

Monticello. May 24 1828

We have such a prof of work of all kinds, dear sister that I can scarcely spare time to write but I must try even if I can only do it a few lines at a time. We had delightful weather for our journey & from Philadelphia very pleasant company; on board the boat with us was a Mr Payne of Boston who had been introduced to me by Francis Atthop, who was at least a gentleman & not averse to ladies company; he was travelling for his health. An Englishman just landed on the first day of May, a liberal, gentlemanly, man & one of information & very agreeable, he was a Capt. or Col (I do not know which) Hardy of the army; we soon got very well acquainted with these gentlemen & regretted that we could not have them with us during the whole journey. The Englishman was a friend of the Capt Hall who was here & told us he (Capt Hall) had lost his commission in consequence of some offensive things said of the English government in his book; he said also that Capt Hall though something of a cynic & not given to enthusiasm was enthusiastic in his praise of grandpapa; if I recollect right however we thought him very enthusiastic. There was in the boat with us, ^{also} a georgian, Mr Wild a member of Congress; he was a fine manly bold looking fellow with one of the finest countenances I ever saw, a true son of the south, & one of the best sort, his person tall & rather above the common size, his eyes full of fire & intelligence, his motions graceful but as untutored & free almost as those of an Indian & his whole appearance rather picturesque, his manners had the same character, not those of a man whose life had been dedicated between the study and drawing room, but those of a man of strong natural sense who had seen much of the world (at least the world of his own country) & estimated properly the advantages & disadvantages of all he saw; his gallantry & politeness were natural & born with him not acquired, his conversation not literary but very interesting & showing an enlarged & liberal mind. The Englishman after we were all shut up in the stage together took out a beautiful gold box & handing it to Septimia told her to touch a spring which he showed her she did when the lid flew open & out flew a little feathered bird about the quarter of the size of the hand, Original manuscript from the University of Virginia with its richest colours; it imme-

diately began fluttering its wings moving its head & singing with all its might while its tiny beak quivered & its black eyes shone so bright that I could scarcely persuade myself it was not a real bird. Its little black legs too were as natural as possible, & its song a birds song not a regular tune; a little cha, cha, cheche cha, kept up for some time & then a pause & then he began again; often copies his bird in the Persian tale was nothing to it; I assure you I feel quite a child's delight in recollecting it, & quite as much admiration of the art as Mrs Royal when she saw the alabaster vase apropos of Mrs Royal she has written a book call "The black book" because I suppose she abhors every body with the most unqualified vulgarity, who would not buy her first book. I do not know which is most conspicuous in it, her absurd vanity & self conceit or indecent ribaldry & fishwoman pleniry, & having said all this I have not used language half strong enough to give an idea of this disgrace to womanhood & civilised society.

We had delightful weather coming down the bay & up James river, that grand beautiful bay & noble river, I sat on deck & admired them all day. In Norfolk we saw aunt Hackley just ~~just~~ long enough to kiss her & tell her good bye, she looks well, but poor Maria Wood wood! she looks ugly & miserable beyond any thing I ever saw, Lavinia Jane looks well & Harriet is very pretty. Richmond is a picture of ruin & desolation, the streets empty, the houses going to decay, the hot wind whirling the dust about, the sun scorching you & the dirt offending your eyes & spoiling your clothes every where without, but within I must say the houses are as neat as the yankee houses & the people so hospitable! so kind! The men so full of gallantry, real, native, respectful gallantry, never stepping beyond their own rank but ever ready exactly at the time & place & in the manner that their services are required, & the girls gentle, modest, apprehending & graceful & lady like, I had dwelt so long on the advantages that the people of New England have over us of their superiority in so many important points, that I began to think the little we had to boast of was but a chimera, a thing unreal & existing only in our imaginations, but the loveliness of nature in men as well as things inanimate struck me as much almost as the ruin & decay of all that depends on the exertions of man. In Richmond both Mama & myself were taken sick but coming up the country although we were fifteen hours travelling in the stage, we recovered as soon as we breathed our own mountain air. Mama has since been in better health than she has been this spring before. As we came up we saw some signs of a revival; in the stage with us was one of those industrious plebeians of Hooanna who is establishing a manufacture there, one of the manufacturers of the Union Mills, it made me glad to see the signs of prosperity & industry at that place. Mr Maquander had been to Boston twice lately & is going there again soon. He said he had not yet been able to persuade the women

to do the work, they consider it disgraceful to work as handlings & particularly in so public a manner.

At home we found sickness we did not expect, papa ill. I even threatened with drssey but he is very much better than he was a yester day was able to drive about in a single chair for several hours; his appetite too has returned. I was so shocked when I saw him looking so pale & haggard that I forgot every thing for the moment but the fitful feelings I used once to have so warmly, we never have seen him look as he does now. he is very uneasy about himself & seems to have softens towards every body. We go to see him every day & the life he leads now seems to suit him so well that I hope he will continue it, that is occupying the pavilion alone & receiving our daily visits. Aunt Clark's strength keeps up astonishingly & she does not suffer pain; her appetite too is usually exceedingly good & though she keeps her bed the conget up & even walk; yesterday she was much worse but I think it probable it was only a temporary change; to day she is better. the congeon & swelling is so shocking a looking place that I wonder any one can have it and live, it is as large as my fist & the inflammation extends all over her breast & chest; it discharges incessantly so as to keep her constantly wet, & the danger is of her strength & life itself being exhausted by this discharge. Poor old woman her life is not of value to any one but her death would distress us all exceedingly.

Nicholas health is bad & his spirits miserable; the life he is leading is a constant source of mortification to him yet he cannot decide what business to do, he is persuaded he cannot practice the law, I wish he would think the active life of a country lawyer isn't his health much better than the life of study & writing he leads.

I Betsy Gibbons have made a match, Miss Betsy Walker married a man named Michie & is now a widow, Rheinhart was married that idiot Catherine Illinois. Malvina French has had an offer of marriage & refused it because the gentleman was younger than her self; this is fact; the youngest sister, Martha French is certainly soon to be married. Robert Southard is dead & so is Mrs Randolph of Wilton. Miss Ind. Thomas is also dead & our neight our old Mrs Rogers of Belmont sprung ~~up~~ ^{up} in a fit of ~~snaps~~ ^{snaps}. Mary tells me since I wrote the above that ~~she~~ ^{she} was already told or most of the news.

1828

Cornelia. May 24. D. J.

Leaving from Philadelphia to Belmont
Mo. May 24. Mr Field of Ge. English
Miss. Capt. Hill. Richard. Good
men & hospitable & the intellects
of both lodgers fine.

Papa's health.

Dear Aunt
Boston Works!

Boston
Massachusetts

Original manuscript from the University of Virginia