

Philadelphia
22nd Novr (Thanksgiving day)/55

My dear Friend.

During my last cruise you addressed me a most interesting letter from Wheatland on Christmas day. I now write to you on "Thanksgiving" to thank you for your long letter, so full of good advice, of the 18th Sept. What you say in relation to Mr. S. is full of wisdom, and I shall be glad if I live up to it: yet, there are daily instances of indifference and neglect, which would surprise you – but, I will let all this pass, and I am thankful that I have an amiable, affectionate & excellent wife.

Miss Harriet Lane is now at Lancaster and is in excellent health, and surrounded by troops of friends. I hear from many sources, ladies who have passed years in Europe, that she made more friends in England than any lady ever attached to the American Embassy. She has been an honor to our country; if I believe those whose opinions are most worthy of notice, and who are frequently most difficult to please; and this I have from sources both English and American.

Anxious as I am to see you and grasp you by the hand; yet I am pleased that you have been detained a little longer in England. In my opinion you proved more than a match for Henry Clay and Daniel Webster – and it appears, that you have now given Lord Palmerston such a blow under the fifth rib, that he will carry the effects of it to the grave.

The British Government and people have never before realized the importance and powers of America. The articles in the Times, in our clubs and reading rooms, are received with Roars of Laughter; and never has Punch been the cause for so much downright amusement. And yet, at the bottom lies a little truth; for if Jno Bull wishes it - he can get a fight out of us. A war with England would be the most popular war we could be engaged in, and the day on which the first gun is fired, makes all the Canadas ours. This would be to us, mere child['s] play. We would go into it merely for a "Lark". Poor old England! Shall we not ultimately be compelled to take her under our protection to save her from the French? but how can we "annex her" with her enormous debt? There lies the only difficulty.

Her statesmen do not yet know, that for many years we have been carrying on a civil war with her – capturing, on an average, 1000 of her best citizens a day, and, now that she wants them to fight her battles, they are gone! Neither have they been killed in our conquest- during the day they cultivate our lands, and at night they make children; & both with great success.

The only regret I hear is that Mr. Crampton was not dismissed; but, go he must. The British Squadron in the Gulf, is the cry of "stop thief" of the thief, caught in the act; and I can only tell you that we have had such fun out all this.

I am glad that you have been kept on this account, and also on some others; and trust that you will remain abroad until the severity of the winter and the stormy west winds are over.

If you were here, you would be annoyed to death by politicians. The People have taken the next Presidency out of their hands, and if you live; my conviction is, no one clique or set of men can keep you out of it. The people, and not your political friends, will place you there.



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I still believe that in 1844 (had you not declined) you would have been nominated & of course elected; but an overruling Providence has preserved you for a more important crisis in our country[']s history; and you will now occupy that proud position under very different circumstances. As I understand the case, you will have no man or set of men to thank for it, neither would you let it cost you a thought, not to get it. That is just the frame of mind you should possess when you take that seat, and all your actions, and all your efforts, and all your experience and all your wisdom will be directed to one end. The Public good – Each of the noisy little crowd, may think that they have done you much good; while in truth they have often done much harm. You will be placed there by the People, and not by politicians.

Forney is now fairly out for the U.S. Senate – and he is stronger in Penna at present than he ever has been. If Judge Black is not a candidate he F. may do well. Bigler it is thought is out of the question. The Dallas movement here is ending in smoke, and after some noise here at the convention he will make no show.

Please accept my thanks for your beautiful and wholesome letter; rest assured of the wave of laughter we have had over the war news, and remain in Europe until spring, and you will avoid storms in both the physical and political elements.

With the best respects of my good wife, and the benedictions of an old friend on your head, on this Thanksgiving day, I am with greats respect and esteem

your old friend & obt servt [obedient servant]

J. M. Foltz

His Excellency

James Buchanan
American Minister

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