

From John A. Bushnell to Eugenia Bronaugh

[page 1]

Calhoun Mo[.]

June 15th 1863

Dear Eugenia[,]

I did not get tired reading your long, interesting and very welcome letter of the 12th. On the contrary when I was through I turned back to learn my lesson over again, and again, and yet was not tired. I have sketched several letters lately that I might write what I wanted in a hurry and not forget any thing--but having no chance to send them that I believed to be safe, and as the weather was gloomy I was fearful my letters might partake of the weather[.] at any rate they did not please me. I [*text stricken through*] did not see Mr[.] B. in town but once last week, then he did not come to the store, in fact that is the only time he has been at town since your Ma was here that I remember. Your last letter was handed to me by other hands on Saturday[.] I have sent a paper twice by Mr[.] Wm. Goff to Mr[.] B--which is all I got last week.

The crisis has not come for, I cannot say how long[.] You can see the news in the papers and interpret it for yourself, better than I can[.]

[page 2]

The Foreign news in the paper of the 11th tells things that is not hard to understand, if one knows the peculiar manner of the writing and speaking of that people, and how few words they employ compared with some of the American orators and writers, in former times, of essays on Government and [MS. illegible] for the eyes of the people as well as many news paper editorials.

Some things we understand by natural instinct, some by comparison, and some by the laws of gravitation and the sciences of nature. While God is our friend we are safe--If we dare not complain of being mistreated[,] molested &c because, we dare not deny what any negro may say, or to vindicate our rights by civil process or otherwise--God so works, that others are instruments in His hands to defend justice and right and His Holy will[.] The nations of the earth, civilization, humanity--all Christendom will defend the right and [order?] unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's[.] What if one is prudent, loyal, righteous--so some curious neighbor, or a spoiled negro says to the contrary? Fret not, nor fear not, Christ suffered much persecution, and was

[page 3]

withal crucified--it was Gods purpose--His purpose in the present perils will also [*text stricken through*] come to pass.

The peace meeting in New York is, I fear, to the north, what John Brown's raid in Virginia was to the south--it may be the first gun, from the papers it might appear that many other guns are charged and primed--which if managed by fearless hands may fire at no distant day and produce civil war throughout every state in the Union. This is the force of reaction in all revolutions, and the Lord only knows how often things may recoil and react before our Government is reclaimed to the pleasure and will of Him who rules all--O may it soon come--I see nothing but terror before us, a certain reality of the horrors of War, and the consequences to follow.

Bro[.] E. & family were up a week ago last Saturday and left on Wednesday. They were well and had much to talk about their visits to and among our relations and what was going on socially and in business. There is evidently a better state of things there than here. Saturday I received a letter from Bro[.] E, he had just received one from Bro[.] Fayette, who seems to think things times are squally

[page 4]

in the North.

We had quite a charcoal meeting [there?] on Saturday. I do not know who attended and have heard very little about it. I suppose we will all be enlightened when it is published. One thing you may prepare yourselves for[,] that is that your blacks will be taken away either by law (the Convention) or by force--as well as all others--the work is going on. If however, the Convention emancipates them you may stand a chance to hire yours as many others will try to do. I told mine this morning that if she was emancipated I would still hire here--while I remained here--but I rather think I shall have no use for her--her [nose?] is tereble [terrible] now--what it might be then I cannot tell--it might be better, or it might be worse--while others will do just as they did before[.]

My goods trade did not hold, after taking the invoice Mr[.] Ragan & Mr[.] Edmondson commenced fixing up their own private arrangements which they should have done before--and they come to the conclusion that they could not be mutually agreeable as partners

[page 5]

under contingencies which might arise.

I shall try Mr[.] [Hakill?] & others if I fail with him, and then if I do not succeed I will do the next best thing--for I begin to feel I am procrastinating matters longer than may be healthful. I am still at a loss to know what is best--when I leave here I am like Noahs dove without a place to set foot on, yet after a few days I may find Mount Ararat.

Mrs[.] Garth passed down in the stage on Saturday. I merely stopped the stage long enough to shake hands, the stage was crowded--she was on her way to Indianapolis to see her son Henry who is a prison there. I understand he was captured at Port Hudson. Sam Garth (Bro[.]) returned last Wednesday[.] I had only a howdy with him. I have not heard from St[.] Louis for some time, I expect because I have not written--nor have I heard from Bro[.] Fayette. I expect I will get a letter to day as Bro[.] E got one last Friday. I will leave this letter open for that and other news.

I do wish you had a place to visit in town that would be pleasant to both of us, it would be quite a comfort, and yet it might excite

[page 6]

the talk & prejudice--perhaps pretended suspicion--of the [MS. illegible] and evil minded--so perhaps all things work for the best. Angels guard us while we sleep and in our waking moments we can [MS. illegible] and think--even [*text stricken through*] while our hands are busy our minds can span a distant future with Gods Providence.

I suppose you had your hands and thoughts both at work while Capt[.] Friend staid with you. I heard that they would stay at your house[,] I suppose before they got there, unless they stopped early in the evening. This might have been accident or it might have been design, if design I was also to feel a certain triumph, we should not however be suspicious, it is best to be charitable and yielding for by even showing vexation or less troubled thought, the triumph is the greater to the fiend[.]

To Speak of Kos[,] I can see him come in tired but showing gladness to get back, manifesting it by asking a kind word of recognition--& asking you for a drink of water, at your house he would not ask for water. At the Store he always after looking about to see if all his friends were present and noticed him, he went to

[page 7]

the Water bucket and scratched on the floor and if no one noticed him he would bark and if then you looked at him and laughed as if making fun he would come to you and hit you with his foot or rub against you & go back to the bucket if he discerned you were going to give him water[.]

Ginnie is doing very well. I have not seen her in her new home, she has two little pets now. I think unless Mrs[.] McDaniel sends for hers they had better stay a little longer[.]

I am glad Cora and Mollie are doing so well in their studies. What a pleasure it will be to the absent when they shall return to find they have advanced in knowledge as well as grown in stature, and will also be proud of your patience and endurance, a happy thought[,] a shining brightness well merited will illumine a happy family when again reunited, and how often will it be remembered and talked of while other reminiscences may pass away[.]

I often try to dream, but very seldom do when I am entirely well--I have suffered much from heat the past two or three days.

I see Mr[.] Beaty in town & will finish this letter. I did not get the expected letter from Bro[.] Fayette. I got one from John Garth[,]

[page 8]

Henry's captain. He has been in every battle fought by Genl[.] Price since the Lexington fight & has not received a scratch--was captured in the late fight at Big Black Bridge 12 miles from Vicksburg, and is at Fort Morton Indiana. John was on his way to furnish him with money and clothing[,] articles which he said he was destitute of. Henry's health was good and anxious to be exchanged.

I will send you the last paper & try to get one to read of some one. Give my love to all the family & tell them to hope on, hope ever and to remember me in their prayers. Adieu[.]

Affectionately Yours[,]

John A[.] Bushnell