
551 4/10/1854 *From:* Rowland [Howard]

To: Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0507

Bowd. Coll.

Source: Bowdoin

Bowd. Coll. Apr 10, 1854

My dear Brother

In bringing forward constitutional objections to the original Missouri compromise you certainly take the most tenable ground that the advocates of Repeal have yet occupied.

The opinions which you know are too common to be startling, even from you - and it is the prevalence of their opinion at the North sown and cultivated by Mr Cass - which, at this time demands strenuous effort on the part of those who love freedom and hate Slavery.

I esteem your moral sense without regard to "prejudice & education", much too high to correct you otherwise than an Anti-Slavery man. This leads you to abhor Slavery and to be in favor of all possible attributions in regard to it. Your efforts, then, like my own if they follow the promptings of your heart, will be towards the eradication of the Evil. Such being our common principles, however much we may differ in matters of expediency, ought we to be "in favor of the passage of this Bill independent of its amendments? You say, that the constitution sanctions Slavery. I will not deny this, although I do contend that this sanctioning is rather in the sense of tolerating than authorizing. The Constitution suffered Slavery to exist because its annihilation was, then impracticable. Our fathers never designed or framed that Instrument to perpetuate Servitude in any form. It is founded on principles diametrically opposed to Slavery, and whatever contends against Slavery is not at war with the Spirit of the American Constitution. The history of the War, and of the Constitutional Convention, are sufficient foundation for these associations. But you point out particular provisions, and say what ever shackles the power delegated to the States, & violates the spirit of the Constitution. The Missouri Compromise had a tendency to limit those powers and therefore should be repealed.

This is your idea? The first question is, What is the nature of these powers, and to whom are they granted? I answer, they were granted to States in their independent and organized capacity. They belong to a State already admitted into the Union, already recognized as a State, by the general government.

The invasion of State rights, thus defined, I allow to be unconstitutional. But with unorganized Territory the case is very different. The Constitution reserves to itself the guaranty of State Rights, but leaves to Congress the entire control of the public domain. Congress has the same right to legislate in regard to the Territories as the Legislature of Maine has to control her public lands. The Constitution specifies nothing in regard to a territory except that it shall be governed by Congress in such a manner as not to interfere with the rights of Sates. In the naut, then, of very specific provision by the Constitution, we are left to the general one, which commits the public lands to Congress.

Instead then of going to the Constitution to find how we shall govern Territories, and on what conditions we shall admit them as States. We need go no farther than Congress, for in this, has the Constitution rested the power. Congress then may prohibit Slavery in a Territory, may say that it shall never be admitted into the Union while Slavery shall exist, and yet, not transcend its power. Suppose a State admitted, with a provision in its Constitution, prohibiting Slavery being compelled to such a course by the general Government, when that State is once organized and independent, Congress must let her alone. The rights of that State are rested in the people of the State. And then if they choose to Establish Slavery, they can change their Constitution for that purpose. The people of Maine, can tomorrow establish Slavery, without the interference of Congress by simply altering their Constitution. I mention this that you may clearly understand what I consider the point of separation in the rights of a State and those of a Territory. But, you will say, if the people of a State will alter their Constitution, why advocate a measure the force of which ceases when that Territory becomes a State? It is because that there is the highest probability that a State admitted under such restrictions will never change her Constitution on this point. Such a proviso debars Slave holders and Slaves from entering the Territory, and it is hardly possible, that a State formed from it should relapse into Slavery. A reason for the Missouri Compromise's continuance, is that it secures a Territory to Freedom, without violating the Constitution of the United States. I mention this alone, as it all that your letter takes up. There are many others which are equally good but which I will not now write, as you are probably sick of the subject by this time.

Charles, Rodelphus & Katie have written me and so I am pretty well posted upon home, and Kents Hill matters, but I have heard nothing from Lizzie this term. I did think of spending Fast Day in Portland, but I shall not go unless I am certain that Lizzie is there.

No news of interest about College, but I will pick up some for my next if we can get out of this Nebraska Question. I remain, sharing with you the hope of our future union I love,

your affectionate Brother
Rowland

552 4/10/1854 *From:* J N Lill

To: [O O] Howard

OOH-0508

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

April 10th 1854

Dear Howard-

I received your letter a few days since with much pleasure, and feel that my gentle remonstrance against your forgetfulness has produced a speedy & happy result.

The anomalous condition of Cadet life is too well understood by me to render it necessary for any of my friends among the Cadets to enter into detailed explanations of the causes of their delay; so that you need not unless particularly desirous to do so, bother your brains for appropriate terms of apology. Only with a little more frequently and the entente cordial will be preserved not only without difficulty, but in the full perfection of amicable feeling.

