Rhinebeck June 26. 1865

SHR

My dear Kate

I have merely time to send a little letter in reply to your most welcome one of April 21. Do not imagine that it was from anything said by your father in his letters that I took up the idea that the village might prove a lonely residence to you all during the long winter months. Your father appears to be always hoping them merely, and to suppose any body hoping around him. He has mentioned with pleasure too, the occasional visits you have all of you made to town and the kindness you have experienced from your friends. I got the idea from something casually [illegible] observed by others lest you might all feel the difference between the social life of the village during the summer months and the meeting and bustle of winter. and I have long felt

a shilling of the kind weekly. Whilst I am at home among you I could occasionally give a little time and attention to domestic life; though even then not so much as I wished: but then my departure and I must but think the winters must pass tedious.

I have been relieved, thereby, the last winter, by finding you had all those resources to make together of pantomatory in the social life and innocent amusements of the city; and trust you will be able to do so still more the next winter. Arrangements might even be made for your all passing the winter months in town among your relatives; making pecuniary compensations; and leaving a man servant at the Cottage. By this way you might all vary the scene without material increase of expence. I love the Cottage; but why because I considered it a happy family nestling place. When it ceases to be so it loses its value and I shall be the first to counsel an abandonment of it. You must not mew yourselves up there under an idea that it is my wish. My wish is that you should all be happy: and I know you all to be such dear good girls that you may be safely left to consult your own inclinations. There you make all your domestic arrangements to suit yourselves.

I have been deeply concerned of late at the illness and death of poor Gabriel at Paris: and even still more at the mental suffering of his excellent little wife: during her long and anxious voyage, and on her arriving too late even for his dying bed! I long to hear of her being once more at home with her children and friends, after her sad, sad wanderings. She is of a most noble nature and is with God and mingles the more she is known.

I shall be anxious to hear how you all pass the summer: now your old neighbours have returned after a fashionable campaign

in Paris. I want to know, also, how Julia Grinnell likes the thousand-dollar cottage: and whether you are able to keep up a tolerably frequent intercourse.

Tell your father I have received his letter of April 15th giving a statement of the fiscal affairs of the cottage, which is very satisfactory. I am glad to find that the pigs and poultry pay for their boarding and lodging; and especially that the turkeys are so much more productive as being supposed to prey the vagabond. I am glad also to hear that you have a good gardener, and that the garden flourishes. In fact the garden and the poultry yard furnish occupation and amusement in a little establishment like yours & ours. I will write to your father by another opportunity

Give my love and benediction to all the household. Your affectionate Uncle

Washington Irving

SHR

P.S. Tell your father in his second report he has made no mention of Vaney.