sacrificed in my absence. Should anything transpire in my Affairs that might invite your Attention, I hope you will attend to the Business, for which you shall receive a handsome Compensation for your trouble. I have not heard from the old Gentleman this long time. I wish to hear from him and my Brother Aaron at Boston. I shall consider it as a great favor if you will be so good as to write me directed to Marietta, as soon as this comes to hand, respecting them both and also every circumstance relative to my Business as before stated. This request granted will be extremely satisfactory, and confer a Favor on one who is your social Friend.

Perhaps it would be entertaining to give you a general Description of the Country I have seen, together with the customs and manners of the people; but this would require several sheets, and therefore must be omitted on paper by mail. I will however mention some few particulars.

The northern part of New Connecticut as far as I have seen is 106 miles N. N. W. of Pittsburg, and from best information about 100 S. W. of Presque Isle, and 200 miles in the same Direction from the Falls of Niagara. The Country, generally speaking, is very healthy, it being elevated much higher than that of the Genesee, and yet it is equally as level. The inhabitants are principally New Englanders and emigrants from the southern States.

The people are under the Government of the State of Ohio; and if we give Credit for the Disadvantages in new Countries, I must say that according to the best of my Judgment, they are the best informed people of any in the United States.

Pittsburg is a place of much Business considering the size of the Town—the merchant Goods are all brought by land 310 miles from Philadelphia. Merchants in Lexington in the State of Kentucky are supplied with goods from Pittsburg freighted down the Ohio River. Goods are sold here at a most enormous price, excepting what are manufactured in the Country, such as Glass, Bar Iron, Furnaceware, Whisky, etc.

Pittsburg stands on a point of land formed by the Junction of the Allegany and Monongahela Rivers, and head

of the Ohio. It contains four hundred dwelling houses and about 2500 inhabitants. There are 40 public houses and 70 or 80 stores. The public Buildings are four houses of public worship, a Market, a Courthouse and Goal. Shipping is built here, and sent down the Ohio of 400 tons burthen. As for anything more, it must be omitted until I write again.

With sentiments of Esteem, I am, Sir,

Your very Humb. Servt.,

Silas Brown, Jun.

N. B. Do not fail to write me as before requested, for I am very anxious to hear from my Father's Family as well as my own Business. You will hear from me again by Letter in the course of next summer. Present my compliments to your Father and his Family respectively. In excellent health.

Yours, etc.,

S. Brown.

NOTE—Mailed in Pittsburg, October 7th, postage on same being twenty-five cents. Sent by way of Philadelphia and New York.

Note on Outside—The Postmaster at Putney is requested to forward this Letter to Westmoreland the first "favorable opportunity."

—:o—

Natchez, March 7th, 1807.

Dear Cousin :

After a long and tedious passage of nearly 2000 miles through the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers I arrived in this City the 7th Febry. last. I left Beavertown (Penn.) the 5th day Dec. in company with 32 men and 4 Boats, bound for this Port, of which Col. Tyler of the State of New York had the command; and notwithstanding all the Virginia mobs and military forces of the State of Ohio, we have with much fatigue and difficulty made our way through.

Surely nothing has transpired within the limits of the United States since the American Revolution, which more justly deserves a place in history, than incidents which have occurred relative to the views and plans of Col. Burr. A full Journal of our voyage from Pittsburg to this place, would I presume be interesting and pleasing; but this would require tens of pages, and would be too expensive to communicate by mail; I will, however, mention some particulars.

December 11th I went from Marietta, 6 miles up the

Muskingum River, to give orders for 14 or 15 Boats belonging to Mr. Blennerhassett, a Gentleman of Virginia, to go down the River that day to his Plantation, 13 miles below Marietta on the Ohio River. I returned to Marietta the same day and found the militia assembling for the purpose of seizing these Boats on their arrival at the mouth of the Muskingum. The Artillery was placed in the front of the town on the Western Bank of the Ohio; and a keel-Boat with 10 or 12 well armed men sent one mile up the Muskingum, to take possession of the before-mentioned boats. By nine in the evening 11 boats were completely in possession of the militia; and I was informed that if I tarried in the town that night, I certainly should be arrested on suspicion of being one of Burr's conspirators. This was between nine and ten in the evening. I then called for my horse, crossed the Muskingum, and rode 13 miles down the Ohio, to Blennerhassett's Island where our boats lay. But how shall I express my feelings on my arrival? At a silent hour of a gloomy night we must risk our lives and property on the waters of the Ohio, where nothing is heard but the hooting of Owls, the howling of Wolves, and the whoop of the Savage, on our right and our left; not to flee from the hand of Justice, but to escape the hands of infamous Ruffians, Kenhaway Mobs and Robbers. And what added grief to the Scene, was to see a tender husband, (Mr. Blennerhasset), an affectionate Father and loving master followed to the River by his nearest relatives and friends, flying for a place of Reffuge from a wicked Banditti, and a prejudiced and unreserved Government of one State which had issued a State warrant to arrest and confine him in prison in case he did not find Bail in a sum of \$50,000 for his appearance at the next Federal Court of the United States. Here Nature at midnight hour, called on us to mingle a tear with the departing friend. The Legislature of the State of Ohio, now sitting, spared no pains or expense to prevent our descending the river. The militia was called out and Guards placed on different points of the Ohio, viz, one at Marietta, one at Gallapolis, and one at Cincinnati—the two latter we passed unobserved. We arrived at the Falls of Ohio the 16th Dec. and put to shore a few minutes at Jeffersonville, but soon found it was better for us to be on water than on land. We immediately sought for pilots to conduct our Boats over the Falls; but to our astonishment we accidentally heard that the pilots were bribed, not to conduct us over. Happy was it

for us, some of our men were excellent watermen, and had passed these Falls several times. Thus we pushed off and run the Falls in ten minutes, which are two miles in length. We arrived at the mouth of Cumberland River, in the State of Kentucky, Dec. 27th, at which place was Colonel Burr. The next day we set sail with 11 boats and about 100 men, and arrived at New Madrid in upper Louisiana Jan'y 1st. We tarried a few hours, then left the place, and descended the Mississippi about 600 miles to Bayou Pierre. On our arrival we found there was so much opposition to Burr's Expedition that we knew it impossible for us to proceed until an investigation took place, and Col. Burr should be discharged by the Civil and Military Authorities of these Territories. Accordingly he went forward without hesitation, was conducted to Washington, the seat of Government of the Mississippi Territory, with military honor, was accused of high crimes and misdemeanors, tried by the Supreme Court, but the Jury did not find a bill against him.

Col. Burr then requested the Court to give him a discharge on his recognizance ; but to this request the Court objected. He then wished the Court to grant him the liberty to return to his boat ; this request the Court granted, with the promise that he would return back to Washington the next day. On his arrival at the boats he assured us that he should not return to Washington but was going some other direction. It is reported here and generally believed, that he has since been taken at Fort Chambers, when on his way to Pensacola in West Florida, and is now sent to the city of Washington. Soon after our arrival here we were all arrested by the militia, were conducted to a convenient place in the city, a guard placed over us, and informed that the Governor of this Territory would wait on us the next day for an investigation to take place.

Our boats in the Mississippi were seized, placed under an armed force and no man permitted to pass or repass.

The next day Feb'y 11th, Gov. Williams and Col. Claiborne came to our quarters, informed us the cause of our imprisonment, which was being confederate with Col. Burr. The Governor then took a small Billet from his pocket which was found with a negro Boy in the cape of his coat said to be the handwriting of Col. Burr—the following is a true copy :

“ If you are together, keep together, and I will join you,

" tomorrow night ; in the meantime put All your arms in perfect order. Ask the bearer no questions, but tell him all you may think I wish to know.....he does not know that this is from me nor where I am."
" C. T. & D. F." " Feb. 9th."

The original of the above note very much resembles the handwriting of Col. Burr ; but I believe he never wrote any such thing, nor was knowing to its being written. We were examined, the Governor, Col. Claiborne and others went to the River and searched our Boats.....They returned in a few hours,.....the guards were discharged and Col. Claiborne said that he was happy that no military stores were found in our possession, that we were no longer prisoners, but might take our property and dispose of it as we pleased. I approve of every lawful measure, both civil and military, that has been taken to investigate the plans of Aaron Burr. I recommend the conduct of the Governor of this Territory, at this critical time, and believe that whatever steps, relative to Burr's expedition, he has pursued were for the love he bears to his Country and the attachment he possesses to the Constitution and Laws of the United States. But what shall I say of Gov. Tiffin, of the State of Ohio (formerly a Methodist preacher) and several other characters in that part of the Country ? Here prudence bids me stop—I will write nothing about them—I can write no good.

Altho' Mr. Jefferson in his message of Jan'y 22nd, 1807, has given us the title of fugitives, I believe Col. Burr and all of his associates (Wilkinson excepted) to be as friendly to the Government of the United States as Mr. Jefferson ever was, or ever will be. Why did Mr. Jefferson neglect to issue a proclamation till late in the Fall, when he was receiving communications almost every day during the whole Fall ? Look at Eton's deposition !!! Why did he not publish the conversation that took place between him and Col. Burr, at the City of Washington, at the time such conversation took place, which by his own words it can be proved he neglected upwards of one year. Look at the conduct of Wilkinson at New Orleans, the arrests of Messrs. Bollman, Swartout, Ogden, etc., etc., by him and much more which I shall omit to mention. When we reflect on such management, what are we led to believe ? Does not every circumstance relative to the foregoing, statements, prove that Burr's accusers were as well acquainted with the expedition in the West, as Burr himself ?

Whatever Col. Burr's plans were, I believe Wilkinson to be the first instigator of, and guilty of every shameful intrigue and abuse, and far blacker crimes than Col. Burr or any other man in America whatever. I give this only as my opinion respecting the character of Wilkinson. Respecting my opinion of Col. Burr I refer you to a letter sent my father by mail from this place.

