MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

George B. Wright and Family Papers

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Pekin Ill. Oct 1st 1859
Saturday Evening 8 P.m.

Marie

I do not know what to do, but I write to you — come nearer me for I need you — An hour ago (_such an hour_) I read this — a dispatch from my brother at Burlington Vt.

"_Rolla is dead_ — Stay there till I write"
"Norman"

Oh my poor Mother — what will she do! He was away — far far from home — my _brother_ my dear brother. I was with him all last Fall — in December I bade him Good Bye — _forever_?

Oh Marie, come nearer me — pray for us, now in this — I cannot write — Good Bye —

George

Sabbath Day

Alone and desolate? No— I thank you— you were with me last night and I was better for what I wrote —It was a way to relief— but it was hard to write at all, I *thank* you —You were with me *then*, you are with me always.

Then I went out into the still night.— It was chill and dark all about me— save overhead there— the stars shone down as kindly and calmly as ever— *They* had not changed— I walked far and late— and till bitterness and doubt were gone —till I could feel that there *is* a God— our *Father* in Heaven. and that *He* is all Love and Mercy and Justice.— But it seems very hard—

Is it, that these things are sent to us, to teach us *ourselves* & our capabilities— the good there is *in* us —our & relations to all around?

This Morning I have been taking a long walk— to the bluffs— on the road toward Bloomington.

I have been where I could over=look this valley. for miles in either direction up or down the river.

It is a beautiful valley.

How lovely, how perfect, are all the works of God— how beautiful is this Earth. —— *He* is not here —my brother— and he loved it. Oh so much— Tree, and flower— every leaf every bursting bud was to him a thing of exquisite beauty— Nature his dear friend— and I did not think *he* could die *now*: he could illy be spared.— Oh the desolation of that home. of that dear gentle loving woman whose whole life seemed bound up in his. and who followed him to the very further verge of civilization— content and *happy* that she might be with him — anywhere. She was not strong in faith or trust, save in him — what will she do now — Her life is indeed desolate, — But she has a bright eyed little boy of seven years — an earnest thoughtful little fellow whose every motion and word will tell her of the one who has gone.

He was my dearest Brother — for I was best acquainted with him — he taught me much of what I know & made me much of what I now am — he was always kind, frank, and easy in his manner toward me, always willing to encourage me & always trying to make me believe that I might be good for something

All our intercourse has been of the most friendly and brotherly nature — particularly last year when I was with him — It was with real sorrow & sadness that he said Good Bye — I thought that he had sad & fearful apprehensions that it might be a last good bye, but I had none I felt sure that we should meet on this Earth again many times — but he is gone.

Why should I write – I cannot think of aught but this – my Sammy. It cannot interest you. But he was my Brother and I knew him, – and – you love me do you not?

I have a little amulet which he gave me five years ago last May – the first of May – the very day when you ~~wh~~ went Home & when I went away from home – among strangers, I have kept it since, sacredly. It is, nothing but a little card with a few words written on it, but they are enough so that if I keep them near me, no harm can come to my soul: – a part of it reads – "This "life – its cares – its pleasures, must soon "~~and~~ close – but that Life and those joys that "have no end & May God bless you"

He was a Christian, earnest & true

This will perhaps make a change in my prospects for the present I cannot believe that Elsie (his wife) will stay in Iowa and our people may wish me to go and settle up his business — stay there till I can dispose of his movable property & take her and little Charlie back home. If so. I must go — my own advantage can have no weight in such a case, I *know* if I were in *her* place I should expect kindness and help from home.

I should very much like to stop here, there is an opportunity for me to learn so much & if the work is carried on, they would like to have me stay & if you come to Bloomington it would be —— — I need not tell *you* how much that means to me.

If I *leave*; there is no prospect of my returning here. — but we will see — All will be for the best — we shall love as ever. We shall be *nearer* than before
— Write to me — God bless you always
George

Sabbath Evening – Oct 2d 59

Dearest Marie –

A still quiet night – as still and calm as though sad hearts and crushed spirits were a thing unknown. Since I left you I have been writing to my mother.

There is no reserve now.

I feel very lonely without you – now. I know that I love you, as I never loved, or as I never knew that I loved you before.

Again and again has come up that fearful thought What if we meet here no more? What could I do. – It does not seem to me that I would want to live if you were gone. And if we should meet again in the dawn of that radiant Hereafter for which we hope, and pass each other soul-strangers? I would sooner believe in a Heaven of Light and Love, and Hell of Darkness and Hate inexpressible & eternal, and I would go down the dark way, where I might not meet you, rather than meet in a Heaven where all that was sacred here on Earth should go for nought," Seems I almost doubt when I think of this" Is it a mania of mine that I am perpetually borrowing trouble & that this thought haunts me?

I think it is & I will try to banish it

Yet I cannot but fear, and it makes me

cling to you closer than before, ...

While *here* we shall part no more - but will it be so always? And we are here but for a little time - I *would* that it should be not long then, till we have solemnly pledged in the presence of the world, what we have solemnly pledged to each other, before God" "For better or worse - richer or poorer - till Death "doth us part" —— Yes, "till Death" *parts* us, - there is a savor of *this* life in *that*, not any of the life to come.

Marie - what will you? Have you thought of it?

Nine weeks ago yesterday I left Minneapolis Eight weeks ago we met - At that hour last night I read sad crushing words. — Seven weeks ago we were in the grove, soul answered then to soul, And two weeks ago; we met & parted, for - the last time? Oh the bewildering maze which these few weeks have wrought in How varied the web it has woven, of brightest joy and hope, of warmest love - of darkest sorrow"

Here my hands sprang joyously to the work before me - my brain was full of it It was my delight - I was learning something every day, I suppose it is well that I give it up though"

Be with me Marie. You are my strength now. Through *you*, I can have trust in *Our Father* I can feel that *He* is good. You will be good too - May you be also happy is the Prayer of the heart that loves you

The heart of Your own George

Monday Evening Oct 3d 1859
Pekin. Illinois

Marie

It is past nine o'clock — "time little boys and girls should be asleep:" and I have nothing to write which ought to detain us for a moment. I can hardly write at all. — but I am *lonesome*, I shall never write you another good letter. Ife I have forgotten *how* If I ever *knew*. Are you not disappointed in me already? Sincerely *Lorena*. are you not sorry you have spoken "three words" to me? Have you not already found out the truth of what I was always telling you? That I am a poor scamp?. I cannot write to you *now* without my thoughts running in a circle, starting out from and coming back to the same place. I begin by wishing to *see you*. & close with how *lonesome* *I am without you*. I cannot be independent when I try, and I ought to *hate* you I suppose but I *cannot*, though never was *Czar* or Great Mogul. more an Auto=crat than you. You dont *mean* to be so do you — I verily believe youre glad it *is* so though

You have said that you wished you *could* stand up straight before your friends, wont that apply to me now? — Here is Serena's picture now before me — She is the very reserved & yet very frank Miss, that I used to know in Minneapolis. It is difficult to draw a line cutting off the Year 1859 from my acquaintance with Serena M Ames, and look at her as she was to me a year and a half ago, And still more difficult to realize that you are the same one. This picture, it was taken a year and a half ago — I remember well when I saw it first — and how it looked to me. I liked your ~~[illegible]~~ Mother pretty well then, I was much more acquainted with ~~you~~ her than with you — how absurd it would have seemed to me then, had I been told that I would ever have ~~that~~ same miniature with me & consider it the nearest and dearest of my personal chattels — And it would have seemed equally strange to you

You say I never came to see you but once while I was in Minneapolis last Summer & then only to see Prof Daniels — You thought I did not like you (your people)," I went to see Prof Daniels, more on account of my friend whom he had seen since I had, than any thing else. But did I not go to Mr Browns, except that time while I was in Minneapolis? I've forgotten all about it now, but I was there and in Maple Grove all the month of July — When I came down from Forest City on my way to Iowa, I stopped in Minneapolis three or four days and then I went to your house

Do you not remember that we walked home together — I did not intend to & it was quite by accident that I did, but I remember that we had a pleasant visit.

I have been half thinking & half dreaming — and it's now half past ten o'clock and I must write no more now. — Another time Dear & now Away & to sleep, with you, Adieu

George

Wednesday Evening 8 P.m. Oct 5.

Good evening. I hope you've not been ~~sleepin~~ sleeping all the time till now though — I have not at all events — I am going to write to-night so that I can send it to Somerville, for you are nearer Bloomington than I thought you would be in a month from now. Don't fail to call at the Post Office and inquire for this letter before you say Good Bye to Somerville. Else you may lose it and it is valuable. (Just about as valuable as this Hibernianism will be.)

I did not inquire at the post office till Monday — I thought I might hear from you then, for until yesterday I supposed that my first letter, written on Friday would leave here on Saturday, — It did not go till Monday and yours of Sep 30th was not mailed till Monday Oct 3d — "Yours of Sep 30" Yes I have just got as far as the first word of my letter, which I was going to commence by saying ~~that~~ "your letter has come!" Dont you remember what a truant fashion I used to have. of setting out to say something, and from thence of wandering off to something which had not the slightest bearing upon the subject in question. I believe I havnt been quite myself since I left Minneapolis - though perhaps I am nearer it now than at any time before, in Out of the circle of your influence perhaps? Not entirely. I selfishly hope for my own good, Geo- Your letter has come! Thank you. Dont you begin to think that, that is a stereotyped phrase with me? It is a true one at all events so far as you are concerned. I never got a letter from you yet, but that, from the bottom of my heart, I thanked you for, either silently or aloud

But I cannot help thinking of the Arithmetic of that young lady who measured the ardor of her lover's passion by the way he walked with her across the green, & who concluded that his affection had diminished in the ratio of the two sides of a square to its diagonal

I count our postage stamps where there used to be two on your letters, & two sheets of paper where there used to be four.

Verily, My Dear, You only love me half as well as you used to. But even *two* sheets are worth more to me than *four* used to be.

This index to your *waning* interest in me(?) came *this* evening — at 7½ o'clock the mail arrives here from the East.

And *now* I'm going to answer it as I used to yours when I was in Minneapolis — by a regular review, page by page.

Perhaps you think I am rather *light* and trifling this evening. I *am*. Do not blame me Marie if I take advantage of an hour of real light-hearted-*ness*, even if it may seem culpable levity — I have been sad, and serious enough of late. Your letter *has* made me glad, glad that you were safe and well and happy. I'm sure you will not blame me if I forget everything *else* for a time.

Starting out with the fact of a reduction in your affection to the alarming extent of fifty per cent, I look forward apprehensively to the time when your Mother will be sending to me for her picture of you, and for that *other* one (which I thought was *mine* as a sort of "evidence of title" in the original) — I have however solemnly resolved that she *shan't* have the little one without paying me a just & fair valuation for it, Say fifty cents ($0.50) more or less. Tell her to apply it on board bill.

You say that I sent my weariness & dissatisfaction, to you, in that first letter — You did not blame me — but I blame myself for it. I forget that you love me when I write such things. I forget that you in your care for me will suffer more for me on account of such things than I will myself if I do not mention them

Still I can hardly be otherwise than transparent, in all things with you.

But I will try to see only the bright side of Life, and were it not for your diminishing love I would succeed. In One of your old letters (Not old ones either — from first to last they are all new as bursting buds & opening flowers) — in one of your letters you say that I once said that I never had got acquainted with any one but that I would like to see what sort of a feeling it would be, I do not know that I can say any differently now, though I believe I am nearer an acquaintance, now, than I was then. Excuse me — I was going to answer your letter straightway."

