

[Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers](#)

VMI Archives

Manuscript # 00103

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Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1870 March 4

VMI
4th March 1870

Dear Corbin,

I have asked Will to send you \$200 which fall due on the 9th. I left word in Richmond with Bob to collect some dividends to send you the proceeds. Should he do so you can transfer it over to me and accept the enclosed \$300 instead which with what Will will send and what I left with you makes \$1000.

In haste
M.F. Maury

per
M.F.M. Jr

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1870 January 21

(body of letter in hand of one of Maury's daughters, most probably Betty;
only signature is in Maury's hand)

V.M.I.
January 21st/70

My dear Corbin,

The mails here are very irregular and this is the first day that yours of the 17 could be answered, for if I'd have written yesterday the letter would have tarried in Staunton until the arrival of the train from Goshen in which this will be. I am glad that you have decided to try Insurance in the South now and especially for these reasons: In the first place you are, or I suppose soon will be out of employment with Edgerton anyhow and then you would have to look for a new place & in the next place- This is the best season for making the experiment in the South, not only climatically, but financially; the people are now disposing of their crops and are full hand. By the middle or the end of June, you will have felt your way sufficiently, to judge as to the degree of success with which this business, if continued, would reward you; in the mean time leaving Nannie & the children here- Returning to us when you will be able to forecast your future lines- for I suppose by that time also, you will know where you stand [Quo ad] the McRankey case & Farley Vale so it seems to me that times are especially inviting & propitious for the experiment.

I hope you will not enter the Southern field, in connection with any of the Northern companies & I think it's better that you should make the experiment with one, than with more. If you take a book agency be sure that you have in writing a regular & business like agreement, not such as Dabney had with CBR which paid him nothing.

I don't know by what route you propose to reach NC, but if it would not detain you more than 2 or 3 days I think it would be wise for you to touch here.

I don't know what is to be done with San Domingo annexation but if it be annexed, there may be a field open there, for the display of your talents and it would be well enough for you to keep your eye open for an opening in that direction. San Domingo you know abounds in highlands & healthy [sites]. The best of mahogany comes thence and in the olden times the coffee and sugar planters there did splendidly and since emancipation everything has gone to ruin, and I suppose the old plantations are again forests in many if not in most cases. Now the advantage of sugar planting in that island over sugar planting

in La. is that while in the latter your harvest time lasts but a few weeks and then the crop that is not reaped is gathered by Jack Frost into the garners of destruction, whereas the San Domingo harvest lasts for months and then the crop [] is not gathered is all the better the next season. Coffee tho' highly remunerative requires some 3 or 4 years before it begins to produce and perhaps 5 or 6 before it begins to pay back. Now then (though I do not wish to encourage you to have too many irons in the fire) would it not be as well for you to talk quietly with men of enterprise and wealth upon the subject of a partnership in a San Domingo sugar plantation. Your friend furnishing capital, or as we say in Tennessee, the plant, and you furnishing the superintendence and dividing profits. A sugar house and the machinery connected with it would cost, I believe not far from \$100,000. I speak of a first rate establishment. Of late years improvements have been made in the manufacture of sugar, but whether the plant for that costs more or less than the machinery and fixtures for the old process, I cannot say. So you see I've suggested here a pretty wide field, and you will have to keep your weather eye very wide open, before you'll be able to survey it fully.

I am sorry to hear as I infer from Maria's letter received in Nannie's this morning that Hasbrouck is so poorly. I am glad you went to see him and hope you thought of mentioning the Minnesota bond, for I suppose as he wrote me word that it was due on the 10th and the money should be forthcoming, that it has escaped his attention in his illness for the money has not come.

Yrs truly

{signed} M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1871 April 6

V.M.I.
April 6th
1871

Dear Corbin-

I got last night a letter telling of the investment of the \$321.34. Thank you. Will says, that the law treats it as usury to compound the interest in that way. Please ask John Herndon about it for I want to keep within the law.

My aim was to let you have just \$1,000. It is therefore that I ask you to remit in case you should receive more than that.

Tell Nannie, that Elie is in bed with a headache, & Lucy is under the weather with a cold, & I don't hear them say a word about going down.

Heavy rain last night. In haste yours truly,
M.F. Maury
(pr M.H.M.)