Sir, I am,

Sincerely yours, with sentiments of Rgard and Esteem,

Silas Brown.

Note—Postage on this letter was 34 cents. It reached New York June 11th.

—:0:—

Hamochitto (Miss. Territory), Sept. 10th, 1807.

Ephraim Brown, Esq.,

Dear Sir :

Placed in a distant Country as I am among Strangers, nearly two thousand miles from relatives and acquaintances, and not having had the least information respecting them since June, 1806, a Letter from any of them would be received with Gratitude and my Anxieties greatly relieved at this time. I wrote you from Natchez the 7th March last, by a Major Smith of the State of New York, who sailed from New Orleans for Baltimore about the 10th of May, and requested him to forward the letter by mail, on his arrival at New York, which I think would not be later than the 15th of June. I wrote my Father from Natchez by mail the 19th of March ; also wrote him again by mail the 29th June, the latter of which I took the liberty to direct to your care. If the two former Letters arrived at the Post Office in Putney seasonably, the time has expired that I ought to have received answers to those letters. Letters will not be more than 45 days coming from you to me, provided they come regularly by mail as they ought. But there are so many failures in the northern mail, it is useless to calculate on any particular time of receiving letters or papers from any of the States.

When I was about to engage in an Expedition to the South, I hastened to make it known to you through my father by a Letter, sent him, from Onandaga in the State of New York, which you may have seen. I pointed out explicitly how to dispose of the property left in his hands, also the Land at

Mountholly, and requested him to beg your assistance in the Business.

I have some times looked back with the deepest regret and greatest mortification, that instead of concerning myself in an Enterprise, the events of which were unknown, I did not return from Onandaga to New England, which woule have proved a Barrier against censure from all my Friends and Acquaintances. It is an unfortuuate circumstance that I came to this Country with Col. Burr. In the Expedition I have lost nearly 500 dollars, \$150 of which was cash in hand. As Burr was looked upon as a tyrant, a traitor and murderer, I am exposed to, and do meet with the frowns and cool treatment of some of the inhabitants of this Terrtory, merely because they say I am a Burrrite and ought not to be encouraged in the Country.

To particularize and attempt to point out the several reasons for my being led so far into the late Expedition, would swell this Letter to a number of Sheets and make it too tedious. Let it suffice for me to say that if ever I should have the good fortune to visit the Northern States, I can then state to you every particular so far as it relates to my concern in the Enterprise, the inducements that led me to this Country, the misfortunes and remorse under which I have struggled by ambitious pursuits, all which will remain fresh in my memory till the latest period of my age.

I do not calculate to be in New England in a less term than three or four years, if I can live in this hot Climate. The Climate is very much against the northern people, during two three of the first years. Scarcely any can escape what the inhabitants here call a seasoning to the Country—I have not escaped myself. The 7th July the fever attacked me and was so severe that it disqualified me for any kind of Business till the First of September. This sickness has been violent, and reduced me to a very low state of health—however I have so far recovered that I can now attend to Business without much difficulty.

I think much of this Country as a Country for making property. There certainly is a field open in Louisiana for speculation:—Besides this agricultural and commercial Business is transacted with much greater profits than in the Northern and Middle States. The raising of Cotton yields great gain to those who possess Slaves and plantations.

True, the merchants here are getting rich very fast, and

trade if carried on to better advantage than in any place where I have ever been acquainted:—Yet I think I would employ a Capital of any amount in making Cotton in preference to putting it into Merchandise.

If you had your property in this Country you might add to it much faster than you can in any of the Northern States, either in raising cotton or any other branch of Business you might wish to pursue. Cotton is the staple commodity and always commands the cash—even before the crop is off the ground; the merchants in Natchez and New Orleans will advance Cash for this Article. But as there is a prospect of war between the United States and Great Britain, we need not flatter ourselves here that agriculture, trade and commerce will flourish. A War with Britain would ruin the trade of the valuable Country; and we should feel the effects of it more perhaps than any other part of the Union. Not altogether in consequence of a stagnation in every line of Business, but it is to be feared that the Indians and Negroes would be exceedingly troublesome in all parts of these Territories. Even at the present day, if the Blacks alone were to raise a mutiny and conspire against the Whites, much damage would be done and the lives of many lost.

Since I began this Letter, I have been summoned to attend the great trial of Aaron Burr and others, at Richmond, (Virginia), who are indicted for high treason and misdemeanors. This is an extremely unpleasant circumstance; and in consequence of a debilitated state of health, I have declined going. My Affidavit is taken and sent to Richmond; stating my inability to attend, and a Commission sent for, which, if the Court will issue, will prevent my going; otherwise my attendance there will be difficult to avoid, if my health will admit of a Journey so far. I will not fail to write from Richmond should I be there this Fall or Winter. I shall not proceed any further to the northward, but return to this country as soon as I can be discharged. I have this day received a Letter from Col. Tyler dated Appalousas 29th August, informing me of his late arrest, and that he is now on his way to Richmond, to answer a Bill for indictment for treason and a misdemeanor said to have been committed at Blennerhasset Island the 12th day of December last. When he was arrested he was urged by some of his most intimate friends to cross the line into the Spanish Dominions, but this he despised, which act of prudence I am happy to hear.

As to the character of Comfort Tyler and Israel Smith, esquires, who left the State of New York in August, 1806, I shall say nothing, for the want of room—I can only add that if the motives of every man concerned in the Expedition had been as pure as theirs, we should have met with much less trouble and difficulty, which we have unavoidably encountered.

I am, Sir, with particular Regard,
Yours,

Silas Brown.

P. S. In the foregoing I have mentioned nothing relative to the customs and manners of the people here, the climate, soil and produce of the Country nor of my Business since I have been in the Territory. For this information see my letter to my Father of June 29th, 1807. I am extremely anxious to hear from my Friends, particularly my Brother at Boston. I hope you will not fail to write immediately, on the receipt of this, directing to me at Natchez or New Orleans—the former place however will be preferred, my place of residence being 140 miles west of the latter. Present my best respects to your Father, his Family and all inquiring Acquaintances.

I am, Dear Sir, with high Esteem, sincerely,
Your very Humble Servant,
Silas Brown.

—:o:—

(Answer to Foregoing Letter.)

Westmoreland, Nov. 19th, 1807.

My Friend—

I now do myself the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your favor dated the 10th of Sept. as also another of the 7th March last. The former I answered, but as appears by the latter you did not receive my answer. Should this likewise miscarry I fear you will think me void of that friendship for you which I have always professed.

What shall I say, my friend, concerning Burr's Expedition? It is a thing which has given me much uneasiness and anxiety ever since I saw a letter which you sent your Father before you set out from the State of New York. My impressions were at that time that you were concerned in the enterprise, but I did then, and do now, hope you were deceived. and still I am sorry you were deceived.

But what gives me the most concern is the high estima-

tion in which you hold Aaron Burr, while at the same time you so violently censure the Executive Authorities of the United States. True it is, Burr has been acquitted of the charges brought against him by Government, but in the eye of the public, I almost venture to say, in the opinion of every candid mind he is Guilty. To expatiate on this subject as I could wish would exceed the narrow bounds of a letter. I shall therefore omit it till I have the pleasure of seeing you, which I could hope might be very soon.

With regard to the Country where you now reside, being a good place for Speculation, and the acquiring of property, I do not in the least doubt. But my good friend, how is property made there? You will say by agriculture and commerce, professions of the most laudable kind. I will grant they are in a State which gave birth to you and me. Here the buying and selling of poor defenseless human beings does not form our Commerce nor the using them like Beasts our Agriculture.

Not even the least plausible excuse can be offered in favor of Slavery—I challenge it from any person whatever—By the peculiarity of their constitution, it seems as tho' the God of Nature designed that portion of the Globe included in the torrid zone for the people of color. Perhaps you will laugh at my Yankee principals, but I who am willing to put up contented with what can be got from honest industry shall never be laughed out of them. I have been taught from my cradle to despise Slavery and will never forget to teach my children, if any I should ever have, the same lesson, for,

“ 'Tis Heaven's high gift, 'tis Nature's great decree
That none be Slave whom God himself made free.”

Man, who is born for liberty, can never reconcile himself to servitude; your prediction, therefore, as expressed in your letter, should there be a War between England and the United States, were well founded. I not only believe as you do, that there would be much to be feared by whites from the blacks in the Western country, in the case of a war; but should also rejoice to have them rise upon their oppressors, and if possible make themselves free.

Soon after your Father made known to me the contents of your letter to him respecting some Business you wished me to transact, I called on Mr. Robbins, who settled the demand I hold against you by giving his own obligation. I gave

him a Deed of the Mt. Holly land, and took a Bond running to you, date 7th March, 1807, conditioned as follows :

That if Robbins shall make out and deliver to you a good and sufficient Quit Claim Deed of the aforesaid Land within 18 months from the date of the Bond, provided you first within that time pay him what he paid me for you and all other legal demands which he then held against you, then to be void otherwise, etc. This I before stated in a letter in answer to yours of March 7th. I also then stated respecting the other Business which you wished me to attend to which, as it now strikes my mind, was that nothing further was done, as your Father did not fully comply with the request in your letter, so as to put it in my power to do anything further than I did.

You say you very much desire to hear from your brother Aaron. I wish it was in my power to gratify you respecting him ; but I cannot in full, not having seen him since last May when I saw him in Boston. He then informed me he lived there and was in a store in Broad Street. Your father's family I frequently see, and believe them all in good health.

I am with esteem, your friend,

E. Brown, Jun.

—:0:—

Hamochitto, Octr. 26th, 1807.