The shadows of my sorrows transferred to you? — Were you here — or I there, this night, I would see that, they should all be taken away again — Sadness in some cases may be removed somewhat like freckles & tan; — by an application of a blister to the face, Severe remedy to be sure, but very agreeable to the "medical practitioner."

Think of it — a kissing doctor. It beats Hydropathy — Electro Chemistry, Healing Mediums and all the rest of the Esculapiis in existence,

And there, I knew you were in the decline of love. & here's further proof "I do not much expect & desire less to see you "this winter" — There now, proof positive — Your own handwriting; — selected from your letter in the same way that one man quoted Bible passages to prove that another, ought immediately to go & hang himself, And then you try to pass it off & call in the Fever & Ague to your assistance, so to get rid of me.

Oh fickleness of woman! Oh!! Oh!!!

"Two weeks ago" — Yes we were both foolish that day, Why was it? — We were as mute as the Sachems that we see in front of tobacco stores or the "Dummies" that dry goods men have to hang shawls & Mantillas on,

Not that we loved each other less — or "Some more", but it is a physiological fact that we were dumb, — There was an entire suspension of articulation; teeth, tongue, palate (I had almost said lips) forgot their office — The full open vowel, as well as the jagged, sharp=

=cerned consonant, was an impracticable thing with us that day. We will never be so foolish again, Oh but I *did* feel badly to leave you then, — Next time we will have learned how to be *glad* at parting. (provided your *letters* dimin=ish at the present rate.)

And in a week from to-day you leave Boston — (By the way who *is* Oliver Ames & Co? — Is it the "O. Ames" whose name is deeply and indellibly impressed on my memory — excuse me I meant to say, ~~A~~ "deeply impressed" on the barn shovel with which I used to clean out stables in my younger days? but really there is little wonder that my mental characteris=tics *should* get confounded with the "agricultural implements" — brains and barn-shovels)
Who *is* Oliver Ames (& Co.)?

Coming to Bloomington — Leaving Boston. It *is* a change indeed. Boston is a memorable place to you — You have not in nineteen years lived half as much in any other six months, as you have since you have been in Boston. I have not time to give the *protracted* *utterance* which a pen requires, to the many things which crowd up and ask to be said in regard to Boston & Boston folks. We will talk of it again. *By the way* again, Please keep on a ~~list~~ paper a list of things to *talk* about or we shall be taken with the

Mute disease when we meet again, I have a book of 300 pages which I lately got + which I want you to see when I visit you again. It may help us talk perhaps.

There is one at least in Boston (bless him. he is a dear noble fellow) whom you may well regret to say "Good Bye" to. You have been nearer him, become better acquainted with him, than any other man you ever saw except your Father & I have you not?

In one yr letter. you say You "like him "Firstly:- because ——— ——— ———"

He has been ever most true to me."

Those books — Yes. I do hold you responsible for them. In business language. "I take you for payment"."

Here my Dear you were almost blaming me because I did not write you the first Sunday I was here, I did write but I suppose that I did not get it in the Office in time Monday to have it mailed that Morning.

Blame me, did I say? I dont believe you could do such a thing now unless I had done something really bad, My moral perceptions & moral purposes are not so strong but I fear I should excuse & not blame You. for anything only "moderately wicked." I do not much wonder that your former two-sided (of a park I mean) love, should have dwindled down to a diagonal, for I've not done or been at all worthy of you, and I can not believe that any sensible intelligent woman, can for any great length of time respect (and if respect goes first + [illegible] love) any man whose only merit is that he loves her.

With us, labor – the active exercise of mind & body, is about all there is in strength or merit. Nobility has to be worked for. What a glorious thing it is that Hon. True Nobility & plain Mr. Bread & Butter both live on the same road. There are a good many other good people on the same road too, and it is as near a route to Our Fathers house as any – (if we go via Messrs Truth & Charity.)

Oh Dear My light is going out & I must close here. I have not yet learned whether I stay here or no. If I go away I hope to see you first.

Forgive me for the many things I have said lightly in this that may make you feel hurt, I love you very very much, — Wait a moment light No? Well Goodnight then Dear

God bless you, George

No 6
No 22

Fowd to Minneapolis

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Somerville, Mass.
October 5, 1859.

George"

"With such a prayer, on this sweet day,
"As thou mayst hear and I may say,
"I greet thee, Dearest, far away";

With your last letter in my hand I cannot feel you to be so very far away. It came to me, bringing joy with it, last Saturday. My heart has been full of the things I would have said to you ever since, if I could. Even now I cannot write very much. I wish I had the power of putting into small space and time what, expanded, would fill the world as some have. — Last Sunday I set apart, ere yet it came, for the answering of your letter, but with the day came other duties, I may say pleasures too, which interfered with you.

For Emerson's sake and Cyrus I will not say I had rather have spent the day with a lonely man in Purgatory than with them in Boston and Somerville, but that man may think as suits him best.

You did write to me when I thought you didnot - and a dear and painful letter, too. Dearer than ought save him of whom it tells, because the reflection of a heart and soul loving and true; ~~before whose my heart and soul bows~~ painful, because it tells me how unworthy I am of such great love. All I can do is with gratitude to love and *strive*.

So "we three" took a long walk all about and around Pekin on a Sabbath morning, when all the rest of the world had gone away - excepting always the affectionate dog. I wonder that you could have so repelled with stones and brick-bats the only living thing in Pekin conscious of your presence; and, too, a creature which showed enough of moral feeling to seek to leave the bad company of an impious village for the good company of a Christian man. Oh! Oh!

We sat down under a tree and I preached a sermon, as you thought; but all the while it was the great love of your own heart which gave light and inspiration to my poor words; the love which is perpetually preaching sermons which, with Our Fathers help, will guide my feet toward truth and goodness; the love which calls forth all the thankfulness of my soul to Him who gave it me, the crowning blessing of a life full of blessings.

You have shown me more of the inner life in this letter than in any other.

It is more to me than any other letter. I can tell you least of what I feel when it speaks to me than I could of any other letter. It is sometimes such an inexpressible relief to know God sees my soul, knows all its inmost thoughts, and sometimes it seems as if, through Him, you too, might *know* without the poor aid of words.

My eyes and the dark say stop. I will write Sunday if I can, I think I can. Mama thanks you for her note and will say for herself what I could not say for her — Could I not be expected to be faithful to one whose progress in goodness and the right one is henceforth from my own inseparable!

I will try *to be*. With all my heart, ever your own.

Severance Jns

Thursday. Oct. 6.

Good morning — George. I wrote you last night a poor little apology for a letter. I am going to do better in a little while but now, you know, we are all in confusion externally and alas internally, for a dirty house, with things all in disorder, upsets the brain, and unless extremely careful the nerves and spirits also. It is a great thing to keep always calm under the pressure of adverse circumstances; to let little things have only their due weight, and live in an atmosphere far removed from trifling annoyances.

We do not start next week as we intended. I am sorry I said to you any thing deffinite about our plans

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as there was really nothing definite to say. Father finds it necessary to preach one more Sunday than he had intended. He now intends to be in Bloomington the last Sabbath in this month — a long time and yet a very short time it will be.

We are having fine weather if it only holds on two or three weeks more we will try and be duly thankful. This is a nice day though the winds sounds a wee bit woolfish and causes an inside shudder occasionally."

In a day or two I will say ever so many nothings to you, mean time, be good and be happy and I will try and be so to. You are not alone in Pekin if love and thoughts have wings.

Marie.

Pekin, Ill. Oct 7. 1859

Marie -

Good Morning -

I am going to Iowa! The prospect is not pleasant. and I may stay there all winter. Probably it will be necessary for me to do so. Last night I received a letter from my Father. A few words will tell all they (at home) knew about my brother's death. Sep 1st he wrote to Father saying - that their house was the only one in the settlement (Forest City), without sickness, Three days after, he was taken sick with fever. and in seven days more he died. His wife and her sister were both sick at the time. Elsie with fever and her sister with chills & fever. but they were better than they had been,

And they wished me to go there. Last Year as perhaps I told you. all that settlement. all that part of the country was overflowed. Unceasing rain for some 15 months, Now the waters are slowly draining away. and pestilence follows. We suffered much exposure to cold & wet last fall there, but so far I have felt no ill effects from it, and it is so late in the season that it will be safe for me to go there.

I regret leaving here. I could do very well so far as business is concerned — Mr Kingsley has been very kind & obliging to me throughout. for which I am thankful.

I would have liked to see you in Bloomington, but it is a consolation to think that I have been *near* you there & to be able now to write to you as there — & to think that we are only *forty* miles apart. I got also a long letter from Geo Chumen, last eve, & another from Delos H.

Geo says that Ed Murphy, Bradford & Garland & C. H Pettitt (Banker) have failed &c &c. I shall go via Minneapolis & try to be there *next* Tuesday (*Election day*) I leave here in an hour or two

And I got a letter from *you* *two* — It was *very good* — Unless perhaps the first one you wrote me after I went to Vt — the best letter you have ever written to me

With all of *My* Marie, it had also *all* of *your* Serena in it. It was the whole of the true woman, whom I am beginning to feel it was, *that* I first learned to love. — not either of her two separate selves.

This was the letter which you wrote me before I left Vermont. It was forwarded to me here

It seems *almost prophetic* in some things — It *makes* me think of the *last* day we were together.

And it opens to me a *new* view, a *new* phase of your character — I love you more & more for all I learn of you

For all you have given your heart in my keeping. you have yet a strong calm self-reliant nature, that heart cannot tyrannize over. You have a soul to which I *must* answer if I would *keep* that heart in my possession. A soul which is not warped & which can sit in judgment on my *actions* as well as on those of another. In *winning* that heart, I have but *commenced*. I have yet to work earnestly, untiringly, faithfully, to be worthy of that love. If I *try* to live a true life & to become better and wiser, you will yet love me. If *not*, I am nothing to you.

You *were* disappointed in me when I was last in Somerville. I felt it

I was not all you wished — and nearer acquaintance made you painfully aware of it — & You were not content.

We all look for our *ideals* in those things which are above *us* — It *seems* almost wrong that it should be so. for we must always be an unsatisfied world. I never expected to meet the ideal spirit that a naturally rich imagination had pictured for me. It was, I thought above all of Earth"

I am perfectly content now!

Is'it then strange that you should feel as I think you do? — Your ideal is far far above my highest imagining"

While I was with you. I could only love you — You were disappointed, that that was all there was of me.

It is better that we should be apart for a time, tell that great joy that has so pervaded our whole being, should have so cleared as to enable us truly to see and feel our relation toward each other, to Our Father in Heaven and to those we are among. The world has changed very very much to us in a few weeks. We could not calmly, while together mark out our duties either to ourselves or to the world around. We have much yet to learn. You with Your Father and Mother have an advantage which I have not, from you therefore I expect to learn much. I will be a willing pupil. I will try to learn what is right and good. from you. and meantime I will try to do for myself &

for *you*. so that you may not be ashamed of me. — so that I may not in *all* things be wholly unworthy of you — Earnest endeavor to do well will do much

"Lives of great men all remind us
"We may make *our* lives sublime"

You have written one thing that I cannot refrain from quoting — It tells me that you are much more of — (what shall I say?) than I had thought. The great soul — too large for such a little body — that is all about you so, reaches out here — I feel it a thousand miles away

"I *had* thought too, that no love
"that *I* could have, for one, human, like myself,
"but would fade out or grow cold at sight of
"spots and blemishes or because of hopes unrealized"

Ah Marie — I *should* have asked the question, which you have put in my mouth — and you have *answered* it — "I *am* *sure* but I cannot tell you wherefore".