{Postscript by Mary}

I got my dear Sister Nannie's letter & will write after the Fair comes off.
The girls certainly expect to go down the middle of the month-

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter, Diana Maury Corbin
1871 July 26

(initialed by Maury; body of letter not in Maury's hand)

V.M.Institute
July 26th 1871

Dear Nannie,

Your Ma got your letter this morning ain't we so glad, glader, glady. Tell Corbin he must come along too.

I returned from Ala. last Monday evening and took them all by surprise. Since graduating, Brave had made a fee and had gone off on a spree, and had gone off with Tots & Elie to the White & Capertons. I suppose his money will give out soon and we may expect them back the last of the week.

My going to Tuscaloosa, is still in abeyance. I found when I got to Montgomery that the Board of Regents at its meeting last June had gone farther in their injudicious course than I had fancied, for besides establishing chairs & filling them without conference with me, they had chalked out a plan of operations for the Univ. which appeared to me altogether impracticable.

The Board of Regents had not been called together as I had requested, but all the professors save 3 were there with Hodgson who is ex officio President of the Board of Regents. During our first session I found out that there was not only no money to fit up the Univ. but there was nothing to keep it a-going: for more than all its annual endowment had already been appropriated. The charges against the cadets were at figures so low that they would inevitably bring the Univ. in debt. A sum not exceeding \$200 was to be the expense per cadet. So in the afternoon I formally proclaimed that I could not undertake the responsibility of such an institution & therefore begged leave to decline. Whereupon there was "sensation." Some made hy-falutin speeches & professors asked "what shall I do." One urging that he "had given up his house" another, "his practice," another "his business," another "his college" another that he "was engaged to be married," all under the expectation that I would accept. The strong men of the city were brought in who promised to make the legislature do the needful. And the judges of the Supreme Court who are said to hold the legislature in the hollow of their hands, black & white radicals & all- Sent word that they would do the needful at its next meeting. In short, the question was asked, that "if they would raise a launching fund, change the fees, so as to be a source of revenue, instead of loss, and alter the course of instruction so as

to suit my views, would I accept"? Yes Well it was funny to see the plan they had laid down. They had three parallel course which were "selectable" and every boy that came was answered in terms "you have paid your money, take your choice" And they told me they had copied after the Univ. of Mississippi, which never did prosper, though it has a clear revenue of \$77,000. So the plan that I propose requires the three Rs for admission & then curriculum all the way up to any specialty, that the student- being qualified to enter upon it- may select, all boys to be examined and to be put as high up as they are qualified to stand.

These matters are to be referred by letter to the Board of Regents, and if the majority pledge themselves by letter to stand by me , if I make the alterations & to sanction them at their next meeting in Nov. and then if the friends of the Univ. will raise a launching fund, I will go.

The earnest desire manifested by the good people of the state, for me to take charge of their Univ. was very gratifying.

It appears to me that almost all the good people in Ala. who have sons & means intend to rally around me, and among the events that were particularly gratifying was a proposition on the part of the professors to lend: some their whole salary: some \$1000: and the others \$500 to get the thing underway.

They were to let me know, in a telegram, whether my views would be met by the Regents. And thus the matter stands.

My plan for the present is modeled after V.M.I. with the open features of the Univ. of Va. In the mean time I am working like a Turk here in collecting statistics and transmitting "useful and entertaining knowledge" to "Tusca."

I did not go to "Tusca", because my house had not been vacated by my radical predecessor, with his three students, but hastened back for the telegram.

I traveled Saturday in the cars with Dabney & Family, they have broken up in New Orleans, and have come to Va. for the summer. They were to stop a few days in Lynchburg, then go to the Bath Alum.

Kisses to the children & love to all hands. I brought some maple-sugar for them, they must make haste and come up or it will be all gone,

M.M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1871 August 9

V.M.I. Lexington Va.
August 9th 1871

S.W. Corbin Esqr.
Fredericksburg Va

Dear Corbin

I have this morning your letter of 3rd introducing Mr. Boulware. No letter was necessary. I had the pleasure of forming his acquaintance last Fall in Fredericksburg and was much pleased with him. All the chairs at Tuscaloosa are full.