Dear Sir :

Your favor of July 29th came to hand about the first of Octr., which contained the first syllable I have received from any of my friends since I left Onondaga. I am happy to hear that your Father's family and mine are in good health. I wrote you Sept. 10th expecting you had not received mine of the 7th March last. Till I can make you a better compensation, accept my grateful thanks for your attention to my Business in my absence.

It appears by your letter that you must have misconstrued a part of my letter to you, and also of that to my Father. You observe that "they both seem to be as much enveloped in mystery as your former ones." I will endeavor to be a little more explicit. Some time in the month of August, 1806, Comfort Tyler, Esq., of Onondaga in the State of New York, told me he was closing all his Business in that part of the country, and was about to engage in an Expedition which he thought of great importance to those who engaged

in it, it being of that kind, that some of the first men in the United States had taken an active part and were very much interested in the concern. He mentioned General Dayton of New Jersey, and several other Gentlemen of rank as being the principals concerned. During the conversation I drew from him enough to convince me that something of magnitude was going on in the West, conducted by men of abilities. He spoke very much in favor of the undertaking and appeared to be deeply interested himself. He asked me if I could engage in the enterprise, and set out on the Journey with him, which would be in the course of 10 or 15 days? I told him it was quite a new thing to me, and that my concerns there, and in New England were such, that I thought it would be impossible for me to embark in such an Expedition. He seemed to be very anxious for me to say that I would arrange my Business and be ready to begin the Journey with him. I told him I would see him again in the course of five or six days and converse with him further on the subject.

I went to Maulins the next day, or next day but one; I communicated the thing to a number of men of respectability and good information, and asked their opinion respecting the Enterprise.

They said they knew little or nothing of the nature of the Expedition, but if Col. Tyler had engaged in it, they thought there was no risque. The people at Onandaga all spoke highly favorable of the object, and a number of Gentlemen of families told me they should engage in the enterprise and follow after, as soon as they could arrange their Business and leave their families. I found that many men of respectability and good information were much taken with the object, and were engaging in the Expedition. I saw Col. Tyler a few days after I had the first conversation with him, who appeared to be very friendly, (as he has always proved so to be through the whole scene) and he conversed more favorably than ever. He told me that Maj. Israel Smith of Cayuga had engaged in the Expedition, and would commence their Journey for the Ohio River in a few days.

A few days previous to this I had a conversation with a Mr. Thompson of Onandaga, a young attorney, who was making preparations for the Journey, it being near at hand. He said that from what he could learn, it was a great object to those young men who volunteered and went on with

Messrs. Tyler and Smith, and as for his part, no person whatever could prevail on him not to go. Viewing all this, and seeing so many men of abilities engaging in the pursuit, I knew there must be some grand object in view. I therefore concluded to settle my Business as far as I could, Collect all the money I could, send a letter to my Father pointing out how I wished to have my affairs settled there, and engage in the Expedition, knowing I could withdraw when I pleased. I made no delay in getting ready for the Journey. Col. Tyler left Onandaga on Wednesday, the 27th day of Aug. 1806. I left the same place, alone, the next day about two in the afternoon. I arrived at Bath, in the County of Stuben, State of New York, on the headwaters of the Susquehanna River on Saturday afternoon (August 30th) where I found Messrs. Tyler and Smith.

We tarried here till the next day, about 10 o'clock, when we were joined by Mr. Thompson. Our party consisted of six men, viz: Col. Tyler, Maj. Smith, Mr. Thompson, two laboring men and myself. We left Bath the same day for Pittsburg, 300 miles Southwest. We had a very disagreeable Journey down the Allegheny River, having a great part of the way no road; nor could we get entertainment.

Soon after we left Bath we overtook a Judge Miller, of Tyoga Co., State of New York, who was on his way to Pittsburg, from thence to the Falls of Ohio. But he knew nothing of the Expedition. We arrived at Pittsburg Saturday afternoon, the 6th day of Sept., 1806, and stayed there till the 10th, when it was found necessary for some person to go to New Connecticut and the north part of the State of Ohio. This I took upon myself. Sept. 10th we all left Pittsburg together. Judge Miller and Mr. Thompson went to Kentucky. Messrs. Tyler and Smith accompanied me 30 miles to Beavertown, and there made a stop for the purpose of Boat building. I pursued my Journey, accomplished the Business I went on, and returned to Beavertown the 29th Sept. About this time I wrote you a letter. Maj. Smith informed me that Mr. Thompson had been back from Kentucky, was in high spirits, and that everything was operating in our favor. I had not been back many days before I commenced another Journey to Waterford, Lake Erie and Presque Isle. From Presque Isle I went to Pittsburg, where I arrived the 6th day of Novbr. I did not tarry here long, but went immediately to Beavertown,

saw Messrs. Tyler and Smith, who were in high spirits. Mr. Tyler showed me a letter he had received from Gen. Dayton of New Jersey, which gave me much satisfaction. I saw several other letters he had received from some of the principal men concerned in the Expedition. The whole tenor of these letters was bent upon an agricultural and commercial intercourse. As it was necessary for some person to be at Pittsburg, I stayed here but a few days, before I returned, and tarried there till the 4th day of December.

While I was in Pittsburg Judge Miller returned from Kentucky. I met him one day in the Street. He told me he wished to have a conversation with me if I would call at his room that evening? I answered in the affirmative and accordingly called.

He asked me several questions, and said he regretted not having known of the Expedition before he went to Kentucky, which, if he had, he certainly would have joined us. He appeared to be much in favor of the object, and expressed a wish to be concerned in the Enterprise. He mentioned several circumstances relative to Col. Burr's trials in Kentucky, spoke of his acquittals with honor, and conversed highly favorable of the Expedition. I spent the evening with him and retired. I continued in Pittsburg till the 4th day of Decbr., at evening, when I left the place and went to Beavertown by water. I arrived the next morning and found about 30 men assembled for the purpose of descending the river.

After engaging in this Expedition, and previous to going on to the waters of Ohio and Mississippi, every object in view relative to our undertaking looked fair and promising; every information whether public or private (excluding all Newspaper communications) gave me to understand that the expedition was honorable and not hostile to the Government.

The foregoing statement is correct. Although it is not so extensive and replete as it might have been. I have excluded many circumstances, which, perhaps, at last would amount to no more than what has already been said. I now leave you to judge whether these circumstances mentioned in the above written statement were sufficient to induce me to descend the Ohio with a respectable party of men. True, it was in my power to withdraw from the party when I pleased. But I placed the greatest confidence in Tyler and Smith, being assured that they would not have engaged in any unlawful

Enterprise, or take a part in any act that would violate the Laws and Constitution of the United States.

A complete Journal of our passage through the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the city of Natchez, interspersed with the geographical sketch of the adjoining countries, and an account of those Rivers, would be far more interesting than the preceeding. But my design is to lay before you a statement of the particulars, as far as they relate to the late unhappy Expedition, which took place in the Fall of 1806, that you may have a correct idea of my views and intentions, and of the inducements that led me to a southern clime, and that you may not place a misconstruction upon the contents of my former letters. I shall, therefore, only mention a few particulars that took place while on the Western waters.

The 5th day of Decbr. last, we all went on board, and began our voyage down the Ohio. Our little fleet consisted of 4 boats and 32 men. Three of our Boats arrived at Blennerhasset Island Decbr. 8th, the other being left about 30 miles behind in consequence of running on to a large Bar in the River; however, she got off the next day and joined the other Boats. At this time and place, treason and misdemeanors are said to have been committed by some of the persons who have been indicted at Richmond for those crimes.

But if those crimes were committed here, then I confess that I know nothing of the nature of treason or a misdemeanor. True, I was absent a part of the time that the Boats lay at the Island. But while I was there all was peace and harmony; no person whatever assumed any military appearance, neither had we military stores with us, as has been falsely and publicly represented. All persons, whether neighbors or strangers, were at perfect liberty to pass to and from the Island when they pleased; no guards were placed on the Island, neither was it illuminated, which old Governor Tiffin of the State of Ohio wrote to Mr. Jefferson was the case. But this is absolutely false; and were I to have an opportunity at a suitable time and place, would not hesitate to tell him so myself. These aspersions, together with many others, have taken rise from men of the lowest Class, who will descend to the meanest of things to gain their points, notwithstanding whatever Office they may hold, and have not only caused Burr's Expedition to appear a more glaring and wicked undertaking, in the eyes of the public in general, but have been the consequence of stamp-

ing the characters of honest, well-meaning men with infamy and disgrace. I returned from Marietta to the Island on the night of the 10th of Decbr. at a very late hour. The men having had information, this day, that the Kanhawa Militia and Wood County Mobs were to be at the Island early the next morning for the purpose of exhibiting their *True Patriotism* and taking us with force and arms—it was thought expedient to be out of their way, and, if possible, not to engage in any contest with such a low, mean set of beings. We all went on Board about one o'clock at night, and took Blennerhassett with us. We found that the whole State of Ohio was against us, and was taking every method to prevent our descending the River.

We were determined not to be taken, if we could possibly pass the Militia that was stationed at different places on the banks of Ohio, unnoticed ; however, we met with no great difficulty, for our men rowed night and day, and we descended the River with such speed that the Militia expecting us to be two or three days passage up the River, were not so much on their guard, and the thing was so managed that we passed all the guards in the night unobserved. We arrived at the mouth of Cumberland River, in Kentucky, the 29th of Decbr., at which place was Col. Burr. The whole body of men, including all those with Col. Burr, did not exceed 100. We lay here nearly two days and then put off.....came to Bayou Pierre, on the east margin of the Mississippi River, the 12th day of Jany., 1807.