I love you for all that have written. more and more.

And I intend to do many things. so that you *shall* love me always. or prove yourself very inconsistent. for having loved me at all,

It is very hard to think of being so long away from you. after it had begun to seem *real* that I should stop here & *you* in Bloomington, I depended very much on it. But this absence will work good for both of us — we will know better *how* to live together when we do meet."

"I have written some sad letters to you this seems so — yet I am not really sad now. I am *hopeful*, *confident*; not *unsatis=fied*. It is well. In your love, and the consciousness of a God who is justice & mercy reigning, over all. I am happy & content."

But with your love has come a keener appreciation than I had a few weeks ago of how much it imports to me, and *how* much I *must* do to always retain it & to be worthy of it, and I am glad that it is so. This world is a broad field. If we use it well, we will be *fit* for the Thereafter. Write to me at Forest City Winnebago Co. **Iowa**. The Iowa large & plain so that it may not be mistaken. To your Father & Mother & Willie, much love. I wish I could see them. To *you* — *all*; *everything* — words will not tell it will they?

It will be lonesome there & as I have time I shall write. Take care of yourself, — of that little finger that wasn't "good for anything." I shall hold you to a strict account & claim all. — A kiss till I write again — May Providence deal kindly with you always George

I have directed an envelope — thoughtlessly to "Serena Marie Annis" I will tear it, Post Office *clerks* have no "business" with *my* Marie

P.S. This is written in much haste. do not blame me that it is so illy digested & so poorly penned. I am hurried & impatient to go. — A. Dieu Ever Your George

Mississippi River
Monday October 10th 59

Marie

I shall not be able to reach Minnesota on Tuesday so as to *vote*. It is too bad is it not. I reached Rock Island on Saturday Morning. Part of my baggage did not however, but it was not lost. I heard of it at *Bea*ureau (*Bureau* I guess it is) Junction - 47 miles from Peoria - It will pursue me like *Fate* no doubt.

At noon on Saturday I took the Steamer "Kate Cassel" and arrived in Dubuque yesterday at noon missing the connection with the boat for St Paul. we were detained several hours by fog on the river

I have formed some pleasant

acquaintances on the boat. One Mr Stone (Brother of Prof. Stone of Minneapolis, whom he is going on a visit to) is, a pleasant gentleman, with decided Republican Temperance, & *New* Theology tendencies: He is a *teacher* in Western New York. but is about to remove to Missouri

At Dubuque we changed from the "Kate Cassel" to the "Milwaukee" — I wandered about through Dubuque till Sundown, with Mr Stone and a gentleman of Dubuque with whom we "scraped acquaintance"

This morning at 9 A.M. we left Dubuque. I was going to tell you something of the trip, how the Mississippi looks to me as I return to it again, the beauty of sunset and twilight, the clear sky & pure air of the West, but dont you see tis quite impo*ssib*le. The boat shakes and trembles so that I fear I, shall not be able to write anything that you *can* read, much less anything *worth* reading. I will not *try* it, Ten weeks ago this day I left Prairie du Chien, we shall pass there in two or three hours. Ten weeks — a goodly circuit. "All the world to me is within it. It is a fair Mosaic with but *one* dark marble block in it,"

Wednesday I shall reach Minneapolis & you will bid a good bye to Boston and thereabout. I cannot write here can I.? My writing looks drunk. But if you were *here* I could talk to day. It, is tantaliz-ing that I cannot write.

Two of us *here* & *two there*. Well I'll not disturb their session. They whisper low but very plainly. — Ever Your George

Cannot you imagine what I would say if I *could* write?

Oh Dear. Ill not spoil any more paper in this way — Geo Chowen writes to me thus What *Does* he mean? I never told *him* anything — He *guesses*,

"*Did* you *take Boston* *in* *your* *direct* "*route* *to* *Illinois*? and how much "*nearer* is it by *that* *route*? "and if you *did* go to Boston, had you "time to step out to *Somerville*? "And if so, did you *do* it? How is our "mutual *friend* — the whole family I "mean" — — — — — "*What* is the "distance from Pekin to Bloomington "Ill and the facilities for *travelling*?

Rather *funny* for George
Well I dont *care* do *you*?

Thus I tell a "little while"

George

1859
Minneapolis Oct 14

Marie,

I *did* vote though — — all the Towns along the River where we stopped were closely watched for "an opportunity" — but we stopped only for a moment at any one place. As we approached Reeds Landing I *saw* that the voting was going on at a distance of only one square from the Landing. As the plank was shoved out toward shore "a solitary *horseman*" might have been seen" to shoot off the end of it & make a very "bee line" for the polls. at which place a very *brief* conversation ensued followed by a deposite of a Republican State Ticket & a rapid retrograde movement which barely *sufficed* to consummate a union between the "Solitary horseman" and the Steamboat aforesaid. For Particulars of election, see a sheet "hereto annexed"

The Republicans are jubilant Scombe's election is a real triumph - there is more rejoicing over it than for all the others. Moody - his opponent kept open house at the Tremont - Money & whiskey flowed freely. It will cost him ("they say") $1000. besides the Defeat

The whole country has been wild with political excitement Im glad I wasnt here. - that is Im glad I went east in August Arent you? Yesterday I came from Maple Grove. I saw all the good friends there. all well and happy. It is very pleasant there. Among them I feel quite at home. You like them too. Why do or why did you like all those people that I like. Jessie doesnt know me & wont "have anything to say" to me. Mary says its because I have been off "after some other girl. and she resents it" How changed Alas. Farewell to Hope - "Sixteen years from now" indeed. I am quite in wonder, that I did not fall in love with Mary "without waiting for an opportunity" to use your words,

Mary is now 21 & Chester Evans 23 years old.

Oh but arent they all dear good folks up there. Mr Hawkins moves there next week. He has bought a place near Mr Austin's (just this side). - Two years ago they wanted me to teach their winter school there. I could not go and spoke to them of Delos, and they hired him. A warm friendship has sprung up between the Maple Grovians & Mr Hawkin's people since then. There is a young

Register of Deeds now stopping at Mr Chowen's. My stars— — Goodness gracious — think of that. Mr Chowen is elected annually it seems after all.

"Many happy returns of this day" There are many many things which the few days past have been saying to me & which are I think growing in me: ripe for telling, by and by. Every season every new experience has a fruit of its own. I will not trust my pen to commence the story for I fear it wouldn't stop today.

You are coming west half way from Boston here now. I pray ~~that~~ nothing unfriendly to you and I may prevent your reaching Bloomington, well and happy. Write to me at Forest City Iowa. I havn't told you once in this that I love you, nor am I going to, — Think not to escape how=ever! By & by I will send an avalanche — an ocean wave of ink and paper ~~that~~ will quite overwhelm you. Ever Your George

Minneapolis Min. Oct 16. 1859

Marie.

Good Even. It is the Sabbath day again— At the same table. by the same window—looking out upon the same gray rocky shores and the same swift eddying flood where I used to meet you in Sabbath days gone by. I greet you now„ Look through my eyes now and see how changed is all this view. The little mirror on the retina holds the same picture as before. save that the leaves that were once green, are rich now in bronze purple & gold, or stained with the crimson drops from the veins of the dying year. But ~~gr~~ brighter than the colors of these leaves are the pictures that the memory of the past and the hope of the future are painting on the rich ground of present joy and gladness. There comes to me a touch of the music that has thrilled me in other days and it swells into rich harmonious fullness and glows and brightens in the glad sunlight of now, And I hear it afar down where the curtains of the Hereafter hide on either hand the view yet do not still the music —It murmurs now in a sweeter holier strain

— softened and purified by the atmosphere of ~~of~~ that Land whither our feet are tending. But the same Tune — It is here *as* *there*. It tells me that Heaven is only a *better* Earth"

Marie "I am glad to see you — I had almost forgotten what I commenced writing about." What *shall* I write about? I will write of everything. far and near — tell what I have seen and heard. I will cull something here. and pluck something else, there, in all nooks and corners of the great field where we may find flowers of thought feeling or imagination. but I will see if I cannot avoid you. Doesn't Mrs Stowe illustrate *something* beautifully where she likens it to the flying up of the bird "ostentatiously" before you. far from the grassy casket of her treasures. from which she has crept stealthily to "act her pretty little falsehood before you"? I should of course have no excuse to play any such part before you. for it could be of no avail. Yet there is a delicate little joy which one may hug close to ones heart thus to be able to fly all around the treasure and see and talk of all things else, while in our own souls is ever the reflection of that treasure; an image always perfect & true but ever varying — larger or smaller *as* we fly near or far. — So I will tell you of many things else, but *you* will know all the time, that wherever I am or whatever I say, in *your* heart is *my* home — *there* is my casket of gems, & the dearest one of all is your love for me."

I have been to church to-day, to the Universalist Church. and heard Wm. W. King. I had forgotten that there was so much force & energy in him. he startled the first sleepy thought that had during the singing commenced to beleaguer me & for an hour (a *long* sermon) I listened *wholly*, *entirely*. Oh, *why* is it that I am so stupid? Why cannot *I* say such things? I almost *rebel* with the Providence that has made me thus. Mr King is *eloquent* & what he says is of the Mountainous order. *Few* men would have the courage to deny even to themselves, the truth of what he says; — if they hear him *say* it. Still he isn't perfect at all. Like all of us, he can *talk* better than he can *do*. Like literary celebrities & distinguished men generally, he has been afflicted with the "Domestic difficulty" malady that has stricken down Dickens

Bulwer, & a host more of the Bright lights – "In short" he has parted from his wife.

Safe!

Marie – I am firmly resolved never to be a genius – Never a distinguished man of Letters – Never President of the United States!" But doesn't it make you shudder and a bitter thrill creep through your veins, at such a thought – The best and noblest among us, those who, it seems to us are the ones that might be most happy, & whose keen and cultivated natures could best appreciate, the holy happiness that love should bring with it; are yet the very ones whose domestic lives are clouded deepest. Cannot you almost pray for ignorant simplicity, for dullness or stupidity, – such seems to bring happiness.

Oh Marie, whatever else betide, though all the World try & tempt us, let us cling to each other. I do not fear; yet the fairest prospects are ofttimes clouded o'er ~~or before~~. I wish your Mother hadnot said, that "strange things as that" (the return of your picture) "had happened," & yet it may be for the best. It keeps in view the possibility (if it is possible which you will not admit perhaps) of losing your love, and the preciousness of it to me, so that I may be more careful, and more certain of ever keeping in my possession, that which is as Life & more than Life to me

Why havnt I told you — Your letter written Oct 5 & 6th. remailed from Pekin. came yesterday to me here. It was *good*. *So* good, but Oh how short. Only six pages — No I will not tell you, (for I *know* you were hurried and were tired. and please *dont* write to me when your eyes say ~~x~~ "no.") how hungry I am for your letters. You can scarcely imagine how foolish I act when I get one,

Perhaps it is better for our Love that I should be kept starving & expectant for words from you. And yet I can bear an avalanche of *blessings*. And they *are* good, you dont *know* *how* good. how *precious*. are your letters to me. I build not only Temples and cottages of them. but real "Homes" in each and all of them. From each (an altar of itself) goes up a prayer for Infinite guidance and help. A prayer and supplication to become better and worthier. Sometimes a gleam of light across the page & through my own Love bids me hope that perhaps the prayer may be answered. "Virginie" asked her confessor how it *could* be dangerous to Love, when it made her, love God and Heaven more than ever before. Are not all these things ~~things~~ within us which we call sacred, these strange holy mysteries of Being, that vitalize and humanize Life & ~~it~~ make Death powerless to harm. — Are not they — the Affectional and Devotional — the Moral & Social threads of Life so interwoven — that one cannot be moved without moving all the rest?