We expect Dick back from W.V. tomorrow or next day. When is Nannie coming up? We expect Will to come next week. Can't she come with him? We don't mean to let you off: you must come and fetch Nannie back. Yesterday was "Crits" birthday: cords of presents---60 years old, and as young as a [sentence fragment]

I am busy with Tuscaloosa but begin to think it will not be ready by Oct. My illustrious predecessor is still in the President's house. Betty has mended vastly since she has been here. Ask Nanna and that boy when are they coming up? We are dying to see them.

In haste yours,

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1871 August 17

V.M.I. Lexington VA
17th Aug 1871

Dear Corbin,

Please don't remit but re-invest & let it roll up. You have always told me I could realize upon ten days notice.

The Goshen stage don't get in now until about 10'clock; We shall set up for Nannie & the children. Dick left for Richmond last night.

The funds of University Alabama are just like "jack-o-my-lanterns". I was to have had \$40,000 to begin with & have got \$16,000 maybe. It bothers me enough.

Ask Brodie when he gets to New York please to call at 156 & 7 Crosby Street & enquire for C.B. Richardson & if he is not in for Prof Lawrence & ask for a copy of Geog No 3 New Edition, for my young friend his little grandson & take it with him to Savannah. I will write & tell them he's a-coming.

You must be sure & come to fetch Nannie back

Yours truly

S.W. Corbin Esq.
Fredericksburg VA

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1871 September 23

V.M.I. 23 Sept '71

Dear Corbin,

Twas a source of profound regret that none of us could get down to help render the last offices of friendship and affection to John. He died as he lived, like a Christian gentleman.

We had Brodie's room ready for him last night and felt disappointment when his letter came saying he had to go to Savannah.

Elie Lucy & I expect to leave for Tenn. about the 5th maybe 1st. I think you had better come up to escort Nannie & the children back- we should be mighty glad to see you. Want to talk over the Tenn. speech with you. There is a stage that leaves here twice a week at 11 AM for Goshen where it connects with a train due in Staunton at 8.45 P.M. There you stay all night & at 9 next morning leave for Richd. I think this is the best way to go for it saves that long night in the stage house. The boy has improved wonderfully & is a great pet.

Tell me the lowest price of wheat in Aug. last, with date, and the price now. Jno Herndon had my will, please ask Charles when he comes across it, to hand it to you. You can fetch it up with you.

The weather here is lovely. Give my love to Ellen Mercer Charles & Lucy.

Yrs. truly
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter, Diana Maury Corbin
1871 November 11

V.M.I.
Lexington
11 Nov. 71

My dear Nannie,

Let's hear that boy whistle- why that's like the cars. Let's hear you whistle like the darkies. Well! cut a somersault. How does he like the new house? and Nanna the dancing school? She must teach him all her steps, gaits and [moves].

We got back last night week- and if they will send us free tickets again Elie and I will go to the Agricultural Congress in Selma 12 Dec. Tell Corbin I am going to carry that plan- i.e.- do my best and so roll that ball over Henry & the rest of them. But the rascals they'll catch it up as soon as they see it rolling along finely and say it was theirs. I think [Thomps] is behaving most shabbily-plagiarism & piracy are mild terms to [] what he is doing. He used to make a living by lecturing on my works-carrying PG's under his arm. Now he not only steals my brains, and ignores my books, but gives other people the credit that belongs to me.

Sally F. and Sister E. have gone to the Pendletons. We have no coal yet.

I begin Monday to prepare my P.G. lecture - to be [based on the question] - "What science has done for mankind."

Crit got a letter from Sue yesterday. Dick stays downtown all day. Totts is poorly- Have been working Crit, Mary, Lucy & Elie hard this week I tell you. The Lee quilt is to be raffled at the Letcher's tonight. We will draw it, I reckon- some of us have tickets- 24 chances- Totts had this morning a letter from Tom Bold - speaks well of Price. Frank Smith has gone over there. Will reports Betty as recovering fast & Nannie Bell in high glee over her new piano. Don't hear often from Brave. Love to Corbin, Sue, Mat and the children.

