

Camden & Scribble

13 Feb

75

Mrs. Margaretta Brown

Frankfort

Kentucky

My Dear friend

Our letters have really been playing a game at hide and seek, but they are all now in port and our uneasiness for detention must be at an end for they never arrive in less time than twenty one days after date either by the Washington or Mountain route. How shall I compensate you for your last communication? not by any thing I can write under present circumstances. You are sensible of the disadvantage which your want of acquaintances here necessarily imposes on me and altho' no pleasure commensurate to that conferred by you should result from my efforts to please you will know the wish was not wanting. I shall begin with the subject which must be first attended to when this reaches you you wish to oblige some that you love with squawks for bonnets, why then deny me a similar pleasure you say do not give yourself any trouble to procure them - in truth I did not, but now that I have them I am troubled for fear they will not answer the purpose, they are too yellow you see troubled - I must and will be until I can divest myself of those feelings which multiplied misfortunes have not blunted, and which

even now recoil from disappointment though it be presented in the shape of a squash. To obviate the difficulty I have enclosed you 50 seeds which you will plant immediately in a box filled with soil and sand mixed, the vine is exceedingly tender and must be protected from frost, after which they may be transplanted into ground lying fair to the sun observing to throw a little sand on every hill; the remaining process we will attend to in conjunction after my return which I now think will be in July next or at any rate in time to drop the fruit.

The misfortunes on the Niagara frontier are too tragical for us to dwell on, and from the present symptoms we have little <sup>hope</sup> to form the future operations in that quarter. Several of the Officers who served on the northern campaign have returned one of whom (Col. Darrington aid to Gen. Hampton) I have seen and conversed with, formerly he was devoted to this Officer but a total change in his sentiments has taken place, and he thinks him unfit to command; in cases of emergency or attack which ~~which~~ require promptitude and decision his energy fails and he is overpowered by anxiety for the result; he is intangible beyond insurance in fine a very Turk in disposition and of course he is despised by his men - he is now at his residence

thirty miles from this place, Sumner says he has predicted the downfall of our arms next campaign, are then American feelings do they comport with the obligations which the lowest grade of citizens owe their country? No! then how ~~can~~ <sup>can</sup> they be treasonable in a Major Genl. to injure the recruiting service. I was told yesterday by a man of the first respectability that he saw a recruiting Officer (who was at a Court house performing the duties required of him) insulted and treated with every indignity which a common enemy could have desired. Sumners acquaintances think he will not return to the north, they also think his <sup>with Wilkinson</sup> former collusion was not without its influence on the Campaign do not think me censorious I only give you the news of the times, and however incapable this man may be of sacrificing private enemies to the public good I feel much pleasure in this truth that there are many very many good and honorable republicans in this state who will be ready at their countrys call and who are truly represented by W. Calhoun their member of Congress whose speech on the Army bill you will have seen and seeing must admire.

I join with much sincerity in the wish that might even in an enemy might draw to its own

That distinction which would measurably mitigate the sufferings of unfortunate prisoners on both sides. There might be hope that Major Macdonald whose absence has long been deplored would be restored to his family and grateful country, great as his trials and calamities are his worth is still greater, and whilst reflecting on his present situation I feel how hard it is for fallen nature to acquiesce in the belief that what "is is right". You mention his exchange as having taken place Mr. Hanna also inform'd me of it and gave Genl. Taylor as authority, but it cannot be true Prevost's Genl. order of Decr. 12 leaves us little room to expect a speedy return; any intelligence on this subject will make me your debtor.

Doctor Campbell was doing better for his family than he ever had done and he has left you I will not say you have lost him for he who is too short sighted to lay hold on the wisest blessings of this life cannot be a proper guide to those who are in the pursuit of imperishable treasures the attainment of which requires humility perseverance and many acquiescences which I fear he does

not possess, as a reviewer of his conduct I am  
constrained to say that Old Archer was not a  
bad physiognomist when he pronounced him a  
crabbed crater. None of the earthquakes have  
been felt here which have shocked the Western  
country, but we are not without phenomena of  
an alarming nature, meteors common to all warm  
low countries have lately appeared here of a most  
prodigious size they are "big with portentous fire"  
and so much have they excited the superstition of the  
ignorant, that a <sup>short</sup> day before yesterday in this  
house, that about three weeks ago the Sun rose  
just at the dawn of day. Tell Mr. T. in all the  
wonders of the West I challenge him for a parallel  
to this. I have not yet been to Charleston indeed  
I now begin to doubt the possibility of our going.  
One of our cousins a very hearty young man was  
taken with an inflammatory disease which settled  
and produced abscess in his lungs his skill  
too low to walk across the room without great  
pain. I however entertain a hope that we may  
be able to accomplish the trip next month, when  
I will faithfully comply with my promise to Mr. Brown

I expect to hear that our enemies are not likely  
to succeed in their attempt to remove the seal of God.  
I was almost provoked with you to think you would  
give yourself any trouble in preparing for the  
entertainment of creatures: they would be more  
at home when eating fried Peas and Johnny cakes  
than all the soft corn you could give  
them, but interest demands a some sacrifice  
and as a good citizen you made it.

I was truly pleased to observe Thomas Armstrong  
on the list of prisoners sent to Quebec. His parents  
have now something to hope and are relieved  
from that torturing suspense so admirably described  
by Thomson, "The sad appearance of what I fear  
were joy to what I feel". Before I quit the Army  
subject I must in justice to Hampton tell you that  
Col. Darington thinks Wilkinson fit only to stay at  
home and drink wine - Not long since I saw  
Mrs. Chestnut she is in delicate health and worse  
spirit, every post she expects the news of her  
mother's death, she is in a dropsy which in her  
advanced age is a hopeless case. She requested  
me to present her best love to you. Her eldest  
daughter is a fine girl but a most uncomely  
figure, craving her pardon for the comparison

she is as near the make of my Fanny as any one  
I could name. she is nevertheless very quick ad-  
-mired - We are making great preparations for  
wedding on the 16<sup>th</sup> Inst. the eldest daughter  
family is to leave us for the protection of a very  
clever fellow, nothing can exceed the pa<sup>rt</sup> of  
wedding parties in this country the <sup>many</sup> idea of  
them fatigues me. but while cotton sells in  
Charleston for 14<sup>cts</sup> the Carolinians spare no money  
in their entertainments. you will perceive by my  
desultory manner that composition is not my  
object, in truth you must not expect a pretty  
y<sup>no</sup> from me I write much as old Dr. Cro-  
ghan does. Tell Eliza Love I regret my ab-  
sence from Kentucky more on her account than any  
other, although it was never in my power to render  
her special service I always felt a pleasure in  
spending a few hours with her, and my endeavors  
to cheer were frequently successful. I have had  
your last letter two weeks but waited to procure  
the inclosure, As your neighbor expects Mr. J  
writes me that Thomas is a fine boy and cannot  
well my anxiety is greater for his health at this  
time than for his education, I sincerely thank you  
for your kind attention to my feelings. <sup>this subject</sup>  
my best wishes to Mr. Brown and the children  
I freely give you my best love  
Eliza C. Turnbull  
9<sup>th</sup> Feb 7 1814