I have read a little in the Oct. Atlantic — which reading, I went off into reverie ~~whi~~ that lasted so long that I have read no more.

Mrs Stowe's Men and women do not talk more eloquently than living men and women of to-day do, but she puts in to the literary currency, those inner experiences, which though we may feel just as keenly as her creations do, we are quite unable to translate into words.

Good stories are never those that ~~are~~ flow in the horizontal plane of men's heads — It matters not how eloquent, how sublime, how grand ~~it~~ they may be, the stories that are made for the Altitude of the brain, just slip" in at one ear & out at the other'

At the level of mens hearts, stories are always good, and in such things we are misers. Whatever once gets in at the heart never gets out again."

Mrs Stowe is a pretty good anatomist. She knows where the heart is, better than a whole School of Doctors, but Charlotte Bronte knew, better than Mrs Stowe.

It seems to me that many things in The Ministers Wooing were meant specially for You and I, Probably there are many other foolish boys & perhaps girls, who think just the same of them selves. Are not All men somewhat like Burr, and all women somewhat like Mary Scudder?

She said she would marry Dr H. — Cannot you see how she looked when she said it? I can." I have seen something once or twice — that makes me think of it."

Was there ever anything, like a woman's self=sacrifice? Do you wonder that we sometimes think women are angels — and that they are the lights on our straight road to Heaven?

We read though of those, who
"Lost their Heaven for woman's eyes."
I dont believe it.

I shall read the Minister's Wooing again. I hardly know what to think of it now — by & by I will write more.

But now (inasmuch as you gave me a Paul Emmanuel in a living character) I think Mary might be what Marie is. provided now that Dr H were dispensed with, and James allowed to breathe again,

There now — I hear you say "stop" — you are blushing — You cannot bear so much praise from me as well as from another.

Mr Paine says "Back again so-soon" The scamp - he knows I have been gone almost three Months.

I have been writing to you at Bloomington - For variety I will send this to Somerville

A word of explanation - I am going to Iowa - I was sorry to leave Pekin - In a day or two I will go from here. I may stop in Iowa for several months. but hope to be either back here or near you in a few weeks.

Yet a little while - - and then we won't part any more will we?

Mr. Austin left here for Vt to-day he has Jessie's picture. very natural + life like it is too. I wish you could see it. He will not be gone but a few days. The Republicans reelected him to the Legislature this year

A Thousand Majority in Hennepin; - that beats even that dark day for Democracy, when the "Rascally Register of Deeds" was re-elected.

Mr Croffut looks + feels finely I think He is a "Dear good boy" as Ada used to say of him, Will has been East this summer He told me glowing accounts of what he had done & how kindly (I had almost said gloriously for according to his account it was a triumphal entry into his native State) he had been treated while gone. I dont believe he likes you - You did not answer his letter + perhaps his pride was touched a little, that you did not appreciate his fine writing. Why didn't you write to him again? He asked if I had seen "Mr Ames' people." "Yes", "Serena?" "Yes." "Had she improved any—or was she as listless and apathetic as ever?"

I don't recollect what answer I made. But I know I thought him the most conceited youth I ever saw. Smart folks don't know much after all. I do not know that I ought to say all these things to you. it will make you feel badly — but really I cannot keep anything from you. And it don't make any difference what Will Cornell says or thinks.

I guess he never saw you get ready for the cars, as I did once.

I thought then that there were two Serenas, ready dressed, like rag-babies & that you could assume either character at pleasure. .... Oh well, we will forget Will. He has yet some things to learn that I once thought

he would have learned ere now:
— There are twenty five millions of people in the United States besides a few elsewhere.

All in one it would be a large person. I do not think there are any living so large, Will Cornell to the contrary notwithstanding"

Mr Loomis left here the same day I returned. I did not see him. It looks very lonely at their house — They will not return till May next" I have passed many pleasant hours there — I hardly think profitable ones — It was rest and recreation to me" Mr Widstrand is pleasant + friendly but odd as ever. Charlie, a good honest faithful boy. He is in the "Late lamented" Journal Office. Mr Paine is going South.

The Journal went over to the Enemy just before Election. What a history of change + mutation. transformation + Chameleonism (all the same) has it gone through. Caesar learned those Types bad things, they dont know whether to be Republican or Democratic now. The Express and News are printed in the same building now, perhaps from the same presses

It is evening now – I am looking over your letter. Now I come back to where I commenced. How changed is this broad green earth to me since I sat here before. Could it all have happened in the ordinary course of events? – The thought seems ludicrous, yet I can hardly feel that there has not been a suspension of the laws of Nature, to have produced this change. When I went East I stopped a day (of necessity) at Prairie du Chien. When I came back – I stopped there also. There I stood under the same tree & recalled the scene, ten weeks before. I had read some of your letters there on that Quiet Sabbath. "Smoke signifyeth Doubt" saith Ik Marvel, wherefore I suppose I smoked." I think I had a desperate purpose in my heart but I couldnot guess the result. Had it so happened that it had been Will Cornell there sitting under that tree I think he would have known no doubt.

Well Well. that is an old story. it happened Eleven weeks ago to-day. Nine weeks is less time. I remember it more easily –

That Night – (I suppose Cyrus knew what was my idea in going to Somerville) but that night I played a part that fooled him quite." He gave me a regular lecture for "getting frightened and backing out and going home without finding out her sentiments," concluding with a proverb to the effect that "opportunity once neglected never returns or something like that."

We have sometimes on such subjects *written* just what we think, but both of us have so much *fun* in our composition that we can never keep straight faces while *speaking* on *any* subject while alone. And so in all our conversation he has treated me to business maxims & short-hand discourses, over some of which I have laughed till I cried.

Your Letter — Dont you think I dont care much about you, to keep your letter so long waiting? — I *do* care — I love you *too much* — for my own good I fear. If you should be taken away from me, — — No, *not* too much for with *this* love I have learned a little of an*other* love, which is *all* gain & which nought can take away. I *think* it is so, but I have not been tried. I can love *all things* now. that make me think of you. If the memory of *Marie* should become painful, should not I *hate* God and Heaven?

Four weeks ago to-night, we were together for the last time. I found that night that I could love you more than before seemed possible for me to do. — Some days, since I have been glad that we were so far away from each other, for I think it may be *well*. To night I cannot think so. —

I suppose I feel as solicitous for your welfare as Mrs Nutting (whom I met at Mr Barber's a few days ago) was in regard to her baby — If you ever read the story of Mr Blifkins' baby I need not tell you more. Perhaps you never read it.

Mrs Nutting was confident that the cap-strings were choking baby to death, that it was taking cold from a draught of air — that it was sick because it slept so long — that it was sick because it waked up. &c &c."

Oh yes. Your letter — I do not think I *can* say anything of it — There are many things that I may *think upon*, seriously — It is *very* good — Again I *thank you*.

I am Much obliged to Willie for his letter — not being a linguist I cannot ~~however~~ translate all of it — I read however that he loves me and would sit on my knee and kiss me if I were in Somerville. I love him too & hope by & by to see him. Dont I hear him saying "Good By-e" away down the street?

I have said many things carelessly Thoughtlessly, some that will make you feel badly perhaps. Forgive me Dearest. I do mean to do to me. A word from me would hurt you worse than all that a stranger could say or do. I remember something your ~~F~~ Father said once, — a long time ago 'twas, about such things,

I have said nothing at all in this long scribble — In length it is like some that I used to write from here, let that do for depth also,

You will find letters at Bloomington (And if you leave Somerville before this reaches there, please inform me of the same.)

There Marie — I must stop writing — and so, a kiss and Good night.

Nothing More, yet I think that all I have told you is as true now as when 'twas told. But I will stop here, nor say "three words" more

Your George

My address is at
Forest City, Winnebago Co
Iowa

Minneapolis Monday Oct 17. 59
-Evening- 8 P.M.

My Dear Marie- It seems a fate that I should write you every day- I didnot think last night that I would, but to-day, as I go away to-morrow, I thought I would get a picture taken. Here it is- How do you like me? I got another, just like it, which I send to Cyrus. Last night I wrote a long letter to you at Somerville. Mr Paine says he saw a letter to-day, "from Mr Ames to Mr Cheney" and that you are going to leave Somerville Wednesday or Thursday of this week. So I send this to Bloomington. My pen is at the Court House or I wouldnot write in pencil.

I am glad you are coming-
- What will my other correspondents think... I cannot write to any one

but you
rior much to you. I have written once to Cyrus since I came away. I am going to write a long letter to him in a few days, if for nothing else, to prove his words at fault, for he told me I would forget him. And I won't.

To day I dined at Mr Barber's. They are in their New House, it is built adjoining the old one, or rather they two form one house. Julia Barber is a very pretty girl. Won't she be the "moving cause" of much heart disease among the young gentlemen hereabout in a year or two.

To Morrow evening I shall leave here for St Paul. Next day to Faribault & so on. I am busy, and not over pleased that some with whom I have had dealings & whose honor I trusted, have proved faithless.

What a world — I ~~was~~ am not wholly wrong in distrust. You not entirely right in implicit faith in humanity

To-morrow will not therefore be an agreeable day with me.

It is no wonder that I come to you to-night for a last goodbye, while I am here. I shall talk again from Iowa. You are with me though ever.

That hand has ~~never~~ always been my prisoner, since the first time I ever held it. I feel them now — those little trembling fingers, that once told me a story that you dared not trust your lips to breathe aloud. It is mine. Specially mine, that hand, take good care of it.

I will hear in Iowa from you. And from your Mother too?

She has told me some good things about you — I want to hear more. Perhaps she has told all? I guess not.

Somewhat like Willie when "Mr Wakefield" was away — I love you very much to night.

God keep you till we meet again.

All and always Yours.

George

1859

Owatonna, Min, Oct, 20

Marie-

Good Evening-

What did I sit down here and write your name on this sheet of paper for? Its quite evident to me that I cannot write a letter. I came here today from Faribault in a chilly wind. — Dinner and a fire have made me happy and stupid. Were't not from the fact that the latter is my normal condition, and the former not a stranger to me of late, I might dilate on such a strange phenomena —

Through this same stupidity I have written letters before now so you will not be surprised and the display now. I do not know that I can write anything

except of my coming here. but
as that is of myself perhaps you
may claim it to be of interest
to you. Monday Evening I wrote
to you - It was the Anniversary
of your first visit to me on paper
- A visit which you have since said
you hoped I did not remember as
well as you did - You thought it
wasnt a good letter? It was though
and I do remember it well; just
how & where I read it & what I
thought of it then - I was never
so surprised in any letter before.
I thought I had found a different
kind of being from all I had ever
seen before. In some respects
I was right. in others perhaps
my correspondent was not so different from other women, as I thought.
But I never got such a letter
before. and as the first of several
visits which have not been
altogether unpleasant or unhappy
- as the commencement of an
acquaintance which has been good
to me. I honor and love that
letter with especial purpose

Tuesday I was very busy
though I did not much, perhaps.
I went to St Paul that night. bidding
"good bye" to Minneapolis and
the few of its people who care for
me & for whom I have special
friendship. It was with regret
& sadness as ever (except last
July when I took a last look
at the fair face of that place
which had become home to me
with some misgivings that it
might look cheerless to me when
I returned) that I said "Good Bye".

