

Shenwood Forest, Virginia

Dec. 7th 1849

My Dear Col:

Your letter along with the newspaper reached us in due course and I need not express to you the pleasure which your letter afforded me. The future destiny of California is too plainly written to be mistaken - with the rail road across the Isthmus of Panama to say nothing of other and grander schemes of improvement which already fill the public mind, it is destined to become the wealthiest and most powerful community that the world has yet seen. I allude not to its gold mines, but to that immense commerce which will make it its entrepot, and its great distributing agent. When I turn to the pages of history and behold the glories of Tyre and in more modern times of Genoa and Venice, and now of England, proceeding as they did from the partial monopoly of the trade of the Indies, and then contemplate the results of a concentration of the whole of that trade on a single country, I confess that my mind becomes utterly bewildered - I can neither measure the extent of its wealth or its population. I sometimes think to myself, that the pleasant places of the Old States of the Union are but the mere shadows of California. Deeply impressed with these views she was ever prominently before me during my administration. If the Senate had ratified the Texas Treaty that ratification would have been followed by immediate negotiation and I do not doubt but that California would have been peaceably acquired. I know not how things are to result in regard to it during the present session of Congress. An objection is taken to admitting her as a state with the boundaries as proposed.

The opinion is urged to what extent I have no means of knowing, that your Convention has too entirely engrossed the Pacific Coast in laying off your boundaries, thereby excluding all other portions of the territory from sea ports. If this be so, your people will most probably have to modify their constitution in that particular. As to the clause excluding slavery, I do believe that any ^{not} opposition will be made to the constitution because of that. The Southern contend universally for the right of the people to regulate all questions of internal police for themselves - hence the conclusion to which we arrive that your power to admit domestic slavery is the same with the corresponding power to prohibit it - and be the decision the one way or the other acquiescence on our part becomes a duty. We however do protest and that protest goes up with the almost unanimous voice of every Southern State, against a set of rascally politicians at Washington, undertaking to make the law for you and us upon the subject. I fear that we are destined to great trouble upon this slavery question and that the end is not yet. I am a silent but not indifferent spectator of what is passing, and I confess to you that I am not without my fears and apprehension, and yet I have much confidence in the good sense of the American people. But even if fatal results transpire California and Oregon united, will, before many ^{years} have elapsed have become a great Republic.

The Congress commenced its session on the first Monday, and had two days balloting for Speaker with ^{out} success. Some thirty free soilers hold the balance of power, and seem to act upon their own organization. In consequence of a derangement of the James River Steamers we are without

more recent advices. I presume that the Steamer
will bear you Newspapers containing full intelligence.
I have little local news. Your mother and Mrs. Peck-
man are now with us, and their letters will accom-
pany this. Mrs. Gardiner was subjected at E. Hamp-
ton New York and Philadelphia to seven attacks
of head ache, and on reaching us last week was
quite thin. She already I think has decidedly improved
Margaret is much better than she has been for
the last two years. Her little boy is a sweet interesting
child and is a great favorite. He resembles very
much Mr. Peckman, to whom please present my
regards and fondest wishes. Gardie and Alack are
noble fellows. The first is evermore talking of Uncle
David and Uncle John and fancies that Califor-
nia abounds in Sugar Candy. Yesterday I had
several gentlemen to dine with me after a box
hunt in the morning in which resulted in the
death of poor Reynard, and a merry time we
had of it. I have only succeeded in getting one
deer this season. With the exception of two other
dinner parties in the neighborhood, we have
had no other merry-making than those I have
mentioned. Mr. Rolling of Sandy Point died
with us "en famille," a few weeks ^{ago} and among
other things expressed great regret at his igno-
rance of your being with us last winter, de-
claring that had he known it he would have
come down from Petersburg expressly to
have you at his house in the County. He laid
me under a promise not to permit either
myself or Alacules to visit us without com-
municating the fact to him. But when we
are again to see you: Report speaks favorably
of your success in El Dorado, and if it does
not lie, I take it that you will be in no haste to

I need not add that Julia writes in true and true love to you. An hour and
Mr. Alice and myself have written you so often it is impossible to do so herself.
at this time.

return - The tide which has carried you on thus far
will sweep you still further, until at last not
even to be a millionaire will suffice - Such is
the tendency of fortunate adventure upon all men -
The specimens of gold-dust which you sent me
are objects of much curiosity hereabout as they
are the first arrivals from the mines - I have placed
them in our cabinet of curiosities - Will you say
to Abel, to whom present my warmest respects, that
I received a box of shells from an unknown source
some four years ago. There may possibly be those
he forwarded through a House in New York - I hope
he may be successful in his adventure to California
will you also remember me to Faulkner the Editor
of the Pacific News - I see he retains as much of
the name of his Connecticut paper as circumstances
will permit - Success attend him - and now
what more can I say which would give you
a moment's interest - We are plodding on upon
our farm in our usual way, our prospects
for good crops are annually increasing with
the improvement of the land and I have reaped
this fall a larger crop of wheat than usual -
but what comparison exists after all between
our products and those of California? We must
however be content as it is a little too late in
the day for one to emigrate - Thousands of our
people are still rushing forward to reach the
land of promise, emigration seeming rather, if
any thing, to be on the increase -

With the sincere hope that you will meet
with the fullest measure of success and that
Mr. Thompson may share a like good fortune
I bid you adieu -

Truly & affectionately
W^m J. Tyler



Col. David L. Gardiner
San Francisco
Upper California