

Philadelphia
9th August 1855

My dear Friend.

After a long, a very long silence, I address you – not that I did not long in this desire to write, had much to write about, or was not anxious to hear from you; who I truly call my best friend. I was deterred from writing by the multiplicity and importance of your engagements, the value of your time, and from the political chaos that we are now in.

The period of your return is near, and I stretch forth the hand of welcome from your old home, and invite you to the shades and rural tranquility of Wheatland; which I found a few days ago, in much the same condition as I describe it, this time twelve months. After your Exodus of labor and turmoil and fashion, you will be well prepared to enjoy its repose and its tranquility – yet, with all these anticipations of ease, our country and our people, require your services your judgement [sic] and your wisdom, more at this moment, than at any other period of your existence [sic].

I will not trouble you with politics yet I have a word or two to say. At Washington, the President does not get along well; and I cannot but feel, that he is indebted to Marcy for most of his difficulties. The removal of Govr. Reeder opens the box of Pandora, and acknowledges the fallacy of his the Presidents judgement [sic] in his appointment.

The Slavery question has assumed a grave aspect, instigated by Douglass in his Naliaska Bill, which has given a powerful accession to the abolition ranks. The Missouri line – (your old ground) has risen Phoenix like from its ashes, and is now more popular than ever. Your predictions to me on this subject years ago, I fear are about being realized; and the Union is in jeopardy [sic]. So far as I can read passing events, we are approaching a crisis when force alone will quiet the fanatics and suppress treason and perpetuate the Constitution. As to the ultimate result, I entertain no earthly doubt. The friends of the Union in the north alone will promptly come to the rescue; “the constitution must and shall be preserved” but I do not believe, that desirable end will be obtained without bloodshed, and perhaps laying fair cities in ashes!

These may again be rebuilt; but the Confederation and the Constitution, once destroyed- they can never, never again be reunited. Should it be my fate to die by violence, I would rather it would be in defense of this Government, under which we now live, than for any other cause I could possibly imagine. The proper tribunal to decide the case of Passmore Williamson would be, Judge Lynch– than whom, there are worse Judges on the bench– the Abolitionists are resolved to go to extremes & “desperate cases require desperate remedies”.

Know-nothingism is dying, but is not yet dead the Louisville mobs & murders will accelerate its downward progress. It is Whiggery under a new mask– only another of her Protean forms but her labors against Democracy are those of Sisyphus, and the stone ever rolls down the hill. Democracy is stronger and former and abler than ever. Her present difficulty is; who will be her standard bearer at the approaching contest. At this Epoch the country cannot have any more new hands, journeyman-statesmen or hero’s – a Sampson – a Cincinmatus [?] is required at the head of the state, and I know of but one man who is equal to the emergency and who appears reserved by the Fates for occasion.



The N. Y. Herald of the 26th ultimo contains a malicious letter from W- in relation to your interview, at your house, with Lord P- I have written a short, pungent & careful article upon the subject, exposing Lord P- love for America and sent it to the Herald. I do not know why it has not appeared, but I expect to see it daily. The feeling in favor of Russia grows stronger daily, and we pray, that in the hour of trials “the God of Battles may be with her.”

I sat down to write to a personal friend, about personal matters, and I have forgotten myself. To the advise of the late lamented Col: King and yourself, I am indebted for getting married. Such was your combined advice at your fireside in W- years ago, you were my confident than and still are. I wrote you from South America, that what I most coveted was a home, and I am now farther off from it than ever. My wife is amiable, kind & affectionate – she is all I could wish. I am now married over a year, and never has her Father once asked me, how am I living or how do I get along; nor has he evinced the slightest interest in either of us in any way, and she left his house almost destitute! Before we were married, he was all attention; since, all indifference – hard, cold & heartless as the iron pots he used to sell. I am stationed at the Rendezvous at Phila; and am miserably lodged in a boarding house, with my chamber for my office, my study and my parlor. George S. is a noble, liberal generous fellow. The Father of his family care for no one; and no one cares for them! Such a family circle does not suit my temperament, and I must abandon all my anticipations of home scenes and comforts, and return to old friends, old associations & old pleasures. I have grown too old to permit such treatment to [?] me; but I must resort to those resources within myself. God grant you health, and strength, and peace of mind; & may he soon safely restore you once more to us who love you as ever-

J. M. Foltz

Hon: J. Buchanan