Yesterday from St Paul to
Faribault. 55 miles. I didnt
get mad - angry - nor very cross
yesterday. Give me credit for that

but at the same time remember to give no credit to the words of any of M. O. Walker's stage agents In St Paul I was told that the stage would go through to Faribault yesterday — fare $4. I reached Northfield at 3 p.m. and the stage went no further till today, A livery stable (for a consideration) stopped the gap between Northfield & Faribault. Farewell to M. O. Walker. To day I have been only able to get from Faribault, here.

A traveller has to "fight & *bleed*" here.

Not all unpleasantness on the way though. *You* have been with me always. I can never think this world very bad while you love me. And I have seen others, for a few minutes only in At North-field, while the horses were being hitched up. I called at Mr Norths. He was ill-abed so I did not see him but Mrs North gave me a ready kind welcome, though I think she must have been somewhat surprised at my appearance. I think that in the beggarly gear which I have rigged myself out in, to go into the heathenish wilds of Iowa, I look even worse if possible than usual - I am quite obliged to her that she refrained from comment which she certainly had a right to ~~do~~ make, and for the kind invitation to make my stay longer, which was quite impos

=ible for me to do, and go to Fari=
=bault last Evening, Of course
the conversation was quite limited
and confined to your people, of
whom "by way of Mr Paine
of Minneapolis" I had recently
heard. It so happened that I
had had the pleasure of meeting
Mr & Mrs Ames since Mr &
Mrs North were in Boston
and that I understood they were
about to move to Bloomington
– probably on the way thither
now &c &c.

It was pleasant but brief.
I think Mrs North must be
really a charming woman
to one well acquainted with
her. In Faribault I
saw for a few minutes a Mr
Buckham "Attorney at Law"
there, an old Schoolmate &
perhaps friend as the world
says "friend"

Young men & who have known
him as I have, would generally
give a full description of
him thus – "Fine fellow – got
two pretty sisters"

As women always describe
a male acquaintance of
their younger years, by giving
the name of the girl he married,

I have seen one or
two other acquaintances on
the way.

To morrow with good
luck I will go to Austin
Min, & next day to Osage Ia.
– There I am some 60 miles
from Forest City

What an out-of-the-way
place that is, Nothing but
the "Thought train" can get
there" Well, If I stop there
unless I am very busy indeed

I shall write to you very oftener. Are you not sorry? Let me see — since I left you in September. Here are the dates Sep 23d 25th Oct 2d. 5th. 7th 10th, 14th 16th 17th & to day 20th as I get it from my note book. Ten letters in a month (call them letters for courtesy)

I told you I could not write to-day. I have proved my word good. There has been a lot of men smoking and talking in the room (bar room) or perhaps I might have done better

Are you now going from Boston to Bloomington

It seems as though you have been moving for a month past. Forgive me darling — you have read this and feel disappointed. I will make it all up by & by — Ever your own George

~~No 27~~ Reed Forest City, Iowa Nov 9. 1859. 65
~~" 28~~ Nos 23.24.25 lost.
No 10
No 26

Bloomington, Oct. 26. 1859.

George, —

Here at last — at home and yet not at home, but at Mr. Thompson's. We arrived last evening, went to our house and found it occupied, much to our annoyance for the time being. We all felt a little like sympathizing with Chick, who cried very loudly, declaring he would not stay all the time at a Hotel. Kind friends came to our relief — took us home for a day or two, when our house will be vacated and we able to take possession.

I found several letters and a face waiting for my coming — and a dear welcome they gave me, dearer, welcome than any thing could have given unless the presence of him whom they represented. I received first and read before the rest came the letter written on the River – so it was very sudden to me, the fact that you had really gone almost as far as I had come, and the tears came with the dying out of a hope which I had fondly though foolishly cherished. That was but for a momēt – and then I said that I was glad for it was well and best. I was tired and it was a disappointment to know you were so far away. Soon I got the letter written in Pekin, the day you went, with two written after your arrival in Minnesota, with the picture – they were all very precious and I forgot all grief and was only glad. Thank you for the picture though I shall not love it as the one I had. It is a perfect likeness of the man Wright, whom the world sees; it looks into my face calmly, with a straightforward business air, but shows no soul to me which others might not see and speaks no love. The other picture – dear face – is more you than you are yourself. I always feel like crying when I look at it, it is so pleading and so loving, and the eyes and mouth say so much. I do not like for others to look at it, for I feel it is only for me it wears those looks. It is the very way you looked at me that week before Sunday. I have looked up from my sewing many times and found your eyes looking into me, just as they must have looked into the Camera when that face was taken.

It make me sorry for myself when I look into your eyes - and almost sorry for you - and it makes me pray, God bless and help us both!

You are in Iowa, now. Be careful. I cannot help fearing a little that you may get sick in so bad a place, but I know a greater Love than mine is all about you always, and will let no harm come to you. Oh! my heart aches - I know not why, only because I am not well to-day and therefore not so strong as usual, which means I am weaker than I am some days. Very nobly you talked in your last letter from Pekin, about your Marie, and what you must do to be worthy of what she has given you. You resolve and go up higher by the power of those resolutions, and Marie must look still farther up if she would lose sight of thee in a more glorious Ideal. But what will poor Serena do? *Poor* *Serena*! who can only sin, repent, aspire and *love*.

George — George, be merciful to you and me, for I am as other women. Good-night, dearest. All I am yours. — Serena.

Thursday 27.

Good-morning, We go into our own home to-day. And we shall be so glad to be there too. I stepped into the house the other night but saw only the parlors which are very pleasant.

Is it possible you have been in Minneapolis? And you have seen Maple Grove, Mary and Jessie.

You have seen all our good friends in St. Anthony and in Minneapolis. I forgive George Chowen for I find he has sufficient cause for neglecting his friends. Joy be with him and his. I do not know why he should have guessed such queer things concerning you. Papa in writing to him mentioned your being at Somerville. that was all, and perhaps enough. Mr. Mourse wrote to Father that report said somewhat of an engagement between Mr. Wright and Miss. Serena, so George, or somebody, has guessed aloud.

What do I think of Blooming-ton? Well, what I have seen of it. It is prettier than my fancy had made it. It seems more like home than any place I have seen for a year. I am content. We came through a part of Vermont on our way here. I never was in your State before. The ride through from Boston to Rutland was one vision of beauty - grand and sublime. Do you remember the view of Monadnoc. You came over the same road, but it was all new to me. I enjoyed the ride along the banks of the Mohawk, the second day. I enjoyed the whole journey. If it were not for the suffering the journey caused Grand-ma it would be worth while, when our faith in humanity begins to decline and in our own coldness we find excuses for the doctrine of total depravity and think we find more reason for believing in universal indifference than in universal love, to make another trip to bring us to our better selves again, and shame us for our unbelief by witnessing the kindness of every body, and calling forth, by our peculiar helplessness, loving words and deeds, and bringing into sight feelings too much accustomed to hide themselves under an exterior of rough commonplace.

"This world is not so bad a place
"As some would like to make it, &c.

I have been reading "Aurora Leigh". I have read nothing in a long time which I like so very much. I thought, before reading much of Mrs. Browning that I should not like her — she seemed, from the little I had seen, too masculine and vehement, and I thought there was too much show of passionate words, and a not very devout spirit in what she wrote. But I was mistaken.

For depth of passion and a true womanly nature, as revealed in "Aurora Leigh", I never found her equalled. It is a wonderful book, to me. I lived in it a little while after reading it — but you dont know what it is, and I am talking in the dark. I was made to think of the book by thinking of what you said of your being only half right in your distrust of mankind. Alas for us, I find almost every day that I am only *half right* in something I thought myself fully grounded in the belief of. Some things I find I am only *half right* in, and the knowledge brings darkness and sad disappointment. It is very sad to find I am not wholly right in thinking the world

very good - it is sadder though to
to find I am not half so good
as I think myself or have thought
myself - to find my temper giving
way under the merest trifles - the
resolutions of my good hours all
destroyed in an evil moment.
I am stubborn, I suppose, and
unyielding and as a consequence
I am often made to suffer for it.
Misunderstandings will arise, and
I am, of course, very often misunderstood
and instead of quietly explaining my
self, I say, there is no need of
this - it is doing me great wrong
to think me capable of doing or
thinking thus and I will not bend
to explanation. I am often wrong
too, and it is like dying to say
forgive. A little thing has just
now ~~occurred~~ happened which
has ruffled me not a little

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Sunday Eve. Oct. 30. 1859.

I am glad to come to you again. the day after we came I commenced a letter but have found no time to add name or back an Envelope since. What should we do but for Sunday? Blessed Day! Thanks to Him who gives it to us. We came home Thursday, or into this house, which we are trying to make home of. Oh! such a house. But I wont talk about so bad a matter as dirt, in this little moment I have to talk to you.

Yesterday I received the letter you sent to Somerville when you should have sent it here. The day before I got one too, the one written on your way out of Minnesota into Iowa. I read the longest last night after every body was in bed and I had time to breathe and think of you. It was almost as well as having you by my side. You cannot tell how very much you have helped me through the dust and tiredness of this week. Are you going to help me thus through all the weeks of coming life? If you can I know you will. Ought I to desire help where I might go alone? No, I suppose not, but it is certainly pleasant to not to go alone where I have been this week.

In this letter you tell me of being again in your old room where you have so many times written me, and of seeing old friends again, and seeing dear Minneapolis _ home after all, and I love it best.

Ah! Willie. Bless him!

The thought of him always brings sunshine and I thought my acquaintance with him very pleasant, and I trust it was so to him as well as me. You see I am a little conceited also for I cant help thinking Will has changed his mind if he dont like me now. I surely would have written to him again if I had supposed he expected me to. for I have talked with him enough to know he can scarcely forgive such a slight. Pretty nearly right, he may have been, in saying, I was listless and apathetic! I never realized I was so dull and stupid looking though. Papa says a first impression of me is of no particular brightness but rather of stupidity. Well, I had rather it was so, that people be not after ward disappointed.

I went to meeting this morning. Father preached his installation sermon there being no one to preach it for him. He did pretty well considering he was tired and unprepared. — Mr. King is really an interesting preacher to listen to isn't he? "Parted from his wife". A common heading to a common tragedy. Alas, how often it is being acted, and by actors, too, whose great names give much credit to the play. It is growing dark. I shall not be able to say any thing until next Holy Day. You said you would write often. I will as often as possible. We are all well as usual. Please write to Papa and Mama, if you can. They say they don't know as much as they used to about you, since I don't show your letters.

I can't see you to-night, can I? Are you far off? No?

Good bye. Marie

Forest City. Winnebago Co. Iowa
Thursday. Oct 27. 1859

Dear Marie

The mail has come. but nothing from you with it. I thought I would wait till I heard from you before writing again. but the thought of another week (before the mail comes) is quite too much

I have never had more that I wished to say to you than now and never has it been more diffi=cult for me to speak. I have written so many times since hearing from you. that I am almost afraid to say anything more now. Some of my later letters are no doubt strange to you — perhaps an apology is due. that you may understand why I have written as I sometimes have, I have noticed that the slightest shade, which passes over me when I write, makes you unhappy too —more sometimes than I am myself, I was sorry that I wrote what I did. October 2d in Pekin.

You will remember that I have not heard from you since—and perhaps you will not now wonder —that I hardly know what to say when I return to the same subject again. Since that time day after day has brought new scenes before me, and other duties have kept mind & body busy & when I have written you I have tried to think of only pleasant things —as between You and I there is only that which makes all happy

I am not sorry now; only that perhaps you may think it strange I should have done so & judge me perhaps as I appear. not as I really am.

You cannot I am sure know how much I have missed you. You cannot feel it, because I have written so often that you would be excusable (under ordinary circumstances) for becoming tired of my scribbling.