Yrs affectionately,
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to grandson
1871 December 20

V.M.I. 20 Dec. 1871

My dear little grandson that's named John Maury Corbin, some of this letter is for Nana too but I send it to you because xmas is a coming-

You just ought to be here- we are having so much fun- Last night your Ma's chimney caught afire- **F i a r F i a r!** Como. Maury's house is afiar! The drums beat, the fife squeaked & the cadets came tumbling up- some with "guns" to shoot the robbers- some with buckets to quench the fire. Oh it was so nice, but the fire went out just so before they could ever get here- And [then] it's so cold the river is frozen- all the girls- and Jimmy Moore & Genl Pendleton and all the other little boys go a skating. They take lunch, and have picknick on the ice. `The boy' can skate & the littlest Johnson is the best skater of them all- []. And then it's been snowing & rainy & hailing- and what do you think it did yesterday at dinner in the dining room- there was money shower and the flakes were GreenBacks! You and Nana ought to have been here for 'scrambling'. They went like soap bubbles- and so you had to catch them quick nobody could get more than one flake- and somebody saved these two for you two - not too and your Ma- She is to give you at least 10 cts out of it & Nanna 20 cts & Charlie 20 cts- for you to go down street by [yourselves] and buy just what you please.

She's to keep the rest

And do the best-

Can you write poetry?

Tell her your Aunt Eliza has been very poorly- is getting better. She hasn't been here since the day after we got back from Memphis.

I have been to see her once- walked- was laid up for a week part of the time unable to turn over in bed. Have sent for a carriage to go & see her this evening- She's afraid that Sally F. is going away from her & that helps to make her sick.

You all ought to be here these times- Your Uncle Charlie sent us some Blue wings- by the time they got here they had turned to Canvas Backs- they are so good!

Here comes somebody. A Merry Xmas to your Pa & Ma and sister & your own sweet little self. Who is Mat's sweetheart? I know Charlie's- Have you got one? What's her name? Your affectionate friend.

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 March 1

V.M.I. 1 March (1872)

My dear Corbin,

Take Nannie, Totts, Nanna & the boy into your counsels- read to them Elie's M.S. in confidence- take their vote- "Fire or Sandy Little" & if they say Sandy, hand it to him- on condition that he's to "harry" the Whig without letting Whig or anybody know who 'Old Spotsylvanian' is. It's a shame that the Whig should be fooling that "foolish little legislation" so.

If you or Nannie do not want to S. [] so for y'r scrap book, hand it to Totts for 'hern'. Why don't those children answer my letters? I've got the whooping cough- used to have it in Ten. Catch it from the children at the house- [up] []- []].

When is the height of the fishing season? Tell me- for if at that time I feel as young as the whooping cough & in the [] I may run down, pick up Totts & Ho for Glymont. Mrs. M. is pestering me mightily to go **A - W A Y !** Got a letter this morning from Taffy imploring me not to let the yankees light Jno Bull.

Tell Totts -O now I wish I had some birds- all well & send love. Yrs M. F. Maury.

>>>> If Sandy publish- send me a few extras.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 March 27

V.M.I. 27 March '72

Dear Corbin,

Totts had been telling us of "the Boy's" deafness and how badly Nannie was looking. I sent the cheque to "buy exemptions" so you did exactly right- and I hope it will buy [cards].

Tell Nana & the boy they ought to be here just to see me. I go about the house whooping like a red Indian on the war path- Does he remember his island? There it is- In the last three snows it was as naked as a rock- now why wouldn't the snow lie on it- can he tell?

Tell Totts Mrs. Sinclair is at the point of death. Betty Page has come up to help nurse her. We hope Nannie will run down to Richmond. [Credits] - Miss Mildred is engaged to Prof. Blair. College Calithumps on the night of 1st- two boys fought a duel- one shot tother two times. Old Hughes keeps [up] pinched for wood- Dick's at home on crutches sprained ankle. Va- I reckon- is going downhill all the time- and tho I fancy I can see ways for letting up- I don't see the wisdom for putting her in those ways, & so her course is downward ho!

This is a beautiful day- I am not well enough to venture out. Don't know when Lucy is coming- Love to all

yrs. M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to daughter Diana Maury Corbin
1872 April 10

V.M.I. 10 Apl '72

My dear Nannie,

Why don't I come out and prevent people from stealing my brains torpedoes & all? Why don't the passenger at sea come out & stop pirates from pirating? Didn't Queen Vic her own dear self steal my torpedoes right before my face- and as for `[thunder]'-look at 'Thomps' & your dear yankees.

