

in of course.

My piece for Boston reached him after the June number was sent up and in type. I immediately wrote him to return it to me or else not send it - publication at all. Father can't keep anything secret.

We have any quantity of water-bullies & Cart-tips. I take things very well - except the constant & depressing heat. This is an obstacle for vigorous exertion - takes the blood out of a man -

Hope your business are here with respect to Uncle V's intentions & to the Wallace Lane. It would suit me & mine - especially as a retreat where Legt. old should think to be the decline of life.

I must begin to fix up a speech for the Worcester meeting - know felt more at a loss but still hope for the best - will write you how Legt. along; much will depend on my appearance in this cause.

Believe there nothing more to add - with mine ever signed to be true on your side & love & duty. I am yr devoted brother

R. L. Wilson

June 30 1860

Back Home

R. L. Wilson

Long Oakes - June 30<sup>th</sup> 1860

Dear Wm,

I am in receipt of yours of the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. - noted its contents. Have nothing to say in reply to your observations with respect to our joint interest here except to express my regret at your inability - to adopt the conditions that forth in my letter. It may be that we shall be able to sell out to benefit this work, but in my judgment the property is well worth more than he will be either able or willing to pay for it.

Lazar with you in what you say as to the propriety of accumulating great fortunes, - but no one can feel at all at ease until he has secured an independence. This is all I desire, but there lies the rub that now without any responsibility - But if that your position should not have "elected" Woodford - I would have purchased an acre or perhaps united a house in Lexington set up in the best place at once as a lawyer, and in abandoning Lexington I should abandon the Profession. You will find Versailles possessing all the disadvantages of Lexington in a tenfold degree with none of its compensations. How do I think you will be content to renounce the Law - You will be quite as unwilling to give that up as you will be to keep an office in that little dog kennel of Uncle Williams very properly called it. But as to all this you must remain



the best judge. All I intend is to remark that you  
will never consent to practice Law at such a lo-  
cation in such a village - at ~~Barre~~ <sup>Barreilles</sup> - The cases must  
be eminently of the most dangerous & trivial  
character, as your associates law, judges represent.  
Should either be a Lexington Lawyer or a Woodford Farmer.

rather left for Luzas a few days ago.

Pheton was suffering with Chills, Fever and his eyes were seriously affected by the disease. I would not be surprised if Pheton & Gladie both returned with Father report the balance of the summer with us or at Uncle Arthur's where Father proposes making a visit. You know the way near Cooper's well - a celebrated watering place.

There are four or five more and seven cabins completed at Nagasaki Bay. There are about to put up no more cabins - so that there will be eight large cabins two rooms, in each, with good chimneys - enough I hope to accommodate all our people.

I will have a stable to hold twenty-five mules, a crib to hold a thousand bushels of corn - one basket & a heap to each. We have also a <sup>timber</sup> bridge ~~timber~~ across the Bayou - no light job - and put up a Circular saw mill. Moreover there is a brick shed to hold a million of brick and finally the sugar house - not to speak of good, cabins, stables, & cribs. - in place of these I am now putting up. We have an engine & boiler second hand; it may cost us three hundred fifty - dollars to have it - put in order.

Now if you were not building at Westford 'd



Imperial right - The foreign my so then measure potatoes.  
The foreign from the Rhine Island the - empty - but the better  
clear of all the world find itself an almost interest under the  
flag of the country - the - we want more land - by the census we  
had only six hundred thousand - now 4 million - in 1870 - you then  
will be 14 million - we now have 8 hundred thousand square miles of land  
- 1870 - you know - we shall want more than that in 1880  
- while before you a synopsis of my speech - There is nothing like  
the study of facts - to give the rest of them before the people.

I will write you again in a few days -  
just as soon as I have of three days. Can any of them  
write? Sometimes think they are concealed from  
knowing the return of Father to see if they can  
remain here will come in two or three  
returned - but I know that my to it is  
my duty to notify you -  
I'll say that Mexico will be full of the  
time she comes down this winter.

With sincere affection for you both

Your brother

R. L. Gibson

July 18 1880

Carl's house

R. L. Gibson

Los Oaks July 18<sup>th</sup> 1880

My dear Frank

I think I wrote you a few days previous to  
"our settlement" at Saginaw. Last year large double cabins  
with good brick chimneys and very comfort - a real country house  
and a nice Cook Kitchen - with brick train of Halls - everything  
perfect under the circumstances, that we could expect or desire.  
Moved all hands up on Saturday - two days ago - and have  
now got to regular work - have done a good deal of fiddling -  
made a good potato patch & cut down about thirty acres  
of land - we shall have a superb corn crop & the cane is  
excellent.

I am sorry to tell you that two of your boys wished  
to go up there with the rest, disappeared and we got  
thence been unable to find their whereabouts. Frank's  
boys - they told him the day they left - that they did not  
intend to move again - that they had moved once - and  
that they were not going to Saginaw. It was not until  
the next day that we began to suspect that they had  
run away - not finding them at Saginaw we concluded  
they were still here but we have not seen them  
either on the Oak or Greenwood. I know Frank & he  
is one of them by sight - as he was sick several  
days before leaving & I attended him - I am not  
sure that I would know Dudley - neither of them  
has ever had any difficulty - both are good characters



There taken all the measures necessary to secure them; but it is strange that 2d not two of them. I have notified the officers in the parishes of Assumption and Ascension - Lafourche - and advised I wrote as well that they will be apprehended - as likely as that their flight was to reach the river river to go up it a fugitive very much that is, disquieting a circumstance has occurred - from reports all seem to feel that in case they should be displaced and that they are again to return to Ky - most of them are excellent subjects and I sincerely trust may believe themselves properly secured from attempting to run away and had been informed in time could avoid some mistakes there - but it occurred as we were moving - and by oversight did not get them there all by sight for indeed did I - there not heard the first complaint on the score of accounts, debts, clothing, food, maintenance - & provisions Saturday afternoon

Further returned yesterday - but before he wrote you from Paris is sent your letter to him there -

There have been politics in Ky & we are entering the little one. On Saturday last we had a big meeting in Horns - & Island of the City. I rode & I each spoke one hour - I made one of my successful efforts - with the exception that I did not have done my voice as much as I should in the open air - I did not find this - economize your voice from

the start some your strength in your open air speeches - It was very hot and despite over a hour - I am pretty well satisfied with the speech but I don't think I produced the effect I sought. The fact was a rejoicing of the audience, even Ball & Cornwell here - However, my speech was well received and has begun a revolution here - in favor of State Rights - and in my favor - I expect to speak in St. Louis, Lafourche - in the City - and shall do all that my pen or voice can, to give this State to the Party of Equal Rights - I think we shall carry this State by about eight thousand over Douglas & Bell - even should they combine - I mean hope but we are hundred dollars that is each one of the following states will would beat Pickens - Missouri, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, North Carolina, Arkansas - that the but a what do you think of it? Doug is a very different man since the infliction of my speech from what he was before - but we know how you like my article in the July no of De Bow's Review. - wish you had been here to criticize my speech the other day - but we can do this unpleasant task without offending and the criticisms generally are worthless - hope your executive committee furnish you documents - and your representatives - I have no duplicates but I will make our Committee read you some - Hammond, Folsom, Mason & Davis - in the order in which I place them have made able speeches - and then old Buckle you see gives us a last benefit - his last appearance - I don't see how you can fail of having a plenty to say - especially on our view of



R. L. Gibson  
July 30 1860

July 30<sup>th</sup> 1860

My dear Head,

I am in receipt of your note of the 23<sup>rd</sup>. - I have already engaged for the balance of this year a very good messenger - who finds himself in any thing & receives thirty five dollars a month - and should he continue to do well I shall keep him next year. However until our improvements are pretty much completed I could not afford to take a raw hand. In the sugar business experience is every thing and at this point in our affairs especially I need a competent manager. Perhaps I might find a situation with Tatters - as in a few months it will all be plain sailing with him. We can't afford to keep a man imported fresh from Ky. -

I have just returned from the Mayor's where I have been to address the Democratic at Franklin - the issue of the contest is somewhat doubtful in this State but the chances are altogether in favor of Breckinridge.

When you have once broken the ice you



will find stump speaking an easy matter.

I would warn you to speak plainly - hold on to facts - and dwell on State rights - attempt no splurges - or if any at all - let them be few and well directed.

The Corn of the Mississippi is here equal to and all else in this Southern Country - the crops over there are indifferent - the corn crop almost a failure & the cane poor. The Lucking have had fine rains and Father's crop may be said to be truly magnificent - there never was such a corn or cane crop on Mississippi - or there is this season.

Blair's Palfrey is here paying me a visit.

Have not quite as much before the people as I was did in college before the students.

Love to Mary -  
For affectionate brother  
R. L. Johnson.

P. S.

Father wishes to know whether Mr. H. or Sister has paid the money due Uncle William? He has no knowledge as yet in what way the Father large sum is to be disposed of in these tight times.

He desires me to tell you to keep David by all means not to give him up. He is busy sending Beulah to Miss Evans.



to be refused - until I get my head - above water once - just  
to see how a man feels. Of course the year after - the year we  
build - we shall be immersed again & stand on the old bottom  
head & any under.

Well you see - I am debating in the political world - I get along  
pretty well - as long yet - of the old or young stagers - appears to  
do much better. The well to do people but for the next best - I have got the  
inside - the politicians - that is the oligarchy - I have got the  
people - I have them away from them and I have got the Court  
circles - by speeches got the people - the minor circles the Court knights -  
I have not let myself out yet - I am looking up for the divine sketch - then  
Schell put whip upon - But Bill Thorne is one the majority - in  
the district - and I have I should be kind of nominated - I am certainly  
would be. There is quick, coming, indications - selfish - accommodating -  
at looks, depth - arguments - and looks for effect in speaking; but  
altogether he is in ordinary man. In P. Miller is also in the field -  
and John Oliver. - They all have to pick up a little flesh, jump a  
little further - else at this pace - I get the people.

I am going to address the young men's club of New Orleans upon invitation at the Odd  
Fellows Hall - It will be a brilliant occasion. I am prepared however to stand or fall  
on the judgment of the right kind line of public opinion. - I have had a fine meeting here  
a fine meeting in St. Louis - a tremendous meeting in the City - I had one at  
Lips the week - and then I spoke at Richmond & I have recently under  
order of the Central Committee. Our committee at Washington have invited me  
to Congress Room & had J. J. - but I can't afford to go so far -  
I have asked you the day before.

My warmest love to Mary the whole day -

Yours affectionately brother

090105 hms R. I. E. Brown.

R. I. E. Brown  
Sept 10

San Francisco August 10<sup>th</sup> 1880

Dear Father

Thank you for your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> about  
two months; and if long wait when I had time to communicate  
I would need seldom take my pen in hand.

We shall send by the middle of Sept. a few more letters - almost  
half dozen - wrote to you to know what they could be  
bought at in N.Y. and on what time - which you would  
let us know if I then can decide whether to get them there  
or here.

Recently we have had a plenty of rain. The cane crop here is  
splendid - I have seen a fine crop. The corn crop is turned out  
to be excellent. My father's best the Bayou is now - and the  
cane there is superb. One of three small cattle places between Bay-  
e-Bayou is the sold 20<sup>th</sup> next month - of course we shall have  
to buy it - and as you suggested I shall see Banner about all  
his property now as I. Perfectly - has advanced to put this pro-  
prietor land. We could easily get fifty dollars per acre for hay-  
raising with \$150. one - but we could make no better investments  
now more productive - none so secure. But we shall have an  
immense deal of building to do.

Suppose Father wrote to you of old John's death. I brought him  
down here a week before he died - indeed I kept there Sept all



if your people pretty much down here. Old J - said in spite of a good  
lungs, a good liver, a good appetite, good digestion & good attention.

His system sank apparently in if the general vital forces, weakened and  
gone away & ceased to operate - without any disorder or disease.

Our climate you know, at this season, keeps a well & vigorous man  
on his back pretty much all the time.

We are going about - there cleared about eight or ten - and shall clear  
fifty more at once. - Then there will remain fifty more to cut  
down on the other side the Bayou.

There is not this not been a single case of sickness among my hands  
for a week - you see what acclimation amounts to. Two of the little  
negro children are very ill at present - but I think they will come out.

We shall have plenty of corn & provisions. What about Pork?

Should you have something, you might see what we could get with  
your supply at - Suppose we shall want forty or fifty barrels - according  
to the increased price of the price. Send some of your friends to the field.

I would like to send my boy Frank to spend a year or so on your farm  
or at Humphreys. He is a old invalid - and a change of climate  
might do him good - has no specific disease.

Let me hear from you on these points. Right and this, says boy  
to you suppose by express - to Lexington.

These summer are my boy & trying. Hope after next summer to  
be able to go away. My father will be then pretty much established.

Sanctipete putting money in my pocket next year - we ought to  
make about ten clear & free - then thousand - but by mind can't  
get that idea into it. I have so long lived on debt, in debt, under

debt and around debt - that I begin to feel it would be too great  
medical a change, to know it as more. But intend to go

P.S. Not around to my mother's residence. There was a lady & a man - self to make



Considerable help. However, should these three candidates unite in the Northern States, they would be stronger against Lincoln than any one of them would be singly; because a part may well vote for any possible vote for Hall & Douglas, who otherwise would vote for Lincoln. That after all what seemed to be unlikely is, but for us.

I would do anything to secure the election of McKimridge. It would annihilate the Republican Party - not a branch. It would give our Party the ascendancy in this State & District - while otherwise it will continue even - Both then for the good of the Country - and the good of this Party, I would like to see him in the White House.

Make your first speech in Louisville - and make it - quiet - before the 5<sup>th</sup> of Sept - else you will have to keep the back seat. I sit on your own back as I did here - don't wait for big meetings - at such you will always get the worst places, being preceded by men of high reputations, and you will come home that place - position or anything, to the popular orator. You must make yourself first, in your own circle, before you go beyond it. Your reputation should always precede you. However, by appearing several times on small occasions you will gradually gain confidence & force.

The general health is very much better than it was a few weeks ago - The number of sick constantly diminishing. Now I had about two weeks to spend at Kentucky - Next season I want to spend the month of August there.

Tell your men in town to keep the boys

Your brother affectionately

H. L. Wilson.

0281-1800

W. C. C.

W. C. C.

Lincoln Aug 31<sup>st</sup> 1860.

My dear Frank,

As the season of summer work is now drawing to a close and we are about to begin the operations for the Fall and winter, it is well enough for us to take a new reckoning. As the first place you have not answered any of the business points suggested. How about Pork? I think if we can get our Pork on better terms, that it would be wise to buy it in Louisville or Cincinnati in New Orleans. How about mules? We shall want about an half dozen - and would prefer well broken mules, to young ones, provided, they were not too old. Had an opportunity to buy as many as wanted the other day at \$165, - payable a year hence in the Northern Bank, but not having heard from you I was obliged to wait. I don't know that another such opportunity will present itself. Father bought one dozen. These being finished the clearing and are now busy with the corn - and as soon as I shall be finished gathering the corn, I ought to begin planting cane, and then had not tell you we shall want all the available force we can catch & escape.