Aren't you tired of me?

I arrived here on Monday last —the sixth day from Minneapolis — Oh Marie. they have suffered. we can hardly imagine how much

All have been very sick—so sick—that they were not expected to live. —— One has gone, too,

Little Charlie. was first bitten severely by a rattlesnake while he was after the cows, a mile away from home. He was running barefooted in the grass, trying to get ahead of the cows and felt a hurt on his foot—but he thought it was only when the grass scratched him. So he ran until his foot began to pain him severely. It was a warm August day and the few minutes exercise had spread the poison thoroughly. As soon as he saw what it was, he stopped running and started slowly toward home - He kept both hands grasped around the bitten limb to prevent the poison spreading - but he was hardly able to get to the house

They used alcohol freely but could not make any impression on him with it. For a week the Doctors thought he could not live - His mother told me that when he was worst, if he saw her crying he would put his arms around her, neck & tell her "it dont ache - its going to get well" &c &c I think he was very firm for a boy not yet seven years old

Before he had recovered, my brother was taken sick and in three or four days after, his wife was also taken down. He was only sick eight days and when he died. she was not expected to live. Her sister was also very sick at the same time

They were living in a new & unfinished house. and the only help they had, was a young man who kept house & took care of the sick ones. No girl could be got who would venture in the house.

My sister says that they were well taken care of though, no woman could have been a better nurse than that young man.

For two weeks. he sat by her bedside every night & she says it seems to her that he got no sleep at all during all that time

The neighbors tell me that she must have died had she not had the best of care

The poor dear woman — I never saw deeper grief than hers — When I came, she did not recognise me till I stepped inside the door (It was a warm day and the door was open) — All her desolation seemed to come home to her with fearful force, as she recognised me — the brother of her husband — She came toward me and called my name — she could no more — her feelings were too strong for her, and she sunk helpless into my arms ~~&~~ uttering a wild moan of despair and agony —

It seemed that it would kill her —

For her sake I should have controlled my own feelings, but I could not.

There are a great many things connected with this that some time perhaps I may tell you but I ought not to now.

I did not mean to say as much as I have

I was not decided to stay here, until I came. I could not think of leaving now, till they leave, and that cannot be before Spring. They are not well enough to go yet.

I have for a few days much to do. Then I shall have too much leisure

There is absolutely nothing for me to do here except the few things they want done

I would get a school to teach this winter if there was an opportunity, — the only one near here was taken the day I arrived here. It is probable you see that we shall meet on paper quite often.

Now however I can hardly hold a pen at all. I have been at work in the corn field and among the ruta-bagas — and my hands unused of late to such rough exercise are scratched blistered, sore, swollen, and dry — as disagreeable members as ever disturbed the equanimity of a Legislative Assembly

By & by, will remedy all.

We are getting along as well as could be expected. The sick ones are recovering rapidly and in a few days we will be comfortable for winter.

Oh Dear — when will I hear from you? The last I got was dated Oct 6th forwarded from Pekin to Minneapolis.

Have you got my picture sent from Minneapolis yet?

Saturday Night. Oct 29th

Good Evening Marie—

I have a right to *write* to you to-night havnt I?

By virtue of "venerable precedent" — Many times we have *met* of a Saturday night. I will think of you as at Bloomington. Safe well and happy — It *must* be so. I *cannot* think otherwise. I am with you there *now* — and the six weeks that have told me some things I never thought of before of the strange mysteries of Life and Death; — the six weeks since the last Saturday Evening I was with you, have all been blotted out. (even while all that *has* passed since remains as *now*) and I am with you again, as them. I fear you will never love me (no not that. but that you will never think as highly of me) again. I remember once last summer I was going to find a great deal of fault with you & find you full of failings & foibles "when I got better acquainted with you". What has become of it now I wonder?

You cannot think so of me I'm sure, and yet it does seem to me that I should be more than ordinarily wicked. if ~~yo~~ acquaintance with you and your people could not influence me to better things. I have no right to say it, but I really think I am better for becoming acquainted with you. It is not far in human nature, from love such as I love you with, to the deepest love for all that is good, pure, true & right

I intended to finish this & send it in the last mail (Friday A.M.) (I need not say that I failed to do so – and you will not question me closely to find if I really did have many other things to do, which prevented my writing)

How I enjoy the cool weather. I believe I am really growing fat. What would you think if when next ~~I see you~~ (I did not mean so) you see me, I have the proportions of a respectable Alderman?

Monday next I am going to the County Seat (some 25 miles) to see the Judge of Probate & may have opportunity to mail this scribble then. If not, it will have to wait till Thursday or Friday. It must be that I will get letters from you in the next mail. They are coming coming May a Special Providence bring them

I told you once did I *not* of a *book* - a new book which I would show to you when next I *saw* you? I then expected to stay in Pekin — It is *really* a fine volume of some 250 pages! - in Manuscript! On the Outer fly leaf it bears the title

"The Correspondence of
"Serena Marie Ames.
"My Acquaintance - and
"My Friend,
"Oct 17th 1858 — Aug 6th 1859"

A valuable book My Dear — I hope you approve my taste in reading."

There is *another* work in *progress*, commencing in August AD 1859 & closing ——— ? When? When I return the *miniature* perhaps. One of these days I am going to *review*. How *far* I have drifted from the spot where I was a year ago. Did you forgive me for that great wrong and wickedness of which I told you once?

You said you loved me "just the same" - but you did not like me as well. And I had not courage to tell you of it till you asked me. I should have told you first of all. Oh well. but I did not know that there would be any need that you should know any more of my past than you already did know

If you had said "no", there would not have been any use in my telling you my follies

Can you forgive me?

It seems to me that I can never be thankful enough for the blessings which are given me. "Nothing too good to be hoped for and expected" — It seems to — And the *realization* may not be far away either. We need not wait for a Heaven beyond the grave. It is ours *here* if we will.

I would reverse the sentiment of certain lines in Lalla Rookh so as to have them read

"Now too the joy most like divine
"Of all I ever dreamed or knew—
"To see thee—hear thee—call thee mine
"Oh Happiness—*can* this be true?"

— and then I remember the answer
"Without *one* fear—without *one*
"doubt—with perfect trust and
"entire love have I given myself
"to you"

Yes, it *can* be true! It is *all* I ask. I *thank* thee *Father* in *Heaven* that thou hast blessed me above my highest hopes, more than I can know or feel, while yet I *am* so blessed.

That is a thanks-giving which I have carried in my heart ever since Sabbath day August 14th 1859. — It will be Eleven weeks comes to-morrow — Does it seem that almost three months have passed since in the still solemn aisles of the grove, with only our Heavenly Father to witness, we joined *hands* and hearts in a union not be sev=ered this side the grave?

Three Months more — brings the Middle of February — three Months More — the Middle of *May* — we shall meet before then, Shall we not?

It seems very foolish no doubt to others. I hope your people do not see *all* the "silly "stuff" I write. — Tell them that about almost everything else I am quite sensible yet..

I will stop writing, for the folks want to "retire" for the night and I must say good night.

Good Night then, Dearest we will talk again to-morrow

May God bless and prosper you always. — George

Sabbath A.M.

Good Morning — I cannot write much — only to say that I am well and happy — Even now. — I cannot but be happy always now. Of what can I complain? — When we get settled for the winter I will write better than I have of late. You'll burn these then, by special request? Won't I hear from your Mother this week? I believe I love her 'most as much as I do you. — Aren't you a reflected light somewhat? For the sake of my theory say "yes". She was brave once braver perhaps than you will ever be. I shall see and read little this winter, and ~~read~~ hear & think less probably. The facilities for getting mental nourishment here are quite limited. It is almost im=possible to get papers here at all in the winter. I shall have the "Atlantic" & "News" (provided the mail brings them, which is quite doubtful) I shall depend on you more than ever for what is going on in the world of thought.

Do I ask too much of you? I would not take away a moment of the time you wish for your studies, or duties at home and please take care of your eyes. But you are willing I should scribble as much as I please to you are you not?

I have several letters to write to-day and *must* close this.

It is not strange is it that afer I have been accustom=ed to writing *answers* to yours that I should find it difficult to write half *a dozen* long letters without any capital to start upon

There now, Ive written enough nonsense, no more Ill write till I hear from you

Give my love to your Father and Mother and Willie and all that *you* love for I love them too. So *good bye* Dear.

Ever *Yours*
George

To Serena M Ames
Bloomington
Ill.

ans^d 10^t Nov

Winslow. Nov. 6th 1859.

Dear Uncle Calvin. [To Calvin W. Clarke]

Your butter is at last ready. I have been very anxious about it since I came home fearing it was too late to accommodate you and that it would not be so nice as butter made earlier in the season. But Emily insists she has done the best she could. She thinks it is not as rich in flavor or color as we make when we have better grass in the Autumn. We hope you will like it. We shall send it tomorrow by Express. There are about 54 lbs. in each firkin, but you can satisfy yourself on that point. We send two firkins. Emily wishes you would have enough taken from it at one time to last several days so that the firkins may not be so frequently opened, exposing the butter to the air. Also she begs to suggest that it will keep much the best in quite a cool place — all which matters I think you are quite as particular about as her lady-ship. However, I trust you will excuse her anxiety when you consider that she almost feels her reputation at stake.

Mother sends her love to you and your wife and family, and says she has not forgotten your visit: It still does her good every day. Her health is about the same as in the summer.

Charles & the girls are very well and all as busy as bees preparing for winter. I am having a nice vacation — feel myself growing fresher every day. We have our sitting-room full of neighbors two evenings a week to hear the Minister's Wooing. They are very much interested. Other evenings we read A Life for a Life, & other things.

Betsey Trotwood Clarke Stratton is poking about in all her glory with Princeton for her protector. Laura Bridgman and her sisters come to the door every day and ask for bread and vegetables and eat them from our hands. It has been very cold. We have had but few pleasant days since I came home. Friday last we had quite a little snow-storm.

Tell Annie my ride to Winslow was perfectly delightful. I never before really enjoyed Autumn scenery.

Please let us know if the butter reaches you safely.

With love to each member of your family I am

Your niece

Lois Stratton

The firkin that was first made is marked with red chalk, a cross upon the top — perhaps that better be eaten first.

We do not wish you to say a word about the price till the butter is eaten. If it is not first quality (& we have many fears that it will not be) let the price be the same. I have got aunts hose under way — wish now I had more legs.

Lois —

108℔ 25c 27.—
leſs paid in June 20.—
feb —— 1.— 21.—
due A.M.J. $ 6.—
Sent nov 10 by mail

Forest City Iowa.
Sabbath Nov 6th 1859

Marie —

If that name did not mean to me more than all I could say to describe it, more than all the adjectives that I could put before it, perhaps I might not place it there alone, But what could I say more than that.

The Mail has come and gone but no letters from you — I did not expect to hear from you at Bloomington, It is not yet time even if you arrived there as soon as you expected; but I hoped to get letters forwarded from Pekin

It is a month since I left there, and except two or three letters forwarded to Minneapolis, I have rec'd nothing since I left there. The last I heard from you was written Oct 6th just a month ago to-day. If I had not been at work day and night for the past week, I should have been lonesome, Last Wednesday Evening when I came from the Post Office and had not heard from you. I did feel lonesome, I have welcomed each day and night as it has come since then, bringing "Next Wednesday" so much nearer, "Only three days more from to-night" I say now, and I shall hear from her. There are tangible proofs here before me that there is a Serena M Ames, and that she loves me or I should be letting some of my old friends Mr Doubt & Miss Trust and the rest, come to warm themselves at my fireside, and board at my expense." But that is one of my follies; & when I told you something of what you had become to me, and you forgot to say ~~nay~~ nay I bade good bye to all doubts; for before I learned to love you. Your truthfulness & direct sincerity had shamed me many times.