That's a fact- Corbin is a great financier- He has managed the estate with much ability and fine judgment & J P owes him 'a heap'. I suppose J.P. did not find enough to do in the office to occupy him- and I think idle hours drag more ways than one before a young man that is not yet fairly engaged in the battle of life.

And can the boy read? Ask him to read this letter.

JIM BIT A FOX

THE CAT EAT A RAT. And go [up] [head].

I've got the whooping cough in my back & all over. And I've "got no work to do-o".

There is nothing [any] my table- Elie is writing a great speech for the National Agricultural Association which is to meet in St. Louis next month. Fish refuses to help my `ball' along. Elie's speech is going to roll it right over him. Don't those fellows in Washington hate me with a hate? And ain't it elegant to make 'em do, what you tell's em?

Mat repeated to me last night most beautifully the Death of Montrose. It reminded me so much of my blessed Davy Jones. My eyes filled with tears & my heart with emotions unutterable. Sue brings up & teaches Mat very well. He and your Nannie are the best child-readers I ever heard. You ought to be here just to see the sons in law- as many as twenty at a time- I hide under the bed-Crit jumps on the sofa Aunt Mary and the rest scramble up stairs. You are right- Totts is chief among 10,000 & altogether lovely. Where am I to go? Can't stay here another winter. Take away my house & my pay- and then leave me to rent a house and do without the \$1800! -how's the pot to be kept a going? The question is bothering me a good deal. The weather here is beautiful and the grass green- and the trees vocal at early matins. When are you coming up? I'd give a cow & calf to come down but the way is so hard & I so rickety. Everybody sends to you Corbin & the children

yr aft M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 April 19

V.M.I. 19 Apl '72

My dear Corbin,

I made up my mind this morning to break out from my pleasant surroundings & happy relations here about 1st Sept. by which time it will not be imprudent to settle somewhere in Eastern Va. The high rents in Richmond Nannie's letter & the Taylor (?) house-opposite Uncle Charlie's- with its \$250- set my mouth to watering for the old burg. In what sort of repair is it- Do the windows rattle? do the doors open & shut easily & without noise- How are the grates and fire places. Does the house smoke. Is it lighted with gas & has it a water closet? If nay, can it have all these things and I the refusal of it, till Sept.? I would ask you to engage it now but for the chance of my being offered something somewhere else which will strengthen my money power and enable me, with material surroundings - to be more comfortable than I could be upon my own only in Fredericksburg. How many rooms has the house? Can you rough sketch me the grand plan?

Could the boy read my letter- and ain't he coming up here to help us pack up, and show us the way to his house?

I send Nanna a newspaper. It is printed by [] Pratt, a little cripple- He is about her size- He has got a printing press and a font of type. He sets these and prints and edits all himself. I send her also a splendid composition by Alice. Alice is a physical geographer- A has told about a drop of water on the earth- Now can N. tell about one in the sky? Water is a beautiful thing I tell you. It is **protean**- and you think that in every new shape you see it, it's more lovely yet. Yesterday it was dropping down in little white pits, as hard as pits and hopping about the town more than the cadets. It made them scamper I tell you. Then it laid itself in the grass, and peeped at you for a little while-as much as to say- here goes your [Tennessee] ice cream- come & catch me if you dare- and by the time you got there 'twas just nothing at all. That No 3 Geography you are studying is an old edition and a great many mistakes such as you and Molly found- have been corrected, maps like those at p.p. 21- 148 & 152 have the scale all the way up and down the sides- it varies with the latitude- Thus reason on a piece of paper the distance for 20° between the equator & 20° N. and then try it for 20° between 40° & 60° N. Your Pa will show you.

All well and send love yrs

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 May 10

V.M.I. 10 May '72

My dear Corbin,

I give you many thanks for the trouble- all for naught- that you have so kindly undertaken in re Carter House. Dr Wellford's figures are too large, so I will get you to keep your eyes about you for one on easier terms.

