Letters Throwing New Light on Jefferson

ASHINGTON, D. C. Nov. 8.— The manuscript division of the Library of Congress has just but into shape and made accessible to the historical windent some interesting letters written by Jefferson Davis and his

wife while the two were fleeing southward from Richmond at the close of the war. The letters were sent from one to the other in all sorts of ways, but in most cases by soldiers. The most of them were intercepted, and the collection finally came into the hands of Edwin M. Statten, who was recretary of war. Mr. Stanton kept the letters among his private papers, and it was only after his death that they came to the national IIbrary. I am told that they have never been published.

These letters were written under conditions of terrible excitement. The confederacy was falling and the sword of death hung by a hair over President Davis and his administration. The letters were written without any idea that they would ever be published, and they give perhaps the treest insight into the characters of Mr. Davis and Mrs. Davis and show the beautiful relations which they held to each other. I will let them speak for themselves.

The first letter is from President Davis just after he had sold out his household effects in Richmond at auction and had fled southward to Danville, Va. Mrs. Davis was with her children at Charlotte, N. C. The letter reads:

"DANVILLE, Va., April 5, 1965, My Dear Wife: I have in vain sought to get into communication with General Lee and have postponed writing in the hope that I would soon be able to speak to you with ome confidence of the future. On last Sunday I was called out of church to receive a telegram announcing that General Lee could not hold his po-

I packed the bust (probably of Mr. should never be found by a Yankee. also gave him charge of the painting of the 'Heroes of the Valley'-both were rebedding and groceries, were saved. Mrs. stand for extremes in their classes. Omelia behaved just as you described her, but seemed anxious to serve and promised to take care of everything, love. which may mean something.

"The auctioneer returned account of sales \$28,400. Could not dispose of the carriages. Mr. Grant was afraid to take the carriage to his house, etc., etc. I sent it to the depot to be put on a flat At the moment of starting it was said they could not take it in that train, but would bring it on the next train. It has not been heard from since.

wished him to send for it immediately. Called off on horseback to the depot, I boxes and they left Tippy. Watson came willingly. Spencer against my will. Robert, Alf, V. B. and Ives got drunk.

being out the spoons and forks. which I was to'd, had been left, and to come out with Gen. Breckenridge. Since then I have not heard from either of

"I had short notice and was interrupted so often and so little aided that the resuits are very unsatisfactory.

"The people here have been very kind, and the mayor and council have offered assistance in the matter of quarters, and have very handsomely declared their unabated confidence. I do not wish to leave Virginia, but cannot decide on my movements until those of the army are better developed.

"I bope you are comfortable and trust soon to hear from you. Kiss my dear

"I weary of this sad recital and have nothing pleasant to tell. May God have you in His holy keeping is the fervent prayer of your ever affectionate "HUSBAND.

"J. D. Howell is here, though I have not seen him. He and Joe Nick came together as a guard to treasury specie." The next letter refers to a letter from Mrs. Davis, which was probably lost.

"DANVILLE, Va., April 6, 1865.-Dear Winnie: Many thanks for your letter giving me an account of your situation at

ERUPTION LIKE RINGWORM ON FACE

Covered with Watery Blisters. Itched and Burned Terribly. Little Rest at Night. Cuticura Soap and Ointment Entirely Cured.

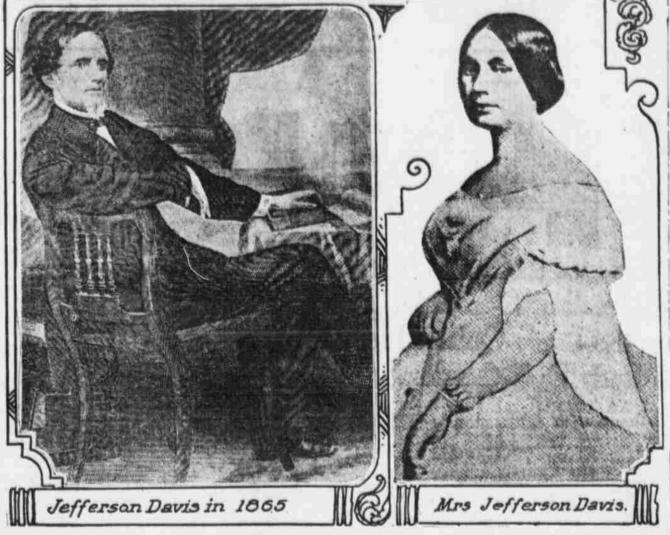
Lock Box 35. Maurice, Ia. - "In the apring of 1911 our little daughter, age five years, had a breaking out on her lip and part of her cheek that we took for ringworm. It resembled a large ringworm, only it diffored in that it was cov-

ered with watery blisters that itched and burned terribly, made worse by her scratching it. Then the blisters would break

through and let out a watery substance. She was very cross and fretful while she had It and had very little rest at night. When the eruption was at its worst the teacher of the school sent her home and would not allow her to attend until the disfigurement of her face was gone.

