

Cincinnati Jan'y 30. 1828—
My dear Parents, the date of this note doubtless surprises you. I suppose you now think I am at St Louis, and perhaps will imagine I am wasting my time by spending so many days in this city. But you must know that Cincinnati is the very heart of all the West. She commands the trade, the literature, and I had almost said the politics of all this country. Here I am every day meeting men; many of them young men like myself who come out for the purpose of exploring the land with a view to permanent settlement, and who are able to give me all the information I desire. I am much pleased with Ohio. This is one of the most pleasant cities I have visited, indeed I think I may say I prefer it to all that I have met in my travels. If I remain in the West it will be here. Much conversation with gentlemen well acquainted with all this part of the Union convinces me that this city offers fairer opportunities to enterprise, I mean of course, professional enterprise, than any other this side of the mountains. As for the South, like Arkansas or Louisiana it is death for a northern man to go there. He cannot often survive the climate. In the South you can make more money, but to rise in politics is less easy than here. But since I started from home, and have by reading & the conversation of many eminent men, informed myself of the character of different sections of the country, I altogether prefer the free to the slave holding states. So strong is my prejudice against them; so ~~though~~ ^{thoroughly} fully am I convinced that their influence, once so powerful, is fast on the decline, and so inreterate are their feelings against all New England men, that I have made up my mind never to settle in a slave holding country. In my heart I believe the South and West both hate New England. I speak, of course of the great mass of the population, not of the peculiar opinions of a few enlightened and liberal men. I frequently find it difficult to restrain my feelings of indignation, when I hear my native country so ill spoken of and so grossly slandered. If a horse breaks his bridle, or a boat runs ashore, if a boiler bursts or a stage upsets, each

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is a yankee trick. Yankee is a broad term of reproach, a kind of cant appellation for all that is mean or wicked. Nor is this feeling confined to the lower classes. Intelligent men, this they cannot deny the proud facts of our history or the enterprise of our present character, still permit themselves to be carried away in the general prejudice. I am frequently told by way of compliment that I do not look or behave like a Yankee. Tho' this is meant for flattery to me it is most mortifying. The more I see of this section of the country, its manners and institutions, the stronger are my feelings thrown back on New England. I am very glad and very proud that I was born there, and unless the country still further west is far better than gentlemen here represent it, the probability is that I shall die there. Whenever I look over the map of the United States my eye turns involuntarily toward N.E. I confess that at this moment I like the road behind me better than the one before, but as I am out here I think it best for me to view all the country as much as lies in my power. I shall probably never have another opportunity. I have become acquainted with most of the influential men of Ohio, and everywhere received much kind attention. But in point of manners and information the great men here are not equal to our great men. On one subject they are all ignorant, that is, New England. On Monday I shall go down to Louisville Kentucky, and after spending some days in that state, I shall perhaps, go to Natches, and St Louis. Unless uncommonly fair prospects should open to me in Mississippi or Missouri, I shall come back thro' Indiana and Illinois, thro the upper part of this state to New York, and arrive in Portland sometime in April or May. Among the gentlemen of this place I am most acquainted with Mr Flint the authour of several novels and some works of on the Western Se States. Mr Flint is a scholar and a gentleman. In literature he stands higher than any other man on this side of the Alleghanies. He has travelled

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thro' all the West and knows its character. He is a great man, and deducting a little of enthusiasm from his observations, they are valuable and to be relied on. He is editor of the Western Review. His time of course is much taken up but I always find him disengaged in the evening and spend many happy hours in his company.

I have enjoyed the most excellent health ever since I left home, and am now in fine spirits, and as fat as the pigs of Ohio, which are much fatter than our pigs of Maine. No one has dished me, or gouged out my eyes, I have not been asked to fight a duel, or [?]kelted in any way during the whole visit. I have to be sure met with some queer adventures, which I hope will amuse you when we are met again in that old chamber, which old and ugly as it is, is yet dearer to me than a palace. I flatter myself, then when I get back, there will be no man in the State of Maine that will know so much about the Western country as I shall.

I hope you are all well, especially poor Harriet and mother who were so ill when I left home.

Give my love to all my friends and believe me your affectionate son
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