I am going to burn off the clearing before planting, - so that I shall not begin until about the 25<sup>th</sup> of Sept. Write you about the improvements - we have also fencing, & ditching the in abundance to do while we are planting cane. While doing this we ought to burn six double plows, one wagon, one cart and one ox cart - requiring seven mules - and then the hard cart makes twenty. With a full force and management, there is nothing to prevent our making



these lumbered off to the sugar, which with the tobacco  
will be worth about thirty thousand dollars. - so that  
we ought to press forward with energy. It is a great  
point to get the cane planted and the ground ditched this  
Fall. Then there will be no danger of the loss of the seed  
cane. Here is a list of our stock and horses - with their ages - Baptiste  
18 years old. - George 12. - Henry 20. - Johnson 30. - Dan 19. - Linn 30. - Peter  
26. - Sam 30. - Thaddeus 32. - Thomas 45. - George Pie 19. - Hank 27. - Baha  
15. - Hermit 19. - May 22. - Lucinda 21. - Clara 45. - Becky 25. - Bert 16. - Julia  
19. - Amelia 18. - Emma 7. - Josephine 5. - Clara 3. - Amanda 2. - Oscar 4. - Lewis  
5. - Jeff 4. - Helen 2. - Lou 15. - and then an young Charles, Henry, Dudley, Mark  
Richard, Jim Fy, Thomas. George. May 18. - I should have never been  
sick - and by and by laid himself up with "colic" and is slowly  
recovering. The rest have been laid up nearly all the time  
since the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, undergoing acclimation, some seriously but  
all of them more or less sick. Two of them are still staying  
here - 2 do not intend to move them up again until the middle  
of Sept. - but they like the rest complain of the heat, general  
debility - and a lack of chile & fever, about once a week -  
weep thin & shabby white washings. After this, they may expect  
to enjoy good health. - They are all perfectly contented.  
I give them out coffee every morning and flour on bread - besides  
they are gathering moss and setting up for themselves. The general  
health of this part of the Parish, was never so bad.  
We have eleven mules - 1 wagon - a mule cart - an ox cart - a  
hind cart - two yoke of oxen. - As you see we need mules -  
six or seven. The horses you send everything down the river. A good  
hick now is worth two in the winter and four in the spring.  
However, we shall have to look to make best spring and a horse now

the Bayou - being to put up a new mill - after Shadwin and  
keep it running until all our improvements are completed. Sept 6 -  
say that we had big plans.

We reach for our business - which in the order of things - must always  
come first. Father has a splendid crop. I predict that the gross  
income of this crop will reach one hundred thousand dollars - strike  
off twenty for expenses - though that is an overestimate - as he says  
fifteen will cover all. His sugar business can't be overestimated  
I have very good property, as coes - as limes - as overflows - as  
worse out soil.

Suppose you see what we all see, in the political journals. Let  
me suggest to you - to take the New York Times - and the Richmond  
Engineer. We get the Statesman regularly and want you to continue  
it. I had sent to you the New Orleans Courier. Had you know what to  
say about the election. I think they ought all three - to unite in all  
the Free States - if so, this would probably secure the election of Breckin-  
ridge. I must confess I can't see into the millstone. If it were not  
for Douglas' rule or ruin policy - Breckinridge might be elected  
by the people - whether he will, in spite of it, is extremely questionable.  
I would not be surprised if Douglas withdrew from the contest, towards  
the close, in favor of Bell.

I am about beginning the canvass, of certain portions of this State,  
under orders of the State Central Committee, with C. L. McLean.  
I am going to the City to make arrangements and appointments.  
We have a Rehearsal at L'Anse-au-Loup on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept and a  
ill may's on the 27<sup>th</sup> Sept. Douglas has no strength in the  
State - he will carry, by the conduct, three parishes, L'Anse-au-Loup  
Acadian & Acadian; - but he will cripple Breckinridge  
or in other words help Bell elsewhere - just as Bell's



I forgot to tell you what a splendid looking fellow Duncan is -  
I have quite a collection of photographs and one of him  
already - but will add this one to the number with great  
pleasure. I think you & Mary had better agree to let  
me have one of your boys - ask her what she has  
to say to this proposition? How old is sister's boy -  
about two years older than Duncan is he not?  
I am told he is a very handsome boy. Is it the  
fashion for boys to wear such long hair - they don't  
look very soldierly with it. I believe I have written to  
you several times lately and shall expect soon to get some  
letters from you. How is Lode? What does he propose  
to do in these times of confusion & trouble?

Let me hear from you. R.D.S. -



R. L. Libson  
Oak Point  
Sep 1<sup>st</sup> / 860

Line 666 Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1860

Dear Frank,

This boy Frank has been complaining so long that I have concluded to try a change of climate. I can't say what is the matter with him. He spent two months last Spring in St. Louis Hospital and was pronounced cured but when he came home, it turned out that there had been only an apparent change. Get a Physician if deemed proper, to examine him and put him on Boardland, or if your accommodations don't suit, hand him over to Hermann's Trust. I think a change of climate, and, vit-das will effect a cure - It appears to me that he has ~~chronic~~ chronic dyspepsia combined with some derangement of the liver. Is what you can for him.

Yours brother sincerely  
R. L. Libson.



What is the great principle at stake in the equal rights of the States. That is the principle. We ask for non intervention of Congress & of the territorial Gov. - the right of Congress. If we can intervene then the other case. We say, Land off. We say that neither Congress nor the territorial Gov. can prohibit or establish slavery in the territories. That is our platform and our doctrine. We then assert it to be the duty of the Gov. to protect among others, the right of property. When the right - so written, in what it may be lodged - has been once ascertained & recognized, it is the duty of the Gov. to guard it against invasion. That does not, in my judgment include a slave code, any more than a slave code involves the doctrine of State rights, is the only doctrine that can secure peace to our country and stability in the Gov. our Party will survive a triumph or defeat. So others can, unless it be the Republican. Douglass has no strength & Bell has none. Buckle & Co. will carry this State and nearly all but two of the Southern States. You ought to come out at once. Now is your time to join the ranks of the great State rights Party - which in the end will be successful. I will send you in a few days the outline of one of my speeches to show you how that the subject.

Live Oak Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 1860

Dear Host,

I got your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. To write a simple business letter seems an immense undertaking with you, why don't you get a good broad sheet of paper and a good pen - and write to the point and in full, as you would talk; - you are as pained, cabined, cither & confined, as if you were entangled in any thing. I ought to hear the additional arguments while not get here before the middle of Oct. - This work is all important with us - Tell plowing & Tell planting. However, they ought to come down, so as to get themselves comfortable before the cold weather puts in.

You might use my name in Bank by adding your own proving on New Orleans. I could send you my name, if you would, enclose me bills & blanks and name the amount. In this way, you might raise all the money you need.

You speak and have spoken several about borrowing two or three thousand dollars, for a term of years. It is as well to ask if I can use the money. My lettered employ one hundred thousand dollars, in three days, so as to make four or five per cent clear, over & above eight. But borrow the money, if you can. - I ought to be able instead of making your legs into pork would it not be better to make them into



Lacon. By all means keep enough for your own  
consumption. It will require close management  
to make it pay to furnish even yourself  
here in meat.

I sent my negro man Frank to you a week or more  
ago. I don't know his ailment: Dr Stone & Richard  
don't pronounced him cured. but it appeared  
about being to be true only technically. I think  
he has something like chronic dyspepsia - but  
him we thank and - a change may accomplish  
what medicine has failed to do. Wish you  
would see that he is properly clad, as to shoes & socks  
flannel.

The health of Margaret is better. Your boys  
have nothing now but a touch of child fever  
once in awhile - whenever they expose themselves.  
We have finished clearing on this side and have  
a little more than half done on the other. There  
is perhaps ten days work to be done. But everything  
is that being pushed now. The cuts & stables will  
be completed in three or four days when we  
shall gather corn & hay with might and main.  
Then by the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct we ought to begin to plow  
& plant. and I repeat that every good day's work  
done this fall, will be worth two after Christmas.  
It is eating healthy the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct and if possible all  
our active capital, ought to be brought into efficient  
work. We ought by all means to get the cane, in  
the ground. The seed may spoil. We ought to make

ten thousand a piece, each of all expense - but all depends upon  
getting the crop planted and ditched. Eight more, full strong hoes  
will do us until next fall when we will need about  
five more. We have had splendid weather for our work  
and since we began at Niagara and it is a pity we  
have not had trouble the forge. There is one thing you  
ought to recollect, it is this: never send my negroes into  
this climate in the spring. The fall is the best period of  
acclimation. The system gradually adapts itself, adjusts  
itself, to the meteoric elements, in our atmosphere.  
It had not come so long with your negroes, had they come  
here in the fall. Should he send eight hoes, you had better  
buy one, on our account we will then have nearly the  
number we shall require. However I can get it done  
by doing me constantly passing row a year or so.

Believe this truly much as I have, our business affairs.  
Now as to Politics I have a few words to say. You will  
find it easier - after your first speech - when you  
have broken the ice - to speak before the people than  
it was to speak in college. You must cease to look on  
both sides the question. Adopt what appears to you  
best and stand up that thoroughly - and then you  
may become an advocate of real reformation.

Now I differ from you altogether as to the  
expediency of breaking ground now. This is the  
chance time. Now this chance, and you will  
have to wait for four years more, for a  
like chance, of equal dignity and importance.



Should you attempt a speech in the open air, econo-  
mise your voice - don't let it out until the last.  
I don't see how you can hold in. You know I  
never talk Politics and believe I should burst  
if I did not speak. If you had to speak to one  
of our audiences - there might be some  
excuse for silence - but to have the chance  
of talking to the old leaders of Clay, Marshall  
&c - I don't see how a man could restrain him-  
self. You will never get over your res-  
tiveness, until you break the ice once.  
Go down to Woodford, call a meeting, get  
up in the Court House and deliver yourself -  
that is the way to do - that is the way I did here.  
I put it right through - when there was hardly  
a man present - wanted me to make a good speech  
& there four or five were bitter opponents.

Don't write out your speech - prepare as you  
would for Society - in College - divide up and  
head off the speech - and write a little. A  
great deal, depends upon a genial, calm, con-  
ciliating, gentlemanly - opening and then going  
deeper & closer to the subject and sitting down the  
moment, you get through. I make strong Union speeches.  
Tell me something about John Bucknidge's  
style & manner. I wanted to hear particularly  
about his speech.

See Robt - is busy at it - sent him a condensed  
outline - as published - of what I said in New Orleans



But the fact was, there was such a crowd - so much  
noise & confusion you couldnt hear your own voice.  
And old Mr. Brai Thwait jaded the audience out  
and that to give them precedence being old slavers.  
But my friends, were highly pleased with my  
speech - I was not - nor could have been, as  
my position was bad. Our meeting was a grand success.  
Letter Rip called it a regular "bang starter"

Expect to do a good deal of speaking between this  
 & Nov 6<sup>th</sup>. I am going to do what I can for our Party.  
 Why don't you join Robt- Buckinridge or some  
 one, in his appointments. There is nothing like  
 practice. You ought not hold back, as you did  
 in College; now is the time to go forward. The  
 sooner the better.

Must - now close -

Love to Mary & John

R. L. Egan

It is easier to raise money here, by drawing on his payable  
next summer - than it would be to draw at six months on  
New Orleans; in the one case, the amount would fall against  
this year's crop - which is nothing; in the other, it would  
be paid out of next year's crop - which ought to  
turn out something. Credit is simply a gain of time.

Keep me apprised constantly of the status quo - depending on getting the 8 under time of 15<sup>th</sup> Oct at furthest, we might find ourselves - minus them altogether & the opportunity of getting them. Have every thing sent down - just as soon as you can. Every day after the middle of this month, is a heavy loss.



in economy. All by visions of wealth are gone - should we  
keep in sight by debt, plantation improvement &c. will  
absorb the revenues of fine crops, for time years -  
should depend little or nothing myself -  
However, expect this is for the best. Often regret that what  
there is not imitated elsewhere. There are already accumulations of wealth,  
the population is isolated exceedingly material, - there is nothing to  
exalt ambition - being extremely expensive - and the life I am confined  
to, unfit for family residence and then the life is not much better.  
You are better off in Ky. - a fine people, healthy climate, good schools - an  
organized society. I would prefer to be in California or New York - some-  
where, among a people not reduced to a low state of materialism - outside  
class. Our climate is killing and society without resources, and unless  
we have the fortune, he is not much - to make money being the  
occupation of most men justly.

Speak pretty often and when before an audience do pretty well.  
Do you get the Gleaner - I have not yet been apprised that it has  
reached you - though I informed you that I sent it to you, several  
weeks ago - Leppan is one of the best - speakers in the State.  
Buckinridge will camp the State. How will the election be  
in Ky? - The impression here is that B & L may still carry the State.  
Has Randall Higgins come in by this summer? What has become  
of Briggs? I expect you will do in politics as you did in  
College. I wish I had a chance once to speak to  
a Ky audience - You ought to try your hand at least -  
half dozen times - Once only will be a trial. You can't do  
well without practice - Write again

Love & sister Mary and to Mary  
John brother R. L. Gibson.

Sine Oak Oct 19<sup>th</sup> 1860

My dear Ned:

I have again received one of your letters,  
but would really like that you should try to tell me something  
to the point in the next one you write. Twice you  
have mentioned large sums of money that could be borrowed.  
Was all that waste? Do you know whether or no a  
Negro man trunk belonging to me, has reached Ky - I sent  
him to your care - have you ever received him?  
If so, please let me know, as to the fact, and let me  
further know if you can, with proper or strength  
or something don't give out - what was what is  
his condition. A few words on business, would  
always like to get from you in receipt for the  
full & detailed letters I have written. On all other  
subject you are equally vague or silent. No  
probable nothing to say - about the chances of candidates -  
two slight & contradictory conjectures - about him a rapid  
attention - Why can't you write a letter - not a  
punctured note, as if everybody in your reach were  
starving for news of any kind and it would bring on  
universal famine, to dispense an iota of the precious  
publication. Are you or are you not going to keep  
Tennell. If not what can be got at? Do you  
ever hear of a man living in Ky by the name  
of William Kent? - if so, how is he & where has



be there for the last six or eight months?  
As much for questions and suggestions - for your  
consideration.

Should you be unable to settle Venezuela as  
agreed it will necessitate a sale. Property has  
been going steadily down since it was decreed  
that the South was not united - but refused  
in part to stand unanimously for her right.  
Had she rallied under Buckinridge, whether in or  
out of the Union all had been secure; but the  
support Bell & Douglass is receiving has had a  
most disastrous influence upon all our interests.  
Negroes are already two hundred dollars lower per head -  
and as the chances of Lincoln's election increased  
they decrease should he be installed Southern  
property of all kinds will diminish in price  
more rapidly than it has increased for several  
years past. There is at present absolutely no  
demand for property of any kind, money is scarce  
tight. Capital is being rapidly abstracted from the Af-  
& Southern investments & securities. The prevailing feeling is  
that should Lincoln be President - Southern Col-  
lateral property is doomed; - and consequently as in  
Cuba though its incomes may continue, high &  
large, its value will surely decrease from want  
of the safeguard of protection, property elsewhere  
enjoys. There is no hope of settling Venezuela. Nobody  
wants to put their money in this kind or any kind

of property in this section. The tendency will be to carry all  
valuable household furniture and the South will become, virtually  
a mere tributary Province of the Great Northern Confederacy of  
free & equal States.