We tried to kill it by applying but without result. It would seem to get better and then broke out again. I then wrote and received a sample of Cuticura Sosp and Ointment. We washed the sore with the Cuticura Soap and applied the Cutieura Cintment and they gave instant relief, so we bought some more. It gradually grew better. We kept on using Cuticura Soap and Ointment and in three or four months the child was entirely cured. (Signed) Mr. Henry Prins, Oct. 22, 1912.

Cuticura Soap 25c. and Cuticura Cintment 50c, are sold every where. Liberal sample of each mailed free, with 32-p. Skin Book. Address post-card "Cuticura, Dept. T. Boston. Men who shave and shampoo with Cuticura Scap will find it best for skin and scalp.



left and but little could be done in the may be transacted here, and do not profew hours which remained before the pose at this time definitely to fix upon a point for a seat of govt. in the future.

Davis) and gave it to John Davis, who not know where within her borders the offered to take it and put it where it requisite houses for the Departments and Chester with Colonel Trenholm. Our lit- angelle thing in the world—she rode along afraid of connection with our prop- I must close. Maggie says in the anticlthe Congress could be found. "I hope our dear children will be well

when they have recovered from the ef- of it. Li Pie is sweet and pink and lovmoved after dark. The furniture of the fects of their journey. Enclosed please ing, her hands and gums are hot and house was left, and very little of the find two letters. As specimens of deep swollen, and I think she is teething. Billy things I directed to be put up, including feeling and idle speaking they might is well, but bad. Jeff is unremunerative, "Love to Maggie, little Maggie, Jeff,

Billy, and little Winnie. Farewell, my May God bless, preserve and guide "HUSBAND." The next letter is from Mrs. Davis. It

which Mrs. Davis frequently addressed heartache. her husband: "April 7, 1865.-My Own Dear Old Banny: Since my arrival here I have been so busy voted wife-

as to have only the evening to write in, "Maggie sonds love, as do Jeff and sent a message to Mr. Grant that I and then but one room where the children Billy-Has Ives turned up? Did Johnhad neglected to return the cow and most did congregate, so I have written son leave his family? Had Mrs. Mcyou but one disjointed letter.

loss of Seima like the 'blackness thereof.' of the way? Did you bring the brandy? Since your telegram upon your arrival at Where is Joe?" Danville we have nothing except the Six days later Mrs. Davis had fled from David Bradford went back from the wildest rumors, all, however, discourag- Charlotte to Chester, S. C., and about ing.

atirred up is great, and that you can do boro. Here are the letters: with a few what others have failed to do with many, am awaiting prayerfully the Banny: The rumors of a raid on Charadvent of the time when it is God's will lotte induced me to come south, and a to deliver us through His own appointed threatened raid here induces me to leave threatened raid here induces me to leave agent. I trust it may be you, as I believe it is.

horse. I have not seen her, but I hear my train and join me tomorrow. she is going out of town before long to some watering place or other. Mrs. preserve your life for your dear wife." Semmes went off yesterday for the south. I did not see her. The Wigfalls are stay- Jefferson Davis wrote: ing, I believe, with Mrs. Johnston, also. They arrived yesterday.

situation! It is, or ought to be, a plan of My love to the children and Maggie. Lee's to keep between Richmond and the enemy. If Grant attempts to throw ever prays your most affectionate. troops between his army and Richmond, Lee can whip them in detail.' With this plan Wigfall was immensely satisfied.

"I cannot judge of the moral effect of the fall of Richmond. The people here were about as low down as they could Again and ever yours." be before, as I infer from little things. but, upon the whole, I do not think the shock is as great as I expected.

"We had a digest of your address to the people today, and I could not make much of it, except an encouraging exhortation. Am anxious to see the whole thing. Numberiess surmises are hazarded here as to your future destination and occupation, but I know that wherever you are and in whatever engaged it is in an efficient manner for the country. The way things look now the trans-Mississippi seems our ultimate destination.

