

latter part of Feb and in March was exceedingly bad the allowance of meat too was scanty and the peck measure which was used when Mr Stewart owned the plantation for allowing ^{the negroes} their meal had been cut down and many of them would get out of meat before the end of the week he said they found other cause off with them, I asked him whether any of your people had run away he said they had not but if they staid there all the year they would not be worth ten dollars, you will know how to make allowances for exaggeration

Grayson has not attempted to get him from me and I suppose will not

I will now propose to hire the five that I now have and the twelve that Mrs Williams has provided they are living at the end of this year and are not maimed and have no chronic disease, I will hire them for two successive years those that are in Mississippi to remain in that state on the plantation which James Chamberlain formerly had in occupancy - for the seventeen negroes I will give sixteen hundred dollars ^{with great} deducting as heretofore taxes & Physicians bills, I will give my note & call

in bank, the proceeds of which I should suppose might be remitted without a deduction of commissions

In your letter to Mr Purnell intended, I much perceive you remark that my payment had been made pretty punctually & that qualifying word it would seem that the payments had not been made entirely punctually - now I do not remember one time when this has been any delay, and feel certain that Mr Grayson has never wasted one hour for the money due from me of which I am sure

While speaking of hiring your servants I have remarked that if any of them were employed for service at the end of the year, a proportion would be made from the proposed amount of wages, according to the value or ability of the slave

I shall go up the river in about six weeks and if your reply should not reach this place ^{before that time} I shall probably not receive it until ^{the} return, about the last of Oct. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours, J. H. Purnell