I need not entertain you with the floating gossip of a locality which bears so little interest to a professional military man, who has no special ties or acquaintanceships which are connected with the place. I will only remark as I have before, that I do not expect ever to live at a better station, for there are none in the army which are just similar, and the majority of Posts need not be mentioned in comparison.

The advantages of proximity to the great centers of business, amusement & novelty, the pleasures of an educated society, easy access to books & means of learning, and not least, moderate expenses of living, combine to make this as desirable a station as an officer need wish. On these accounts your knowledge of my likings & dislikings, and of the wants & needs which characterize many young officers, will readily convince you that my contentment with present advantages is unalloyed save by the lurking apprehension of a change at some unknown period. I would be much pleased to see yourself at this post when you graduate, or if not yourself at least some other person with whom association & intimacy will be agreeable. Officers however cannot expect to be always suited on that score, so that in any result I shall try and not be materially elated or depressed.

You go into a lengthy and interesting revelation as to your own intellectual abilities, and I see with no favorable judgement on your own capacity. I am sorry you see fit to dishearten yourself with such notions of your future prospects. You may be sure that this very feeling is a striking proof of the existence of aspirations which lie locked within the bosom, and strive as you may to check them the struggle will be pointless & unavailing. You will not be able to check those inward yearnings, even should you in despair abandon the path of intellectual eminence, and throw yourself into the mechanical monotony of routine which is the function of most kinds of business which depend on simple rules, and require no effort of mind. Therefore do not attempt to curb your ambition, but divert it into some useful channel. A sanctified ambition is the glory and crown of man and leads him farther and farther above the grovellers who live to eat & propagate and then finish with as little concern to the true world of true men as the insect.

I will not attempt an elaborate argument to prove a position which may startle you, but will simply assert a belief which at another day you will be inclined to assent to, viz. that the differences of intellectual calibre considered in aggregate are but small, and that those are more dependent on artificial causes as for instance education than on the natural bounty of the creator. The consequence or deduction is too obvious, and I believe if men struggled alike for pre-eminence, the uniformity would present but few instances of uncommon men, and those would be the favored few in whom (a god-like race of intellect) the creator always perpetuates the divine spark of genius, something the proposition, you see it affords no encouragement for vanity or undue pride; our elevation beyond our fellows being chiefly attributable to exertion. But as you may be sure that the sloth & inactivity of human nature will always enshrine the efforts of the mass even of educated persons. You see a ground of encouragement to press forward & win the prize over your laggard competitors. The talk so prevalent about persons of genius being able to achieve wonders without exertion often deludes young men, but I am sure your natural good sense will save you from giving adhesion to such an absurd dogma. Men of Genius never amount to much until they have in common with others acquired the materials and foundation on which to build.

As for that distrust in yourself which you speak of, I will not speak my mind about it, for I would be severe and offend you. But I must say that the sooner you get rid of that, the better. It is a fault though so far as I am concerned I would freely pardon what so often stunned & mortified myself when a Cadet. I attributed much of it to the fault of a certain instructor who I fear did not consider the humiliating or degrading effect of his contemptuous treatment.

Remember Dear Howard, that your thinking part is immortal, and let the soul assert on that ground a conscious dignity. Surely it is dreadful to be tied in this world to a portion of ourselves of which we are ashamed, and that portion constituting the sum total of our eternal being hereafter.

But enough. I should endeavor to encourage you, and to do so, I need only point to your success previously and the fair field ahead of you. Your West Point career is not decisive of your life, and strange mutations will take place in the fortunes of your competitions before their standing is fully made out by the world. Therefore be consoled and do not become too uneasy and anxious about the future. I should like to allude to the remarks which you were pleased to make with regard to myself, but perhaps it is hardly worth while. You are right in assigning me a more appropriate sphere than the present, but the assumption would hardly have required so much solemnity of diction as I believe I conceded the fact long ago, and your remarks do not astonish me though made as a confidential disclosure, and your fears of my being somewhat discontented I assure you are unfounded as I am only too well pleased with my present situation, of course, I must change my plans, but for the present I am altogether passive.

I have not heard from Smith lately, but I believe he is still at Governors Island, awaiting orders for departure to Fort Union, New Mexico. You have probably heard from him since my last letter dated a month ago. It's needless to say that the natural impetuosity of our friend can hardly be bottled, and I hope such effervescence may never be, though Smith is certainly not a genius in the true acceptation of the word, his energy & perseverance will yet I hope be the source of profit to himself and the world. I regard his present rough & tumble life, so inconstant & variable as an excellent discipline which he needs in some respects and which is best gotten from that unpleasant school of experience called the wide wide world.

