

Copy.

Furman Inst. Dec. 18th 1848

Dear Bro: Bailey

I write to make inquiry respecting your ~~contract~~ designs in regard to your servant Francis. You will remember that when he applied to me for leave to take my servant Caroline as his wife, I declined giving it until I could have an understanding with yourself with a view to prevent separation in case either of us should remove our negroes from the neighborhood. I accordingly wrote to you. You did not reply; but soon after, on a visit which I made to Charleston, explained your failing to write, and consented to the conditions on which alone I ^{allow} consent to Francis to become Caroline's husband. You will no doubt recall the statement which I then made, viz, that my wife had promised to Caroline's mother on her death-bed, that she would never part from Caroline while she lived.

On previous occasions I had been subjected to great inconvenience and to heavy positive loss in order to prevent the separation of my servants from their wives, in two instances, and from their husbands in two other instances. I laid it down at that time as a general rule not to ^{permit} ~~allow~~ my servants to marry out of the circle of my own negroes, unless there should be an understanding ^{with} ~~between~~ the owner of a servant & his such connection with one of my servants, and myself which would be a safeguard against future separation.

Francis & Caroline, so far as I know, have lived together in conjugal fidelity. She has taken his removal very much to

heart. She is depressed beyond measure; more so, probably, than she would be even by his death.

In reference to this whole subject then devolves upon us as Christian masters a very solemn responsibility. Where the conjugal relationship is sundried, God's law is violated, and inasmuch as the slave in such cases is an involuntary agent, the wrong must rest on others. Persuaded as I am of the Scriptural warrant for slave-holding I have no fear that Providence will not interpose for its protection from the violence of fanaticism, provided we who hold slaves honor God's law, in the exercise of our authority.

And such practice on our part is tending to mislead the minds of our servants with a sentiment too little felt among them: I mean in reference to the sacredness of their marriage relations.

I take it for granted that the facts, to which I had adverted, had passed from your remembrance, & that some plan will be fallen upon by which our servants may be restored to the enjoyment of their conjugal union.

My wife begs to be affectionately remembered to Susan Bailey and yourself. I remain with sentiments of highest regard Yrs in our Lord & Avenger
Mr. W. E. Bailey. James C. Furman

1847

Slavery

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Copy.

W. William C. Bailey

Waynesville
Georgia