"Though I know you do not like my ininternecine feuds if you do so. If your friends thought it best I should feel helpyou decide to do it:

'Mrs. Chestnut wrote me a most affactionate letter from Chester today. She is staying in two rooms very badly does every kind thing in his power to long night of oppression which will folfurnished, and furnished with food by me. Mrs. Burt is more than affectionate. low the return of our people to the her friends there. As I shall have a "Jeffy D. was taken quite ill on the union." On the other, the suffering of spare room, she will come over and stay cars and is here sick at Mr. Trenholm's, the women and children, and carnage a marble table, brocatelle chairs, nice with the train which left here yesterday vain. I think my judgment is undis-

could be, and very affectionate and kind. anxious. I really regret to see him go tomorrow, "I am unwilling to leave Va. and do which is the day he proposes to leave. "The Trenholms left yesterday for

tle ones are all well, but very unruly, or in the wagon as we bumped over the crty, and your carriage was sent to the pation of her journey she was forced to else the small house makes me sensitive horrid roads, making nose at everything- depot to be brought with me. A plea go to bed. She sends 'a thousand loves' but behaves well in the main. Jeff is her saddle-Ellen about her child-Washington (who is a fine boy) about his \$2,000 left in his master's hands with his was written at Charlotte, N. C., and it clothes, I about my precious Old Ban, begins with the affectionate title by whom I left behind me with so keen a "May God in His mercy keep you safe the event of our having to leave, to store us to happiness. Devotedly,

"Write to me, my own precious only love, and believe me as ever your de-

Lean got off? Did Mr. Minnegerode come "The news of illchmond came upon me out? Did we bring off anything when Called off on horseback to the depot, I like the 'abomination of desolation,' the you came? Did you send the pest off out

the same time Davis had fled from Dan- wife. "I, who know that your strength when ville and was on his way to Greens-

"CHESTER, April 12, 1866.-My Deat without making an hour's unnecessary "It would comfort me greatly if you stay. I go with the specie train because could only find an opportunity to write they have a strong guard and are atme a full, long letter. As soon as we tended by two responsible men. I am are established here I am anxious to leave going somewhere, perhaps to Washing-Mrs. Chestout with the children and ton, Ga., perhaps only to Abbeville (S. bring Li Pie (evidently the bahy) to see C.). I don't know.. Just as the children you. I do not know how soon that may seem to bear the journey will I decide. be. God grant it may be soon. The gen- General Chestnut seems anxious, as is tlemen I have seen here (the officers of the author of the letter you sent me to the post) are exceedingly kind, and have Charlotte, but oh so moody that I am offered me every civility in their power. wordless, helpless. The children are well, "The surgeon general was also very as are Maggie and I. Would to God I kind in his offers of service. Colonel could know the truth of the horrible Johnston, with his wife, called to see me. rumors I hear of you. One is that you Mrs. Joe Johnston is here living with the have started for General Lee, but have cashier of the bank and family, and never been heard of. Mr. Clay is here keeps a very pretty fancy carriage and and very kind. He will catch up with

"May God have mercy upon me and It was on the day following this that "GREENSBORO, N. C., April 14, 1865 .-

Dear Winnie: I will come to you if I "I heard a funny account of Wigfall's can. Everything is dark. You should interview with Beauregard. It seems he prepare for the worst by dividing your went to see him on his way to this place. baguage so as to move in wagons. If and when the news of the evacuation of you can go to Abbeville, it seems best Richmond came, and that the enemy had as I now advise. If you can send everynot yet entered the town, the general thing there, do so. I have lingered on had come back with their arms and said, 'Oh, they do not understand the the road and labored to little purpose. "BANNY.

