

Portsmouth, 27th Sept., 1818

My dear Son:-

As you are about to leave the paternal roof and protection, to enter upon the more active scenes of life, I think it my duty to address you on the occasion. I had flattered myself that time would have been allowed me to have done it at length, but I have only enough to say a few hasty words. Much of your future usefulness and respectability in life depends upon the foundation which you shall lay in the onset. It is with this as with the building of a house;- much depends upon a good foundation with this there is little to apprehend, without it, everything to be dreaded; with it the durability and respectability of the Mansion may be said to be beyond question and without it its speedy fall and destruction are quite, if not, more certain. No persons are so much interested in your welfare as your parents;- this interest, added to their experience and the love they bear you, entitles them to a more than common share of your confidence and obedience. You must needs know that they would not give any other than good advice and you are in duty bound to walk in the tract they may point out to you. For nearly fourteen years our love and care have not ceased to attend you and you owe us innumerable obligations, which we expect you to repay us in some measure. The method of payment we propose is quite within your reach and will cost you nothing whilst to us it will be of inestimable value. Another advantage peculiar to this sort of payment is, that in discharging a debt to us it will add to your possessions an inexhaustible fund of wealth;- it will procure you a friend in need and indeed, and who will stick closer than a brother. To be plain, my dear boy, all we ask is your good behavior or in other words that you should practice virtue and shun vice. Nothing is more easy of attainment than this, for you have only to will it and your Heavenly Father will give you strength to carry it into complete and joyous effect. Let me therefore entreat that you will make yourself and us happy by walking continually in the pathway of your duty. As you will be in a great

monition, you must look up to your Uncle and Aunt as your future guides in as much as they will supply our place. You must know they love you and that they can have no other aim than your good advancement in usefulness and virtue. It is therefore my earnest wish and desire that you obey them in all things;- that you endeavor constantly to deserve, which will be to possess, their esteem and that you avoid the smallest occasion of giving them offense or causing them the least pain or uneasiness on your account. Do not imagine that you know enough not to need advice, for now is the very time you require it the most. Accept therefore thankfully whatever may be offered you in this way, not only by your Uncle and Aunt, but any other person qualified to give it, and draw a suitable improvement from it. You ought to be sensible that your temper is fretful and peevish and that, without intending hurt, you are over fond of teasing and fretting small children. Endeavor to overcome these propensities, which could not fail to render you hateful. You are likewise addicted to another failing that of interrupting grown people in their discourse, in a conversation not addressed to you.

Let me entreat you to drop this highly reprehensible propensity, the mark of very ill breeding. When in company with your elders be an attentive auditor, endeavor to derive improvement from their discourse and never speak unless spoken to and then with a becoming modesty and without being too flippant. Whatever you hear in one company never repeat in another, where there is the smallest possibility of its producing evil consequences. Be very careful in keeping good company and associate with with none who are not approved of by your Uncle and Aunt. Spend your evenings at home, unless you obtain their consent for going abroad. Avoid the idle, profane and vicious, knowing that "evil communications corrupt good manners."

As the use of all Spirits and Wines seldom do a little good and often much hurt, I wish you to abstain entirely from the use of them. Your father never uses any and it will do you no hurt to follow his example.

In all your dealings preserve the strictest honesty and integrity;- that after you shall have been found faithful in a few, you may be made ruler over many things. Should you be placed in a store or indeed in any other situation, in trust of anything;- let his property be sacred to your touch;- never take the smallest trifle to your own use, or suffer it to be done by others, without the previous consent of your employer. Be zealous in the discharge of your duties, obedient to the commands you receive and punctual in their execution. Strive to avoid the commission of a fault, but should you be so unfortunate as to commit one, frankly own it and never endeavor to hide it with falsehood. In owning and avowing a fault you give evidence of your sincerity and inspire a hope that, with a becoming contrition for the past, you are determined to guard against a repetition in future;- it has also this advantage that it readily procures your forgiveness and often places you on higher ground in the good opinion of him whom you have offended. I repeat it never endeavor, (I say endeavor for it seldom succeeds) to hide one fault by committing another;- this path once pursued and ~~and~~ there is no knowing where it will end.

