West Point. June 18th. 1833.

My dear William,

Since your departure two vessels have sailed for Canton, by which Father & I believe some of the boys have written to you. As I was out of the way, I could not take advantage of the opportunities. Sanders is now up here passing a few days and I prepare this to be forwarded by him whenever a chance may again offer.

In the short time that has elapsed since your departure, nothing worthy of note has transpired. Uncle Washington & Theodore have been travelling backwards & forwards between Tarrytown & New York. I believe the latter Lawrence is now settled at Ogdensburgh for the summer. He is going on with his work, which I trust with Uncle W's aid may turn out to be of advantage both to his reputation & pocket. As he has proved to his own & our entire satisfaction that he is good for nothing else, he may & Capt Rogers succeed in his new line of life. I have often noticed his happy knack at description & under the tuition & direction of so competent an adviser as Jeffrey Drayton he will have a fair chance of improving his natural powers.

I am yet under the harrow myself — and indeed must expect to linger through many long months before I am free to choose again. The Browns are pursuing destiny & most unfortunately my own connections of

what is the proper course for me to pursue Do not agree with the ideas of others whose interest I have to consult - Time & patience will put an end to this and I may then again breathe freely -

George Dunn is also upon here - He has as yet no prospect of a situation, while he is very anxious to be doing something for himself. He is endeavouring to procure some place in a Canton establishment & for his own sake I hope may succeed -

Your voyage will doubtless prove irksome in the extreme particularly as you are like myself rather impatient of restraint and confinement. Do not however I beg of you allow yourself to grow weary and negligent - I think after all that I have said to you and with your knowledge of our situation here, no more need be said to incite you to exertion. We are all here in a poor way - and if we but succeed in getting our living and maintaining our respectability we shall remain satisfied - You will beyond a doubt find your situation irksome - and will often feel despondency - especially as you are so far away from all the scenes and associates of your youth - but always bring to your recollection that you have now for the first time an opportunity of redeeming the valuable time you have lost - and a prospect of being Lord of yourself - You will have to work hard and undergo many privations - and will for some years have doubtless to content yourself with a mere maintenance - but if you are attentive and anxious to acquire the confidence of your employers and of Mr Coolidge in particular, I have every reason to think that you will have a fair chance of making a little property. Recollect however that in this business like age, no money is amassed without industry and perseverance - and as you have every incentive to exertion, I hope most confidently that you will now meet with success - If Even if you make a mere living, you ought to be satisfied - You were, you know, out of employ at home - and had you remained here. might have continued so - This situation is almost the only thing that could have turned up for you - and you have been most fortunate in securing it -

Another thing I wished caution you against - Absence from home and distance & a lapse of time will gradually soften all the asperities and scenes of past life and leave but the brighter scenes for memory to dwell upon - & happy it is, that this is the case - Now although the very last thing that I wished with is that you should become estranged from your home - Yet I wished have you recollect it as

it actually is - the clouds as well as the sunshine - & call up occasionally a few sombre recollections as an antidote to present discontent - We are all scratching along here by the hardest & indeed at the present moment fortune pours most inauspiciously upon us. You are I hope in a way of taking care of yourself - Indeed with perseverance and patience - & a control of temper - and proper attention to the interests of the house. I think you may confidently look for an advancement -

There is one other matter, to which above all others I intreat your attention - and as I believe you know me well enough to be satisfied that I am one of the last men to be led away by what the world calls "Cant" & "humbug", so I hope from me the recommendation will have the more influence - I wish for my sake, you would frequently read the Bible and Prayer Book I gave you before your departure - &

[illegible]

[illegible]

W3271a

short as my life has been, still it has been long enough to prove to my entire conviction the truth of what we constantly hear and as constantly disregard – the utter insufficiency of this world to confer happiness. Having realized from my own experience the vanity of its promises, the folly of its pleasures and the unprofitableness of its rewards I would most earnestly entreat you not to live as if this insignificant term of forty – fifty – sixty years were the whole of your existence. If you for one moment bend your mind seriously to consider this subject and can grasp its magnitude, I feel satisfied that you will need no urging – It was so with me – I lived with entire thoughtlessness with regard to a future state of existence, until sorrow & disappointment had wearied me of this – and I found my thoughts instinctively turning to the last refuge from earthly trouble – Then the film dropped from my eyes – & it is now only a matter of amazement to me how I could for years live in such utter unconcern – Satisfied of my own incertitude and emptiness to die I sought that to which every mortal must come or point – the Bible – There I found that this life is but a term of probation – in fact the mere threshold of our existence – but which is by our conduct in it to determine our fate forever – Submitting my own will & reason, I read humbly the history of our race & our redemption, and with a firm faith in the mercy of the deity and in his Son Jesus Christ, it is my endeavour so faithfully to do my duty here that when I die

I may rejoin you[r] cheerfully to the will of God –

As the thoughtlessness of my part life may have had some imperceptible influence upon your own character. I am prompted by duty as well as by the deepest interest to declare to you my sincere belief in the great truths of the Bible – It is a belief founded upon careful reading reflection – & one which I would not now exchange for worlds. So far from making me gloomy & melancholy as I have always been inclined to think religion would – I now for the first time in years enjoy a cheerful & contented disposition – Satisfied that everything is working for our good if we will only regard events in the proper light – & seeing in the troubles that have fallen upon me, the very means of my Salvation, I submit cheerfully to my lot – knowing that by a patient continuance in well doing I may at last win a happiness – of which now we can not form the most distant idea – & Then all the mysterious dispensations of providence at which we are now inclined to murmur, will be clearly understood by us –

I have not known how to speak as fully on this topic as I could wish – I beg however that you will for my sake, not treat lightly what I urge upon you – Look upon yourself as an accountable being – as under the constant charge of a merciful God – and if you will who will render you an aid which none you cannot imagine if you will only ask for it –

I am most sincerely & affectionately yours
D. P. L.

Write often – as often as opportunities offer – I will lose no chance of sending you something – & will on my return to Kentucky prepare some books forwarded to you –

Wt. William Irving.

Care of Messrs Russel & Coy

Canton.

Franklin
July 7.

E32416