

Lexington June 12th 1791⁵

Dearest cousin, your letter of the 20th of April came to hand a few days ago, and had I been at Cincinnati I would have received it much sooner than I did. — Your poor excuse answered every purpose, and the bearer of it I assure you, met with a most welcome reception. —

Little did I think when I last wrote to you, that I should now be a tutor in a private family. — At the time when Mrs. Clay was endeavouring to find for her children an instructor, that would take the place of one that was about to leave her family, a friend of mine who was at that time in Lexington, thinking that the situation was a very eligible one, proposed me to her, as a person that would suit her; although he did not know whether I would accept of the place or not. — He soon after acquainted me by letter with what he had done, enumerated several of the advantages that I would have, and desired an answer. — After comparing my situation then, with that in which I now am, and considering that I would have the use of Mrs. Clay's extensive law-library, and a sufficiency of leisure time to devote to my studies; — that the confinement would not be irksome to me, as I had been much accustomed to, and was pleased with a sedentary life; — that I should render the Latin and Greek languages familiar to me by teaching them, and would in the same manner become more intimately acquainted with Geography, &c; — that I should thus strike off from the list of my expenses the articles of board &c; and lastly, that I should have the satisfaction of reflecting that I was supporting myself, independently of any assistance, which was far from being the least inducement, I engaged in my present employment. — For although I could not entertain the smallest doubt either of my father's willingness or ability to defray all my expenses, yet cousin, such to me were the charms of independence, that I could not resist them.

My pupils are five in number, two boys of the ages of twelve and thirteen, reading Latin, and three girls whose ages are six, eight and ten, the eldest of whom together with her brothers is studying Geography and Arithmetic. Besides being paid in board, and every thing pertaining thereto, I have a servant paid me, and a horse to ride, and a compensation at the rate of three hundred dollars a year.

I have now been in the family rather more than six weeks, and find my situation very pleasant. — If Mrs. Clay continues in Lexington so long, and we continue to agree as well as we do at this time, I may remain with her untill her sons have gone through the usual course of studies. — I am much pleased with Mrs. Clay; she possesses many good qualities, among which are benevolence to the poor, and kindness to her servants. — The latter is the more conspicuous, because it is rarely to be met with where slaves are so numerous as they are here, and where the first impressions that the infant mind receives with regard to this unhappy people, are so degrading to human nature. — She is a woman of warm passions, strong prejudices, and a most violent political Partisan. — Being possessed of the means, (Mrs. Clay's estate being worth near two hundred thousand dollars,) she lives in the first style, and sees much company. — She has a fine form, and is very fond of dress, yet I think could never have had any pretensions to beauty. — Her family, exclusive of servants, consists of herself, her housekeeper, seven children, the eldest of whom is thirteen years old, and myself. — Mrs. Clay is daily expected.