There is no material change in his handwriting but his style is very much improved — Those little skirmishes if they do not lead to expulsion will brighten & sharpen him very much but if they occur often they may lead to the improper spending of his time in laying plans & perhaps to bad company & worse occupation which we must guard against. It is a new theatre for him & I hope Mother will not think him in danger

We are at Mrs Belts first house below the City Spring the expences almost frighten me but as yet it is difficult to say how I may do. Altho I found her from Margt says Mr Taney told her she thought I would get on but must endeavour to get some active friends he had not much in his power. Poor H is poorly frightened at us having not much & risking considerable expence tho' we now I think fairly on the road to good health if proper attention be pd to exercise, feels strong & no complaints — Colville has sailed about two weeks. Please tell Hester I will write her soon. I'm afraid there is too much nice calculation in the W. M. bank for me — However they must pay some one & as afraid to offer me a per annum lest in any one year it might come to more than the per centage would. If I could get the board to write me I would know more particularly their views & propose accordingly but a rejection from a standard would be afraid be improper. I hope affairs will go on better here in the course of the second year at any rate than formerly with me. We are to furnish our own room & have brought down our bed & I can buy here a bureau & bedstead for at least what I sold mine in Frederick. Mrs H gave us her best bed & blankets & if an early opportunity occurs please ask mother to send it. One of the quilts she had made for her — Mrs Belt is a most motherly kind woman & looks already on us as of her own family claiming a connexion through Uncle Scott.

He is delighted with her kindness which tends to take off a certain longing for home which under different circumstances would make her unhappy — Mrs Belt however tells H at the end of 3 months she will not have any more female boarders as gentlemen are less trouble. We would like to continue with her if it would be proper under such circumstances. However as to that we will see. H joins in love to all the family & I remain yr affect son

A Birnie jr

P.S. Least you should come down before an opportunity offers I will send this by mail as it is some time since the family heard from us, hereafter J Brannan can always send us a waggon post

such near neighbours unless persons of good principle — The man could probably get occasional work at his trade and if he is a good labouring hand I should be pleased to employ him by the day whenever needing assistance on the farm — I will be much obliged to you also My Dear Sir if you will tell me what is the usual wages for a labouring hand like Anthony, or what you yourself would be willing to give such a man — I will not mention your name, and really need advice on the subject — With most affectionate respects to Mrs Birnie and your daughters —

Most respectfully yours
Ann Neilson

P.S. I ought to have mentioned that it was in consequence of Anthony thinking about the purchase of a little place near me which is offer'd for sale (I think low) — and saying he wish'd to place his sister there — that I first thought of the little plan of offering them this house of mine — supposing it might suit all parties — It will oblige me dear Sir if you can give me an early answer to this — Please write by mail