You tell me little of your incidents of every day life and it was just as well. What bears so uncomfortable an aspect as the prospect (even at this distance) of your toils & trials? I will indulge the charitable hope that the Garnettian Administration will find more ardent admirers and faithful retainers than it numbered in my own class.

I hope also that your bills of clothing equipment will not be so large as to render your life long debtors to each <will arrive sooner>.

Write occasionable at <>.

From Your true friend
J N Lill

P.S. Love to Chap. & Closson

553 4/16/1854 *From:* C.H. Howard

To: Otis [O O Howard]

OOH-0509

Kents Hill

Source: Bowdoin

Kents Hill, Apr 16th 1854

My dear Brother

I have been waiting for a letter from you before I should write, but I have waited a long time & have not received one, so I think I will write again for perhaps you did not receive my other one. I shall not always wait for an answer, to be sure to my letters, before I write, but I have not had time to spare, so I thought I would not write till I had received an answer, thinking it would be here surely in 3 weeks, after first expecting it in two. But not only two & three but 4 almost five have passed & nothing have I heard from you. I fear you are sick, for if you have not received a letter from me, it seems you would have written ere this. But may be, your studies are harder than usual & you cannot get time. This seems longer to me now, that I am away from home. I hope you are enjoying your health as usual.

I am progressing well in my studies; have read the 1st book of Virgil nearly through & am reading the Natural History in the Greek Reader. We take between 30 & 40 lines in Virgil & some times more & 15 or 20 in Greek. I have taken another study since I first wrote, that is, Arnolds Prose Composition. I recite in this 3 times in a week, there are five or 6 in the class. I have not bought a book for Hamlin Eaton offered to let me study with him. I suppose you have studied this, and know what it is, for I am informed that it is studied the first year in College at Bowdoin. Mr Walsh advised us to study it, all who were fitting for College or not. And I think I shall gain a better knowledge of the language thereby. We have had a pleasant term of school so far; there are about the same number of students as usual.

Mr Torsey has not yet returned, but expects to by next Saturday. We have had pleasant meetings this term as usual. Three boys about my age have been converted. All the past week I hope there will be still more who will seek & find Religion. The month of April has again come round in the course of time, & nearly passed or I believe half of it has gone. But our snow has not left us here yet & there has been no rain or not much rain to carry it off. Still if we have so warm a sun as we do this afternoon it cannot tarry much longer. And it is time it should leave according to the laws of Nature. For I never knew a time when there was so much snow at this time of the year as there is now. Last year I see by reviewing my Journal the snow was entirely gone on the 1st day of April at Topsham.

Our Fast day was last Thursday [April 13]. I attended meeting in the forenoon & heard a sermon from Mr Eaton. In the Afternoon I wrote a letter to Grandmother Otis. It was a long one of about four pages & had an engraving upon it of the Maine Wesleyan Seminary, for they have such paper at the office to sell. And I will send you a picture which some one cut off from a sheet. I only bought 3 sheets & I sent one home thinking our folks might like to see one & one to Lizzie & one to Grandmother. Grandmother was eighty years old the 14th day of April, the day that I mailed my letter to her. I thought a letter would be as good a Birthday present as I could make her & one that would give her as much pleasure as any thing.

I wrote to Mrs Frost of Topsham & to Lizzie each a letter Yesterday. I was owing them both a letter. Lizzie wrote me before I left home, she then went to Turner, so I thought I would wait till she returned to Portland. I have had one letter from Rowland & I also received a Catalogue from him a short time since. I have received two letters from Mother & Dellie. They are all well. But I suppose you have heard from all these as lately as I have.

The New County I suppose you know is formed & John Harrison is I believe Register of Leeds, but I don't know who holds the other offices. Father has lately been to Mass. to sell Arza's land.

I am attending singing school, have been twice. The Teacher is quite celebrated hereabouts as a singer & teacher of vocal music. His name is Glitton of Fayette. We voted to use the old Boston Academy, for he said it was much better than any of the new books. We meet twice a week. The terms of Mr Glitton the singing master are 1 dollar for 25 lessons of two hours each. I thought it would improve my voice to attend.

We have good Calliope meetings this term have had one public meeting which was quite interesting. I was one

of the disputants appointed on the Question last Friday night. It was a private meeting. Our Question was "Does the Farmer live a happier life than the Professional man." I had the Neg. I think I should have chosen the Aff. but the fellow opposed to me, wished to have the Aff., so I was willing to take the Negative. It was decided in the Neg (on my side) by two majority. There were 12 in Neg, 10 in Aff. 9 undecided.