> "P. S .- I sent you a telegram, but fear it was stopped on the road. General door and he awaits me to write this. Five days later Mrs. Davis is at Abbe-

ville. She writes despairingly as fol-

ought I do with these helpless little un- one of warconscious charges of mine are questions ple call promptly and seem to feel the several states. * * * warmly. Mr. Burt really seems to feel

ing me that we must leave Richmond, as gave you all of my prospects which can I am very well off and very kindly hear it has been stopped nine miles from directed. Robert says she would not per- first things will be straight, but the the army would commence retiring that now be told, not having heard from Gen- treated by the Jewish man, Wiele, who here by a rumored raid below here. I do mit to pack; that she even took gro- spirit's there and the daily accretions will evening. I made the necessary arrange- eral Lee and having to conform my owns the house-with the delicacy and not know how true this is. I shall wait ceries out of the mess chest when he be great when the delicacy and ments at my office and went to our house movements to the military necessities of hospitality of a gentleman. Major Willis your further directions here. Do write had put a small quantity there. to have the proper dispositions made the case. We are now fixing an exec- has offered every attention and so has every day and make the staff send the there. Nothing had been done after you utive office where the current business Major Echols-Harrison has been more ef- notes (I do not expect more) by officers and I learned after we left Richmond the strict construction fallacy. If we are ficient and attentive than I thought he coming this way-I am so unhappy and was not with the saddle and bridles to require a constitution it must be much

but did not stop long enough to see me, the next. Specific charge and promise ing, but bad. I felt quite disappointed, because he was was given, but the carriage was left. se very kind to me at Chester and Char- "The notice to leave was given Sunday, get rumors that Brown is going to seize very much exercised about his pony. lotte; he sent me word he would see me but few hours were allowed, and my all government property and the people Maggie about her saddle-Margaret about at Washington in a very few days. * * * public duties compelled me to rely on are averse and mean to resist with pistols. "Margaret sends you her best love, little others. Count on nothing as saved They are a set of wretches together, and Pollie sends hers and the boys-your little which you valued except the bust, and I wish you were safe out of their land. pet would I know feel for you if she that had to be left behind. hoped to find you.

and raise up defenders for our bleeding place the valuables with the sisters, and country prays your devoted wife."

"24th. "My Own Dear Old Banny: The dreadful news, with its dreadful confirmation has rendered us very wretched. I long for one word from you. I will come to you for a day or two if this truce is with us. really so-i. e., if you cannot come to me. The children are all well, Jeff has gotten well.

"May God to His mercy have you in His holy keeping prays your devoted

P. S.-How comes it that my dear Jos did not go to you as soon as paroled? Everything is mystery." The next letter of Jefferson Davis is

a very long one. It deals not only with the military situation, but also with the hope which Mr. Davis had of escaping to Europe. Parts of it are full of pathos, and, as will be seen by the letter from Mrs. Davis which follows, it was one of the few letters which was received, the others baying been intercepted on their way. This letter reads:

"CHARLOTTE, N. C., 23d of April, 1865. -My Dear Winnie: I have been detained here longer than was expected when the last telegram was sent you. I am uncertain where you are and deeply feel the necessity of being with you. even for a brief time, under our altered circumstances. * * *

"Your own feelings will convey to you an idea of my solicitude for you and our family, and I will not distress you by describing it.

The dispersion of Lee's army and the surrender of the remnant which remained with him destroyed the hopes I entertained when we parted, Had that army held together I am now confident we could have successfully executed the plan which I sketched to you and would have been today on the high road to independence. Even after that disaster if the men who 'straggled'-eay. thirty or forty thousand in number with a disposition to fight we might have repaired the damage; but all was "God bless, guide and preserve you, sadly the reverse of that. They threw away their arms and were uncontrollably resolved to go home. The small guards along the road have sometimes been unable to prevent the pillage of Bonham bears this. His horse is at the trains and depots. Panic has seized the country. J. E. Johnston and Beauregard were hopeless as to recruiting their forces from the dispersed men of Lee's army, and equally so as to their ability lows concerning herself and her children: to check Sherman with the forces they "ABBEVILLE, April 19, 1875.-My Dear had. Their only idea was to retreat. Old Banny: The fearful news I hear fills Of the power to do so they were doubtme with horror. This is that General ful, and subrequent desertions from their Lee's army is in effect disbanded, Long- troops have materially diminished their street's corps having surendered, Ma- strength and, I learn, still more weakhone's also saving one brigade. I do not ened their confidence. The loss of arms believe all, yet enough is thrust upon has been so great that, should the spirit my unwilling credence to weigh me to the of the people rise to the occasion, h would not be at this time possible ade-"Where are you? How are you? What quately to supply them with the weap-