The storm may overshadow in the extreme. Her loss cannot be  
less than one fourth or one third should we escape any  
further accidents. There is no question about his business  
that I prefer to keep as much in ignorance of it as possible  
without offending, by going to the opposite extreme. I think  
he expects to be ready next week. I very seldom go into the  
field or know what is going on either here or at Sanborn.  
Oft a deep interest but our personal relations, forbid me  
to know it beyond a prescribed limit. I would advise  
you not to have much to say on that head. It only affects  
will be, to create unpleasant feelings, on this point.

I am going ahead at Mayaguez - putting up and came  
proposing either to go to planting or to come down here  
during the winter. The weather has been cool and we have  
had several frosts. All kinds of sickness has been banished.  
Should you not be able to send negroes, we will have  
time to discuss what is to be done after Christmas. It puts  
me back any much & causes heavy loss to us both.  
I had expected that we would have forty hands at  
work up there. You know how the value of my  
negroes on a cash basis - and if I can't make income  
I must sell them or land to pay the debt.

There long since given up the idea of ever being rich.  
I begin too late and with too little, ever to do more  
than pay the expenses of a pleasant bachelor life - guided



be made even it not for the slave system and by  
geographical position in this Parish. The slave on for  
me but Ende thy so for first - being to an ultimate  
personal friendship of two years standing. I can't get over  
that, but thank God - time will conquer all. -  
If we only had a true people - a people that could  
see, but some think feel - our politics would  
yield to outside pressure - but now it is all intrigue  
- a few men office holders office seekers - about this  
Parish town - control every thing.

It is quite cool here. It must be cold in Ky -  
Write all right - Love to Mary &c  
James Estlin  
R. D. Estlin

Oct 16<sup>th</sup> 1850

Oct 16<sup>th</sup> 1850

R. D. Estlin

Swi Oak Oct 19<sup>th</sup> 1850

Dear Wm,

After reflecting upon the contents of your  
last letter it has occurred to me that perhaps you yourself  
had written in too great haste, having hurried to conclu-  
sions, which I hardly feel prepared to accept, as final.  
Under the circumstances, I think we should postpone any  
action until the matter is absolutely and definitely settled.  
And if this be in a way that you find no reason to  
anticipate - in violation of an understanding, why  
after winning the force on hand, why could you not  
borrow the money you have frequently spoken to me  
about and invest it in tobacco. This would absorb what  
otherwise would be clear income, but it appears to me that  
you might manage to get along on your farm and  
with the use of credit.

I think it will be difficult for us at this crisis in  
public affairs and during this season, to find a purchaser.  
The next season will put it out of your power to buy  
and there has been so far no demand - no capital looking  
investment in this kind of property.

Should the worst come to the worst then we can determine  
what to do. I am of course ready to assent to any plan  
you have to propose if it be at all practical.  
There is no wisdom in anticipating unreasonable  
contingencies. Suffering until the day is the evil thing.



we shall be obliged to put up a land mill - and altogether our expenses will not be light, seeing as they will have done over two years work when a crop is made - and on a bad place very thing is to be paid for - from kites & flowers up to the houses themselves.

I am putting away the cane - shall not be able to plant this fall - my force will be required here. Should rather not be able to begin to make sugar. The season is very favorable at present, weather being cold and dry - but our loss must be paid by frost - yet unless all things change.

No one can foresee what is to be done in the event of Lincoln's election. There is a general feeling of uneasiness - I am favor of waiting until the South shall unite and then she will be safe in or out of the Union. Whenever that period arrives I am in favor of restoring the Government after the fashion of the German Confederation - giving mutual vigor and permanency to the Confederate feature of its organization, and both limiting and defining more closely the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. Unless this can be effected, I am then in favor of separation and of the establishment of a Southern Confederacy in the mode I have suggested. It must be settled at the outset that the General Gov is a mere league - an umpire - the creature of the States. For the accomplishment of one or the other of these purposes I am in favor of a Convention of all the States - we must avoid revolution -

civil disruption - bloodshed; - this can be done only by an Union of the South which will at the same time prevent precipitate action, on the part of certain States and ensure a more of submission on the part of others. An Union of the South is peace, is confidence, is safety for Southern rights interests - in or out of the Federal Union. Any partial movement will be unsuccessful and disastrous in the extreme. We must have Union at home else submit to all the evils that must befall a conquered, abject people - deprivation of honors of property, of right of all kinds - an utter demoralization of moral, political, material interests. That must be the result. The great object then - the patriot's hope - is to unite the South.

We are still carrying on the campaign. I shall not be able then to carry this Point in the Congressional Convention should one be held. I am the favorite in other Points or could make a good stand and could carry the City, but the clique at Horner is phlegm for Evarts and seeing that my prospects are brightening, are already in the field for him. I am like a man coming in Junior Pros and competing for the 1st Presidency. I am so far from Horner that I can't manage it. Horner controls the Parish. I intend, however, to fight any inch - and never yield while I can raise a single vote. They - the clique - are strong in my favor, for State Senate. The key behind the plan is going for Will South Candidate and making the sectional way be carried by a N. & S. man - but I mean to contend for the first place in the leadership - which would



You speak of the Union being sick - that being  
way are incidents - unavoidable. It will soon give way  
to the influence from the North and the  
movement of the South. The safe side is for presenters -  
but they will not be given - the North & South will  
ultimately have two separate doors - as peacefully adapted  
to their interests & institutions.

About engines. Our engine in the Sugar house is  
80 horse power. We will require one fully for  
full. at Magnolia - It don't do to have ~~these~~ things  
at the Sugar house. by to how will the machine they can  
be got or will have as any where.

What could you get a 60 inch saw engine at - all  
complete with full mill attached of the kind you  
speak of. 2nd what price and on what terms? Or  
a 50 inch - however less than 60 would suit well at Sugar  
house - heavy timber & by Capt. Stand.

What you would borrow all the money you can? We  
could give mortgage on Magnolia if wanted. But your  
name & credit will ought to carry it through. We might be  
due about 10000 for next year. 100,000 would be  
worthless, as to of this winter - borrow what you can  
of 10000 then 100,000 - if 100,000 then 50,000 and so on 100,000  
if you don't want it - 100,000 and that high. Difficult matter  
if you should find? Thank for the devil to pay this winter yet.  
We ought to look out for our Park now. It will take almost  
half price bonds, with our present force. I am to say. I don't  
know else - your brother R. H. Brown -

Line Oak Nov 29<sup>th</sup> 1860

My dear brother,

I am in receipt of your favor of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst  
and am glad to hear that you are at length settled at Scotland.  
I doubt not but that you will find it after a short trial  
the most pleasant residence and location in any regard  
that you could desire indeed that could have been  
selected. Forget that the little home, is not somewhere  
in the same general section of country. You know belongs  
told you that the great mistake in my life was in  
my name -

We have had as usual all kinds of disasters this Fall.  
First a locusts protecting the crop and blighting down Sugar  
house - Next the election of Lincoln the effect of which  
has been to create a commercial & civil disorder so  
grave as to annihilate credit and bring Sugar from 80  
to 10¢ to 3 and 4¢ per lb. All this with an engine that  
did not perform and now as fast that kills the cane.  
Stock held about ten days ago - my hands being down, and  
we are now going about successfully & cheerfully. We hold  
more or less than five hundred acres of land but much more  
as I think. We only had about four hundred acres of  
cane to grind. We have something over two hundred fifty  
bushels made instead of four hundred. There are no oranges.

Must not tell you that concerning our progress at  
Magnolia has been retarded by the necessities here -



There a few hundred there. We have an immense deal to do if we intend to make a proper Plantation of it; and this we must do or abandon it. There is absolutely no market here for anything and there is no credit - no money. Had expected to have begun planting the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. with full good hands - but have been able to keep only about eighteen & having in the field and have done but little. If we had the force we have the cane stand for at least three hundred bbls. & sugar house must be built & cabins, stables, & other places and the ditch dug. Can you calculate business farming interests, how much that will cost. — an expense that must be incurred sooner or later in addition to current outlays.

Must confess that when I reflect calmly and wisely on the whole matter I feel sometimes like abandoning everything and going home & begin to live. — There a debt on my nose, the annual interest of which is three thousand dollars. Take that sum — add <sup>to</sup> the ordinary and other <sup>little</sup> expenses, to be necessarily incurred to make it a Plantation — and deduct the <sup>little</sup> ~~income~~ from ourselves the income — and what shall I get — for my services. This is no place for a man unless he be wealthy. There is so much individual wealth and the only standard being money, that we can never hope to accomplish anything and it is only a mere waste of my time to be living in the woods on Boy or Black.

Should things again be restored to former quiet & health I shall sell the first good offer — If more foot loose would go

to California and take a look at that country. Have wasted a great deal of time here, under the delusive hope that I should soon be in a way to make money. Might just as well be in the moon or where I am, as to attain, any of the purposes a man may have in life — as society — as means of political action. Must either change or give up everything in life — If I saw by way of fortune might be recruited, but as it is or will be a way to — Father gives me just about enough to make the annual payment he requires of me, by close management and economy.

The election of Freese has awakened a feeling throughout this State that no one could have anticipated. The spirit of hostility is deep & active. The determination that the State shall secede almost unanimous. I believe that the Gulf States & Interior Cotton States will secede absolutely & unconditionally from the Union. He measures need be taken to prevent this step — it is inevitable. Afterward be & these Maryland — then Texas — then Ky & finally all the Southern States will be united under a new Government. This in my judgment will be the result. The guarantees would be secured by the Cotton States — they proper secession for secession has one right & only principle — The entire population will be under arms in a few weeks. They have organized at Athens & Panama — two companies & the equipped at the expense of the Pinches — the officers will arrange before an emergency people record of it. The Legislature assembled on 10<sup>th</sup> Dec and a Convention will probably be called early in Jan.



R. L. Gibson  
Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 1860

Live Oak Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> 1860

Dear Mother -

Aunt Anne & Cousin Lizzie Gibson  
are with us. There have been here several days. Father is  
very well. He hopes to finish sugar rolling in about  
three weeks and will not make over six hundred hhd's  
of poor sugar. I am still progressing slowly at Natchez  
with a few of my ~~superior~~ <sup>decent</sup> men - all  
the rest being here. I have been at home very closely  
shrouded but little or nothing of Party movements.  
The moment the Legislature called a Convention my  
friends & neighbors invited me to be a Candidate -  
Goode however against the circumstances of our  
mutual friends, formed a coalition with Leage  
& they had themselves announced on the same ticket  
and their stickers scattered all over the Parish before  
they even returned from Baton Rouge. Had I  
known deeply & justly indignant at the base con-  
duct of T. S. Goode as it results in closing the  
books entirely of all opposition to him. But  
his own Party have their eyes open, many of them  
will not vote for him & hereafter he will find  
that though reaching he has lost all the strength  
he ever had in this Parish.  
The fact is, however, that living there too and in



my circumstances it will be out of the question  
ever to accomplish anything in any way.

Cornell & McCullum are the candidates of the  
Fug-Of-Cooperation. Dodge & Cager for secession  
direct. This State will go out without delaying  
until the inauguration of Lincoln and so will  
all the Cotton States. The only question in Ky will  
be to join a Southern or Northern Confederacy.  
If you wish to take a lead in this matter or  
rather, you had better begin to lay your  
plans as soon as possible, to be elected to  
a Convention, taking the Southern side as far  
as you can go. A Convention is inevitable  
in Ky - and the South must decide to join the  
North or South. You can form no idea  
of the exalted state of the Southern mind -  
it appears all at once to have lifted itself to  
a comprehension of the whole question and  
to have resolved its solution.

Did you ever see my piece in the July  
number of DeBow's Review and do you  
get the Delta? You ought to take this  
but more especially the Richmond Enquirer.

As told you sometime ago we are  
in the midst of hard times - I enclose you a  
bill from your Tailor - I have also received  
our bill for dry goods clothing of Kelly & Co amounting  
to \$220

We shall have bills falling due in March for wagons, blankets, &c.  
probably altogether amounting to \$1000 or more. - I don't see  
how we are to raise money. Father can pay me nothing  
and I don't see how Hewitt, Norton, &c. can advance their  
pressing times. It may be that matters may change - I  
think we have not seen the worst yet. It will require  
three years to get entirely done with this revolution.  
I will try to take up everything by notes.

In my day there has been no such financial  
distress like this and no such movement among  
the great masses of the Southern people. They shall  
be deceived but to this we are all liable.

Set me free from you

Love to Mary  
Your affectionate brother  
N. L. Johnson.

P. S. and Confidential

I am opposed to the Delta newspaper  
& absolute control, for \$21,000 - or to take any  
part of it - say 4 shares at \$4,000 and a voice  
in its control, its influence - This is a profound  
secret. It just came out to see me at Louisville. At  
having the money I declined. - Nothing like opportunity -  
& ill fortune! I say nothing of this as it would  
not do to get out. I agreed to keep it to myself -  
I made notes the regular radical & told him so -  
N. L.



am sure it will be to your rational mind. It is a  
great mistake to keep young men, negroes, or best here in  
families. Women are necessary to wash, sew, & take care of  
the men. I myself have more than twice as many men as women.  
The negroes should be educated. Negroes are not contented unless  
there be women in the place.

I would advise you under the present state of facts to  
have these negroes removed to Ky and that without delay  
unless you can fulfill your agreement. This is the best you  
can do.

Inject the issue to your undertaking in the South. It will  
make a vast difference in your fortunes in a few  
years time. You have fifty thousand dollars of idle property  
here, from the want of adequate means to cultivate and  
improve it. How much better had we sold to Besant & they have turned out!  
You know my disposition to leave you, but must be  
frank with you placing the facts before you.

That one result, you know, is a  
fault of mine. You will lose much & shall be  
greatly inconvenienced - but you will lose less  
by putting the first hands here where they can help to  
produce something at once.

Should an opportunity occur, will sell the property.  
Under the best Government look forward to a bright  
one for the Sugar Planter. We shall have the benefits  
of the Continental & East India opened to us - also the  
the tariff system and then our interest will greatly  
proportion as we do not grow sugar enough for the  
fifteen Southern States - Live to buy & become  
your true brother

R. L. Wilson

Live Oak Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 1861

My dear Bro,

The moment has at length arrived  
where a full understanding, as to the course to be  
pursued with regard to our joint interest here can  
no longer be postponed.