Here we found that the people of the whole Country were greatly alarmed, and the Territory in arms. About 350 of the Militia were ordered out and stationed at Natchez. A detachment of cavalry, consisting of the horse and foot, was sent to Bayou Pierre, and another to the mouth of Coles Creek, about 20 miles below. We had information of this and moved our Boats to the other side of the River. Wilkinson had sent the United States Bomb-ketch and two Gun Boats to Natchez, which lay abreast in the River at an equal distance, so that no Boats nor Vessels could pass without permission, and an embargo laid on all vessels at New Orleans. We lay opposite to Bayou Pierre and the mouth of Coles Creek nearly 4 weeks. Col. Burr gave himself up to the Civil authority of this Territory, an extra Court was called, he was indicted for high crimes and misdemeanors ; but the Jury found no Bill against him. The Court then refused to discharge him on his

recognizance. But he was determined not to be trifling with them any longer. He came to our Boats the 5th day of Feby. in the afternoon ; told us his situation, and that he was resolved to leave the Territory. He stayed about two hours, then left the Boats in a Skiff with two men and a servant, and went up the River. This is the last time I saw Col. Burr. We arrived at Natchez the 7th of Feby. The men soon dispersed like clouds before the wind. Some returned home and some are in different parts of this country.

I shall now take the liberty to make some remarks on certain sentences contained in your letter, and endeavor to point out wherein it appears that you have placed a wrong construction upon certain expressions in my letters. You say I "very much criminate Wilkinson and Eaton." 'Tis true--and where is the man who knows the late unprincipled conduct of Wilkinson in the affair of Burr who will not criminate and look upon him as a man whose assurances can never be confided in? That Wilkinson is a soldier and a brave General I do not deny. But what was his conduct last Fall, about the the time he went to the Sabine, and even at the Sabine? And after he returned to New Orleans, he did not say that he was going to "play the Devil," which he afterward did to perfection.

It was my intent when I began this letter to have given a particular account of the character and conduct of Wilkinson ; but for certain reasons I shall omit doing this at present. Whatever I have written respecting him in any letter, let it stand—I will never blot it out. As to Eaton's Deposition, it may be pretty correct ; and yet I look upon it as mere stuff ; but wherein I censure Eaton, is that he neglected making this Deposition afterwards of one year, which by his own statement is a fact.

You mention one sentence in my letter to you, and another in a letter to my Father, that does not carry the idea which it appears you have drawn from them ; and ask "What does all this mean when put together?" Is it possible that you should think me to ever have been in the service of Burr, and to still continue in his service?

When I engaged in the Expedition, it was a mere voluntary act of my own ; I was under obligations to no man concerned in the Enterprise whatever, nor have I ever been, and was in my power to withdraw when I thought proper. My saying that Wilkinson in my opinion was guilty of far

greater and blacker crimes, etc., and that I, with a number of enterprising young men, and men of talents, have been led into this Business and have been deceived, does not convey the least idea, which I can discover, that I have ever been in the service of Burr. These two passages contained in my letters of March last, is what I allude to in the misconstruction of a part of these letters. You say that my "hinting of the Government of the U. S. and all the heads of Departments surprises you." But depend upon it, Sir, there have many more men winked at Burr's Expedition than you are aware of, and men, too, whom you would little suspect. If ever I should have the pleasure of seeing you, I will convince you of positive facts, which, if I were to write you, you would perhaps not believe. I shall therefore close writing anything more on the subject.

In consequence of bad health, I have been more than a week in writing this letter. I have been very sick with a fever since I wrote you Septbr. 10th—it is now the 4th day of Novbr.—and I am beginning a little to Business. I flatter myself that when it begins to be cold weather, I shall be free from this debilitated state of health. I expect to tarry in this Territory 'till sometime next Summer, and perhaps until the ensuing Fall.

Sir, I am with particular Respect,
Your very humb. Servt.,
Silas Brown.

N. B. Always Direct your letters *to* Natchez.

—:0:—

Laurel Hill (Miss. Territory)
Jan'y. 18th, 1808.

Dear Sir :

Enclosed is a note of \$10 signed by John Robbins, also a letter to my brother Aaron, supposed to be in Boston when written ; but by a recent date it appears that he has left that place. I hope you will be so obliging as to learn where he resides and forward it by mail direct to him. I have another important favor to ask, which I fear will not only weary your patience, but induce you to consider me as taking these liberties which no Gentleman would presume. But knowing you have been apprised of my situation, and being acquainted with my concerns in New Hampshire and Vermont, and having

placed confidence in your fidelity, I am under the disagreeable necessity of making these solicitations.

It is with the deepest regret that I have to express my feelings on the unpleasant circumstances of leaving my Business in the Northern States, and now having reluctantly to call my friends to attend to such Business as ought to have been brought to a close by myself. It appears by your letter of July 29th, 1807, that John Robbins became accountable to you for my note of eighty-one dollars and interest, and that you have deeded the land at Mount Holly to him, by his giving a Bond running to me to deed said Land to me, provided I settled with him within eighteen months from the date of said Bond, which was given in the month of March, 1807. From another letter received from my Father a few days since, I understand that Mr. Robbins says his demands are one hundred and fifty dollars. The following statement will show what his demands are :

My Note dated May 15th, 1805	\$40.00
Interest on ditto, 3 years.....	7.20
Note dated Oct. 8th, 1805.....	12.00
Interest on ditto 2 years and 7 mos.....	1.86
Bal. of cash in my hands received of Mr. Reed...	76.88
Expense at his house as per agreement.....	5.00
	\$142.94
Deduct his Note and interest.....	11.95
	\$130.99

By the above it appears that there are one hundred and thirty dollars and ninety-nine cents due Mr. Robbins, provided none of the property that I left in New England has been appropriated to meet these demands. I left with him a pair of Oxen, worth about forty-five dollars, also a young horse in the care of my Father, worth sixty dollars, which I requested him to remit to Mr. Robbins. But I cannot learn how this property has been disposed of. Allowing Mr. Robbins pays you one hundred dollars, which must be added to the above Balance, I shall then owe him two hundred and thirty dollars and ninety-nine cents, provided he has never received any of the property that I left. The Land certainly is worth two hundred and seventy-five dollars, and perhaps more. However, I am willing that Mr. Robbins should have the Land at a fair price, admitting he satisfies your demand, and accounts

to you for whatever the Balance may be over, should there be any ; and if he has received any other property, he must account to you for the same. But I have no idea of his securing the Land to himself, and still to retain my obligation in his hands. I therefore earnestly solicitate your attention in this Business, and if possible affect a settlement with him—take up the Receipt which I gave him on Mr. Reed's obligations for collection at Pittstown, also my Notes, and either destroy them or forward them to me by mail, directed to Natchez. Should you grant me the requests herein made and bring this Business to a close. if after a just Settlement any thing should be due me. let Mr. Robbins be accountable to you and the residue remain in your hands. There ought to be \$40 or \$50 out of the Land exclusive of any other property. However, settle that matter on the best terms you can. The money which I received of Mr. Reed amounted to Three hundred and twenty-six dollars and eighty-eight cents. Deducting Two hundred and fifty dollars which Mr. Robbins acknowledged to you he had received, there will remain Seventy-six dollars and eighty-eight cents as appears in this statement. I shall write to him on the subject, and before a settlement shall be made, it will be necessary that you should peruse that Letter as the whole Business will be more explicitly stated. It is probable he may produce several Receipts which I have given him for sundry obligations to collect. But as they could not be collected, I do not consider myself accountable for any Receipt whatever, except the one given on Mr. Reed's obligations. I did not receive so much money on those Notes as I expected when I left New Hampshire ; my letter, however, to Mr. Robbins will state the reasons.

I am aware that you have no propensity to embarrass your mind with other men's Business, nor to profit yourself thereby. But you see the situation in which I am placed, and that for me to expend 400 or 500 dollars in the course of the present year merely to visit my friends and bring those little concerns to a close which I left unsettled, would injure my own private interests more perhaps than any person is aware. My expenses for these two years past have been too much already. I am doing very well, considering the situation I was in when I came to the Country, and have fair prospects of doing still better. All I have to fear are the discases of this scorching climate.

I have just received a Letter from a Gentleman in Natchez, informing me that a few days since he forwarded a letter to me from that Office which was postmarked at some town in New Hampshire. The Bearer says he lost it on his way from Natchez to this place. As I have never received but one Letter from you since I left Onandaga, and from every other circumstance that I can learn, this letter must have been from you.

I regret extremely that after informations being conveyed from so great a distance, it should not only be lost, but exposed to I know not whom. I shall request the Post Master at Natchez. to deliver no Letters in future, directed to me without my order. You will please to write soon after the receipt of this, directed to me at Natchez.

I have the pleasure to be, Sir, your most obdt. and very
Humble Servant,

Silas Brown.

NOTE—Postage on this letter was 50 cents from Natchez.

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(Copy of Answer to Silas Brown's Letter of January 18, 1808.)

Westmoreland, April 18th, 1808.

Dear Sir :

I now have before me your letters dated as follows, viz : March 7th, 1807 ; Sept. 10th, 1807 ; Octr. 21st, 1807, and Jan'y. 18th, 1808. By which it appears you have since you left your native State passed thro' a great variety of scenes. A great part of your letters have afforded me much pleasure, but they contain some things which have frequently drawn from me an anxious sigh on account of the critical situation in which you seemed to be placed as touching the Burr Insurrection. As it would be almost impossible for me to place on paper all my ideas respecting the Burr Business, I shall omit till I see you, and shall drop the subject by observing that I hope you did not know his real intentions when you entered on the expedition,

It appears you have received my letter giving an account of my proceedings with Mr. Robbins about the Mt. Holly Land. At the time I gave him a deed of the Land I requested him to give up the obligations, but he refused, adding that he did not wish for the Land any other way than only to make

you interested in having those demands settled. Supposing you would settle them in the course of the time mentioned in the Bond, I took of him, and feeling anxious to get the money for your \$81 Note, I negotiated the Business as stated to you in my letter of the 29th of July, 1807.

