

At Home, Jan. 6th 1846

Brother Abel,

I was unable to send you a positive answer by Angus as to the business of which we were speaking. I have ascertained at last that I can procure some ground & employment of a suitable kind for the boy in any leisure time that he might have. I will take him at the rates you mention in your letter, if it suits you to let me have him. If it should not suit you to spare him, it will put me to no inconvenience as I have engaged the land on condition that I can get the boy. I wish him to come by all means to come by the first of Feb. If you break up housekeeping I would like to exchange Betty for Susan. I have my fears that she has been tampered with by some who would like to break me down & drive me off. She has on one occasion lately manifested a degree of impudence unusual even for her. I cannot explain the whole matter & its bearings on paper, but I feel that the sacrifice & risk of keeping her is greater than it is my duty to make. Her child will soon be weaned - is very healthy & smart. If you chose that she should not have the raising of it we could keep it if Susannah were here. I mention this as one chance if you should be embarrassed. About Christmas I was fully prepared to advise you to sell her. She has done better & I am calmer on the subject. But I can only

consent to keep her any longer on the ground that you cannot possibly make any other disposition of her. I would not wish her to remain in this neighborhood, nor would I wish her to remain in your neighborhood for her vile tongue would be as busy & as effectual for mischief there as here. It may be that my fears are in some measure ungrounded - it may be that we have not done & suffered all that the case requires & that perseverance in effort is called for. I know that you have your embarrassments in the matter, but when you think of the power of a lying tongue to injure & the malice of her heart & the foul charge which she indented, & in addition that every means have been tried to reclaim her, you will not feel inclined to blame us with being too sensitive on the subject. It might be that a year with a hard master would do some good for her.

If you can let us have Susannah we will take her on any fair terms. If necessary we would take Grandison & Betty's child & do the best we can for them. It is not profit we would want, but peace & safety. When you write speak your mind plainly & what ever we can do to assist you in your plans we are willing to do. As Angus will be here & as I will not be much from home I will have nothing to fear from Betty's evil tongue - that I do fear especially as it will be the interest of some in the neighborhood to injure me - let me know your plans & on consultation we will do what is for the best.

The trial will come on probably next Monday. No stone is left unturned by one of the parties. It has been a severe school to me - will probably soon be in the church - sometimes I feel as if old blivet was tottering - in general I