You will recollect under what conditions we induced  
Besant to decline his former proposition to purchase  
the whole property at what was deemed a good price  
& on a cash basis. We assumed then that we would  
take the property jointly - each to contribute an equal  
number of negroes & to establish a Sugar Plantation.  
You know exactly what I said - that I was ready to  
put on the place some twenty five young, acclimated  
and disciplined ~~negroes~~ besides mules, oxen & many other  
things necessary to a Plantation. It was understood that  
at first by 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. ~~planned~~ past, that you would  
be enabled to put on the place a full equivalent  
in property. It was clear that unless this could be done  
it would be folly to take the property - that has taken  
twenty five hands to begin with would not warrant  
us in the endeavor to establish a Sugar Plantation.  
Any other partnership than an equal one it was obvious  
would be advantageous to neither, undesirable, & impossible  
from the nature of the case & the peculiarity of the case  
culture. Unless you could put on the place as many  
negroes as I at the start, we both would lose



being in the undertaking. Here was land worth one hundred of fifty or fifty thousand dollars, here were improvements - absolutely indispensable that would cost about twenty-five thousand dollars - to be made too this & the ensuing year - here was land open for fifty hands; - under this state of facts, how idle it had been for us to have put on the place less than forty-five hands. The thing is out of the question. No sensible man can fail to see that there would not be hands enough to make the improvement - and if made, that the expenditures added to the cost of the improvements would more than absorb the income. Sugar Planting is not Cotton Planting or Rice Farming. It cannot be successfully carried on, unless the means for producing income surpass the great necessary expenses. We might as well attempt to run a first class steamboat on the river propelled with appointments belonging to a low water craft, as to start a Sugar Plantation of the size & needs, of Magnolia, with less than forty-five hands. It cannot be done - that is the fact. We can commence with forty-five hands - and then increase the number. These facts are patent - every child in La Monroe knows them.

My full quota of property was placed according to agreement on Magnolia last spring. They have built seven cabins, cleared one hundred fifty acres of land, planted fifty acres of cane, built fences & dug ditches. They are all settled & at work. Four negroes remained here

all summer, seeing that they were often sick and in order that they might receive personal & extra attentions. They have sleep worked here as they might, do without expense. They have loved him to Magnolia. But the past spring - in our forces I had carefully overlooked that the negroes arrived here as you did. But, however, that period, is past, what now shall be done? Could you send down forthwith fifteen or sixteen hands I would not take into account the year's work in advance that I have performed & have out of view the essential difference between acclimated & unacclimated negroes. Twenty-four acclimated hands, educated to our labor are worth in the market as much as thirty odd unacclimated negroes. But if you are not enabled to do this you had better remove the few you have here. We can do nothing with this force. We can make no improvement. We can do nothing. The cost of the indispensable improvement would exceed any income they could possibly produce. Should we make something of a crop this year with the present force & you allow me for my other hands & contribute an equal share to the necessary expenditures to be incurred on the place, you will probably be brought in debt to the estate at the end of the year. We have slaves, carpenters, blacksmiths, the year through & a few will to be put up besides brick to make and "wagons, but I plan to do to try. You will find it a losing business; we can have no improvement in your force until you increase your negro force in proportion to the necessities of the case. All this must be clear to you; after due reflection I



Jan 12<sup>th</sup> 1861

Dropped you the enclosed note in order that you might consult with Mr. Duncan previous to the determination of the question. You ought in justice to both of us, to explain to him the exact position of our affairs. Should he conclude to send negroes down, like him, they ought to be family negroes - and above all more women than men. The disproportion is already too great in my own force and ought to be diminished, instead of increased on the same Plantation. Negroes do best here in families. They are better satisfied. They take better care of themselves. But there said enough on this head - let me however then have bound to say. I am never been so fine ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> ever in letter. It won't bring me out contentment to write.

You see how matters progress in public affairs. The whole Confederacy is falling apart - just as I predicted. The losses by moves & losses & losses the better. We have carried the day in this State. Bay Roads were defeated in this Senate by Cornelly & Mr. Callow & Martin & Varnet. Expect there be but four Mr. Call & myself in the Senatorial Contest of the Parishes of Ascension, Assumption & Terrebonne. We have no exact returns except the general statement that Confederation carried the day in all these Parishes so I suppose Mr. Call & I are beat.



The State however, will go largely for direct secession.  
In fact, I would not be surprised if several of  
the remaining States found themselves out of  
the Union before their Conventions assemble.  
The Gulf States are raising this Fort & arsenal &  
all the border States, should do this without delay.  
Such bold action may prevent a war between  
the two sections which now appears imminent.  
But I still can't believe it will ever happen.  
The dissolution may cause a little bloodshed but  
not a large civil war or rather sectional war.

Take it for granted that you see the  
New Orleans Papers - The City is in a flame of  
excitement all the time, and went strong for  
secession.

Everybody is for secession - some for separate - the  
rest for cooperative secession.

Separate secession carries the day everywhere. All  
the fifteen Southern States are bound to decide.

There will be no reconciliation. We need two  
Governments - must have them. We are two  
distinct people with different social & civil &  
political institutions.

And some Cousin Lige, Estlin, & others  
join in love to say to the boys  
Yours

R. F. R.

They are all in a hurry. It seems to me that they are all in a hurry.



County. In this case in other matters a man has  
to assert himself - call meetings - make speeches  
& hold opinions - especially in revolutions.

We have three military Companies in Tombaugh  
- two at Homer & forming one in Liverville. You  
ought by all means to get the Delta. It is the  
leading organ at the South - that and the Richmond  
Enquirer.

We are all pretty well - Aunt Anne & Cousin  
Lizzie Higgins are here. Randall & Allen left  
yesterday.

With warmest love to Mary & the boys

Remain

Your brother affectionately

R. L. Sisson.

P.S.

Write me promptly and don't overlook or forget - all the  
business point. How is Frank? Jim, Andy & Tom & Henry & Kate -  
are here pretty much all the time. The health of these boys is  
finally getting on a good footing - and they appear to be satisfied -  
they all like the place - but are now getting to prefer Augusta.  
My night to have mine - R. L.

19<sup>th</sup> May 1861  
R. L. Sisson

Liverdale Jan 18<sup>th</sup> 1861

My dear Frank,

I received your letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst. yesterday.  
but have nothing of consequence left to say in reply  
in addition to a long letter sent to you only a day or  
two ago. As that letter aimed to show you how directions  
would be the result to your interest, unless unless you  
increased your force so that we could make an in-  
come that would more than cover our necessary expendi-  
tures. As it is, the failure to send the land at the  
time agreed upon, <sup>the consequence</sup> failure to get the crop  
planted, will cost us one hundred thousands of dollars and  
without efficient additional force and a good season  
we cannot hope to make over one hundred fifty - or  
two hundred thousands. Now put a good price on that  
number of thousands - then deduct the cost of the perma-  
nent improvement, and of the current expenses - and  
subtract from your help of what is left, the  
time of my extra hands and you will not  
fail to see, that you will be compelled to borrow  
money to pay your indebtedness. Neither one of us  
can do anything under present circumstances. Now  
winnow you fully on the subject. I think you owe  
it to me yourself as well as to Duncan who is your  
- part of the larger business, to explain to him in



like manner the situation of (his) (your) or (my) affairs  
here in conjunction with my own. This alternative is  
my plan. It is this: the force must be increased  
probably eight to twenty four or five hundred, else  
the eight ought to be removed where instead of  
bringing you or their owners in debt they might  
produce something. Is not this plain? ought I  
not then to place the whole matter fairly before  
you. And ought you not likewise to acquiesce  
with the situation my interest and  
your own here is foreclosed. You have against  
my eight hundred, fifty thousand dollars worth  
of land that could have been sold a year  
ago at that price on a cash basis; and  
would have been sold but for the understanding  
which you had with me, to the effect, that  
by 1st Feb past you would be enabled to  
put on the place twenty four hundred or an  
equal number with me. By three of land had  
also been sold for about fifty thousand dollars -  
and that with my acknowledged repairs would have  
been equal if sold to one hundred thousand dollars  
- all active yieldings - with the expenses incurred  
during the past year together with those necessary to  
be made the present year, there will remain a  
debt on the estate by 1st March 1862 - of ten thousand  
dollars - not a cent less. Had the agreement been promptly  
fulfilled we could have made three hundred fifty

or four hundred dollars - which would have given us an  
income after paying the \$10,000 - of 15 or 20,000 dollars.  
But as it is now the additional force put on we  
might calculate on 250 thousand - but without such  
increase - one hundred fifty to two hundred - as  
the maximum result. Make such calculations as you  
may upon these bases and you will see in advance  
what next year will bring forth.

Therefore, say that there is no time now - say the  
moment has long since passed - for delay. This must  
be clear to any reasonable mind. You & your friends  
ought to act now on way or the other. I am sure  
Mr. Duncanson will do what he deems best and you  
should give him your entire confidence in the  
premises - acquiesce with the fact, - inform  
him of the true situation here and abide by his decision.  
There can be no hesitancy - no delay.

You promise that the formation of a Southern  
Confederacy is in fact accomplished. The idea of a Central  
Confederacy is simply absurd. It is an hallucination of old  
big game & divines. The question in 1862 is simply this: Shall  
we join the Great Northern or the Great Southern Confederacy.  
That is the issue - which will arise before long the people  
have their eyes open. Go before the people on that broad  
open question - an alternative not sought but  
forced upon you by the election of Lincoln and  
you will succeed. But you must throw off the manners  
of a youth - get on horse back and trundle over the



swindling process enacted, Old W. Stewart says it is much better to buy in the West, than buy this there & sell in Louisville.

2d 4<sup>th</sup> This is the latest morning we have had this year, but I am glad to see it is clear and we may now hope for dry weather. Should you have the means on hand you might get our Pork - but I am sorry money has no other support now seeing there you can in Ky. Maybe it would be injudicious in you to assume promptly obligations in order to raise the money. I am of opinion that there will be much distress in the country and should there be no war, suspension of credit & business for several months will send a well amount of people - besides those who live by credit. You may ought to put the house in order and prepare to pay the debt - as small debt will be as difficult of payment as large one under ordinary circumstances. A good deal of property will be sacrificed. Things keep up pretty well here. Rice's Plant should be 445,000 - no more has than it was appraised at last spring. our fourth debt - balance is 1,2,3 years.

Everything seems more alarmed about the danger about the the danger than they themselves. People not understand their position.

I am going over with him this morning. Shall get up a line since as soon as possible and put up a strong line when hope you will spend much of your time in Virginia. Should you send any more down this spring I suppose you make a flying trip. I will take a look at everything; and feel the Southern pulse. It would take you only a few days. Hope you will get into the Ky Convention - start early in the morning & catch moderate - catch by -

By line to buy & the by

1781 E 4<sup>th</sup> Your affectionate brother  
R. L. E. 1861  
R. L. E.

Lin. Ark. Feb 9<sup>th</sup> 1861

My dear Walt,

Mr. W. Daniel arrived here today with the negroes and at about the same time Wash. visited Magnolia with the niggers from Doverville. They are all snugly quartered at Magnolia and seem very well satisfied. W. D. was up there this afternoon and will be able from a short observation to give you some information in regard to our affairs. For a month we have had hot weather which has materially retarded our operations but I hope that hereafter we may have dry weather as much depends upon getting the cane planted as soon as possible. During the past week there have been in the Ark. as an outside member of the Convention having been defeated on the National ticket - as was indeed the whole Southern candidature in the District - in nearly all the Great States. But you will observe that even those who were elected as Cooperatives still show the movement was at hand and the issue presented itself for discussion direct. The whole Convention will begin the advance of discussion. The feeling in the State is almost unanimous in favor of a Southern Confederacy. I think that if the question of Reconstruction were submitted to the people it would be voted down. We have all the tools and well supplied with material & will soon have a powerful force of



ten thousand troops and altogether nearly twenty thousand men in the State prepared to shoulder arms in its defence.

We intend raising a regular army of two thousand soldiers, after the same fashion of the army of the old Federal Government. Col Briggs will in all probability be made Commander-in-Chief. Limited to apply for a Captaincy for himself & myself, in the regiment of artillery. This will be immediately organized & put in the field or form the nucleus of an army on a larger scale if needed. We are to have two regiments - one of infantry & one of artillery. We are preparing for war. This is a question however, for the North to determine. We want peace.

The new Gov on the exact basis of the old Constitution will be established in a few days at New Orleans. There will be some States - to adopt this Government at the start. It must be recognized - accepted as a de jure & de facto Government. It will be backed by more population than the colonies had at the period of the Declaration. The only issue then will be - peace or war?

Virginia must come with us - and as I said to you before she will be out of the Union before she knows it. The Union will leave her. The Union in fact is larger spots. It is only now another name for the sectional war which the North has declared against the South.

But in spite of these appearances I do not believe the North intend to wage this war.

I do not discuss the question of secession. You are familiar with the pros & cons. All the seceding States take ground against the African slave trade and will adopt the old Constitution. The only issue in the will be first & incidentally opposition to secession. This will be your first step. You have already taken this. Then will come the issue involving the other shall she join the North or the Southern Confederacy? Whether the North or the South - desire a reconstruction. There will be none.

You ought to go as far as you can in the true direction, for your whole population will gravitate instantly at first, but eventually afterwards towards the Southern Confederation.

There are our views from this stand point. We do not condemn the border States. Perhaps it will be said that they have delayed. It may prevent war; but in case of war the Deep States will be more opposed than the border States to attack & will suffer more therefrom owing to geographical position & position industrial pursuits.

Everybody here is absorbed in these questions. I show you how we all think in this State. Everybody here is a member of a military company. I am Capt of one in Bogalusa. He has a uniform & a sword - a rifle & sword.

I will write you again about our accounts as Parish draws money. It would be well I think to get our North in the West. It will take about thirty - forty to do us. We lose about twenty pounds on every bond we buy in New Orleans besides commissions & interest on the money. It is reported in the City & there is a regular



how they think, how they feel and then drawing from these sources  
reinforcement - for the opinions you held - apply them to  
conversation, to public speech & to writing an article once in  
while in your local paper; always taking care while  
holding decided opinions never presenting two faces - not  
to get too far and pursue a Confrontation Course. Act on  
this line of conduct, you will soon emerge from obscurity  
and become a center of influence, identified with the people  
and interested in whatever interests them. Hope this advice to  
myself as I know we both are at fault in these respects. A Yankee  
& European education has made us strangers to the ways, the  
sympathies - the manners & customs, around us and hence life  
is sterile and discontent arises. The only way to do - is to counteract  
this tendency. However, there is no alternative - so this closes the  
whole case. But as an example. I want to work to get up a  
military company in Liverpool - the idea seems preposterous.  
I want down every night to drill them, get Foster's Catechism - studied  
them - get a drill master - and now we shall turn out, tomorrow  
twenty five men, handsome, uniformed and pretty well drilled  
with drum & fife - as nice a company as can be started.  
Two weeks more, we shall have forty men uniformed &  
then I shall induce them to place themselves under the  
orders of the Emperor, to which they are now opposed.  
Our uniform is of light gray trimmed with black cloth. Now why  
can't you do the same in Newcastle? I got men to join those  
who wouldn't get to subscribe and full of disgust from signing  
to the end - expressing this all the time, we have succeeded.  
A man must take cold and adopt himself: otherwise he  
will remain a lump on the log. Our company is light infantry.  
I am going to make it light. You ought to have been in Fort Hall  
frequently this winter, consulting, advising, putting your own in.