Since the receipt of your favor dated Jan'y 18th, I have called on Mr. Robbins several times and stated to him your request respecting a settlement, but to no purpose. It is, therefore, my opinion that the only mode that can be adopted in order to obtain the land is to pay him your Notes, etc., within the 18 months as mentioned in the Bond. As to the Horse and Oxen, neither of them has ever been appropriated to discharge any of your debts unless you owed your father when you left this place. I made known to him your wishes expressed in a letter you wrote some time ago about this property, but he objected to give them up.....undoubtedly he will make a statement to you, as he assured me he would.

I now enclose you the Note which you gave me, supposing you would wish to receive it.

As to news, I do not know as I can tell you any more than we have in the Publick Prints.....everything here jogs on in the old way.....your letter to your brother Aaron I forwarded to him in Marlborough, (Mass.), where I understand he resides. Your and your father's families are in good health—and I do not know but I ought to add mine are too, as I have since I saw you become the owner of a wife and child.

You will, my dear Sir, write me occasionally, as nothing would afford me more pleasure than to hear from you. Do be so obliging as to tell me what you are doing.

In great haste, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

Ephraim Brown, Junr.

—:o:—

Laurel Hill (M. T.) Feby. 16th, 1808.

Dear Sir :

Before this reaches you, you will probably have received mine of the 18th of January, covering a letter to my Brother, also a Note of hand signed by John Robbins, for the sum of ten dollars and interest. By a statement made in that letter, you will see that I have calculated interest on the Notes therein mentioned to the 15th of May next, it being a difficult

Season for the mail to progress with its usual rapidity. You may have observed an error in the amount of the enclosed Note, which did not occur to me till after the letter was sealed. Instead of three years and three months, interest ought to be reckoned at *four* years and three months, as will appear from the date of the Note.

Whatever has been mentioned in any of my letters to you being very inconsiderable relative to the most important places on the Ohio and Mississippi, a description of those Rivers, the customs and manners of the people in these regions ; the climate, soil, common produce and natural growth of *this* Country, I will endeavor to throw a little light on all. Pittsburg, in the State of Pennsylvania, 310 miles west of Philadelphia, stands on a point of land formed by the confluence of the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers, in the heart of the healthy fertile Country. It contained in 1806, 450 houses, consisting chiefly of Brick, 42 of which were public houses of entertainment. Pittsburg is a very lively place for Business, and if we except European and West India Goods, which are transported by land from Philadelphia across the Alleghany Mountains to this place, it may with safety be said to afford one of the cheapest markets in America. The merchants and mechanics in Pittsburg possess as great a share of industry and close attention to Business as those of any place within the circle of my acquaintance. At the Junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela is the head of one of the most beautiful Rivers in America—the Ohio—if we consider the height, fertility and safety of its Banks, and the numerous advantages it opens to an extensive infant country.

One hundred and seventy-eight miles Southwest of Pittsburg is Marietta, in the State of Ohio, situated on the north bank of the Muskingum River, fronting the waters of Ohio on the east. (The Ohio River at Marietta runs nearly southwest. The Muskingum from northwest to southeast.) The country here appears to be high and remarkably level, with a pure, wholesome air, and the soil in point of richness inferior to none that I have ever seen. No place in my knowledge exceeds Marietta for pleasantness : The streets are well laid out, the buildings neat and elegant ; and what adds beauty to the town, is the gentle current of the Ohio gliding along on the east, while the waters of the Muskingum are rolling in on the south. There are several other towns of note on the Ohio. Galiapolis, Cincinnati, Louisville, etc., are all places of some

consequence. Louisville, in the State of Kentucky, stands on the Southern Bank of the Ohio, a little above the Falls. It contains about 250 houses, built principally with Brick, and is in a flourishing state. The principal Rivers that fall into the Ohio from the State of Kentucky are the Big Sandy, Kentucky, Green, Salt, Licking and Cumberland. Cumberland River interlocks with the northern Branch of Kentucky, and rolling round the other arms of Kentucky, among the mountains, in a southern course 100 miles, then in a southwestern course for about 250 more, finds the Ohio 413 miles below the Falls.

Mr. Morse says the Ohio is the most beautiful River on earth, and in fact I have no right to dispute him. The distance, however, from Pittsburg to its mouth is not so much as is stated in some of the former editions of his geography. By the best and most experienced navigators it is found not to exceed 1102 miles; and from the mouth of the Ohio to New Orleans is reckoned at 1100 miles. So that the distance from Pittsburg to New Orleans by water is 2202 miles. But by land it is only 1400 miles. This distance, from best information, I believe to be pretty correct. New Madrid is situated on the Western Bank of the Mississippi, 70 miles below the mouth of the Ohio. This is a pleasant village, but appears to be on the decline. From New Madrid to Natchez, which is upwards of 700 miles, there are no places of consequence, and but few settlements of any kind.

The city of Natchez, 300 miles above New Orleans, stands on a high Bluff, about a quarter of a mile east of the Mississippi. There are about 50 houses, however, under the Hill at the landing. These are also attached to the city. Natchez is a very brisk place for Business, and appears to be rapidly increasing, both as to trade and improvements in building. But at present, the buildings, generally speaking, are low and mean. There is not a house in the whole place that may be said to be elegant. The citizens experience a great inconvenience from the want of good water. The river water, which resembles that of a Clay-pit, is the best and only made use of. They pay from 25 to 37½ cents per Barrel for this muddy water, which is brought to their doors by poor people, on Carts or Drays.

The Mississippi River is the largest in North America. It stretches along from north to south a distance of about 4250 miles, including its bends and windings; some accounts

say 4500 miles ; and in several places, between the mouth of the Ohio and New Orleans, it is said to be three miles wide within its Banks. But its general width is from 1 to 2 miles.

I can compare the Banks of the Mississippi to nothing but a loaf of sugar, which, being dipped in water, then placed in the air, dissolves and tumbles to pieces. Such are the banks of this River. They are constantly falling in, and whole acres, covered with heavy timber, are known to have been lost in the Mississippi by this immersion.

I have seen the most stately trees floating down the river, apparently torn from the earth by their roots by some terrible hurricane or whirlwind with their branches as lively and green as the forest in the month of June. From the smallest sapling to the loftiest Cyprus, trees are hurried down and lost in the Gulf of Mexico. It is surprising to see what an immense channel this River cuts in the earth through one of the most fertile Countries perhaps in the whole world. While the traveler reflects on these romantic scenes, he is ready to acknowledge the works of a Supreme Being when viewing this River with its powerful waters rolling down its channel in majestic appearance, overlooked from the east in many places by high Bluffs and lofty Cliffs, which seem to have been formed by some dreadful shock in nature.

However, incredible it may appear to some, it is certain that in some seasons an extensive tract of Country bordering on the Mississippi and extending back from the river to the west, a distance of 50 or 60 miles, is in a state of inundation a great part of the year. From the great quantities of water this River receives from the east and west, it is natural to suppose it impossible for this channel to contain all those waters. And so it is Being denied a passage to the sea through the Mississippi, they rush over its Banks, are spread over a part of the plains of Louisiana, and in other places are formed into Lakes. It is surprising to see the difference between low and high water at Natchez, 300 miles above tide water. This difference is upwards of 40 feet perpendicular, and had I not have been a witness to this, I could scarcely have given it credit, however well it might have been authenticated. This River, as well as the Ohio, is extremely crooked ; so much that in descending either, the navigator many times fancies himself returning to Pittsburg, instead of pursuing his voyage to New Orleans. As to the climate of this country, it is ex-

tremely warm 4 or 5 months in the year, 3 of which the heat is almost insupportable, viz: June, July and August. The weather during the winter months is pleasant and agreeable, yet it is subject to very sudden changes, so much that a person will want different apparels the same day. There are generally frosts in the month of November sufficiently to kill the leaves of the woods, which fall in that month and December. The inhabitants speak of winter. But for my part I have seen but very little appearance of winter since I have been in this Country. It is a rare thing to see snow or ice here. In January, 1807, the snow fell 2 or 3 inches, which lay on the ground about 48 hours, and was accompanied with some cold weather. The oldest people here say this was the severest winter ever known in the Country. The 27th of January last we had a little snow that covered the ground about an inch, and lay perhaps 24 hours. Excepting this, I have not seen a particle of snow this winter, nor not more than two or three nights cold enough to freeze any liquid whatever. Fruit trees are beginning to blossom, and frequently the Peach tree blooms in the month of January. But the people here say that in consequence of a hard winter all vegetation is extremely backward. Gardens, if properly attended to, would afford a plenty of vegetables, such as Cabbage, Lettuce, Green Peas, Beans, etc., the whole year. But this necessary Branch of cultivation is almost totally neglected in a Country where it might arrive as near the bounds of perfection, perhaps, as any place on the Continent. The Summers are so excessively hot that Grass will not come to any degree of perfection; yet Cattle, Horses and Sheep are not unsupplied with a good substitute for Grass and Hay summer and winter. They live chiefly in the woods during the year on the reed-cane (by some termed canebrake) which grows spontaneously through the whole Country, and even as far north as the State of Kentucky, I have seen the reed cane 8 or 900 miles to the north of this. But it does not grow so large in that climate as it does in lower latitudes.....
.....I have seen it on the banks of the Mississippi 30 feet high. There is not a Country perhaps in the Universe that can boast of a greater variety of timber than this. The principal is Cypress, Sassafras, Walnut, Hickory, Poplar, Red and White Oak, Live Oak, Sycamore, Mulberry, Lynn, Cottonwood, Magnolia, Gum, Pawpaw, Black Jack and some White Ash but of an inferior quality. The Peach, Plum, Cherry and Fig Tree

flourish in this Territory ; and a little further south the Orange Tree produces as fine Oranges as I ever saw. The woods here abound with a great variety of wild fruit, such as Grapes, Muscadines, Mulberry, Chinkapins, and many other kinds the names of which I do not recollect.