I have most got my courage up to the sticking point for St. Louis. Here I feel somewhat like Sin Bad the sailor in his valley of Diamonds- so hard to get out. Dick took the cars this morning for Richmond. The weather is mighty hot. That was a first rate physical Geographical composition of N. I sent it to Alice. Bless her heart give her a kiss- and ask her to ask the boy if he knows what river that is that goes by Fredericksburg and where does it come from & where does it go to- and if she can write a composition and tell what's the use of rivers anyhow? Love to Nannie- all well- Tell her there's another [] of S.C. [rice] on the way.

yrs,

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 May 12

V.M.I. 12 May '72

My dear Corbin,

I have no doubt of Carroll's fitness because you speak of him so highly. But rules work sometimes inconveniently. I have found it necessary to make rules for conduct, and one is not to recommend unless I can speak from personal knowledge & sufficient acquaintanceship. So I hope neither he nor you will take my rule amiss.

I expect to leave for St. Louis on 22. But the getting out of this valley is the trouble. The idea of getting out oppresses somewhat as Sin Bad the Sailor was oppressed in the Valley of Diamonds.

Thanks for your kind invitation, but I don't reckon we shall get away from here before the fall. Moreover we are hedging now so as to treasure up for the move. Today it's very hot. Lucy is under the weather. The church is to be pulled down tomorrow. Mrs. Burwell is here- and we are all well.

yrs truly
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to Nannie & S. Wellford Corbin
1872 May 19

V.M.I. 19 May '72

My dear Children,

I set off for St. Louis day after tomorrow- a day earlier than I intended for the purpose of spending Thursday at the Arlington in Washington to meet C.B.R. He is very much opposed to my `burying myself alive' and makes a proposition which amounts practically to an allowance sufficient to pay house rent say \$1000 in Richmond. This is `[now] just so'. I'm to do nothing for it but just live in Richmond. I have not accepted nor declined it but have it to stand just so tall after our talk.

C.B.R. and his Co are doing a roaring business. From all I hear they expect the Geographies alone to clear this year not less than \$125,000.

We have been expecting a visit from Jim Monroe & his girls. He wrote word last Tuesday they were coming- and sent word that he would go with me to St. Louis, and that's all. I shall be sorry to miss them. Crit talks of going with me as far as Gordonsville on his way to Betty. But Betty don't write to say she "can't get along without her" so I should not be surprised if she don't go, though she had her trunk brought down three days ago intending to ship off in the 'Packet' tonight. Dick is still in Richmond. They have begun to pull down our church & we have 'nowhere to go'. Dabney expects to move this week to Nashville. He tells me he has a letter from [T.] saying he didn't think anything of my `ball' at first and that now he has changed his opinion and advised Dabney as to what I ought to do- a great [piece] of imprudence- I have no doubt he wants to get a chance to steal more thunder and have asked D. not to hold any correspondence with him upon the subject.

Tell Nana I did answer her beautiful composition and asked her to tell me the use of Rivers and make the boy tell where the Rapp. comes from & whither it goes. Don't she want to go to St. Louis & see the great big river that runs by there? What is its name. Totts is going on a visit to the [Cock's] of [Bowston]. Don't know when she's coming home. All well and send love

Yrs
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to wife Ann
1872 May 30

St. Louis
30 May '72

My dear wife,

The Congress never before knew what an address was. It was delivered last night- and everything has been done exactly as I would have it. I was surly yesterday. Am having a bout with the foot in the elbow- was in bed half the day- and was not fit to speak and thought I should break down but am much better today. Charles escorts me to the Guthrie's tomorrow- I return Monday- 37 miles and then strike for you and home as hard as I can rattle. Have not decided which route to take. Col. Withers who C.B.R. sent to take care of me fancies to go through Tenn. I shall be governed a good deal by him for he is so considerate and kind I can't get on well without him. If I go via Wash. shall touch at Fb'g- and at Richmond anyhow. Send this letter and the papers I mail with it up to Nannie to be passed on to V.M.I. for I [have] to [trim] the [wick]. Love to all. Who is 'Kate'? I haven't had time to see her.