R. L. Gibson  
Oak House  
Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 1861

Dear Aunt Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 1861

My dear Aunt,

Your last - one to Father & one to me - have  
been duly received. Wait for letter tomorrow. Received a letter from him  
today dated 25<sup>th</sup> birthday - report having left Boston Saturday in  
good health.

The weather continues not whole about planting. It is impossible to accom-  
-plish much at this season, we can should have been planted  
last Fall while it was dry. We must, however, do the best we  
can. Everybody is well at Niagara. The Mary that Ben & Laura  
were married last Saturday night. They had a large wedding. I  
gave them a box of flowers, coffee, sugar, a hog & anything  
regimental - that which they seemed very much pleased.

The people by degrees are making themselves very comfortable and  
appear to be very well satisfied. We need a few more young  
women, and then shall regard our interests as essentially  
consolidated and the investment complete in all its part.  
Have no desire to increase our property - I need not Duncan put  
on a few more women, as he suggests, we shall have force  
enough for the land and unless some accident occurs, we  
shall derive from the capital invested a fair income.

Hope, as you propose, that hereafter you will be enabled  
to furnish the meat. What can you buy twenty barrels of  
meat pork at from the packing establishment near Portland  
How much would be the cost for some delivered in New  
Orleans? Ascertain this accurately and let me know without  
delay. Have determined not to put up a land since this year.



shall make brick and this with cheap land, drafting and plotting is and saving the cost will be all we can accomplish. Only in Jan & Feb. put up a few hills, having done all we can, with the single exception of leaving the logs, in preparing to put up a larger house next year. We shall thus avoid unnecessary expenses and have money in hand to meet obligations. It will not do, in any business, to borrow money; unless the success be clear & pressing. This is the policy I have adopted and I think would well justify it. Next year I hope you will be able to spare your Carpenter and he with the two others there, will be able to do all our work except such as one or two carps can do residing near the place. We may thus have all our improvements made with but little outlay and in the larger business, it is the cost & manner of expenditures that destroy the profits. So much on the score of business.

You refer in your letter to Father, to the stability - the morality of life in Ky. Let me tell you that this comes from our European education. Experience, in a twofold degree, the same feeling exists as to life in Louisiana. We are in the material stage of our civilization and the tendency of the American mind is materialistic. I am a native - an European - a foreigner. I am surrounded by non-conductors - entirely isolated. I wish when we first returned from Europe we had settled as you suggest in New Orleans. But the fashion is passed - it is too late now. You must make yourself a Kentuckian & a Louisianian. I contemplate a settlement in New Orleans but I must first organize my "little all" and set it a going successfully on the waters; but can't will determine my final course by Jan next. I don't see how you could leave Ky

without selling out. You ought to buy a good library at Portland, attend closely to your business, send more than you ever did and write more; mingle more with the people. Always be on hand on County Court days and circulate freely - so that you may have something special to say to nearly every man in the County. You confine yourself too much to the people and pretension persons or set of persons - you must generalize. You are situated so as to do this. People never come to a man - he must go to them - he must go to the mountain - he must go to the woods, assert yourself. Judge you of myself. Read a good deal more & expect them you do and demand things but have in point of fact, no opportunity. Within ten miles, however, of my domain, my empire is complete now - but don't go farther because I am unacquainted - and then in a means of doing or working or monthly contact - but you are at the doors and County Court days afford you the facilities for radiation of which - of both of which I am deprived. Virginia does the thinking for Ky - Richmond is the center of the border States. You ought therefore to acquaint yourself with Virginia ideas. Take the Richmond Enquirer - as I do. The Virginians are the best educated Politicians in this County. Study the Enquirer - you find it brimful of interesting matter - especially applicable to existing affairs in Ky. New Orleans is the center or fulcrum of the South - You ought therefore to acquaint yourself with its ideas - Take then the Delta - you will find the product of the Southern mind, or passing issues in it. New York is the Northern Center. Take the Times - Father takes the Herald. We also take all four of the British Reviews. Now find out the mind of the people around you



You & I can't live without something of this kind, so the only way to do is to sleep in and take post.

Col Bragg is Major Genl of our Army. Both Clamde & I will get appointments, in the regular Army, as soon as the list of West Pointers is exhausted. I saw the Governor as well as the Col. Our applications are in the hands of Col Bragg who will not present them until as I said the list of West Point men - who ought to have the preference, is exhausted. I hope Clamde will make but little delay in Ky - in his return, & should Lincoln attempt to take our Fort or our Army we shall <sup>have</sup> work on hand. My opinion is that both of us will be in the Army in two weeks, though I have heard nothing about what progress has been made in the appointments.

Have you read the speeches before the Virginia Convention made by the Commissioners of South Carolina, Miss & Leo - they are very fine. John Preston's is worthy of his name. It is a splendid oration and it is said produced a wonderful effect on the audience. I regard it as a masterpiece of eloquence. I want to read it once or twice more, let Lather have the benefit of it and then you shall have it.

I begin to believe the Union is finally dissolved - no more to be reconstructed. As to the slave states, they are bound together, Va & Ky are with us. It is only a question of time. The first blow unites them - if no blow be struck, time will accomplish all.

March 1<sup>st</sup> 1861.

It is perfectly clear this morning and that we may have some fair weather. Dry weather is what we want. Since 1<sup>st</sup> Jan we have no moderate weather at all - the ground has hardly been dry a day. It is



rather warm this morning. I am sitting in my room with the windows up, the doors open & in my shirt sleeves. This is a fine climate about six weeks out of twelve months. In a few days we shall have myriads of mosquitoes & a killing frost.

Our money market in New Orleans continues tight; but since secession matters have improved and should a conciliatory policy be adopted at Washington business affairs will expand to large dimensions. Only give us peace and money will flow freely - there is plenty of it in New Orleans - the South is wearing out of debt - and with a stable Government would soon become the most prosperous community on the face of the Earth.

But if that the means - I should not live in this country. I would go to Europe & there remain permanently. There will always be confusion, uncertainty in private & public affairs in this country - and the rule of the dirty rabble will prevail; - continue with intensified sway at the North and most probably in the South also. There is no hope of the redemption of either section - except such as may be obtained by a baptism of blood and eventually the establishment of despotic Government. You & I will live to see this at the North and in the end when negro slavery passes away, perhaps before - the same result will obtain at the South.

Well I have written you a pretty long letter -

My love to Mary & the boy

Yours brother affectionately  
R. L. Gibson.

P.S.

Have you read Hottel's Dutch Republic, and, United Netherlands? &



Ligeville de Maché 27<sup>th</sup> 1881

My dear Hunt,

I came down this morning & find your letter here from Bradford and Lanes without delay. Pork - good mess pork by today's quotations is worth \$18 per barrel - what would be the cost of transportation from your Packers to New Orleans? In my judgment it ought to be delivered to us at fifteen or seventeen dollars in New Orleans - consider these facts and if we can have pork delivered there at fifteen or seventeen dollars, you could buy thirty barrels - it takes nearly if not quite a barrel per week.

I am sorry you do not state the price but after what I say you must act on your own judgment.

I hope you may be able to deliver all we want in New Orleans at even fifteen dollars but anything under eighteen or eighteen fifty will be a gain.

There is no doubt Kather would take fifty barrels - taking eighty barrels we might get it lower - Should you be able to get so much or even one hundred barrels



at a reduction from the prices mentioned I  
authorize you to contract having mentioned  
the matter to Father.

We are somewhat behind hand at negotiation  
but whether we build or not, we want the  
same mill forthwith - and hope you  
will be exact in the terms of purchase.

I am taking particular care of  
the new lands - have a fine garden  
opulent of vegetables and they are comfort-  
table in every respect.

I am glad that your Party is  
organising - with a perfect organization  
you may defeat your opponents -  
Organization, Harmony - distribution of  
tracts and plenty of speeches - these  
are the elements of success.  
The idea of reconstruction does not  
exist in our Confederacy.

I don't know that I shall leave  
La. this summer - but if I do it will  
be for New England to enjoy the mountain  
view.

The organization of the Districts by the  
Constitution throws my chances for  
Congress in the hands of my strongest  
opponents - have been carried to a  
different District.

It has been met - but we have the  
prospect of dry weather -

I have brought our interests here to a point  
with Father as to titles and doing all I can  
to push forward the Plantation property  
to moving to the City.

When is Claude?

Hope you will find what I say sufficiently  
explicit as to Park. You know the prices  
here, act for yourself -

Ill. May I am going to write  
to her next and that she must prepare  
herself for a long stay as soon as I get  
some of our political paper with our  
new flag stamped on it.  
Often wish that you were and the  
boy - is he a Benjamin Bay? some  
living in reach of me -

be great heart

Yours affectionately  
Father R. H. H. H.



have quite well when we hear from  
new from the boys. Suppose Blake will be here in a few days  
more or rather wait for him to return at once.  
Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> 1861

There is a dead calm in politics since the secession. We all expect  
that the Border States will come with us next week to be kicked out of  
the Union by the Black Republicans or engulfed by insidious secessionists  
into treason to their social institutions and abandonment of their  
true friends. It is difficult to pierce the veil. Sometimes there is a  
cloudy vision. Commencing from the whole question, in accordance  
with the program so admirably sketched forth in the web, and  
splendid oration of Mr. Sumner. The flowers of this rhetoric conceal  
from the friends of the South, the glistering weapons of war &  
rapine which he covertly urges his followers to hold in  
readiness. It is a masterful indication before the world of the  
policy which he & Mr. Sumner may have the courage to pursue -  
the policy of coercion. The Border States have been duped and  
will be bewildered & confused by hanging around them, and fast  
them. I do not believe that there will ever be a reconstruction  
of the Government; neither the true North nor the true South desire  
it. Our systems are antagonistic - our roads unlike - our aims  
distances wide apart but not hostile unless brought into contact  
by a forced & strained Union - a conjunction. We hope a sectional  
alliance may supersede the old Union.

Have you read Benjamin's article? speaks on nothing from the Southern  
view, & shows your entire satisfaction. The whole South as well  
you before is nothing and will be splendidly prepared by the 4<sup>th</sup> March.  
Have a company in Ligonville and shall take the post of Capt. in  
the regular army of the State or Confederation should we exhaust  
the list of the graduates of West Point. You ought to take the  
lead of this movement in Ky. go as far as you can without losing  
influence. Convince your country of nothing but, send around docu-  
ments - and do all you can in this way. Your affectionate  
friend  
Love to Mary & the boy - let me hear from you - R. C. Shanks

Line Oak Feb 14<sup>th</sup> 1861

My dear Heat,

My last letter to you acknowledged the arrival  
of Mr. McDaniel with the negroes; since then I have had no  
letter from you. The negroes continue in good health and  
say that they are perfectly satisfied. The boy Jim Fry is  
out at work and I think he has recovered from his  
complaint. One of the new negroes Jane - the wife of  
Peter - says she has been a permanent invalid for  
years with typhoid fever and rheumatism. Is this so?  
She declines going to the field as there are no crops and  
having no means of ascertaining the truth I write  
for information which you must furnish me  
promptly in order that they know what she really  
can & cannot do. I wrote you fully as to Peter  
stating that we would require that <sup>Miss Mary</sup> bond, or the  
equivalent in other kind of work. I would hardly  
give him five days. Let me request your prompt attention  
to these business points. Matters of this kind should  
be attended with promptness both fullness and  
whiteness of statement. I don't put your head under  
water and if understanding is and upon good terms you  
can furnish the best work you would do so.  
The negroes are all in excellent health. How is Frank?  
Three Christmas we have had our usual winter rains  
there made but little progress at work and very little



indeed at planting time which requires dry weather. We shall have about one hundred fifty acres of cane to grind instead of the two hundred & twenty-five we had expected owing to the scarcity of labor last fall - when every hand as wrote you was accomplishing more than five times as much as they can now with wet weather and decaying seed cane every joint of which requires a close and tedious examination to secure a stand. It will take four or five good hands to put your negroes on an equality with mine. If any more should be sent let them be young women. My previous letter will have demonstrated so clearly the necessity of an adequate force on the property that I need no more allude to this subject. As to the way to pay for improvements we must have income and without a proper force - a force ample for the work the income must fall below the indispensable expenditures. Just in proportion as the force is increased - the income will increase. With a certain force the income falls below the essential expenses - increased to a higher number - they balance; carried still further and then there will result for both of us - something over & above the outlays. As it is here not much prospect for an income for two years to come; unless sugar goes up. Five good hands additional now would make a difference in next years crop of one hundred bbls - five thousand dollars at the best calculation. But I have exhausted this matter. I shall endeavor to get the monthly statement to let this year's account - and keep us moving through the coming years -

fixed year I mean from March to March, when I suppose the crop will about equalise matters. I calculate on two hundred & twenty-five bbls - Should anything be profitable we may go to 275 or 300 but it don't do to calculate on these figures. I am nothing as to our ability to put up a saw mill this year. If we can make all the brick needed to complete the sugar house and build the saw mill house without buying the mill engine - we will have done enough for the year. Next year we would have the sugar house to build & complete and there would be ample time to do the sawing - getting out the logs in advance. We must save expense. I mean to keep in line and adopt the frugal but principle.

The more I see of Magnolia the more I am pleased with it. It has vast resources. The land drains beautifully - there are ridges penetrating the Cypress swamp making it available and the quality of the soil is unsurpassed. We have about twelve hundred acres of high land and all we need is force. We can never consider ourselves at work in earnest until we shall have fifty good hands - efficient workers - in the field. With sugar at four cents we can make fortunes. With our sugar house complete and saw mill in operation I shall never complain of the price of sugar while it keeps at 4 cts. With fifty good hands and these things finished, Magnolia will always turn out in hard cash with sugar at 4 cts - the lowest price - \$20,000. Selling your land at \$50,000 & Mary's negroes at \$20,000 making \$70,000 - and \$10,000 is not a poor but income putting price at what men exclaim will ruin the whole island.

Father left for Jones yesterday intending to be about three or four weeks. Col. Adams died a few days ago. Preston & Gladie



line will become tight.

Your expenses will be less in 1/2 in six months than ever. I feel ashamed of you. The North had to kick them out - the Union & even then they got on their knees & swore for peace - I pardon, but they find themselves deceived by their Public men, unmoved, while the murderous foe is at their doors. It hardly pays us to take the broader states - all the fighting expenses will be on their account.

Everything was prospering at home by the last account.

I feel well & tired -

Why don't you & Mary write?

Love to both -

Your devoted brother

R. L. E. E. E.

P.S. You ought to get a stiff appointment

R. L. E.

New Orleans - May 5<sup>th</sup> 1861 -

My Dear Brother,

Telegraphed you some time ago not to take the said bill you had contracted for and with your usual inattention neglected to business point - I've omitted to let me know what you have done.

I've just found Fort Jackson and will return there tomorrow having been ordered here on duty.

