



[William Crosfield Letters](#)

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National Hotel, Washington
15 Tuesday September 20/59

My dear Papa,

I am afraid that if I go on writing throughout as I do now I shall have nothing to say for myself when I get back. But I think that it is better to jot down my impressions as I go along rather than leave them to be moulded by after circumstances.

Very many things indicate an altered relationship between the two colours for I am now in the slave states. I was struck with the very large proportion of blacks even in Baltimore tho' that is so much contaminated by the neighbourhood of freedom that it scarcely merits the name of slave. In New York the notice on the 6th aven cars attracts ones attention "coloured people allowed on these cars" but here the tariff on every room states the meal-hours for "white servants" and for "black servants"; and notices declare that "the Balt^c & Ohio R R requires

the bond of two citizens of Washington papers say of our quarrel, I to secure them against damage think that if I read only this before any coloured person white side of the question I shall almost slave or free can be transported believe that the Island of St. John that notice is in this hotel. All men does really belong to Uncle men are equal here!!

Passing through Baltimore and got Maria's and Maggie's letter very welcome they were, after the long delay and uncertainty of the Persla's arrival. I had intended to sleep at B^c tonight but as it began to rain about 10^o with the intention of continuing I changed my mind and came on here - a dull place indeed. The rain is coming down with a will and there is nothing doing in the house except a dozen people listening to a lady who is expending her voice on her highest notes I can up to my own room to talk to you. Washington is just now empty as there are only the regular inhabitants in the place, till the 1st of December when congress meets. What do the English papers say of our quarrel, I think that if I read only this side of the question I shall almost believe that the Island of St. John does really belong to Uncle Sam. He has sent out General Scott and that looks like business for "the General" is a very old man and is very fond of an easy chair, like some of the rest of us. He is a man that I should not like to have to deal with hand to hand for he stands supple 6ft 6 and is very strong built. He commanded on the only occasion in his long career when British & American bayonets crossed, but one of his greatest victories over us he himself ascribes to accident. I have only seen one "Times" since I landed and that was on Saturday at a distance from here I shall go if all be well to the Natural Bridge, Weir's Cave and the Mammoth and on to Chicago; then as soon as it is safe to New Orleans and the Indies spending my time in Jamaica

rather than in Cuba; then return
through Cuba to New Orleans and
cut across to this city one way or
other so as to be able to see something
of Congress. I am also anxious to
see the Garralls again they treat
me so well on Sunday and Miss
Mrs G so agreeable that I should
like to accept their invitation to see
them on my return. Mamma
speaks of the uncertainty of my
letters when they go to New York
it would indeed be curious if I
lost one. If I do I shall get it back
and keep it under glass. the
fact is when they are sent to N.Y.
I can keep count of them all and
having one in every Gunard Street
know just which I want but if
they are scattered up and down
the country I shall spend a great
deal of time in picking them up
for here post masters are not allowed
to remail letters addressed to their
houses.
Maggie mentions the American
method of removing. I did see a
house going from home but I

considered it so well known a fact
and so common, as not to be worth
putting on paper though it does
certainly look curious. At times
the weather is still warm but not
by any means continually. I
suppose that I am now getting
nearer the sun. I mentioned
to Mamma how the sun crossed
the line on Saturday, every where
the storm seems to have been very
violent and in many places has
done great damage, and a frigate
has gone ashore and broken up
somewhere down south: and all
along the route ^{today} there are great
landslips. I shall try to get the book
Mamma speaks of Abouder if he is a
Judge Upham that I met in New
Hampshire. Thank Bertha please
for her message and tell her that
I will try to write to her again soon,
and also tell Charlie that I shall
be glad to hear from him whenever
he can write but that he must not
neglect his lessons for it. I should
like to hear something about

business. Blackstock and Asher
streets and Temple Place are they
still in statu quo? The miserable
exclusive system exists here in
full force as in England as regards
Sugar Houses.

I think that I did not tell you
about the cars between New York
and Philadelphia; they are by
far the best that I have been in
ornamented with pictures all
round, not high works of art,
but still they give an effect of
finish that I have not seen else
where. At night the cars on this
road are lighted with gas, it gives
a good, steady, brilliant light,
great improvements on the old
oil lamps which require constant
attention to keep them even
visible. When I found myself in
Chestnut Street Phil^a I remem-
bered Mrs Wright who amused
me with

Walnut, Locust, Spruce Pine
Chesnut, Filbert, Cherry &c.
In Philadelphia they have a

curious way of reckoning the
houses in the main streets which
run between the two rivers. At
right angles to these the streets
are numbered beginning at
the Delaware. Set out on Saturday
to find Mr Yarnall 123 Market St
when I struck Market Street the
number was 1427; in pouring rain
it looks like a long walk to 123 till
you know that 1427 only indicates
between 14th & 15th twentys even houses
from 14th so 501 is at the corner of
5th. In all American cities they do
not speak of "streets" but a man
will give you a direction "Smith's
536 Broadway near Spring" or
"corner of Broadway and 16th" I
looked in a directory for Mrs
Booth & Little to deliver Mrs Wright's
letter and found "Chambers,
Warren, & Church" that looks like
a very respectable firm but to
a knowing one proves that they
have a very large establishment
fronting on two parallel streets
and having its side on a third.

September 21 Wednesday. It is just 12
months today since the *Byler* sailed
by the day of the week was in Oxford
this day-year it is just such a day
that was thoroughly soaking, but
what a different place this is to that
both have been seen under adverse
circumstances but how different
is the impression left by each. All
here is stagnation, I hope it is not
an emblem of the south or I cannot
nothing. See that the passengers
by the *Persia* held a meeting and
Hedkins a gentleman, they should
have allowed some of the ladies
speak and answer for it they
would some of them have moved
an amendment, at least all
my lady co-travellers would and
he cannot be so much changed
in the last eight weeks. The Amer-
-an ladies especially dislike him
for they seem to know that away
from his own ship he is very pleasant
and on it he is not. I tried all
the booksellers in Washington
for Upham's book but they all

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pleaded the most utter ignorance
of the existence of such a book, and
I am not surprised for I believe
if you asked them for their own
heads they would say that they
hadn't got it; but I must retract
some part of my statement for
I have since tried one of them a
second time and with the prospect
of 75 cts before him he did after a
delay confess to the possession of
Tennyson's new Poems. He then
constantly and those whose opinions
I rely on think great things of them
Mr. Tarnall read a part of the first to
us on Saturday; some of the thoughts
are very fine, and take my fancy
greatly. I am very glad to hear that
Mama has at last consulted Mr. Moore.
I hope that his may be one of the
cures set down to homeopathy. I do
not feel much satisfaction in
making remarks on facts which
are recorded in letters from home
for you will no doubt feel that
about might be much better
occupied than with my observations.

on facts which you have long
forgotten; for this reason I seem
to take less interest in Maggie's
letters more particularly than
I do really; for I do assure you I
take the greatest interest in the
smallest piece of news that can
find its way into any little corner.
Today is Wednesday and there is no
conveyance to Mount Vernon till
Friday and the Tomb of even so
great a hero as Washington; tho'
I admit that it is a grand thing
to find such a country as this
still even the interest in his life
and body shall not keep me in
this muddy mixture of grand
and desolation for two days as long
as even one is too much. The woods
are spoken of as destroyed by fire
and I am inclined to believe them so
they might have made \$5 by inducing
me to take a train. I must close
with a heap of love to all of you. I am
now turning my back on you and
my letters must necessarily be
very irregular as I shall soon be more
than 2 days from New York. Believe
me my dear Papa your ever
Wm. Field