Yrs M.F.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 June 1

St. Chas. Co. Mo.
1 June 72

Dear Corbin,

I am to leave this Monday A.M. and St. Louis at 3 P.M. Straight onward for you & Nannie say 50 hours.

yrs in haste, M.F.M.

send to my wife

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 June 19

V.M.I. 19 June '72

Dear Corbin,

Thanks for the 13 [Newses]: you and Nannie [regard] the [speech] nicely. Monday the Minor girls left in a carriage under Walker's escort, to spend the night at Goshen and proceed yesterday to Hanover. Crit without writing and accompanied by Totts, Nannie Bell & Alice took us quite by surprise Monday night. They found the Minor girls at Goshen- scorned the carriage and came straight on in the stage arriving here at 10 1/2 pm. as bright as the moon and as gay as larks. They left Betty still in bed. Will's trip to Wytheville has been put off till 1st July. We are writing for Betty to come along up. I sent in resignation yesterday to take effect 10 Sept. The day before sent off new ed. of Geog. no. 3. and this morning have "the foot" also a letter from Dab- of 16- from Nashville- where they all are saying little Dab is very ill with scarlet fever. This morning also I got a copy of the Physical Geography of the Sea in Italian, which [Gat a] has published in Rome. He never knew what a book was before. Love to the children.

Yrs, M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 July 24

V.M.I. 24 July (1872)

Dear Corbin

We are driving to see Nannie & the children. Look for Betty also. Sorry you don't come too. Plenty of room. Totts lie & I are off for [Yellow] next week- [thence to 6] or -13th Aug. for an Ag. Address- then back, then to Boston! 18 Sept. for another. Thence to St. Louis 1st Oct for another- so you see I am knocking the 'balls' along.

Don't bother yourself about the money. If I want it- we can discount old [Harmon].

Better come up and get those Farley Vale 'tadpoles' & Fredericksburg chills out of you.

Yrs, M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to wife Ann
1872 August 11

Knoxville Tenn.
Sunday Aug 11 (1872)

My dear wife,

I arrived here last night at 11.30- It is now 9 A.M.- The ride did me a `heap of good' knocking the remains of that [severe] bout in the knee into the middle of next week. I left the girls lodged next door to, & in charge of, the Taylors- nice people. I [propose] to be back Saturday- to leave Monday and to be at home Tuesday. I had a fancy to spend Saturday night & Sunday at the White, for the sake of rubbing bright the links that bind me to the Maury's there - Uncle Phil's - and of seeing gentlemen [there] & 'roll any balls'. Higgins who married one of them was very kind & [pressing] and told Totts he would come and fetch her any day she'd name & 'Dilly' promised to take them into her room. I suggested to Totts that she should write for him to fetch them Saturday p.m. so we might arrive about the same time. They did not appear to take the hint that I wanted them to go- so I did not press. The trip is not so long as I was told it was- so I should not be surprised if I were to pick the girls up at the 'Yellow' Friday p.m. and be with you Saturday. How's Betty & when's Will coming up? I suppose I shall be putting out for "The Hub" about this time next month so if he don't come I shan't see him. Betty [resistive] that of going to the White by herself-V.M.I. is a better place than Springs for her anyhow. I can sleep in Barracks if need be- so tell her to be comfortable & stop that climbing. One morning Totts was at the Bowling Alley- all of a sudden your son in law & his sister hitched up, bid me goodbye, and when Totts came back she was surprised to hear they had gone!

The trains here are just 12 hours apart- so I shall take the one at 11 1/2 today- and go to Dalton- due at 6- or to Atlanta due at midnight according to my feeling.

I think the girls are having though not a grand, yet far from a dull time. I left the Boston speech for Elie to flirt with. I met with no adventures on my way save an interesting looking youth, of 17, sent by the Tribune to carry Tennessee. He was on their city staff, was a practical printer- had worked at the fonts 3 1/2 years- learned shorthand, and was such an expert that he could take down 200 words in one minute. When he takes down a speech, doesn't know what it's about! He could take down a Chinaman's speech - as well as an Englishman's- but then he would have to have Chinese to report it.

Love & kisses to everybody. Dying to see [you]

[Yr.] M.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 September 4

V.M.I. 4 Sep. 72

Dear Corbin,

I am suddenly called on to make a raise.

I have sent R.H. Maury & Co. Richmond an order requesting you to discount that paper and send them the proceeds.