The soil produces Cotton, Corn, Sweet Potatoes, Rice, Indigo, etc., all of which same are raised excepting the latter ; but the former is the staple of the Country. The raising of Cotton is found to be such profitable Business that the planters have turned their whole attention to this Article, and do not raise provisions enough to support their own families. The expense of making Cotton, comparatively speaking, is so trifling that a few years' attention and industry raise the owners of plantations and slaves to a degree of Affluence and popularity, frequently placing them beyond want and yielding independent fortunes. Since this Country has been under the American Government it seems to have been progressing to a state of wealth and population almost of too great a magnitude to give credit. I know several planters in this Territory whose annual income, merely from the article of Cotton, is 20,000 Dollars each ; and many others have each an income of some 4,000, some 6,000, some 10,000 and some 12,000 Dollars, etc., annually. From the prevailing practice of extravagant living and the want of good economy, these men do not acquire such wealth and great fortunes as would be expected from their annual income. Their children must be indulged in all their extravagant propensities which their pride for show, grandeur and gay life naturally leads them.

The people of this Country are fond of Shooting, Horse Racing, Cards, Billiards, Music and Dancing ; and as Slavery appears to be progressing to an unknown height, a door is open for vice, immorality and time misspent, more than in those Countries where Slavery is little known. Very few white people here labor. The Planting Business is all done by the Negroes directed by overseers, and all domestic concerns, such as cookery and other affairs necessary in housekeeping, are attended to by servants.

Notwithstanding the extravagant and expensive mode of living, the people in this Country do not live so well as the people in many parts of the United States ; yet most of the planters may be said to be steady, industrious, sober men. They are beginning to educate their children in the English

and French languages, and measures are adopted to introduce Schools and Academies into both these Territories.

There is not a Country perhaps on earth where gambling, dissipation and many other unpardonable practices have crept in more than into this ; and what is very singular, the young people who are raised here are not so much given to these vices as those who came to this Country from other parts of the world. The unparalleled custom of dueling prevails here more than in any other part of the world that I have ever heard or read of. The most trivial disputes, either in politics or any other way, must be decided by a duel, which often ends in the death of some near friend, leaving either parents, wives or children to lament his dreadful fate. There have been five duels fought opposite Natchez on the Louisiana shore since I arrived in the Territory, and several others in different parts of the Country. Human life is of little consequence on this part of the Continent, whether people are hurried into future existence by sickness, or fatal accidents by Providence ; whether they fall in duels or are assassinated by thieves and robbers, it is noticed but little more than the death of the beasts among Christian people. The *Laws* of the Country, it is true, *forbid* murder and manslaughter, while *humanity* and *hospitality* claim to be diffused among the unfortunate and unprotected. But the people know but little of the former, and are devoid of the feelings of both the latter.

Men are permitted to shoot and butcher each other on the spot ; and if either survive, he may cross the Mississippi into the other Territory, or step into Florida, and there take up his residence with impunity. A Spaniard was killed at Natchez last Spring by a Kentuckian, merely from some dispute that took place between the former and a Boatman belonging to the latter. The man belonging to the Boat interfered, and the Spaniard ran. He was followed and fired upon by the Kentuckian, but did not fall immediately—he went a short distance and fell. The assassin not having glutted his fury, it is said, came up and shot him through the head and left him dead on the ground. There was very little or no trouble taken to apprehend the murderer. It was said he crossed the River opposite to Natchez ; and for aught I know he might have remained there until this day unmolested. These, with many other corroborating circumstances, show how the laws of this Country are put in force.

I do not enjoy myself so well as I expected to have done when I first came to this Country. This is in a great measure, I believe, to be owing to bad health. But Heaven be praised, I am yet alive and in better health than I have been for these last six months past. I see a great deal of company, but it is not that kind which is agreeable to my taste. I meet with those who appear to possess a disposition to be sociable and friendly. But the customs and manners of the people here are so different from ours, I take but little pleasure in their society. When I say society, I mean their company. As to society, there is, strictly speaking, none—neither moral nor religious. Nothing induces me to stay in this Country, but its being beyond a doubt the best of America for accumulating property. However, I am not conscious that it is my duty to sacrifice my health and happiness for the glimmering prospects of property in this nor any foreign clime.

Admitting the distance from here to Philadelphia to be 1500 miles as it is called, the distance from here to Westmoreland, via New York and Albany, is 1843 miles. This distance may be shortened by going from New York, through the States of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

My engagements are such that I must be in this Territory till the first of June next; and it is not impossible that I may settle here, if I can endure the climate and enjoy a tolerable degree of good health; however, it is uncertain. At any rate, wherever I am, and whatever my lot may be, it shall be my study to make known to my friends my good or ill fortune, as it may occur.

My best respects to your Father's family and all inquiring friends.

Accept assurances of my warmest wishes for your health, prosperity and future happiness.

Silas Brown.

Postage from Natchez 25 cents. ;

—:o:—

Laurel Hill, June 15th, 1808.

Dear Sir :

The latest date from the Northern States being Jan'y 13th, 1808, I deem it expedient to write once more stating the different times I have written and the letters I have received. Since I have been in this Territory I have written

you the following different dates, viz : From Natchez, March 7th, 1807 ; from Hamichitto, Sept. 10th, 1807 ; from ditto Oct. 26th, 1807 ; from Laurel Hill, Jan'y 18th, 1808, and from ditto, Feb'y 16th, 1808.

I wrote to my Father in the months of March, June, Sept., 1807, and in Jan'y and May last. I wrote to my Brother in the months of Nov., Dec. and March last. I have received one letter from *you*, dated July 29th, 1807 ; one from my Father, dated Sept. 23rd, 1807, and one from my Brother, dated Jan'y 7th, 1808. These are all I have received from the New England States ! I fear that either through the negligence or dishonesty of some Post Master between here and Philadelphia, my letters have never reached their destined places. I am extremely anxious to know how many have been received, and whether it has been in your power to effect a final settlement with John Robbins, as stated in my letter of the 18th of Jan'y.

When I left Keene, there was some small demands against me at that place, a part of which were then due. But I had previously agreed with those persons holding them to postpone the time of payment till I should have returned from the State of New York, which I expected would have been the following Spring or Summer. As I have never heard *how* any of the property has been disposed of, excepting the Land at Mount Holly, it is probable it has been appropriated to meet a part of those demands, unless it has been conveyed to Mr. Robbins, which, from the tenor of your letter of July 29th appears has not been the case. I wrote to John G. Bond the 5th of May last, inserting a statement of all the Debts alive when I left Keene, and of the property that was left in the hands of John Robbins and my Father. I requested him to write me on the subject, stating what demands were unpaid, and to point out the most proper method by which I might meet those demands. A few days subsequent to the date of my letter I received a Note from Seth Hunt at Natchez, formerly of Keene, informing me that John G. Bond had enclosed him a small Note of mine for collection. I read with surprise. I went immediately to Natchez, saw Mr. Hunt, and paid my Note. He informed me that he should leave Natchez in a short time for New Orleans, and should there take passage for the Eastern States.

I never experienced a greater anxiety relative to any concern of my own than I do to know how near my Business

in New England has been brought to a close, and what demands now remain due, I have ever expressed a wish to have what property I left disposed of to the best advantage, and have requested that the proceeds should be appropriated to meet certain demands. How far this request (which was made to my Father) has been complied with I cannot say. I therefore hope you will have the goodness to write by the first mail what has been done, and whether you have received my letter of the 18th Jan'y. I regret extremely that I am necessarily compelled to give any of my friends trouble with my Business, or to solicit their attention in those affairs in which they are not particularly concerned. But the principles of morality and the honor of a man require that I should take this alternative to remedy the consciousness of my error, and do justice to others. I hope your demand has been settled to your satisfaction; also hope you have been compensated for any trouble you may have been at in effecting a settlement with Mr. Robbins, which I presume has been done, provided you have received the statement of the obligations between us.

A letter to my Father, dated January 9th, 1808, one to John Robbins, dated Jan'y 20th, 1808, and one to you, dated Jan'y 18th, 1808, covering a letter to my Brother; also a promissory Note, signed by John Robbins, all left the Post Office at Natchez the same day. The letter to you being double, and principally upon my Business, I paid the postage. But in future I think it best to pay no postage till we receive our letters. When the postage is paid, especially on double letters, they are supposed to contain something of consequence; and as I make no doubt but there are dishonest Post Masters or clerks between this and the State of Pennsylvania, it is very probable letters are frequently opened, and perhaps destroyed. One man we know has been detected in his villainy, and has since been removed from office. We have had no news from the United States for several weeks past. The most important here is that the Indians are beginning to commit outrages in different parts of the Country. Accounts from Tennessee state that eight men have been killed, low down on the Ohio, by the Creeks or Chocktaws. Two men have been killed on the Mississippi, between here and New Orleans, by the Alabamas, and several wounded. The embargo annoys the trade in this Country very considerably. Cotton has been as low as \$12 per hund. in New Orleans, but it is now selling at \$15, and a probability of its continuing to rise.

As to myself, I can say but little, so far as it relates to my future engagements in any line of Business, Under existing circumstances and the present state of National affairs, I cannot calculate upon any thing more than to continue in some kind of Business at a fixed salary till the scale turns.

My health is much better than it has been for almost a year past, and still continues to be returning. If no accident in sickness overtakes me this summer, I hope to be able to endure the climate hereafter. There is not a person out of fifty who has a seasoning so severe as I have had already. Do not fail to write me directly to Natchez.

I am, Sir, with Sentiments of the highest Esteem and respect,

Your most Obt. Servt.,

Silas Brown.