Fort Jackson is a first class Fort under the command of Major Duncan with three companies - 80 men each. I am in command of Company D - first opposite is Fort St. Philippe with two companies. In the whole there are 400 men. These Forts are seventy five miles below the city - twenty five above the last Pilot Station - and fifteen miles below the last Plantation - situated indeed on the worst stretching away to the sea which is plainly before us - the White Caps

Wm. A. E. E.  
May 5 1861  
R. L. E. E.



starting as every morning.  
We are very well supplied for the fleet  
and in ten days more our position  
will be invincible. Our superior officers  
are West Pointers and have had experience -  
the discipline is rigid and the whole  
command is always on active duty  
from 5 in the morning until 9  
at night from sunrise to sunset.  
We are in the Confederate service.  
Our accommodations are plain  
& meagre but substantial. I really  
enjoy this military life & hope to make  
a good officer.

Gloucester & I are very lucky - he is a  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieut & I a Capt of Artillery.  
Everybody here is in one way or another  
in the service. We are sending off troops  
to Va. Richland will be attacked by  
about the time this reaches you.  
Washington will be ours by 1<sup>st</sup> June -  
and there will not be a hostile

foot on our soil by the 4<sup>th</sup> July -  
I get \$120 per month & Gloucester \$90 good  
pay. Could you not get Fisher a really  
desirable position in Ky. Ky & so on -  
and if you can telegraph Tatters and  
write to Lobe to come home leaving him  
And yet it will be a pity for either  
of them to come home without the  
French - still under favorable  
circumstances Lobe might as  
well return. But you do something  
for him. I want to get him in the  
army and wish him to remain  
there. We shall have hard times for years  
to come - many severe prospects worth  
nothing - that is I fear this. It may  
be otherwise. We shall at least prosperous  
people on earth the moment peace is  
established with the Northern Government.  
I have bought Pork enough to do until  
January next. Let's hear of your  
Provision corp - everything in that



A dependent love pervades our people - they are  
smothered. They bowed down, most of the present holders  
of property and the leading merchants are in debt  
beyond all hope of redemption, under the new order.  
Property has got to change hands - a new set of men  
must come on the stage and rearrange things - before the decadence of all things  
great & small things ceases - and the new  
epoch of energy, enterprise opens. I hope  
and believe all things will work together well & that  
in three or four years all will be well. Meanwhile  
we must get on the right track of nothing more.  
The past is the past - the Southern Confederacy is  
a reminder of the dynasty of B. Lincoln.  
I hope this from Washington with reference to my  
case in two or three weeks, so I can go at work -  
either at New Wood or here, as the case may be.

Legs out to find out in the morning.

Kim is asleep on the bed in my room 65 -  
Dampier St - address me in the care of David  
Bell.

With much love to sister & Mary  
Remain your devoted brother  
Geo.

Some young men are going  
North West to get something to do -  
new slave families are here,  
R.D.S. -

Wheatland, La June 20<sup>th</sup> 1865

My dear brother,

Your of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst is at hand. Loring  
has just reached here from Portland bringing Elodie &  
Blanche as far as Madame Humphreys' on the  
Coast. He reports Preston very well & getting along quite  
satisfactorily. The health of himself & family was  
excellent. You know they all belong to the  
lean kind.

I have this moment gotten a note from Father  
who is quite as dependent as he has been during  
the past four years - if not more so. The loss  
of this year's crop, and the troubles attendant, appear  
to deprive him of all hope or confidence.

One or two attempts during the past eight or ten  
months at handling money - speculation - proved  
extremely disastrous - and these accumulations  
of disappointments appear to be more than he  
can stand. If he had followed my advice, placed  
his money abroad instead of paying his debt, he could  
do as everybody else is now doing - buy up all his  
paper at from 10 to 90 cents in the dollar - and after  
paying his debt in full - enjoyed the satisfaction  
of having at least one hundred thousand dollars abroad  
before all contingencies. His crops have amounted



to more than one hundred thousand five thousand dollars since 1848 come - and he owes about twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars still - all of debt contracted before the war. He manages his affairs very much like our Richmond Governor used to do this.

Do all I can to encourage him, and Kim has gone to work in the trees.

I will have determined what to do by the 1<sup>st</sup> July - I think it probable but not yet certain that I will settle here with Rayne in the practice of Law. I know more of Medicine & Physiology than Law, but have about made up my mind to try the Law. If agriculture is prosperous - I shall be independent of the Law, if it fails, the Law may make me independent of it. I shall have a hard road to travel. The C<sup>l</sup>-looks dull, indifferent, repulsive. A man must do something and in my situation do it soon. All the professions - all occupations are crowded. I must go in & work my way to fortune. Believe I can do it for I have healthy strength and earnestness. I hardly feel as if there were a five thousand dollar fee just ahead waiting for me - what a thing is a hopeful temper! Still this is only probable. I may be obliged to settle at Greenwood. I have but one single object in view that is a fortune - an independence.

You can form no conception of the pinched condition of the people here now the South generally. Many of our

very substantial people are reduced to the lowest poverty - some to absolute want. Every body is struggling for meat bread & clothing. I can not see how people live. My advice on all hands is - hold on until the blizzard comes, to all you have! pay no debt, take the oath - register as a voter - go hard at work with your hands if you can do no better. I have got a letter from his mother in which she says that Robert Lee's sons are living in land (the houses having been destroyed) working with their own hands at the plough &c - on their farms called the White House. Permit me to say that I am rather surprised at your indecision. and I will take the privilege of an elder brother to give you one piece of advice - never part with a foot of your Land.

I understand Mr Duncan held a debt against the Potland estate of \$50,000 dollars - he has sent you his letter on this subject - in which he discusses the matter. He observes that he holds - this debt - these claims for the benefit of his Grand Children. You ought to try to obtain relief upon special application - for all couples, and - if going if necessary to Washington. If you fail make the whole over to your wife & get Mr Duncan to do the same - then get her to make a will in your favour. You will certainly get law ready on application.

All questions arising out of the new order of things are discussed - especially the regulation of the status of Freedmen, & the introduction of white men & Colored.







eight dollars an acre, with all the improvements. Selling therefore is out of the question. We may be obliged to sell a little topsoil, loam - but I hope even this may be avoided.

The water has disappeared from all the front cuts and we began planting corn on the front cuts yesterday and were stopped by midday of rain - It's rather early yet for the rainy season and still I hope, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, and the numerous accidents to which a corn crop is liable at this period - that we may be able to succeed.

The negroes are a good deal demoralized in consequence of the situation and of the want of adequate police regulations. They are running about all over the County with no one to restrain them - that is leaving nothing to be done - and some of ours have found business or places to live or nothing elsewhere. This is the case very generally throughout the County as far as I am informed. But we hope soon for some improvement and as our own have with some exceptions, done so well - it is quite likely that most of them will settle down at regular work when they can do so.

It is understood, that we are to have a general election for all officers both State & Federal in November and after the readmission of the State into the Union, on a civil status, and get free of the military rule, our affairs will wear a more hopeful aspect. Truly the present Governor is a good man - and is working hard to restore civil Government and has cut loose from

what is known as the Radical Party - a Party in favor of negro suffrage and opposed to any and all restraints of any kind upon the class of population. He promises well.

I had a conversation with him and sent through him my application for an office upon which he made an endorsement then which, none could be more complimentary to me. He said he would do everything to rebuild Louisiana, to get the negroes in order and to restore the old order of things. The position of Gov Wells encourages me to hope for the best possible arrangement under all the circumstances for our people and interests, I look for the return of my communication with an answer - granted in about two weeks from this writing. It was sent to Washington by Wells on the 20th inst.

I am hard at work at the law and shall have gone over the Code & all military work before going to the C. J. - which I hope I am able to do in about three weeks and begin practice at once. I shall then stop and go around looking up business. I see no other mode of making a living which will give present support and guarantee for the future. This is my mother in law's view. There will not be more than fifty or sixty working hands in all and he can easily manage them with father to direct and an overseer (a kind white man) to assist him. I am serious that he should study medicine & wishes to do so - but father has set the means at present, his health is not very good & father says he wants him here & that he ought to take active exercise. Now this state of facts, he will remain.



he could make. There are twice as many people in the  
Ct. as there was some before at this season of the year.  
I am as confident as I can be of anything which is to occur -  
that this Ct. is to be a great center - that in ten years she will  
be to the South including Mexico, & the Islands what  
New York is to the North & she will be strongly Southern.  
Now what a work you & I together would have here! Everything  
in our favor! While if separated, - you in Ky & I here neither can  
help the other & both will have almost too large a field  
to cover unaided by any body. You can never read such a  
life as this in Ky. It is too provincial. It is too contracted. It is  
a question of life & death & cross and after all, there is no more  
security or safety than here. With your fortune as it is, you  
can do nothing - absolutely nothing. Will not get a handsome  
home here & the interest on the money will support you  
like a wheel. You can really enjoy life, while for lovers  
go North every summer (for the Court are not open in summer)  
have a original occupation - establish a name & a  
future for your children, while in Ky what future can they  
have? We can also develop property in Tennessee. What will  
your personal accomplishments avail you in Ky? absolutely nothing  
for they are against you. A man with your tastes, abilities, opportunities,  
social & mental wants can never be satisfied in the kind of agricultural  
rustic, provincial life of Ky - will even say rude, "barbaric".  
It is more vegetation - it is living under protest.

They can get a place on the sea coast or on some Lake or  
River near New York & spend our summers if you & I are

New Orleans, La March 24<sup>th</sup> 1866

Dear Bob,

I have taken up my pen every day to  
write to you but have as often laid it down since  
I opened my office is that I might give the maturest  
consideration to what I had to say. I have lost what I  
am going to say long on my mind but I have been  
unwilling to encourage your own disposition to take  
a certain step, much less to endeavor to induce  
you to do so, - without having myself first felt the  
way and ascertained that there was solid ground to  
stand on. It is not my purpose now to discuss the reasons  
for the conclusion I have at length arrived at for you have  
again & again revolved them in your mind. I confess, I think,  
the best thing you can do looking at the present & the future  
is to sell out everything on earth you have in Kentucky  
& to move at once to this Ct., buy a comfortable house,  
and join me in the practice of law. I have now  
for the first time had an insight into things in the Ct.  
We shall have no difficulty in building up a really  
splendid practice. I see hold all the Court in my hand.  
I have already as much business as I can attend to and



it is coming in every day. I did not until I settled here appreciate the strong hold I had on this community. It would amuse and gratify you to see the great number coming of persons who have called at my office. I have been offered several Partnerships but I have determined to await your decision.

This city business suits your mind - I think better than me. You would like it I know more than any occupation you have ever had. There is a great field open here and practice has not all settled down into particular hands. Your knowledge of German and French would aid you greatly. Your acquaintance in Ky & the South would add to your facilities in procuring business. You would in five get a fair per cent upon your personal accomplishments. In politics you will have opportunities here greater than in Ky - You are named Gibson and that is a more popular name here than any you may be allied to in Ky. We can assist one another. Any civil attachment to me you will get the benefit of. There is much in a name. There is the bulk of our property. Now the rest goes is and must remain. Intellectually you will constantly grow because you will be constantly in contact & conflict with men of great labor and attainments.

Sooner you will be charmed for you will find a host of congenial men & women. Art, science, literature, music, amusement - all that may afford the mind recreation & improvement. As to health I only believe you would enjoy a good health here or anywhere - provided you could travel in summer. As for property you could in this my office find the best sorts of investment either in real estate or in paper. Bayne is handling now about one hundred thousand dollars in paper. A friend bought a store opposite to us a few weeks ago at \$26,000 & rented it yesterday after a few repairs at \$8000 per annum. A piece of property on corner of Chatham & Canal was bought about three weeks ago & in ten days thereafter the agent of the owners in New York had received two hundred different applications to purchase the same from parties in the city. Arthur Stuart told me yesterday that the House of Bennett Barton who had done the largest business in dollars & cents this season they had ever done and the season was not closing out. Bloomberg says in five years from now, from what he can see, his property will be ~~worth~~ more than double what it is today. Bayne bought a dwelling house for his wife a few days ago for seventeen thousand Cash because he thought it the very best investment



worth the snap of our fingers in the professions and the most moderate and reasonable calculations don't fail; or, you could spend the summer months in Ky. Facilities for railroad travel are so great that distance is no longer an open question. For myself I really believe you will enjoy excellent health here - for that depends more upon the mode of living - than climate and the Ky. climate both summer & winter is delightful. I would prefer an eternal winter but as this is not possible I like this as much as any other in the South.

Father thinks about like I do and would have urged it upon you but I urged him not to do so - while you were here - as I thought you had better let me feel the way. I am convinced this is the place for you if you had not a cent. I am still more strongly convinced that this is the best doing place for you under actual circumstances.

My idea then is that you make short work of everything in Ky - but to make no sacrifice of your property - not the slightest - and sell the moment you can get your price - mostly in cash - all if possible and be sure of the ability of your purchaser. It is no use of selling property to be paid in dribbles, nor is there any necessity for delay. If you can sell out, you ought to come down immediately & begin work. There is no use of losing six



months, by waiting until next Fall. This summer you will have a better opportunity of seeing the inside of things, of buying or renting a house & of establishing yourself in your profession — for next year, and also of seeing what investment, if any, you had best make. If it gets sickly or you get at all unwell, — neither of which is at all probable, you are within a few days of Lexington where you might leave your family for the summer. Next Fall they could come down by that time you would have made all your arrangements & it will not have cost you a few hours off.

Glodie & Claude with Lobe went out there this morning. Luther goes out tomorrow or next day. I never saw anyone dislike to quit the city — as much as he does. If he had a decent house here, he could not be dragged away & this he must have I hope this Fall. — I don't think you ever will feel settled in Ky with all of us living here — and the sooner you make up your mind — and act the better.

Love to all. Let me hear from you

your devoted brother

R. C. S. —

Things are working admirably in the Country. I could increase my working force from this market to any extent — if I desired. R.C.S. —



New Orleans La April 18<sup>th</sup> 1866

Dear Hor,

I received your letter too late to form the partnership you suggest. Regret my inability - to please you and sister. You will see by the enclosed Card that Major Austin & I have joined hands in the work and no one else can be admitted into the firm unless you should conclude to come to the City. The road to substantial success is long & hard and my situation was such that I have been compelled to adopt those means & none other, which would render available any element of strength at my command or within reach. Cutting at this stage I could not think of carrying any more weight - than is absolutely necessary. It will take time as it is to accomplish anything and both Austin & I united - control a great many influences and very active & powerful influences.

You will appreciate what I mean. A man without a large circle of friends to begin with would stand at the bottom - because after the Revolution people have gotten tied together by ligaments that bind them in business, - and any one not thus circumstanced would have immense odds to contend against. I will not recapitulate the reasons I assigned in my last letter to induce you to come here nor say anything of the imperative necessity, if you come at all, - to come soon. I certainly agree with you in your determination not to sacrifice your property in Ky - that ought never to be done. But I would certainly sell out & move to this City. and I would make no unnecessary delay.



Will telegraph you should we be overland - or  
should it be any in interest. R. D.

The River are very high and I am seriously apprehensive  
that our Estate will get under water. The latest news is  
favorable - and our hopes are strong - but I unless there  
be a change before long I fear through the adverse results.  
The stoppage of the Bay on Plague mine may save us - that, and  
about that alone, stands between us and the general situation  
last year when we were under. I feel very shaky.  
Aunt Anne & Cousin Louisa Barnes are here, and  
very well. I saw them last night. Father goes out to  
the Plantations in the morning. Gladie is at her work -  
she is not in good health - Claude looks very well. Lobe is  
there also.

