

Washington March 1816

Your letter my dear Mother caused me a great deal of surprise and uneasiness. I received the letter containing the draughts four days after date, and wrote by return of post, to you, to acknowledge their receipt. by the mail after (which by the date of your last letter, left Washington the very day on which it was written) I enclosed the bank notes made up in two packets of different sizes and directed to Grand Papa in different hands. no precaution was spared to ensure their safety. I can truly say that I was not happy from the moment I received them until the business as far as it lay in my power was executed, until the notes were enclosed and in the post office. I tried very much to get notes of the Baltimore chartered banks as Papa thought they would suit him better, but I could not do this without paying a percentage upon them which he had given me no authority to do. the draughts were on the bank of Columbia which is considered one of the firmest in the District, and to which those Baltimore banks are indebted, <sup>are</sup> bearing in its debt.

By the same post which carried the notes I wrote to Papa; I had obeyed his directions, they were of the Columbia bank which after the Baltimore he preferred; they were of the number and size he wished, I carefully took down their numbers and letters, cut them all in two by a wavy line, enclosed them first to you and then under cover to Grandpapa; in short just as he had desired. — I enclose Gale's receipt, Milligan has not yet sent in his account although I called on him the day after I received your letter. he has not got Day's work on Political Economy but will if Papa wishes send or far it to one of the northern towns.

And now my dearest Mother I am going to do a thing without having time to consult you on it, which yet I hope you will not disapprove. George and Matilda Dallas with Miss Patten.

a friend of the family go on the day after to morrow to Philadelphia, I proposed accompanying them as far as Baltimore, when Mr & Mrs Dallas suddenly conceived that it would be the most eligible thing in the world for me to go all the way with them and thus take advantage of the opportunity for visiting the real capital of the country; they urged me so strongly, made use of so many arguments & entreaties, so many kind importunities, and were so warmly joined by the rest of the family, and all my friends, including Mrs Madison, that I dare <sup>not</sup> suppose myself to be prevailed on. the plan is this. at Baltimore <sup>we</sup> embark on board the steam boat which takes us in 24 hours to Philadelphia. I stay there a week, long enough to visit the Museum, Academy of fine Arts, Theatres &c. &c. avail myself of the protection of some of those numerous respectable persons always passing between Baltimore and Philadelphia, to return as far as the first; pay a visit of a few days to Mr Smith, & return to Washington, where I can write to my brother to join me, and then straight home, or by Richmond, as his business ~~and~~ may direct. to all the arguments made use of to induce me to adopt this plan I could only oppose. 1<sup>st</sup> going to a house where I was a stranger as George and Matilda Dallas will stay with their sister Mrs Bacha; 2<sup>nd</sup> the difficulty of returning to Baltimore in case there should be no one going that way whose protection I might avail myself of. these were readily answered, Mrs Bacha ~~not~~ only one of the most amiable but ~~one~~ of the most & intelligent women in Philadelphia, fond of society and gaiety will receive with the greatest pleasure a person invited to her house by her father, mother brother & sisters & accompanying the latter. Matilda and myself would occupy one room and one bed.

with regard to the difficulty of return, that was entirely decided, George and Matilda Dallas offered at once to return with me to Baltimore, and on my opposing this as being out of all reason, they demonstrated to me that between two such cities as Philadelphia and

Baltimore. I could never be in ~~want~~ fail to meet with protection of the most respectable kind. the expense ~~also~~ made me hesitate until by reflecting, on the rates of travelling I became convinced that this could not be great. my wardrobe is ample. my curiosity my eagerness to visit this celebrated city you may conceive. I have been told that those Philadelphians with whom I became acquainted here, carried away favorable impressions with regard to me which they have communicated to their friends & that I shall find many persons well disposed towards me. there is to be a splendid ball on the fourth of April, we shall just arrive in time for it. Matilda & myself have even arranged our dresses. hers is to be white guaze and mine, my pink crepe with the silver trimming which is very handsome. our heads dressed by the most fashionable piseur we calculate as looking "out and out (as Lady Llanberries say) very superb!" —