You must not forget to tell me about the society at West Point. Today is a good Sunday, the sun shines warm & there is plenty of snow, and it freezes nights so that the crust bears a man in the morning. I usually take a walk. I have been to meeting today all day. Mr Prince preached. His text this afternoon was the prayers of the Pharisee & publican. You remember the Pharisee thanked God that he was not as other men were &c &c. And the Publican prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." My Chum, Frost, is a Universalist or Unitarian or both or nothing. I can hardly tell what. But he & I often get into warm discussions on different parts of the Bible &c.

It is about supper time & I must close. I am in hopes to get a letter from you by Tuesday's mail & to have good news. If nothing occurs contrary to what I expect, you & I shall arrive home about the same time about the 20th of June. So write as soon as you can or I shall suspect that you are sick.

Good Bye to you Otis. From Your Affectionate Brother
C.H. Howard

P.S. Please correct any mistakes you may see, for I wish you to, that I may improve. I have always remembered how to spell "till" & "until", since you corrected them in my letter.

554 4/30/1854 *From:* Charles [Howard]

To: Otis [Howard]

OOH-0510

Kents Hill

Source: Bowdoin

Kents Hill Apr 30th '54

Dear brother Otis;

I with great pleasure received your letter a week ago yesterday. I was glad to find that you was well, but am afraid you will not be As obliged to study so hard this Spring. I received a letter from Rowland a short time before I did yours. He is well & doing well as usual & I suppose has written you since he has me. This letter of his I have just been answering & have written four pages entirely over on large paper but my large paper is entirely gone so I must write you on two small sheets.

I received a letter from mother day before yesterday. She does not write but that all of our family are enjoying good health. But says that Mrs George Turner is dead & buried. Mr Barrows preached the funeral sermon. He & his wife were at our house. They say that they & their children like living at Fayette much. Mother writes that Dellie has layed away some Sap Molasses for you when you shall come home in June.

I am getting on well in my studies this spring, have got to the 218 line in the Second book of Virgil & to Mythology in Greek. I have declaimed twice this term & written one composition on "The Boyhood of Daniel Webster." I think I shall take a part in Exhibition this Spring. Don't you think it best? If I do I shall be obliged to give one original declamation. What had I better write on? I think the preparation for the Exhibition would do me good. I should improve in Declamation & Composition by it. And I think I can do this & not interfere materially with my other studies.

We have a very good singing school this term. Mr Glidden is a master of the Science & the Art of Music. I think by Attending Singing school I shall improve my voice for speaking which is at present pretty poor. I think I have something like the Bronchitis in my throat. We sing in the old Boston Academy, for Mr. G. said it was a better book than any of the new ones that are out.

We are having a very <backward> Spring here in Maine. It had now got to be almost May & the snow has not yet left us. But I think it will soon for it is now raining hard & it has been for several days more or less.

I attended a "Love Feast", this morning & then heard a Sermon from Mr Eaton. His Text was the 16th verse of the 3d Chap of 1st Timothy. His discourse went to prove that there were many things in religion & in the Bible that are misterious yet they should be believed, & that this did not prove that religion & the Bible are false but on the contrary that they are true & that God being an infinitely wise being is the author of them, for what is misterious with man is simple with God.

This afternoon I have been in my room as I am now & I finished a letter to Rowland. It rained so hard & as I did not feel very well I thought it proper that I stay at home. I have a cold in my head so that it ached some but it does not now, but I do not ever feel very well when I have a cold, which is pretty often, but I am in hopes to soon get over this one.

I was intending to go home last Friday but it rained so I did not go & I shall have to wait another week. I wish to get some things as well as see the folks. Mother says that Uncle Jabez Leadbeter has moved his family to Monmouth; that Lucia & Aurelia have lately made her a visit & that Aurelia brought me a present, the Young Christian's Guide.

I have thought much about the different churches & what one it would be best for me to unite myself with this Spring. If I were to be a preacher it seems to me I should not want to be a Methodist, not considering their doctrines but their customs. But many <useages> of the Methodist Church I think are very good. I think it a <very good> thing for Christians to attend such meetings as the Class meeting at the close of every week. It does them good to review their religious <career> of the week just past & to speak of their faults & failures to their brethren, & it is a good preparation for the coming Sabbath. But I should not want to join a church if I was to be a preacher of the Gospel, if I did not acquiesce fully in all its beliefs & doctrines. And I do not now know hardly whether I do with those with the Methodist or not. I do not know whether to disbelieve or believe many

things for I do not yet know whether it is right to believe them. As to Christian perfection I am not certain whether any one can be perfect or holy in this world or not, but I believe that there is a passage in the Bible that says without holiness no man can see the Lord. If you wish I should like to have you write a part of your letter about these subjects.