And so I said I will never doubt — It does not seem to me now that I ever could doubt you; but really the time which has passed since I have heard from you has made me feel keenly how much your prisoner I am, I do not regret the loss of my freedom, for I feel that I have acquired an ownership amply compensating for my own loss, — the pride of the yankee who has made a good "swop", it must be

I can realize better here, five
hundred miles away from you
~~what~~ without hearing from you
for three weeks, how hard it
would be, should you be taken
away & from me forever,

Why need I say all this.
I hardly thought I could hold
a pen at all when I sat down
to this, I have been at work
day & night for the past week
- How tired, sore, sleepy & cross
I feel, —— Cross? Bodily so
certainly, Monday last I
went to the County seat, 25 miles
across the bare, bleak, prairie
-of which some frozen memories
& reminiscences came back
forcibly to me as I passed over the
same grounds where a year ago
I waded sloughs & broke ice"

I remembered all very plainly
—There was too much enjoyment

Nov 9.
Instructed Jones
of Nov 1. from
Bloomington.
None others.

as well as too much pain and suffering in the experiences of those days, for me soon to forget them — and now the memory of those last hours here, is deep cut in me — I passed by the last camp that we made last year. A ring of sticks still standing mark where the edge of our tent came; and others standing over where we built our fire, are the same ones that we used to hang our boots on, to thaw them at night. One of the last letters my Brother ever wrote me, he spoke of seeing those sticks — mementoes of last years cold feet — I did not think I would ever see them again.

Sometimes I cannot realize — I cannot make it seem possible that he is dead.

I have engaged a school at Elk Grove, 6 miles from here — I supposed it was taken when I wrote before, How *rich* I shall get — Visions of gold Dear — don't let it turn your head — $25 per month and — — *board myself*.

But I could not be entirely idle & *now* it will keep me busy There's but half a *dozen* scholars & we shall have time to *meet* often enough."

I shall come home every Friday Night & return Monday Morning. Meantime my time will be pretty well occupied."

I have been at work almost day and night to get the house so far completed as to be tenable through the winter, I have pounded my fingers. driving nails — played the part of "Mason's clerk" i.e. carrying hod & mixing mortar — and one day and night I "fought fire" on the prairie. The grass is dry as tinder & there was a heavy wind at the time, How it *did* burn, All night long it was light enough out of doors to read newspaper print — a red glare overhead & a flickering reflection from the buildings" One house, several Hay stacks & *miles* of fencing & fence were destroyed — My fingers are all afraid of each other, — They are black with dirt & bruises & full of holes from lime & scratches. Truly a pitiable condition I am in, am I not, but the worst is past and in a few days we will be nice & comfortable — I have written enough have I not? When I feel better I will write better, & *more* — *Hurrah* for *Wednesday* and the *mail*, So Goodbye Dearest & May God bless you George

Ans'd 11th

Bradford Vt Nov 8th 1859

Mr. C. W. Clark,

Dear Sir:

Could you make it consistent with your financial matters — to assist me with your name — or a Check — to the amount of Two hundred dollars? — for 3 or 4 months? I am doing a good fair Business now — have just completed one job of work which amounts to 300.$ — and have some out — and have now over half completed another lot of same school books which will come to over 850.$ — but feel cramped all the time for want of money to go along with — If I was to work for Mr. Lowe — alone I should not feel so secure — but George & Edward Prichard are partners with Mr Lowe — and they are safe and reliable men — I would not on no account ask you to assist me — if I did not feel morally certain that I should meet it — Uncle I know if I live I shall be able

to do so certainly by the first of
March — because I shall — for the
printers have already got the paper
for still another Edition — which
will make over 1,000 $ worth of work
from say the first of last Month
to the first of Jany —

If you feel any doubts about the
safety of the thing I am willing you
should consult either of the
Brickards — I would like
to hear from you — and learn
what your opinion is — Uncle — I will
certainly not wrong you to the value of
any thing — I know I will pay you
principal & interest —

Believe me ever truly
Yours J. D. Clark

Bradford Vt, Nov 12th/59

Dear Uncle Calvin, [To Calvin W. Clarke]

Yours of the 11th was received — I thank you kindly for your proffered assistance — It will answer my wants any time this month — If I looked only to Mr. Lee — I would run no risk of the kind — But as the Prichards are the foundation I feel perfectly safe in this transaction with you — for I certainly — on no account would wrong you to the value of a farthing —

I hope to be able by another spring to get me a small Book Store in connexion with my Bindery — Dwight is learning the Printers trade — and has a good man to work for — and board with — Charles — is resuming his studies — and working in the shop with me — and is a great help, truly — He is bound if he can have a chance — to make a superior schollar and business man

– and if I it is possible he shall have the opportunities – He is one who any man would keep in his business – if he once obtained his servises – for he is one of the honest faithfull – naturally trusty boys – and smart. – I should feel perfectly safe to trust him any where – even in Baltimore or Vicksburg – for he could not be led astray by any of the allurements of the adversary –

He has trimed some 2,000 of these school books in a day – besides dooing other work – My triming Machine will more than pay for itself in 2 years.

I shall have by another spring about 100.$ worth of paper shavings so Uncle you need have no fears

With many regards to you for your oft repeated kindnesses to me

I remain yours very truly

J. D. Clark

Forest City Sunday Eve. Nov 13^59

Marie,

Good Evening —

At last — at last. Wednesday Evening it came. Eight days from you at Bloomington, which is somewhat sooner than they will usually come. So far as letters are concerned we are further apart than when you were in Somerville & I in Minneapolis (Last Summer) — In other respects we are somewhat nearer are we not? How glad I was to get that letter. Four weeks had passed since the last one — I do not like being divorced thus against our own wishes.

I have been happier ever since, & and (I hope) better. I think I am somewhat better for every letter you have written me.

I wish I could answer this letter of yours *now*. I must let it go unanswered though (*unless* you will take some that I have already written in payment) till I have more leisure. At present - in *number* I am far ahead of you. I have only *received* from you 23 letters & have *written* - such as they are - no less than 37.

I do not complain of the exchange, for yours are worth to me more than I can ever pay.

Oh they *are* dear to me — I have often wondered if such a thing as *love* could be real - or rather if I could ever find it so to me. I did not think I *could*. I did not *expect* it - you *know* the reason why. Do you not? I never can think of that time *now* without a shudder

in — and but for *her*, her own neglect first intimating to me that she too did not love: - these letters now so dear to me had never been written - and what would *my* life, or *hers* been worth?

One may be very sensible in regard to other people - may tell what they ought to do under given circumstances, and yet in *personal* matters act very foolish.

It is easier giving advice than following it. I should blame *another* very much for doing just what I do myself, but in this matter perhaps I *now* blame myself as much *as* any one could. Yet I hardly see *how you* could forgive me. Was it that thus early you loved me so much as to find excuse for my follies.

My Dear, Dear, loving, forgiving, *wife*

I said I *could* *not* write more

There is but about an *inch* of candle in the candlestick (all there is in the house.) and I must use it fast & well

Oh could you see how busy I am, — day & night — you would say it is *as* *bad* as house cleaning. But you help me through all, I go triumphantly through dirt, difficulty & discouragement, so long as you love me,, I expect to be at home only this week, Meantime I have to do, — the "chores" — bank up the house, — 2 days butc*hering* beside taking care of the meat &c — — A half day to Elk Grove & back — a cow stable to build, boards to haul, wood to *draw* & chop — half *a* ~~8~~ dozen men to settle with & a *weeks* work beside in *It* — must all be done *twixt* now & Saturday night next.

I do not know but I may "do chores" this winter, too, almost the only place to board at Elk Grove is Mr Stiles' - he is sick & wants me to do his work while I am there. Won't I be busy though? It is all going to be done with in the Spring though. I shall hope to leave this part of Iowa forever then

My people are very kind - they write me from home that they wish to remunerate me for the loss of time &c of my coming here, as they know that it came very hard for me to leave Ill. after I had depended so much upon it, though I did not exactly say so to them. The last letter I rec'd enclosed $100. to pay my expenses here, or whatever

I needed it for. They are very kind.

You have written some letters to me at Pekin which I have not got I think. One dated Sep 30 & one Oct 6th are all I have recd — from that till Nov 1 — How many? I am exacting & could not bear to lose any.

I wish I were with you in Bloomington now. I should not like to have you here except in Spirit. Oh how cold & dreary the prairie looks now. How the wind howls — How all day the snowflies so thick one can see but a little way. except overhead where perhaps the yellow & leaden clouds are not thick enough to ~~hi~~ hide the sun. If there is a cheerless dreary uncomfortable place it is this great open prairie in North Iowa, in the winter — Ugh — I dread the winter here.

Yet a little while. — Rest unquiet soul: — there is a God in Heaven, It is but a few days till flowers bloom & buds burst. — and then — and then

We shall meet then, wont we? You have received the picture I did not expect or wish you to love it as you do the other — It was not intended for that Yet it is myself much more than the other. Some time you will say so & some time you will like (not love) it better than the other one. It is like the large one I have of you — in this much — that to any person but ~~xx~~ you a much truer picture than the other. It tells more of character. I do not love the *larger picture of you as I do the other one. yet I see in it all that soul earnestness and positiveness for which I first loved you (as a dear friend where the friendship was all on my side perhaps I may say) The pictures that you and I love are not full pictures - they are special faces:- for you and I only - and have a special meaning which We alone can fully under=stand. That Meaning, is not all of us, - However much this love may change us - may make us each like the other - we are yet two souls in our duties and respon=sibilities toward Our Father in Heaven and our brothers and Sisters in Humanity on Earth

It is well is it not that we at least keep in view what we are in our relations to the world outside - If I were near you perhaps I could not say this

Even here I do not find it easy to to do. If you can understand what I *intended* to say (I did not succeed in saying it) you will I am sure agree with me. We love those faces because they love *us* don't we? More than because they *show* the full character (in *repose* where each part is seen to good advantage)

And *now* as to those who do not *know* as much of me as they used to, when my letters were not "contraband of war" as *now*. It seems to me that once I wrote quite a lengthy preface to such a correspondence — It seems to me that I particularly requested a response. It seems to me that I never heard more of it till *now* in your letter (Excuse me. I did not think of what treasures the Pekin P.O.

may have swallowed up for me
— I can say no more..

Perhaps the other person interested would wish only to know of Road Surveying:— I believe that was the extent of the inquiries made when I was in Summerville... ~~H~~ Tell him that I was not Surveying at all — only platting."

But why should I write him? It is as well perhaps that they know no more of me — if I could tell of something worthy it might do to write

But I cannot benefit them by writing:— though they could do me good if they had time + opportunity to write. as of course they have not,

Much good I get from them though (second hand, through you) and I thank them May they long ... be blessed & prospered here. I love them very very much, —

I must stop, for here goes the last of the candle

Goodnight dearest, I will try to write again before Wednesday Eve. Goodnight — May God bless you ever

Your Own George

Monday Evening... One day gone — Butchering day — I believe it is the first time for six years that I have participated in such bloodshed. It seems very natural to me however (since I came here) to do anything that must be done. Tomorrow there will be a malady among the swine ... I shall not be able to write any thing more till next week. Then perhaps I will get time.

So goodnight. Your folks all "talk good" to them of me.

Yours Ever, George

Hannah Curleys' letter
Decr 10th '59.