We have no recent letters from your quarters. The last  
was from Birmingham - letters from any of the rest of you, don't  
amount to anything - except our desire to hear that  
you are all well - but much is missed.

Instituted the suit for the mules in Father's name &  
shall institute one for my baggage in my own - I have  
also a suit against the same Company for Dr. Richardson.  
You ought to sue for your trunk. Estimate my personal  
loss at \$12.00 &c.

Love to all others, here from you.

Wish you were here to attend one of the fine dinners  
given in social circles - I have seen better cooking, better  
wine - such good living. Good fine dinners, wine even  
eat them, but build houses twice men buy them - a good  
deal of truth in those old sayings. Your devoted brother

R. D.



the water gets to running up instead of down hill.

But you get up something for our big town here  
next fall. I think she could get the  
crop with her boys, &c. - but that is not the  
kind of show it is to be.

We are to have a great mechanical & agricultural  
Fair out at Fair Grounds; and want to make it  
a grand affair. Can you lend some cattle or  
horses or implement or some things? I have thought  
something of making the opening address but have not  
yet decided to accept. I don't have time for outside  
matters like this. Would you go staying at P. W. not sell  
all but 100 or 150 ac. of Sumner Co. It is now  
capital whenever you like will keep you poor. Whether  
there is in R. I should not hold all that money too up.  
You ought to have agreed to come here but I suppose you  
knew that for the best. How are all at home now?

kind, and thank you very much. I don't intend it  
for Friday - for his illness deserves an answer  
more than your note. Have well

Yours devoted brother,

her

New Orleans La May 28<sup>th</sup> 1866

My dear Hart,

I am in receipt of your two notes, one of the 11<sup>th</sup> & one of the 14<sup>th</sup>, with also of a letter from Mr. Killy of the same date, - after an absence of ten days I reached here last night.

I went up the River on the Atlantic (Captain Thompson) - & -  
our old friends the Atlantic Ship & Steam Coal Company - with  
Smith on deck - the same who was "killed" with  
us, on the Corwin. We had a delightful party of friends and  
three splendid young ladies - about whom I will say nothing  
but in spite of all I can do, will fall in love once in  
awhile. Miss Lucy & - Miss of St. Louis wife - from  
Stonington - is a splendid girl - I fell in love with her  
on the trip but believed I have nothing recovered <sup>and</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>lost</sup> ~~lost~~  
Attracted by these kind we got as close as they would  
take. Hunt all over the Deer Creek County &  
remained several days at Nickelsburg, got through  
my business & came back on the Baltimore a  
very fine boat. Everybody made kind enquiries for  
you - especially Emil Rodway. David Booth  
passed through here two weeks ago with his wife -  
a blonde beauty - stylish. Our people in Miss for &  
now have fine crops and have escaped water.

Letter letter from Letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> represents water rising on the back end of Pine Oak below Sugar House - the Bayou very full - still rising slowly. It must be as a cloud today must falling by soon.



unless the well established fact of the Union have been repudiated in the  
headquarters for the Union is falling everywhere, at Newbury, at Watbury  
at Newbury, at Newbury, at Newbury, at Newbury - everywhere  
I therefore no longer feel my apprehension of doing damage  
for the future, all will be right. I have just come into  
my office & have not yet been fully down yesterday and  
have nothing. Great successful efforts will be made to  
secure the Union for the future.

You say I will about this going home & there but forget  
that he has no money. I thought I wrote to him to draw  
upon me. I will furnish all he needs either one way  
or the other. I wish you would say this to him. I can  
draw for what he draws on me for, from Newell,  
Boston &c. - If course he must draw lightly as the  
understanding is we can draw for Lydell's plantation  
work, but I can arrange this. Say to him also  
that in cordially approving his plan of going to New  
York I did not in the remotest way intend  
to question the propriety of his remaining during the  
winter in N.Y. - When I spoke of promptness &  
certainty as the indispensable conditions of success  
I did not intend thereby to insinuate that he was  
without ability or labor in beginning business.

Do not see how he could have drawn such inferences.  
Much less could he construe my jitters about his political dog  
own for our American Cause into the serious cause  
of considerable delay on his part in N.Y. - On all these  
heads, he is wide of the mark. If I were in N.Y. in  
his place I believe I would certainly spend my

time & money doing, more, just what I have  
I certainly would have spent much more of it than  
he did at our Cousin's house - as I did - and  
this regardless of any body's opinion concerning or  
not. It would be a matter for me alone to determine. I believe  
in a certain sense of propriety - should regulate our social relations.  
I am only astonished at his ability to keep away from that charming  
household - charming certainly to me - whatever they may be  
to others. Tell him I told you to straighten him out on  
this matter.

I really never read the newspapers or discuss politics. My impression  
is that another successful attempt will be made to hold a Convention  
of the Legislature this winter coming. I see my plan now that there  
are quite a number of persons whose names are being connected  
privately among their friends, in connection with the Garrison's cause  
& some with more avowed attempt among a few - than your humble  
servant. That is the result it is difficult to follow me in a  
man the best judge of his strength. - I think I may be stronger in the  
County than in the City - though I really have no idea how strong.  
May seem to think no man could stand against me in such  
an election! - This is very wrong. I think they are greatly mistaken.  
There is very a man in this state, who he respects me, thinks I am  
not, proud & indifferent. - If I had the advantage of a democratic  
manor or even had now a good wife to electioneers I should be  
undoubtedly disappointed but not only without enemies but with  
very many more warm friends. But enough of myself.

Will telegraph you the amount there that the plantations  
are employed - but all apprehension with me is past.  
It is not so long we can be easily agreed unless



Don't believe there ever has been such "wastefulness" in one way or another of money as is being put off the question. It is being wasted out in much expensive speculation - but not up by force. I have been trying hard to close my door quite the world for business - but I can't then account of being obliged to reverse - and my losses are taken down yet.

Well I had not intended to write you at such great length. These notes, it would be well, for you to consider. You must visit me in either coming up. It is the right to keep the money kept for his lot - in money and out of all business, as a real egg - I think I shall write to tell his Chicago people that his money is good stock. But you are never near as better than I am. This of mine is the best - but completely - give a handsome dinner party once of week - at three thousand dollars a year - this includes dinner and everything personal of my expenses. It is a fact - I know them there are in their money & know their business. They have they say "economical" which is the only way to manage business well.

It is my own little house - a coal office, a coal house, a display of all water - and it is so much more comfortable than living in the woods on one hand & being on one side of the road & around, and then there is the bathing in the lake the best of dinner rooms where we all go for this purpose.

Give many thanks to my friends my love - and expect to come to visit them in the lake of little ones. As the whole world will send him & his children - the young people - many cordial greetings; although he never around my little boat friends.

With my remembrance especially to Mr. & Mrs. Duncan & Miss Lily - and tell her that they Duncan & I are going to find her some more, this fall.

Yours  
P. S.

New Orleans La June 13<sup>th</sup> 1866

My dear Mr. Hart,

The crisis about the high water has at length been reached and passed - and we have escaped overflow. We lost a part of the corn crop on the bank but nothing more. In summer flood of rain we fallen almost daily this month and the fields look everywhere like blue grass pastures. The cotton crops in the valley have been cut about one third - ours are exceedingly promising & have suffered like others. Indeed it is simply gambling to attempt to raise cotton in this climate which is much more suitable the climate of Mississippi than that of Louisiana is - we can count on nothing certain from cotton. The cane on Magnolia which I believe would call "gorgeous" and the corn on Greenwood - the cane on Greenwood & live oak is a little thin but vigorous flowering. The corn crop we shall have to replace on live oak - better than I think for better managers than Smith. The field is - 4. I have learned from an extended tour through the cotton region and from a large circle of friends - our present system of organization is not at all adapted to the free labor. There should be at least four men in charge on each plantation - and all interested - one to keep the store and accounts; one to attend to the cotton plants & be with them all the time; one to go with the field gang to take care of the weeds; and one the most important, to hunt up labor. There are plantations, under this organization, are prosperous, than they were before the war while worried that was an owner close on gradually mining out of labor. Now on New Creek a field of higher land was for the place - with but little at work in it - a field that had never been broken - the first place ever sown - when nearly four years ago from the land had yielded a place at \$14 per acre - and had eight hundred acres of the finest cotton



I have seen anywhere. On the farm there was the old Plaster with the old mason both hard at work cleaning & draining the new system and planning & building the aqueduct to work while the new man even in high spirits & carried good cheer & merriment.

Highland is one of the finest plantations taken all in all in the Cotton region - especially in its general freedom from overflow. Only part of it even get under water and it is so high up the country and relatively so high - the sun in the greatest overflow, the water passes off in time to plant Cotton & Corn. John has the Plantation in charge and at last accounts had about sixteen hundred, one hundred & thirty acres in Cotton & a plow of Corn - with a man as owner or partner, who makes all the cash advances & manages the business & after all expenses are paid, receives one fourth the net proceeds. This agreement was subject to Father's approval, and he has written pointing out his objections & making points to insist on other clothing John with full power to act. Mother could not meet the conditions of the contract with him. Think Cotton will be any high crop here. Higher estimates prevail. There will be just fifteen hundred bales - and it is now half-cut here - one hundred fifty or two hundred dollars a bale - will make a small crop crop in a good deal of money. Hope John will make one hundred bales for our general account. It will go a good ways to keep up that along. If we make anything at all here, we ought to make at least two hundred; that is if it is not literally eaten up by the worms - we ought to make twelve hundred from him to three hundred, say three hundred from all places - the entire estate. This will give us from forty to fifty thousand - the entire expense including the purchase of mules, will not reach expense or twenty thousand.

Just you think it would be well to write to John and discuss matters with him; to show some interest in him and to give him the benefit of your views & to encourage

him & to compliment him on his efforts. The more such stimulus and it will do him quite good. What there is an interchange of ideas & all some expression of your appreciation for him. But that has just come in & interrupted me - we have become intimate friends and like him very much. He is very well and will soon I hope be able to bring around himself the comfort of life on his own hook. We are trying to get for him the Presidency of an Insurance Office - or something of that kind. Archie is devoted to me - is very popular - knows everybody - is sharp, hard - and we are building up a good business. Sometimes you would think our fees would be very large - but often the most attractive cases in appearance, turn out nothing.

He is to marry a Miss Crockett - a great beauty - in October - a cousin of Albert Wilson - she resides at Mrs. Crockett's in Town.

I am kept very busy and enjoy good health. Sometimes think of going off, this summer to New York - and then again as it is my first summer in business I think it would be best to remain - especially as there would be up a good deal to go about next summer. I believe it would pay me well to go to New York this summer - and if I get married I will do so. The County clerk 1<sup>st</sup> July and later or nothing can be done here except to collect business & read up the Law.

Sometimes I think it would be well for Father & John to open a house here with Mother. We shall be obliged to select some planting interest in some other business than the present one for the future. Mother must have some interest in partnership with him to get him to do better work & take care of things and to push forward. The same of Mother, Father & John & I could rent a house and easily pay expenses & live elegantly. Think seriously of renting a house for myself. If that book & notes would contain so - I could live as cheap as I do now. Archie's earnings will keep himself on our business probably my income will be a little larger than his this year. Had one estate free of \$1,000 which I will get when the Byrns estate is sold & it is a very valuable Lane property.



If you all - that is Walter or yourself wish Elsie to come up - you should write to her direct. You had better address your letters to my Care Box 2809. Thus the Alex is going to Kentucky but do not know it.

Mr. Humphreys estate cannot now be sold until the next term of Court and expect to see her converted and one hundred nearly acres of land for her - and half of the estate for her children - of which you know she has the usufruct until a second marriage or death. This will secure about half the Plantation and a greater part of the buildings. The difficulty is that her children are girls, that they have no money & can't manage their property. A real business man - except her - could make a support out of it; but they are

just as bad off, as if they only had a house rent in case of land or a cut of money - as bad off - practically in fact - and they find out this worst trouble.

Alex is a noble - but a good boy if put in a proper place and cause to study, would do well. The ought to get into some good Commercial House and he would do better when his associations before the war & might come out in a way. He throws up his hands the moment they don't please him. The young ladies are willing to do anything - but they can get nothing too hard. The fall term of Court opens in November. The Court adjourned until 1st Nov or the 1st of the month.

New Orleans La July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1866

My dear Walter,

Father quit the City on Monday (yesterday) July 2<sup>nd</sup> via Mobile for New York intending unless subsequent information should change his opinion, to go to Cincinnati, Charleston, Knoxville, Lynchburg, Washington City - thence after a few days delay to his destination. He does not know how long he will be obliged to remain in New York - not more he supposed however than two weeks. He was chosen by the Commissioners to represent the Free Board of this State - to oppose the sale of the State bonds specially set apart to pay for the construction of the Levee. I suppose he will get to Lexington towards the close of July. He was very well and represented matters there in a somewhat satisfactory condition on the Plantations.

There is one matter to which I call your especial attention. Fixed out the exact date of the two bills we drew in the bottom bank that we know without delay. These forgotten & missed, Boston has drawn three drafts so as to make the proper entry.

Wm. rather opposed to the sale of the lot in Lexington as I believed the way in there was better insured than when it will go.

We have had two weeks - three - of winter weather though notwithstanding this our summer has been delightful. There are some exactly in town for about a week - there had a tendency towards slow fever - not sleeping very freely - with pains in the head & many other symptoms of an uneasy & disagreeable condition. Had better today and hope shall escape without a decided attack of fever - which would be a serious blow. I am taking all proper precautions. I attended the funeral of Mr. Bain yesterday - the



Mother of Captain Willie Richardson & Mother of Hugh Ken - shared  
a kind of apology at 2<sup>nd</sup> Broadway, where with Miss Dodge, her  
youngest daughter - she was on a visit to Hugh & Fizzie in the  
absence of Cousin Gail & Nellie who are spending a month at  
Pres. Lincoln & dining quite amply from the change. By  
telegram we even know that Dodge & Nellie as she is called  
& appears in a "most critical state" - will probably not live.  
Willie & Miss Kitz are in the deepest grief. It is said that Capt  
John Robinson will be awarded this Hall to Miss Kitz. - Sober, it  
is more explicable. John is my old friend.

One had left for New York on Sunday - is going there to  
look up business for his house & to visit old army friends.  
He has been afraid of going to N.Y. for the business in a  
few days - but Buckner & family will remain here all  
summer or if they go away it will be late in the  
season. I have been a great deal with these gentlemen  
especially the first & last during our sojourn here.

Mr. Pinkard & family are going to England to spend the summer and  
had some little things to send home but I did not know she was  
going until it was too late. Wish if in your way you would  
pay some attention to her & her people. Mr. Pinkard & a sister  
of Mrs. Gwin who was my kind to her.

I have thought something of going to New York - but Father has  
promised to circulate my card & deepest business for me. A few  
hundred lines or books in the boat would pay me well but before  
going off I must get some last line. How pretty much made up  
my mind not to go away. Though I think a few weeks vacation  
would be a good remedy for to accomplish some rest better.