Should you arrive at earning a maintenance for yourself, you will be careful to be economical and to enter into no expenses, however trifling, without first consulting your Uncle and Aunt;-not forgetting that it ought to be your object to earn and not to spend money. If it be your duty to be saving when you shall earn something, it becomes you much more to be so whilst you shall be at charge to your Uncle. He has a large family to provide for and you must make the additional burden of you as easy as possible. Be not wanting in gratitude to him and your Aunt and never suffer yourself to think that they do not do enough for you. You have no claim upon them and everything they do for you is more than you have a right to expect. You have received all the education my limited means could procure you and though I wish it had been a more finished one, yet, with the talents God has given you, and what you do know, you may become useful and respectable. It is my earnest request that you pursue and improve

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your studies, by constant and unwearied application, not neglecting any of them.

As you are about establishing yourself in a Country where the abominable practice of Slavery is tolerated, let me warn your youthful heart against the practice of that cruelty which is often exercised against and upon them by their tyrant Masters, who view them as little better and use them worse than brutes. There are some good Masters, but their number is small. Should you ever have the control over any of these unfortunate beings, let it be your aim and endeavor, my dear boy, to soften the rigor of their situation and to alleviate their sufferings. Many of them have grateful hearts;- they are to be won by kindness;- they are all the offspring of our common Father;- they have all a soul to save. I have been conversant with them from infancy;- I have ever been their firm friend and have made it my study to stand in the breach between them and their Masters;- I have found many of them faithful, and affectionate and grateful. I can recollect more instances than one, in which their grateful souls have ascended to Heaven in fervent prayers for my felicity and that of my unborn children, and the sensations I have experienced on the occasions have been some of the happiest of my life. It is not impossible that when known, some of the grateful souls, will talk to you of your father and still bless you for his sake. If you continue long with them, may they bless you for your own sake.

Last but not least my beloved Son, I earnestly entreat that you will not neglect your Religious duties. Morning, noon and night let your soul ascend in devout prayer to your Heavenly Father;- in every time of need fly to him for guidance and support, and be assured that he will never leave you nor forsake you. Be constant in your attendance upon public worship and let neither example or temptation cause you to neglect this very pleasing duty. You will always have decent clothes and no excuse for staying at home.

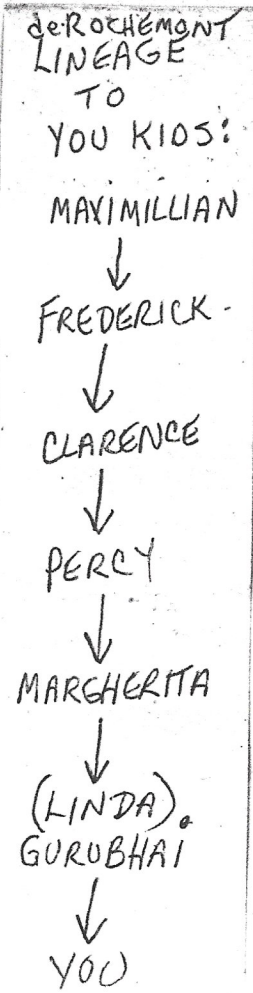
Live in peace and love with your little Cousins, so that their parents may not have occasion to regret your admission into their family;-

rather suffer wrong than commit it.

Never forget your Parents and Brothers and Sisters and when you think of us, remember our kindness only. If at any time your parents have corrected you, they have done it in love and for your own good. You are as dear to them as the apple of their eye;- they will not cease to offer daily prayers for your health, happiness and peace and it is not without severe pangs that they part with their first born, O my dear son you little know our present feelings and what we shall suffer in your absence. If you would not break our hearts and hasten our passage to-----you and us will be happy. May God Almighty take you in his special keeping;- shower the choicest of his blessings upon you;- keep you while absent from us and grant us a happy re-union. Once and again adieu, write us often and at length and may you never give me occasion to be any otherwise than your very affectionate

father and Friend

M. J. deRochemont.



THIS LETTER WAS WRITTEN
BY MAXIMILLION J. de ROCHEMONT
TO FREDERICK W. de ROCHEMONT
BEFORE LEAVING FOR DEMERERA,
BRITISH GUIANA, SOUTH AMERICA
(MAXIMILLIAN WAS GJS' GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRAND-
FATHER)

FREDERICK NEVER SAW HIS FATHER AGAIN;
HE WAS ASSASSINATED IN NEW ORLEANS FOR SPEAKING
OUT FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN 1823
★ ACTUALLY, HE WAS BEATEN TO DEATH WITH FARMING TOOLS,
ROCKS, SHOVELS, ETC., THEN STABBED IN THE RIBS.