"General Johnston had several interterference, let me entreat you not to send which I am asking myself always. Write views with Sherman and agreed on a B. B. to command there. I am satisfied to me of your troubles freely, for mercy's suspension of hostilities, and the referthat the country will be ruined by its sake. Do not attempt to put a good face ence of terms of pacification. They are upon them to the friend of your hears secret and may be rejected by the "Since I left Richmond no such hearf- Yankee government. To us, they are less, but resigned; but even those who feit welcome has been extended to me as hard enough, though freed from wanton hope for favors in that event deprecate the one I received here—they will hear humiliation and expressly recognizing it for you. If I am intrusive forgive me of no change of place for the present and the state governments, and the rights for the sake of the love which impels urge me with tears in their eyes to share of person and property, as secured by me, but pray long and fervently before with them the little they can offer. Peo- the constitution of the United States and

"The issue is one which it is very paintenderly to us; pets the children and ful for me to meet. On one hand is the a few days with me. I have carpets, who lives just across the street. He is among the few brave patriots who would some curtains, some window shades and better, but not well. He and Joe both had still oppose the invader, and who, unless three pictures, and some lovely volumes very hadly swollen throats with high the people would rise en masse to guaof books belonging to a man in Augusta- fever. Joe was nearly well and went on tain them, would struggle but to die in

"I have prayed to our Heavenly Father to the demands of the position in which Providence has placed me. I have excrificed so much for the cause of the conto make any further sacrifices required. and am assured there is but one to which am not equal-my wife and my children. How are they to be saved from degradation or want is now my care.

"During the suspension of hostilities. you may have the best opportunity to go to Mississippi, and thence either to suit from Mobile for a foreign port or to gross the river and proceed to Texas. as the one or the other may be more practicable. The little sterling (money) you have will be a very scanty store. and under other circumstances would not be counted, but if our land can be sold, that will secure you from absolute want. For myself, it may be that our enemy will prefer to banish me. Or it may be that a devoted band of cavalry will cling to me, and that I can force my way across the Mississippi, and if nothing can be done there which it will be proper to do, then I can go to Mexico. and have the world from which to obey Him, and I know there is a future This was several days south of Washchoose a location

"Dear wife, this is not the fate to cannot bear the tug of war. which I invited when the future was be prolonged a day beyond the prospect votion to you. of useful labor here, and there is every

"The children are well and very happy; At the same time I was informed that pressure if it covers us at all." . . play all day. Billy and Jim fast friends your saddle had been sent to the sadas ever. Little Winnie the sweetest little dier's and left there. Everybody seemed around has caused it to ache violently, so the children seemed to improve under it. was made that it could not go on the and says Pie C. is sweet as can be. Billy "Mr. Clay passed through here today, cars of that train, but should follow on and Jeff are very well. Limber is thriv-

that she would distribute everything. It will astound you to know how Pro-tone builds the body, gives you nerve.

It will astound you to know how Pro-tone builds the body, gives you nerve.

It will astound you to know how Pro-tone builds the body, gives you nerve.

buoyancy and a carriage that makes
you feel like a new person. Adding
the influence of her husband, was afraid
to be known as having close relations
with us.

"Kindest regards to Robert and thanks
for faithful conduct. Love to Johnson and
John Wood. Maggie sends you her best
lova."

The last three letters are without date
and without place. They were written
by Mrs. Davis when she was flying still
further south, and before the time she
natural way. It puts more corpuscles in

in the final hour was poor old Sam, give only extracts from them.

wishing for "ple cake," and thus I left our late home, no bad preparation for a search for another.

The first was sent to Mr. Davis at Abbeville, and it states that Mrs. Davis hopes to get to Pensacela and take a direct, upon receipt of price.

view, but my love is all I have to offer, and that has the value of a thing long possessed and sure not to be lost. "Once more, and with God's favor, for

a short time only, farewell. "YOUR HUSBAND." The letter of Mrs. Davis in reply to the

above gives another affecting picture of ing. Billy plenty of laughter, and talk the loving relations which always ob- with the teamsters keeps quiet. Jeff is

"ABBEVILLE, S. C., April 28, 1805.-My and two quite well." Dear Old Husband: Your very sweet let- The letter goes on: ive reached me safely by Mr. Harrison "I have \$2,500, something to sell, and and was a great relief. I have here in have heart and a hopeful one, but above the morning at 8 o'clock for the wagon all, my precious only love, a heartful of train going to Georgia. Washington will prayer. May God keep you and have be the first point I shall unload at. His sword and buckler over you. Do you to give me wistom and fortitude equal From there we shall probably go on to try to make a stand on this side. It is

Atlanta or thereabouts and wait a little not in the people. Leave your escort until we hear something of you. Let me and take another read often. Alabama beseach you not to calculate upon seeing is full of cavairy, fresh and earnest in federacy that I can measure my ability me unless I happen to cross your short- pursuit. May God keep you and bring est path toward your bourne, be that you safe to the arms of your devoted,

these pleasures have past for me.

