

Fort Mackinac July 30/62.

My apparent neglect, my dear Mrs Bass, in failing to answer your interesting letter to Genl Harding and myself for so long a time, has resulted from two causes - the first - that I desired to place an interval between our replies, with the hope of making each the more acceptable - and the other - that I feared, from the troubled condition of things in Tennessee and Kentucky, there would be but ^{small} chance for a letter to reach Nashville soon or in safety. The latter reason prevented my writing to Harriet Barrow for nearly fifteen days. Have I put myself ^{right} before the court?

We fear that these troubles have detained Mrs Harding beyond the time of her intended departure, as she has not arrived yet, although the day for leaving was the 22^d - eight days ago. I regretted exceedingly that I was compelled, from considerations which I could not disregard, to advise Harriet Barrow not to make me a visit. I laid the whole case before her, and

in her last letter she tells me that she has abandoned all idea of the trip. I can well imagine that the disappointment was great, especially as Sam Gardner had determined to come and she would thus have had pleasant company all the way. But I have much reliance upon her fortitude and pride and, in this instance, both were called into action, and I have no doubt that she has been able to reconcile herself to what she deemed a very hard case.

Our prison life might be a good deal worse, but were it full of comfort and luxury, the restrictions to which we are subjected, the deprivation of the right to go and come when and where we please, the necessity of being always under the surveillance of a guard, the absence, in short, of liberty, of action and speech, would make it hard to bear, and almost unendurable, were it not for the aid that philosophy affords, and the consciousness that we have done only what we considered our duty. We might murmur, and fret and complain, as we feel a strong disposition to do so sometimes, but we suppress the feeling, as, probably, no good would ^{result} from its exhibition, at least.

for the present. Whoever has the control of our fate seems to have forgotten that we have not been convicted of any crime, that we have not been even tried for the commission of any, nor afforded the opportunity, which we desired and asked for, "to put ourselves upon the country", and, thus speedily, as the constitution requires, be able to test the question of our guilt or innocence. Prisoners of war are taken in the overt act, there is no further evidence necessary, yet we learn that those at Fort Mifflin, McGarrah, Hermon and Bailey and others, are allowed the privileges of the island upon which it is situated, upon their parole, from sun rise to sunset - while we, prisoners of State, of whom no overt act nor the slightest evidence of any description has been adduced, in legal form, are refused to give our parole, and are strictly guarded besides, as though to make "assurance doubly sure" - as if a man were to say - "I know you are a gentleman, from your previous character and from your associations, you are my prisoner, I desire that you will give me your parole that you will not endeavour to escape nor to do any thing to any thing to my detri-

ment either in act or word - But, he continues, al-
though I know that in all civilized nations, the parole
is considered equivalent to the most solemn oath, and
the penalty of its profanation may be death, still, my
God sir, I must take a "bond of fate", and in
addition to your pledged honor, I must watch every foot
step you take by means of a guard with his mus-
ket, and then I can sleep soundly, from the re-
flection that I shall be able to return ^{you} safely to
the authority from whom I received you". I do not
mean, in what I have said, to censure Capt. Brown, who has acted liberally, in
describing ^{his} ~~his~~ ^{ask} your forgiveness, my dear friend, for instal-
ling this dry argument upon you about the incon-
gruity of bayonets and a parole - but it ^{is} the thing
that most chafes me in my present situation, and
having mentioned it, I could not stop until I had given
you my views, condensing them as much as possible as
far as I went, and then cutting off the volume for
fear you might deem me a most uninteresting correspon-
dent. It may be true, however, for as both that they
opened to take this course, as, had I got upon a different
one, I might have said some things, of a stricter
or softer character than John M., or Naime Barrow
would have esteemed commendable. To your next letter
I promise that I will ^{give} a more interesting and appropriate
reply - though the incidents of our prison life are but
few, and it is difficult to make much of them.
One day is as monotonous as another, and we are ready
to seize hold of the most ^{trivial} circumstances that may add
to the meagre variety. We are all looking forward with anxiety
to the arrival of Mrs. Harding and the children, as it will
break in, greatly, upon the tediousness of our lovely life. Oh!
that circumstances had been such that Naime Bar-
row could have accompanied them! I am, my dear
Mrs. Bass, most truly your friend,
Washington Barrow.

Remember me kindly to all the family that may be with you, and when you
write to Mr. B. if you write at all, give him my kindest regards.

Mrs. P. P. B. in the most delicate manner, to
ask you to