I would like very much in September to take a cruise in Illinois or  
some recreation of real diversion. How could you like something of  
the kind?

As Father was stopping into the Canal to go to the Cross he got a letter  
from him. It appears that the young folks are having a gay time  
about Washington. How did my day - Suppose you & Mary still dance  
as much as anybody. You must get me a gift or something out of  
which I can make a riding horse. What have you done with Branch's move -  
Must have often let it be but not mention the subject. Jeff Thompson  
shows frequently must send his love to you. He has a great deal  
to say about his prison experience with you.

The life has become dull but remains healthy.  
I will go out to the Plantations about the end of this  
month for a few days.

Tell him to write me a description of the  
place at New Port. He must say to the young boys the no language  
can express my regret at not being present.

Hope Mary & your children are in fine  
health - Love to all

Your affectionate Father

P. S.

It looks as if Kentucky was going <sup>unwillingly</sup> again to throw herself  
into the arms of men whose ultimate purpose was  
to bring her into the embrace of the Radical Party.  
When will the old slave state become independent & vigorous as  
it is unquestionably fertile?

What have become of old Fanny & Cousin Sue & how are they? and  
how are Uncle Will & Aunt Rebecca & the "little Prince" - over



Cost Orchard? I could by no means come up if I thought  
that the Council with young people into politics and  
working - I must have riding, better work - and  
quite. My health is good but that a course that attack the other  
day that I must like - such as I hope to have at college and  
that something in the eyes a month ago - I mean to say, the  
while my general health is excellent; - was never better; - I am  
convinced that the subject of health is an important one -  
with me, and that if I thought of it - I shall become delicate.  
We all seem to be delicate of Constitution. The two London and  
developed mine but this life will, I hope, put me back where  
I was before the war. I am liable to occasional spells - two  
this - and that, though it bottom could. I have not heard from  
Katie lately - aim of putting a letter every day. I do not know  
whether she will be of his difficulties but I hope of his  
prospects. His letter better a warty tone.

I did not hear of the a delegate to Philadelphia. He had a vil-  
latory. Saw several poor negroes killed. Though my sympathies are  
for the negro - yet believe the killing very necessary since have a  
wholesale effect. They fired first on the Police like long poles - the  
Police cleared them out. They throwed away in the day the shield and  
were armed with clubs, spears and had been put up of their  
white hands to kill some body. They were not fired - negroes - but were  
"Corn Field Negroes". A good many of my men were on Police they  
relished the chances. When away in meditation, there two questions:  
When does the Bill remain 18 to my machine or fall due? When does the  
Bill of the 20th March mature or fall due? your devoted brother

P.S. Do you or sister write to John or  
Gladie? R.H. & I

New Orleans, La July 31<sup>st</sup> 1866

My dear Horst,

Have young of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. just marked 26<sup>th</sup>  
the quickest time any letter has yet made from N.Y. I am glad to hear  
from you once more for I begin to imagine you had given me  
up. As you have almost made a landing at Portland. You can  
almost say with the early settlers of this country "Now the Cape of  
Horn where is there a fairer land"? Your capital in yourself -  
your own resources be do want but the times are early out of  
joint - and money, from any place however cheap, is  
uncertain.

Remember that I will come up. I am still taking in a few  
small crews and extending my acquaintance among the small  
jobbers, tradesmen, mechanics and others - the shipyard classes.  
The large merchant like the large Planter shrinks at the idea  
of a Court and stands in dread of the lawyers - and people!  
There too are as hard above my uncertainty.

I have just got a letter from Wadsworth in reply to position  
inquiring from me. He says the grass has possession of the  
Crop (Cotton); that the Cotton & Cane are excellent, and he  
woud to God he had my leaf as long as was in case of the  
loss in Cotton. He says he thinks we will make from  
one hundred twenty-five to one hundred fifty bales on  
both places! That is coming to the point. Suppose if we make  
one hundred bales we will do splendidly. I must go out and  
see how things are & work up the best I can. I have too some



appearance of the corn on Newland but none to do any  
harm. May there not have been the counter-claim? Had our  
knowers. Longues they declined to do anything for the Leases.

It is now reduced to a certainty that the crops under  
the best look will not pay current expenses. How the  
pending question arises as to how we shall raise money  
to pay any balance against us and any part of the  
old indebtedness. Money must be borrowed some how.

Do not think we can depend on Smith, Watson, & Co -  
You & I must clear close of this Kenbourne estate.

I think if the worst comes to the end - of being clear  
we all can come in and have our share for Father.

And if we risk any money in crops there, we will  
not get the benefit - but others depending upon contingencies.

Butter keep your credit for Horkland just as close yourself  
here. The goods ought to be credited extended. We ought

not to extend at all in Kenbourne - not by another mile  
or plow. I think Father's a wise but a curious man. He

thinks against debt but will make them and is going  
to 4 pence and on five oak in my judgment premature.

He has not got the heart and courage to pay as he goes.

He concluded debt being the worst now due when he had  
money to his credit rather than pay down. And my brother

is if he keeps hold of the whole estate he will absorb  
his credit or income - is increasing the crops or in

reaping damages & losses - and we shall never  
have any security attached in our own day and

generation. And we shall all have to finish and

postpone and the longer the longer the poorer we become practically.

That is the effect of the old system. All running up a few debts -  
nothing in themselves - but a little, then a little and at last you come

up the great aggregate. Five or six thousand dollars would be of great  
service to me - would gladly take it as my share & relinquish all claims.

If that that amount I could have I could have a partner for this  
coming year equal to that amount. My prospects however are very

good at the hour. My great obstacle is a very simple one; ignorance of  
the law - in fact being no lawyer - having lived my head the wrong

way since the 24<sup>th</sup> April last. The difficulty I am trying to get over.

There another obstacle. I have no family assistance. There is no uncle  
or brother or cousin, entirely rich, or landed, or business or family.

Bankers, or commissionaires, &c - in a word business; a clerk,  
clerk or judge - men who can know business, of the kind that

into lawyer hands. This is an immense point in this life for, or  
against you. Then others think I am Father's only son - that he

is rich, that I am young & don't need or deserve help like  
some others whose losses they are acquainted with who have

families. So what some have thought upon them - in this  
is in all else, than to fight for, to struggle for what I want. In a word

than to stand on my own bottom. I feel quite certain since easily and  
fully pay all my expenses this year - but I am most anxious to get

two thousand dollars to go abroad on next spring say June 1<sup>st</sup>.

All my plans for the year past have miscarried for the want  
of a few thousand dollars. Every dollar spent now like the smoke

away from the gun must have. My only object is coming to  
K. is for health & to see you & your sister &c. I don't care to  
go into any sort of society. How often can you go up to



New Orleans July 31

Please ask your brother to furnish the date  
and time, of the two acceptances he took  
up for negotiation, He will remember  
the date and time was left blank to  
be filled in by him at the time he might  
make the negotiation. I ~~just then~~ wish to know  
what date he filled in this bill &  
whether drawn at 2400 or 7 months  
in order to complete the entries on  
our books and know when they will  
mature.



Shunt sends me this. Please  
understand and give full answers.  
You need not fear saying too much.

R. L. S. —



Saturday - Greenwood Aug 25<sup>th</sup> 1866 -

General Libson, Dear Sir

The articles I  
sent for have come. 4 Ounces quinine. 1 Gallon  
Oil. 1 Bottle Laudinum. 2 jars Blue mass. 2 Vials  
Calomel. + Bunches iron furniture for cotton. 3 Cythes  
& Gnaths. 1 Block and rope. 1 Can hard Oil. In good  
order. It rained hard at 12 O'clock today got in  
319 pounds cotton and one load corn. 2 Loads wood.  
I put the cotton away in good order in the sugar  
house. Have got in seven loads of corn the corn is  
is excellent but has been used badly by the two  
legged coons Abby lost a child this morning one  
year old. The sayes God call for it. But green  
corn and trash was the cause.

~~On~~ The Sunday morning we have north wind  
this morning I hope the weather will settle  
soon the cotton is growing fast and looks fine  
if the evening don't come back next morning we  
will have considerable cotton. I will start 2 or 3  
cythes soon as the weather settles. Cybrenns and  
Wilkins will be in in a few days with 120  
mules, and ponies. if they have any good stock I will  
git one or two if they trade on fair terms. Cotton is  
heavy the first bale we put up for Smith weighed 706 pounds



The press, and gin is in good order. Well it may to ship  
seed this year you are in the city you cannot  
the solution. I think we have two tons of old seed.  
Monday evening a small shower of rain this noon  
but done a tolerable fair days work.

Tuesday have been up to Magnolia the young  
corn will not do much, the cane is falling down  
in places, it rained this morning til breakfast  
has been a fine day since for work.

We have three thousand pounds cotton in  
seed. it opens slow. No caterpillars at present.  
Have got in 12 wagon loads corn in all.

Yours with respect

G. H. Lincoln



Oak Forest, August 29/66

Genl. R. L. Gibson

Genl

I wrote

to you on Monday but for fear  
of an accident I thought  
I would write you again  
this morning - Please don't  
fail to send the Pork  
by Saturday. The weather  
is still unsettled a heavy  
rain yesterday - No further  
development of the latter  
pillar yet. Picking Cotton  
I wrote to you Pa-  
Sunday -

With my best  
wishes for your health  
I am your truly  
P.S. Ned Smith

The Medicine & other  
things for Mr L - was  
received



GIBSON & AUSTIN,  
Attorneys & Counselors at Law,  
100 COMMON STREET,  
NEW ORLEANS.

APR 30  
A. S.



Hon<sup>ble</sup> J. Gibson

Care of

Hon<sup>ble</sup> H. V. Duncan -

Lexington - Fayette County.  
Kentucky.



Let the whole man obambers know I am practicing law doing  
a collecting business all <sup>the high valley</sup> ~~the high valley~~ <sup>the high valley</sup> ~~the high valley~~  
GIBSON & ~~AUSTIN~~ <sup>AUSTIN</sup> ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS AT LAW.  
100 COMMON STREET.

New Orleans, Aug 29<sup>th</sup>

1866

My Dear Father,

Again I enclose you despatches from Terrebonne.

If there is anything in the world which can excite an emotion in me  
it is a vague, scattering, generalizing letter without the statement  
of a single fact or a single opinion in it - just such a  
letter as Smith sends. I have replied to him for God's sake to write  
me no more such letters. He has never yet said anything, how  
many pounds of Cotton or bales - how much fodder or hay or  
corn - how about the mules - in fact nothing.

Lobe can when he tries get up such a letter & sister too  
can fill a sheet without alluding to anything existing  
or real - but of late years she has got over it & once  
in while now says something relating to some actual  
person or thing. Aunt Anne's letters are full of facts and  
that is the reason why in her day & generation she has become  
famous as a letter writer. But when the can of a tremendous  
exhaustion of the will make out to write a half sheet will put  
on it a few facts. - Run 'em down - and such  
is your style except when you get on free labor on  
politics - when your feelings rise up & you



indulge in a sermon, Philosophy, romance, rhetoric - eloquence - these things don't suit the strong & sharp appetites of men who have slept on the ground, lived on half rations & made war in earnest. I think one of the great benefits of this war - is to cultivate a love of facts.

But I did not intend to write an essay. I am in correspondence with Genl Aiken of Carolina who wishes to move his negroes to the High Valley. I offer to sell, lease or work the Ridgeland Plantation in Partnership with him - he furnishes the labor & makes the advances - lease is answer. His first letter was one of inquiry. He can make money at Sugar in Louisiana. It is not the free labor but the overflows that ruined us. I can make more money than ever at Sugar - if I owned a Plantation & had no debts.

There was such a bonus offered to intelligence, energy & capital. It is cotton planting in Louisiana that is gambling. The South was devastated & was of the sudden loss of four thousand millions of money in slaves - the old manner of planting will last only a few years more when all estates will be subdivided - intelligence & refinement will be banished to the Towns & Cities. Commerce is even today, the highest occupation in America: it wears the Crown and dispenses the patronage & wields the power of the people. Planters, Lawyers, Doctors, Preachers, Manufacturers - revolve around the Principal Merchant & Banker. Heavy taxation is what is grinding us to powder.

It rains every day - the City is literally full of people; rent going up - price of real estate rising. My law business keeps me busy all the time.

What do you think of the young Ladies around Lexington? Love to all - <sup>in haste</sup> son  
Everything will be done that can be done in Louisiana there tending our interests. R. G. G.



and sore throat and a Cough -  
off and on for three weeks. Shall stay  
out here at least a week longer - and  
you can't imagine what a treat it is.  
By tip down to Kurochans and me  
and now I am quite well - have no  
Cough or sore throat or rheumatism; only  
a little ringing of the eyes & nose - Now  
enjoy being away from people, seeing  
no newspaper, getting no letters and only  
riding round here over the places and  
stamping up things giving directions.

Nothing escapes me - the mules, clothes,  
corn gathering, hay saving, - every thing  
moves forward with pusher as poor Uncle  
just used to say. We will be planting Corn  
by the 15th Oct.

I ate pecans today from the trees  
I planted either 18 or 20 years ago;  
they are all bearing.

You never saw such splendid  
weather. Have anybody at work; will  
make a ball of Cotton.

Free Oak

Sept 28<sup>th</sup> 1866

My Dear Host,

I came out here in a  
hard rain two days ago and found  
everything in the condition you can  
well imagine when there you there  
have been scorched by dry weather for  
two months.

It cleared off the day I came &  
we have had an Italian sky for two  
days with a fair prospect of it

continuing.

I have been on horseback round my  
feet since my arrival. The mules  
are in fine order; there will be corn  
enough for both places; and we  
will make about seventy bales of  
Cotton more or less - of five hundred  
pounds each; and the sugar cane  
is excellent. We have forty bales  
of Cotton made & there are some



anything business will. At any rate  
 of business, and such things, we can  
 arrange a new act year. Any thing we  
 want to say for the labor. We have plenty of  
 money to do so. And of course.  
 I cannot remember more than a  
 week - my business suffers in the city.  
 A man can support his own wife  
 in case of any other business.  
 That has a letter from you about the  
 shows are all the same and you  
 the money for them or something  
 up down. I am afraid I cannot  
 get along without a horse. You  
 might select one and buy me one  
 you get the money from me.  
 The capital to know money in  
 by of the horse, can. I think, I think  
 so not at all to answer to any body  
 out to you. At least about that.  
 At least I think you to go up there?  
 The capital to know money in  
 and the rest to know.

hardly fine to forty more in the  
 field - I should say thirty if the  
 weather continues fair.

I think we may count on seeing  
 sales and no more.

We will pay at all events half the  
 expenses, 71 sales at \$200 make \$14,000 -  
 and our expenses are nearly \$15,000 on  
 each place including the purchase of the  
 milk, other disaster. You must attend  
 to the disaster business matters. I do it  
 promptly.

I was completely broken down in the city  
 and had to come out here; and already  
 feel the beneficial effects of the change.  
 I can only keep myself up by constant  
 "hiking" - don't forget what I wrote  
 you about these horses. I would rather  
 that the horse for me had been broken  
 to harness as I might want to sell him.  
 - after awhile - in the spring.

I have had much trouble myself.