Florida if possible, and from thence go three. youngest join you in Texas- and that is devotedly your own.

"Here they are all your friends and tured. The rest of the story is a matrose colored to us both, but I know have the most unbounded confidence in ter of history you will hear it even better than my. you. Mr. Bart and his wife have urged self, and that, of us two, I alone will me to live with them offered to take ever look back reproachfully on my past the chances of the Yankees with usareer. I have thus entered on the begged to have little Maggie done every questions involved in the future to guard thing in fact that relatives could do. I against contingencies. My stay will not shall never forget all their generous de-

"I have seen a great many men who reason to suppose that ! will be with have gone through-not one has talked you a few days after Mr. Harrison ar- fight. A stand cannot be made in this rives. Mrs. Omelia behaved very country! Do not be induced to try it. As sition longer than till night, and warn- Charlotte. In my letter of yesterday I china and nice tin busins and buckets, evening, having arrived in the night. I strangely about putting the things you to the Transmissississippi, I doubt if at are crushed out between the upper and "Little Maggie's saddle was concealed. nether millstones. But you have now tried which I directed to be all put toggether, stretched during our hours of outside

"I have a very painful thumb. A run "Be careful how you go to Augusta. I

God bless you, keep you, I have wrestled "Mrs. Omelia said she was charged in with God for you. I believe He will re-"YOUR WIFE.

"Kindest regards to Robert and thanks

further south, and before the time she natural way. It puts more corpusci and her husband came together, for the short time before Davis was captured. I "Kiss Maggie and the children many and her husband came together, for the

"Dear children, I can say nothing to them, but for you and them my heart is short of funds and I do not see why full, my prayers constant and my hopes are the trust I feel in the mercy of God.

"Farewell, my dear, there may be better children, saying that they are well, "although little FI was vaccinated, on the though little FI was vaccinated, on the liftle, Detroit, Michigan, will send to though little FI was vaccinated, on the liftle, Detroit, Michigan, will send to though little FI was vaccinated, on the liftle, Detroit, Michigan, will send to though little FI was vaccinated, on the liftle will enclose life in stamps or view, but my love is all I have to offer, readside, on account of a report of lifter to show over postage. They will send to life they will enclose life in stamps or view, but my love is all I have to offer. roadside, on account of a report of silver to help cover postage. They smallpox in the vicinity."

The second letter, written at twenty their book on "Why You Are Thin. The regular \$1.00 size of Protone is the regular \$1.00 size of P

miles south of Washington, Ga., where Mrs. Davis is riding to a wagon with picked Mississippi teamsters, says: "All well, with Winnie sweet and smil-

tained between her and her husband: | happy beyond expression, Maggie one

"It is surely not the fate to which you | The last letter contains the following invited me in brighter days. But you "My awn precious Banny: May God most remember that you did not invite give us both patience against this heavy me to a great hero's home, but to that trial. The sold ers are very turnly and of a plain farmer, I have shared all your bave taken almost all the mules and triumphs, been the only beneficiary of horses from the camp. * * * Do not them, now I am but claiming the priv- try to meet me. I dread the Vankees flege for the first time of being all to you getting news of you so much. You are the country's only hope, and the very "My plans are these, subject to your best intentions do not advise a stand approval. I think I shall be able to pro- this side of the river. Why not cut cure funds enough to enable me to put loose from your escort? Go swiftly and the two eldest to school. I shall go to glone with the exception of two or

over to Bermuda or Nassau, from thence "Oh, may God in His goodness keep to England, unless a good school offers you safe, my own. Maggle says she elsewhere, and put them to the best has your prayer book safe. May God school I can find and then with the two keep you, my old and only love, as ever the prospect which bears me up to be once This ends these remarkable letters more with you once more to suffer with Shortly after the last was penned Jefyou if need be-but God loves those who ferson Davis was united with his family. for you. This people are a draven set, they ington, Go. He traveled with his family two or three days when he was cap-

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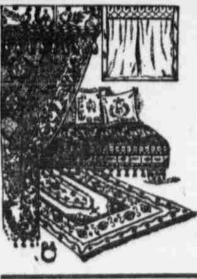
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