—:0:—

Laurel Hill (M. T.) July 21st, 1808.

My Dear Friend :

Your favor of the 18th April came to hand the 25th of June, in which you stated that you had received my letters down to the 18th of Jan'y. Since that time I have written to you, Feb'y 16th, and June 13th, the latter of which you can not yet have received.

You observe that a great part of my letters have afforded you much pleasure, while a part has drawn from you an anxious sigh on account of the peculiar situation in which I have been placed as respects the Expedition of Aaron Burr. O! my dear Sir, if this unhappy event has caused my friends to sigh, who have but a faint idea of the nature of my adventure, what must have been my feelings, and what must I have experienced, who have been an unfortunate sufferer and passed through scenes which have never been described—scenes which would add sublimity to the tragedies of Shakespere.

I have already given you some account in my former letters, of many circumstances that took place in the Western Country in the year 1806, and stated several reasons why I was induced to leave the Northern States. I therefore deem it unnecessary to add any thing further relative to the "Infamous Expedition," and have only to remark that when I left New York I had no propensity to abandon my friends and acquaintances, and have at all times and places, since, remonstrated against any unlawful Enterprise whatever, and have

refused to take a part in any act that would criminate myself or violate the Laws or Constitution of my Country.

It seems you have communicated my wishes to Mr. Robbins concerning the land at Mount Holly, and that he refuses to give up my notes, or to make a settlement on any proposition whatever. It must be well known that this property I do not want; and that it is worth as much to any man in London or Paris as it would be to me. I have ever expressed a wish that this property should have been appropriated to meet certain demands; and have taken every method in my power to adjust my concerns with Mr. Robbins, and to bring those affairs to a final close. Mr. Robbins may flatter himself that my absence will be an acquisition to him, and that he may profit himself thereby. But I can assure him that I have no idea of paying any demand a second time; and that if he should think proper to forward those demands to this Country for collection, I shall take every step in my power to avail myself of that justice, which the laws of this Territory have pointed out. On the receipt of yours of the 18th of April, I had resolved to give myself no further trouble concerning the Business. But I think I shall write to Mr. Robbins once more, stating to him the disagreeable situation of the business, and the impropriety of waiting my return. You advised me to forward money to induce him to redeed the land; but as I said before, the property I do not want, and to do this would be but little more to my interest than to throw so much money into the Mississippi. I am willing that Mr. Robbins should have the land, not at my price, but at a price fixed by any two or three men who may know the value of the property. Should he not be disposed to do this, I shall give myself no further trouble nor concern. However, I propose to write him on the subject.

Notwithstanding my misfortunes by sickness, loss of money, time or reputation, I hope I shall never regret the hazardous undertaking in which I immersed when I so precipitately left the State of New York. At the same time I am not unconscious of that error, and let my fortune be what it may, it must be attributed to the consequence of that enterprise. Although I am not prejudiced in favor of anything in this Country, except its being the best within my knowledge for accumulating property, yet it is highly probable I shall settle in one of these Territories.

It is my highest ambition to effect some lucrative and honorable line of Business which will compensate the troubles, fatigues and unpleasantness of being marked as a conspirator. But it is impossible to calculate upon any permanent Business in the present situation of our common Country.

Should the embargo be raised the ensuing Fall or Winter, every branch of Business will flourish throughout the whole Country. On the other hand, a war with either England France would annoy this Country more, perhaps, than any other part of the Union. A thinly inhabited Country, surrounded as we are on all sides by Indians and Spaniards, would have serious dangers to apprehend in case of an emergency or a foreign invasion; and, besides, the French, on the coast of New Orleans, are always ready for any commotion whatever that would terminate in hostilities against American peace and happiness. Time alone, however, discloses all future events.

You observe that you should be glad to forward me two newspapers in exchange for two printed in this Country. If the heat is *not* too great I expect to be at Natchez in the course of 15 days, and shall endeavor to make arrangements to forward you one, printed in that city, and another printed in New Orleans, weekly. You will please to forward your papers on the receipt of this, one of which I hope is a Boston paper.

You request me to inform you what I am doing. At present I am doing no Business of any consequence. I shall leave this place by the first of Sept. and shall go into *some* Business at Natchez, or a place not far distant. I am much opposed, however, to making Natchez a place of residence. It is, generally speaking, the most unwholesome, dissipated, unhappy place I ever knew or heard of. At any rate, if no accident or sickness overtakes me again, I have nothing to fear. You may expect to hear from me as usual, and I hope you will not fail to encourage a correspondence between us. May the most happy union exist in your little family, and may long life, health and prosperity add to you and your partner's happiness.

I am, Sir, with Sentiments of Esteem, respectfully,

Your obt. and very humble Servant,

Silas Brown.

Hamochitto, (M. T.) 17th Octr. 1808.

My Worthy Friend :

Your favor of the 30th July, enclosing copies of two former letters, came to me a few days since, by which it appears you enclosed my note the 18th of April last, and forwarded it by mail. The letter has been received, as stated in mine of the 21st July, but the note has never reached me ! It is probable that some generous Post Master or clerk who is in the habit of searching letters, had the assurance to break open your letter with such niceness, as not to have been observed, and take therefrom the note. But as the note was discharged, much good may it do the villain who dared presume on such an unpardonable offence. I have written to my Brother four or five different times within these last twelve months, and have received only one letter from him, which was dated Jan'y 7th, 1808. I make no doubt his letters or mine have fallen into the same channel as that of my note, and been destroyed.

Concerning the subject of my Business with Jno. Robbins, I flattered myself when I wrote you last that I should not be under the necessity of introducing the subject again. But it appears that Mr. Robbins bears off, and is not disposed for a settlement on any reasonable terms. I wrote him, the 27th of July, expressing my wishes that a just settlement should take place, and stated to him how the business might be brought to a close with very little difficulty. I am extremely anxious that this business should be settled, and the obligations which Mr. Robbins holds against me lodged in your hands. That you may have a perfect knowledge of the business, and understand my wishes more fully, I have extracted the following from the copy of my letter to Mr. Robbins of the 27th July, viz :

“ You must be fully aware that I have expressed a wish
“ that the land at Mount Holly should fall into your hands,
“ and that when I left the State of New York I ordered that
“ this property should be appropriated to meet your demands,
“ and that since I have been in this Country I have taken
“ every method in my power to effect a just settlement and
“ to bring the business to a final close. I regret extremely that
“ after having taken so much trouble to adjust my affairs, that
“ they must still remain in this disagreeable situation. Why
“ you could object to a settlement with Mr. Brown, I cannot
“ say, unless you had expectations of my being in New Eng-

“ land shortly to attend personally to this Business. But as I
“ have not the least expectation of being in any of the North-
“ ern States in a less time than 4 or 5 years, and perhaps not
“ then, I have thought it expedient to write you once more
“ stating the impropriety of waiting my return and to point
“ out explicitly whereby a satisfactory settlement may be made.
“ You will therefore make out an impartial statement of your
“ demands, and to render it to Ephraim Brown, Jr., Esq., who
“ is authorized to receive and settle the same. Your statement
“ cannot differ materially from mine, which I forwarded to Mr.
“ Brown in the Month of Jan'y last, which you may have seen.
“ The property at Mount Holly I do not want, and am willing
“ that you should have it at a fair price—not at my price, but
“ at a price fixed by any two or three men of good judgment,
“ who may know the value of the land. Exclusive of the land
“ deeded to you by Mr. Brown, there are eleven acres of im-
“ proved land adjoining this tract, which may be obtained by
“ paying Mr. Stephen Fletcher, of Mount Holly, thirty dollars
“ and fifteen cents, with interest from June 1st, 1805—this be-
“ ing attached to the other tract, will increase the value of
“ both, and will make a very handsome little farm. Now, Sir;
“ as it is out of my power to do any thing further, and as I
“ have no expectation of being in New England for many
“ years, and perhaps never again, it is sincerely my wish that
“ two men of sound judgment at Mount Holly be chosen to say
“ what this property is worth, and that a conveyance of the
“ whole be made to you, and that your demands be discharged
“ in this way, and my obligations which you hold lodged in the
“ hands of Ephraim Brown, Jr., Esq. Should the land be
“ appraised to more than the amount of your demands, give
“ yourself no trouble concerning the surplus—should it not
“ amount to so much, I will endeavor to make up the deficiency
“ immediately on receiving such information. I make no doubt
“ but you will cheerfully comply with this request, and let the
“ business rest no longer in this unpleasant situation, but be
“ brought to a full close. Should you not think proper to do
“ this, I shall not consider myself bound by any principal of
“ honor to do anything more relative to the business. At the
“ same time, do not think that I wish to impose the land on
“ you involuntarily, if you do not choose the property, let it be
“ sold for what it is worth, and the money be appropriated to
“ meet your demands. All I wish for is that an honest settle-
“ ment should be made, and that you may receive your just

“ dues—I wish for nothing unreasonable nor unjust. Neither
“ can I think you would wish to secure this property to your-
“ self, and still to retain my obligations in your hands with any
“ injuries to me whatever. If, therefore, you have a disposi-
“ tion that equal justice should be done, you certainly will, I
“ think, comply with the request herein made. But if the bu-
“ siness should continue in the present situation, and my obli-
“ gations should be presented for payment hereafter, I must
“ necessarily take the most proper steps to avail myself of that
“ justice which the laws of this Territory have pointed out.
“ However, I flatter myself that there will be no difficulty, and
“ that the business will now be brought to a close.”

By the foregoing you will understand how I wished a settlement to be made, provided you could not agree with Mr. Robbins upon a price of the land. If it is possible to effect a settlement with him upon any reasonable terms, I wish the notes and accounts to be left in your hands, for I can assure you that I am not willing that any demand against me should lie in his hands.