They are to send you the order only in case it be necessary. So if you get it from them you will know what to do. They will want \$1200. Expect Will & Betty tonight.

Yrs
M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin
1872 September 8

V.M.I. 8 Sept. 72

Dear Corbin,

Thanks for yrs of [recd] this morning. [Secure] at some time from R.H.M. Better let them carry at 8 prct. while ours run at 10-? So hold on for further orders.

I reckon houses in Fb'g will not fall much lower- and that purchase would be wise.

I congratulate you on security debts- think you have done first rate.

What do you think of buying in Richmond instead of Fb'g? property is going up there. I don't see when the tide is to turn for Fb'g.

I mail with this the Ga. speech. Whatever may be the local exceptions here & there, the south is as there stated going downhill.

Elie & I are off for Boston Thursday. Nannie writes and gives you chit-chat.

yrs

M.F. Maury

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter to his wife, Ann Herndon Maury
1872 September 15

(part of letter in written by Eliza H. Maury to her mother)

New York (Jim's)

15 Sept '72

My dear wife,

We arrived here at 5 p.m. yesterday all safe & sound. Elie had `the [head]' say from 10 to 2. I got her a cup of coffee at Wilmington- also a sandwich and [they] set her up. We only stopped there 10m so there was no time for dinner- I brought her the coffee, after a while a man came hopping through the cars, selling papers & crying fresh fried oysters- piping hot, especially for this train- each box has 6 oysters- 6 crackers and a pickle. I bought the last box and that set Elie completely up. She's as bright as a lark this morning going to church 10 sqrs off. Too far for me. Jim and Pierpont have not returned. I shall leave here about 10 in the morning, spend the day at publisher's and then at 5 go to 4th street for dinner and the night. All of Jim's folks were at home- glad to see us - & send love. Elie told 'em she was hungry as a hawk- They had tea at 6.30 and the best beef steak I ever did taste. I went to bed at 9 - and got up at 8. Glorious night- for I made a [bed] out of it in Washington- left there at 8. Arlington expensive place- went there in a [bus] and came away in the [bus]- total cost including lodging & 2 meals ea. \$11. It's cool today. Leave this for Elie Love to Bettie, Nannie, Will, Lucy, Molly & Mary & all the children. So sorry I forgot to tell Lucy to copy [that] [Res.] from the letter book- they are there in her hand at the end of the Boston Speech. yrs M.

(Letter continues in hand of Eliza Maury).

I thought about that black dress once or twice, but felt quite satisfied I had put it back in the trunk after wearing it at the Waddells. Went to Grace Church today but didn't see Cousin Ann & Cousin Rutson. A beautiful Gothic Church with stained glass windows, fine music, & a real good sermon, I enjoyed it ever so much. Saw Mr. [Ned] Rives as I was coming out, but don't think he saw me. The girls gave me a very warm welcome & cousin Ellen too. Lucy & I have a room together & she makes a great fuss over me. This house is right next door to everything. Stuart's, Tiffanys, Cousin Ellen Lewis, Cousin Matts! Cousin Ellen Mercer's & every hing. Lucy admires my new trunk very much & says she is going to have on just like it. This is such a pretty house & so very nicely furnished. They rent it furnished but all the pictures & ornaments are their own & there are some very pretty ones among them- bronzes & things. The children seem unnaturally quiet to me,

they scarcely speak above a whisper at the table. What do our children say to that?

Give my love to everyone & kiss my dear [Jim] for me. Tell Lucy Mr. Noland was here on his way to South America not long ago & gave Annie his photograph with a moustache, oh such a nice nice picture! & I haven't got one & my heart is broke. Good bye dear sweetness were you mad when I left my dress? It was horridly stupid of me; it has not been delivered yet but will come tomorrow I expect- Your own Beloved.

Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers
VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103
Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin
1872 October 10

(in hand of Eliza Maury)

St. Louis. 10th Oct 1872

My dear Corbin,

I have just time to say that I am too poorly to undertake the long journey East & propose going tomorrow to Jefferson City to Genl James Minor's to recuperate; he is George Minor's brother you know.

Yours- M.F. Maury
per E.M.

S.W. Corbin Esq.
Fredericksburg, VA