Now dear Mother what do you think of all this, and more what will Papa think of it. I feel secure of GrandPapa's approbation, but for him I could never have thought of it, for I should have had no means to execute the plan. he wrote to me to say that the sale of his tobacco afforded him an opportunity for amassing my "moyens de jouissance" and God knows how much they are increased. I was reduced very low, the money I brought with me had pittened away I knew not how. circumstances seem to have combined to ~~make~~ make<sup>my</sup> trip expensive. the 20 \$ thrown away by Harriet, the imposition of the Richmond Martine Bakers &c &c. I sometimes ask myself if the pleasure I have enjoyed can compensate in any degree for the pain I have suffered on this account, and I must still answer no, for there have been times when my happiness was destroyed by these <sup>harrowing</sup> ~~distressing~~ thoughts. they have lung round my heart, embittered every moment of the day and kept me awake at night. the privations of my family contrasted with my own selfish gratifications. the trust reposed in me violated, by spending in trifles the money which must be repaid for things of importance and which

cannot be replaced without new privations for you, or new distresses for my father. at least this visit to Washington has made me acquainted with the faults of my character, impatience, indecision, want of confidence in my own judgement & opinions with an absurd reliance on those of others; and a weakness which rendering me incapable of withstandng temptation, does not shield me from the bitterest self reproach for having failed where I should have been firm, let me add to all these a propensity to self reproach which makes me exaggerate ~~faults~~ <sup>errors that</sup> in my calmer moments tell me are unreal or altogether imaginary. I sometimes fear that this is in part produced by vanity, and is but one of the forms in which the monster disguises itself. that I should never do wrong, and that it is disappointed pride causes that <sup>natural</sup> bitterness of feeling when I discover that I am ~~more~~ prone to err than many who are considered my inferiors in point of understanding. — the new situations into which I have been thrown the ~~and~~ reflections I have been led to make, have made me better acquainted with myself than I should ever have become in the tranquility and monotony of a country life. there was so little to call forth my prevailing defects that ~~they~~ I might have remained, and ~~conscious~~ only at a ~~future~~ period unconscious of them until it was too late to cure them.

There are rather gloomy thoughts to be my travelling companions to Philadelphia, especially as I fear they may sometimes communicate a sullen sadness to my manners which may not be altogether agreeable to my light hearted associates, one of whom is as happy as youth & cheerfulness can make her, & the other going for the purpose of being united to a woman to whom he has long been fondly attached. I must banish them ~~as much as possible~~. one part of my task is easy, I can endeavor to think of faults which once known may be corrected, by time and exertion, but ~~however I remember~~ not of the expense to which I have put my father and Grandfather and for which you and my sister may now I grieve you in one of my

early letters or exact accounts of the manner in which ~~this~~ my money had been laid out, leaving in my hands \$80 ~~8~~, ~~which~~ <sup>this</sup> I have spent I scarce know how; a variety of trifling articles which I wanted, & many <sup>not</sup> which I could have done without; Mr Smith could get no silk stockings in Baltimore, and the ones he sent were some too small, some too large, only three pair that I could wear at all; the others I returned, except one pair <sup>that</sup> I gave Mr Todd. I bought one pair of silk stockings here, which with the two pair I got in Richmond have served very well. Mr Smith returned me 42 Ds. 7 of which I have spent and two I lost in the discount of a bad note ~~which~~ <sup>not</sup> I got, I know not how. 33 ~~D~~ <sup>this</sup> remained. ~~which~~ with the 100 sent me by Grand Papa constitutes my present stock.

I have written a very long letter and missed the post in consequence of it, of course you will not receive this until I have commenced my journey. Mr Madison sends his love to you and desires that you will enclose your letters for me, to her, and then put them under cover to the president. This will be the only way to ensure their safe arrival, as I shall be not long in any one place. He promises to forward them. If Grand Papa has any commands to Philadelphia and will write immediately, how delighted I shall be to execute them. I will try to procure Papa's book for him. Oh my dear Mother if I could only command funds to supply you with whatever you want, in Philadelphia where every thing is so cheap and so good. What a precious advantage is a command of money, if you could only send me a memorandum and a sufficient sum I would <sup>if</sup> necessary protract my stay to execute it. but alas I fear this will be out of your power, as it is, any thing within the limits of my little fortune, if you will only send me, I will get.

Hurried confused & incoherent as my letter must be, I have not time to write another. This has been the work of a day, I have

been several times interrupted by morning visitors. Matilda Dallas  
has been here and the second of April is fixed on for our departure.  
Adieu my dearest Mother, write to me immediately for your  
letters are always precious, with the most unalterable love.

your Daughter.

my letters meet no eye but yours.