Should Mr. Robbins not think proper to do this, I do not wish to give you any further trouble concerning the business, and shall leave him to take his own way. I have already given you more trouble than I am willing to give any gentleman with my concerns. But it is to be hoped that my importunities will be pardoned when you reflect that the great distance I am from you, and my long absence, necessarily compel me to make these solicitations.

From the tenor of your letter of the 19th Nov., 1807, you seem to manifest a spirit of much friendship, and express a great concern relative to the dangerous situation in which I was placed after I left my native country. I am not unconscious of the anxieties and concerns which my friends have experienced, nor of the nature of the enterprise and the dangerous tendencies to which such expeditions lead. Perhaps it would be unnecessary to say more than I have already said in my former letters on this occasion; yet it would be a pleasure to me to make you acquainted with every motive in my view, since the thing was first communicated to me, to the present time, and to throw all the light that is in my power relative to the hazardous adventure; but I am not master enough of our language to express my feelings on the subject. Suffice it to say, that if ever I should have the pleasure of seeing you

again, I can then say much more than I think proper to commit to paper.

You observe that you do not doubt but this is a good country for speculation, and for acquiring property ; but speak greatly against the manner in which it is made. I acknowledge that the wealth which many possess has been gained by servitude and cruelty exercised on human beings who are possessed of the reasonable faculties of life, and are capable of civilization. Your sentiments in many respects concerning slavery perfectly concur with mine ; while in some other instances my ideas differ widely from yours, as expressed in your letter of the 19th Nov. last.

Suppose, my dear friend, slavery in this country to be entirely done away, what would the country be worth ? Perhaps you may say what is New England worth, where there is no slavery ? I answer that there is a material difference between the two countries. In the Northern States the climate is such that every white man, in health, can cultivate the earth. Here he cannot ; and it seems to have been predestined by the Divine Being that we should be provided for in those climates where our constitutions will not admit of labour. Nature seems to have formed the blacks for all hot countries, and endowed their minds with a humble submission to the service of the whites.

Notwithstanding, however, their submission to the yoke of bondage, let them not be treated an hundred times worse than we treat our beasts of burthen, but let them be provided with the necessaries of life, at least enough for the support of nature. I confess that it has made my heart ache, and the blood chill through my veins to see the cruelty and severity with which these poor unhappy wretches have sometimes been used.

I frequently say to myself, "How much happier am I than you who possess hundreds of slaves, and enjoy all the luxuries of life, and swim in the tide of affluence and wealth." Yet, I cannot say that I wish slavery totally abolished. But I can freely say that I could see the masters of Negroes, who are devoid of every feeling of humanity, and whose cruelty and oppression cry to heaven for vengeance, snatched from their opulence, and immersed in the depth of slavery, and servitude, during life, without the least regret. Servants of every description ought to be trained to know their duty and

to esteem and obey their masters. In return, it is our duty to use them like human beings, and to give them that support which nature requires for the comforts of life. If this were the case in all countries where slavery prevails, how much more happy would that race be than thousands in the world who are born free, and enjoy the rights of liberty through life. Our ears are shocked with the word "Slavery." But instead of the whips, chains and prisons, let us substitute the principles of hospitality and humanity towards those unfortunate beings and the name is all.

I might offer many arguments in favor of the service of the black race, but cannot produce one in favor of the inhumane treatment which they generally receive from the whites. Slavery, in the limited sense of the word, as I just observed, is but little or nothing more than the name. But, when men, women and children are involuntarily torn from their native country, relations and friends, transported to foreign countries where their language is not known, laid under the severest restrictions, exposed to all the hardships, cruelties and unjust punishments which men of unfeeling passions think proper to inflict, we cannot but behold them with pity and condole with them on their unhappy fates. After all, this is no more than slavery; but slavery of this nature I have as great an aversion to as you or any other man in New England. I would make a few general observations on this subject before I leave it, but for want of room must omit saying any thing further at present.

I made arrangements about the first of August to forward two Newspapers—the Natchez Gazette, printed at Natchez, and the Louisiana Gazette, printed at New Orleans. These papers have been forwarded to you, weekly, ever since, and will continue in the same manner. I have rec'd one No. of the N. H. Sentinel.

When I wrote you last (July 21st) I expected to have gone into business at Natchez or its vicinity. But having heard that the yellow fever has made its appearance there, and besides it having been extremely sickly with the prevailing diseases of this climate, I relinquished the idea a few days subsequent to the date of that letter. I came to this place about the 15th Aug., and in consequence of a general check in every description of business, I have been here much longer than I expected to have been. I cannot give you any information concerning my future engagements in any line of business, as

there is very little to be done here at present. It is highly probable I shall settle in some part of this country, consequently have no expectation of returning to the United States for several years, unless business should call me that way,

This is accompanied with my best respects to your Father's family and all Inquiring friends.

I am, Sir, with much Respect and Esteem,

Your Friend and humb. servt.,

Silas Brown.

P. S. I will know that the moment my note became due to you the land was forfeited. But when I last saw Mr. Robbins he assured me that in case I should not return from the State of New York before the time of payment expired, he would pay the demand. This I supposed he did, according to promise, till since I have received your letter in this country. It appears, however, that he has since paid the demand. I understand he has written me on the subject, but I have never received a word. If you can conveniently forward me the Boston Sentinel, it will be thankfully received. Accept my sincere thanks for your friendship and benevolence, and kind attention to my concerns.

Adieu—Your friend,

S. B.

—:o:—

Natchez, 4th April, 1816.

Dear Sir :

Your esteemed favor of the 26th of Feb'y came to hand by the last mail. But not recognizing the handwriting, and it having come from a place where I least expected, I was at considerable loss to determine whether it came from a Brother or Cousin or some person of that name, of whom I have no remembrance. But on comparing the signature with the signatures of Ephraim Brown, Jr.'s letters, formerly at Westmoreland, N. H., I was convinced that the letter above mentioned is from my old friend and cousin, Ephm. Brown, and it is with much surprise that I find him living in that part of the country from whence his letter came. I well know that part of the State of Ohio—was in Warren and several of the neighboring Towns in the Autumn of 1806, where I spent some very agreeable time.

I shall rely on hearing from you on receipt hereof, and hope you will not be reserved, but acquaint me with what and how you are doing, and also with the wellfare of your Father's family.

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Concerning myself, I am in excellent health and have enjoyed such during the last four or five years.

It is now almost five years that I have been a principal clerk in the "Bank of the Mississippi," established in this city, and since my appointment to that Office, have not been ten miles from this place. It is probable I shall continue in this situation some length of time.

It will be desirable to open a correspondence with you, and shall at all times be happy to receive your letters, and will always afford me pleasure in answering them. The next time I may have the pleasure to write, I will endeavor to be more explicit relative to my situation and concerns in this Country.

I am, Dear Sir, with much Esteem,

Your friend and obt. Servt,

Silas Brown.

NOTE : Directed to E. Brown, Esq., Postmaster, Bloomfield, near Warren, Trumbull County, State of Ohio.

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Natchez, July 29th, 1817.

My Dear and Esteemed Friend :

It is not without difficulty that I can find time enough to write to my most intimate friends ; therefore, as time with me is precious, I must be brief. Your esteemed favor of the 14th May, 1816, was duly received. The only excuse I can offer for not having answered your letter under an earlier date, is my close confinement to business.....the various duties that devolve on me to discharge in Bank.....the absence of our Cashier all last Summer and Fall.....all of which, when united, I hope will be sufficient apology for my long silence. The close application to business during the last two or three years has prevented me from being as attentive to my correspondence with my friends as I could wish. If I can write once or twice in the course of a year to each of my New England friends, it is as much as I can expect till I shall have been a little more relieved from the fatigues and pressure of business. But I hope this will never prevent my friends from writing. Their correspondence is desirable, and I shall at all times be happy to receive their letters whenever they may be inclined to write.

A short biographical sketch of my life, since I have been in this country, if not entertaining, might, perhaps, be gratify-

ing. But the want of time precludes all indulgence upon this subject, except a few remarks upon the last six years. In the month of June, 1811, the Bank of the Mississippi, established by law, commenced its operations in this place, with no other officers than its President, Directors and Cashier. On the 5th of July following, I was appointed to the office of Chief Clerk of this institution, and entered upon the duties thereof on the 10th of the same month. There never having been any other clerk in Bank, and the liberality with which the Business of this institution has been conducted, have required my greatest attention and the most strict application to Business, particularly for the last two or three years. Since I have been in Bank I have never been absent therefrom one day or night—neither have I been ten miles from Natchez for more than six years. My salary is \$1000 a year, exclusive of convenient and comfortable lodgings, wood, water, candles, etc. This may be thought to be a tolerable liberal salary. I grant it is. But, still, I do not conceive it to be adequate to the services rendered the institution. How long I may continue in this business I cannot say. It is probable some years, unless something should offer which might be more advantageous to my interest. I am in excellent health, unmarried, and perhaps may be so for some years.

These remarks will throw some light upon my present situation and what I am, and have been doing during the last six years. Therefore, I will weary your patience no longer upon a subject which must be less interesting to you than myself.

There are several subjects on which it would give me pleasure to write, but for the want of time they must be omitted till another opportunity.

I am happy to hear of your success in your land speculations and hope you may continue to be prosperous in all your undertakings.

I sent you, last summer, several of our city Newspapers, but I am unable to say whether you ever received them or not.

I intend, in the course of a few days, to make arrangements with one of our printers to forward you at least one of our Gazettes regularly every week.

Please have the goodness to write me on receipt hereof.

I am, D'r Sir, with much Esteem,

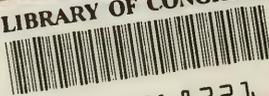
Your friend and Obt. Servt.,

Silas Brown.





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