We have very good prayer meetings this term. Several have all ready experienced religion & others are seeking it earnestly. I do not enjoy religion so much as some do or seem to, but I do love to meet with Christian people & to pray to God, to pray for my brothers & friends when praying for myself.

Write soon Otis & keep up good spirits as I have till next June when you'll leave West Point.

From Yr Aff Brother
Charles

555 4/30/1854 *From:* Otis [O O Howard]

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0511

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Apr 30, 1854

My dear Mother,

This is as you perceive the last day of April, one month more of recitations at this institution and we have done not quite so fast! Then the examination commences and we will have finished by the 17th of June - and "change the grey for the blue." This last month has sped on like the wind and as I will have to be uncommonly busy I presume the next will go as rapidly. We have such an immense amount of study to accomplish between this and the examination that I will hardly have time to think of Graduation till it is upon me.

Though I have not done as well this year as my previous success might lead one to anticipate, yet this has been as happy a year thus far as I have spent at West Point. I have been received into the first society of this little place. Mrs Lee has more than compensated all the difficulties that I have had with her son in years gone by from her kind attentions. She has invited me to her house whenever an opportunity offered, puts confidence in me & gives me always a hearty welcome. At Capt Boyntons I am treated as a brother. Mrs B. is my model of a lady. When little Closson and myself visit her we are made as joyous & happy as she is herself. When she has a friend come to visit her from her native state Vermont we are always sent for. Last night we had a permit to go there, and though it rained pouring and Capt B's is about half way to the Cemetery, we felt ourselves soldiers enough to go. We found there a young lady, Capt Boynton's cousin from Vermont, who looked as fresh & beautiful as the morning rose. After having an excellent supper and a happy evening with a little dark lantern that the Captain gave us in lieu of a pilot, we plodded our way back through mud and water. Again at Mrs Berards I am treated like a son and a brother. In fact the girls call me brother Oliver. And so it goes. It is almost a mystery to me how I got so intimately acquainted with every body, but it is after my usual fashion.

This going into society so much has had a beneficial influence. It has had a tendency to improve my social qualities and taught me how to converse with a lady without pulling away as if for dear life at my coat-tail as cadets are want to do. Their hands seeming more burthensome <woods> than useless appendages.

So I must say that my final leave of West Point will be attended with far deeper feelings of regret, than one year ago I could have anticipated. That I have been less assiduous in my application to my books, and that a little indolence of spirit has stolen imperceptibly upon me and all that in consequence of my heart being possessed of objects of more immediate interest within the circle of its action. I have no doubt. But I do not suspect that I have received any permanent injury, and hope to meet you with as bright an eye and as light a heart as I possessed when I had the happiness of eating my meals beneath my mother's roof, and was subject to her immediate care and felt continually her ever present & watchful solicitude.

In less than two months I will be there again, with the same boyish spirit as of old. Home is already near - there I will meet my mother, my father & my brothers. It is saying enough to mention these relations of intimacy & affection. It needs not words or the strong colors of a lively fancy to invest ones ideas with a visionary halo, and make sparkle like diamonds one's fervid anticipations of happiness! 'Tis enough to say I will soon be home, in the midst of those that never cease to love me. My soul is still filled with misgivings in view of the distant future. For I feel severely my anomalous character, an educated ignorant man, well versed in intricate and untangible knowledge and yet not fit to buy a lady's shawl or a piece of meat in the market. But courage, thou soldier by profession. There is ten times more wisdom in the seeming than in the real. It is the province of man to <gammon> his fellow man. Strategy is not confined in its operations to military affairs. Many a man takes advantage of the shortsightedness of his fellows to cover the true position and true amount of the forces of his brain. He throws foward his most showy troops whose brilliant armor dazzles & deceives.

I attended Church this morning, and the Bible Class this afternoon. The text was: The bruised need he will not break, the smoking flax he will not quench. A beautiful text, which the Professor treated admirably. It was a sermon that would delight you to hear. He examined at the class, the last part of the XII chapter of Matthew, where our Saviour likened the people of his age to the children who declared - We have piped unto you and ye have not danced. We have mourned for you and ye have not lamented & the following. I presume our comments & dissensions might interest you but tattoo is beating and my sheet is almost full. I did not have the

heart to fill my letter with the language of brokers and money changers, and perchance of railroad men. It is sort of out of place. It gives the impression that ones soul is troubled about many things. You may ask father if he could by any manner of means furnish me with 150 or 200 dollars.

My love to all - Yr affectionate Son
Otis