San Jose November 1 1859

Dear sir I take my pen once more to write a few lines to you in hopes that ~~you will~~ that they may find you and family in good health as I have not heard from you or mrs Clark Sence I went to the warm springs last summer I have Just returned and I am gratedale Better than I was ~~when~~ I wrote to you Before I am now staying at mr matthews and he wanted that I should write to you and ask you if you got my letter of last June or not if you have get it I wish you write to me and let me know I am run in debt to mr matthews one hundred dollers that he pa the docter for me now mr Clark I hope you will answer this and let me know if you can send me any or not

of that money you have in
your care I expect that you
have given it to william
kenneys folkes if you have I
wish you would let me know
I hope you will answer this as soon
as posibee nomore at present
from your humbee servant
Hannah Curley

Remember me to mrs, clark
and the young laydees

derect your letter to mr
william M matthews
san Jose santa clarra County

ansd
21st

Bradford Vt. Nov. 19th 1859

Dear Uncle Calvin. [To Calvin W. Clarke]

Perhaps the enclosed note is not worded correctly — if not please return it to me — and I will sign such an one as you will write — I feel very gratefully obledged to you — and will by all means in my power endeavor to pay the principle and interest when due — I am mortified to think of asking you for such a favor — when it has put you to such inconvenience — but all of us — rich as well as poor are sometimes necessitated thus to do, — & whenever or however I can — I will try to do you or some one in some way a ~~similar~~ kindness

Very truly yours

J. D. Clark

Forest City, Sabbath Eve
Nov. 20th 1859

Marie:—

I have written your name, and for at least five minutes have been stupidly staring at it—like the parson in Dr Holmes' "One Hoss shay" "—perplexed, at what the—Moses was coming next".

You can scarcely imagine how, not only *barbarous*, but dull and stupid we are here. In the four *weeks* I have been here. I have had *two* letters, One from home and one from *you*—no *papers*—no Atlantic—"no *vember*" as Hood hath it

Your letter though *ought* to be enough to inspire me (or rather I *ought* to be inspired)

by reading it. so as to be able to write
— Alas for poor I.

When I was going up the river, toward *home* (Minneapolis) I thought I could, in the midst of the grand panorama which swept by on either hand; above and below; catch glimpses of a strange spiritual beauty in the universe of God, with which my own soul seemed in perfect harmony. a beauty, fullness and perfectability not visible to mortal eyes, nor yet perceptible to the mind, but a revelation to the soul of something most glorious, most radiantly lovely in the light of a pure and perfect Hereafter gleaming through the curtain that circumscribes our earthy vision

— Something perhaps like the *few* glimpses through the cracks & keyholes of the "Great Secret" which is a part of every human life, according to the "Professor"

I thought then that I could see something of the meaning of that mystery which even *he* mystifies in trying to explain. — at least I could *feel it*.

It was but a brief vision however, — My vision is bounded now by sky (or oftener *clouds*) above, the earth (*dirty earth*) below & a dull blank, all about — And *all* opaque, dull, leaden, impenetrable — a pall around the soul. I can hardly credit my memory when I recall the moments wherein I could see through and beyond all this material world around, into realms of such perfection and loveliness, & I say — "It is but a legend I know
"A fable, a phantom, a show" —

— Only in one direction *does* a light shine through this dull mist which is around me. A glow as of sunrise in the east. I feel that above and around all, the pure clear light of a Father's unspeakable & perfect love, illuming all things. It is light but not warmth — And were it not for your letters (I count them; all that I have ever received, now) I am not sure but I should spiritually freeze here. There is enough of Heaven in them, that I pray for Infinite guidance and help, to grow better & to be~~come~~ worthy of "her I love", and enough of Earth in them, that I feel the writer to be more woman than angel & therefore I take courage, ~~and~~ I would not have the disparity too great —

Nothing is impossible to the stout heart, Even I, may yet learn how to grow, better.

There is opportunity for progress,

Really I have been talking to long,
and have not said our usual "Good
Evening" in I say it wrong. How do you
do? I was quite — "what shall
I say" as Mr Widstrand says — quite
sick-ish. last Wednesday eve, when
I returned from the Post Office &
without any letter from you.

Only four letters from you
since I left you in Somerville
nine weeks ago, and only two since
I left Pekin, more than six weeks
since. The last one was a good
one, very very good & I will not
complain, I would willingly
write a quire of paper over for
such a letter as that from you —
— if I couldn't get any more.

The more liberal you are, the
more exacting I shall be I fear.
Such letters as I once thought were

very good & very kind from you, would ill content me now — There's nothing positive & fixed but truth I guess All else is relative, Even Heaven is modify-able, & what would be Heaven for one would be no more than Earth for another.

I have got a respite for one week, my school will commence a week from tomorrow which will give me ample time for all I wish to do here," By way of exercise I will "do chores for my board" — Is there anything that sounds more like poverty than that! Six miles to Elk Grove & on Friday night I come home & stay till Monday morning Saturday I draw wood, chop & such other light work as a farm abounds in. Evenings I'll study, read, & write and so passes the winter 1859-60

Hereafter (if you please - but don't do it against your wishes or convictions of duty) direct to Elk Grove. Hancock County, Iowa.

Now that makes me think How are we going to get along - when - when - by & by, you know?

For instance - "What will we have for dinner my dear?" "Whatever you wish of course".

"Exactly so, but you name it please". "No, you".

Horrible result in the dinner fails to "occur", through delicacy, - Starvation & death ensue.

"Too deferential by half" the "world will say"

You remember dont you when I was in Somerville, I couldn't get you to say your wishes or preferences about little things?

Oh well - They say a healthy reaction is quite common after marriage. Let it be" in time to avoid the catastrophe mentioned on the last page. A long time ago I heard a man say. That he told his wife once — when they were not so well acquainted as now — "My Dear, you've burned the potatoes" — and she cried.

Can you bear being laughed at for a mistake? I enjoy such a thing famously, and it matters little whether the laugh is upon me, or some one else if it is all in goodwill.

I am careless, thoughtless, & shall often I fear say things that will make you feel badly — till we get better acquainted & till you get so as to put a lighter valuation on my careless remarks & I. take more thought of what I speak.

But don't for an instant forget that I love you & would not for the world do aught to hurt or offend you.

I cannot write more now I write none at all, of late, but to you Please write often. Tell me of your people & yourself

Ever your own

Georges

ans

Paris Nov. 21st 1859

My Dear Uncle

I intend to leave home this day week for Virginia and take Mrs. Clark with me as far as Washington, She would like to Consult with Dr Townsend. ~~On Monday~~ We shall be in Boston on Monday Eve. Or Tuesday moring and would like to make you a Call if perfectly Convenient for you to have us, We should be very happy to have Cousin Anna accompany us ~~On~~ ~~Am~~ to Baltimore or Washington Mrs Clark is quite feeble and I intend to have her spend the winter if posible with much love to all Very Truly Yours

E. W. Clark

1859

Elk Grove. Hancock Co. Iowa
Tuesday 8 A.M. Nov 29. 1859

Marie.

Good Morning - It seems a long time since I have written to you, and it is a long time (reckoning by our measurement of time) since I have heard from you. Will I ever get letters here. from the east?

None last week either. I know you have written - You would write (knowing how anxious I am to hear from you often & how I prize your letters) you would write often. even if you could not have time to write much. Our dear, kind. careless negligent Uncle, "kind old Uncle" Samuel is much. to blame.

I am writing this in a School-House. ~~are~~ a real Yankee "Red School house". It savors more of New England & boyhood than anything I have seen since I have been "in the west" Western School houses are mostly coarse uncouth ill-arranged things

This one is a~~n~~ real beauty; new clean, neat in appearance & very convenient in all respects

The finishing and furniture inside, is all of varnished black-walnut & nice as a parlor need be, There are seats sufficient to accomodate 40 Scholars, & 60 persons might be seated in the room comfortably — a nice black-walnut desk with a lock & key, where my treasures repose, A black-board some 5 feet by 12 at the north end of the room, two windows on each side (East & west) and at the south end, two handsome doors with with white walnut (butternut) panels & black walnut frames:- One of these leads (through the entry, where the hats & shawls are deposited) to the "Out of doors), and the other into a neat snug wood=room well stored with dry oak wood, very convenient to the stove:- a new, bright, box stove — standing near the south end of the room, where Scholars may stop to warm themselves before going to their seats, without crossing the house, to reach the stove.

It is indeed most convenient, comfortable & tasteful in all respects. Here I "hold forth" for the four months "next ensuing". It is situated in a little valley open toward the south and looking down toward the creek (Lime Creek is a small river rising in Minnesota and running South Eastwardly into the Cedar River), There is timber on the North and East. Toward the West & South the broad prairie stretches away almost without limit - beyond it rolls the Missouri two hundred miles beyond here. and the winds that come sweeping across the bare blackened field, tell tales of the Rocky Mountains and the frozen North

I hear them in the air far over head. for they do not come down into this valley.

South East from here at the distance of perhaps a mile and on the opposite side of the Creek is the Grove from ~~which~~ whence

–this settlement & post Office
take their name.

About 25 or 30 rods east, on
a rise of land stands a white
house, (my boarding place) It
looks better *outside* than inside
for the house as well a its
occupants are not quite
finished" They (the people), are
intelligent agreeable & polished
enough, perhaps, besides being
"Radical Abolitionists" & *readers*
of the "Era" – yet like all of
us, – *not* perfect – I *fancy* *so* at
least, from what I have seen
& *not* judging from general
principles. – that they have
"Some truths to learn
– "Some frailties to forget"
And who has not?
I think I shall get along
very well – I like it *now*
& think that the people do not

dislike me.

But you will know how I succeed. by & by.

Yesterday was the first day of School— There are but 10 or 12 scholars in the district & few of those are ready to attend school yet.

So I had— "_my eyes!_" _four_ _Scholars_. yesterday, four girls 8 to 12 years old, naturally rather brighter than children generally are but neglected & backward. I fancy they had been taught just what there was in the _books_ & _no more_ I asked them questions & told them things which probably no teacher ever had told them before. & they appeare as much surprised as delighted at finding there could be any=thing possessing any _meaning_

or *interest* to themselves in what
they studied. Oh I shall
hope for great things of them
by & by." Unfortunately however
they are all afflicted with a
peculiar:— ahem.. and I observe
"traces of volcanic action" i.e.
"eruptions" in the vicinity of their
"digital articulations"— a
thing for which my Gaelic
ancestors have become *famous*
or notorious rather.

"Fore*warned* is fore*armed*"
and being apprised of the dangers,
I procured an *amulet*— a nice
little sack of "mineral perfumery"— my *bosom* *friend*— my
safe & *sure* *reliance*..

Faugh, all that, instead of
itch & *sulphur* which I have
said after all. Ex*cuse me* *I pray*.

After school — They have all gone. All — every one of the four. for I had the same number today as yesterday.

Tomorrow night the mail comes again. but I shall not know till Friday night whether there is anything for me in the Office. After that, I shall hope for letters from you directed to this place.

I have not heard from Cyrus since I left Boston nearly two & a half months ago. — It was never so before — Has he forgotten his old friend? I have written him four or five times since I came away. I guess he has gone to the Indies." Have you heard from him or of him?

I would be frightened by the long silence only that I feel confident that his "lucky star" his "manifest destiny" will not allow trouble ~~or~~ sickness or harm in any way come near him — He has a plain and unmistakable "future" before him. I haven't have I?

But some how & nothing seems impossible to me since I went "east" last summer. Last summer, think of it — how the time has gone by, — fifteen Sabbath days have come & gone since we met in the Grove: —

That grove — sacred evermore — I shall be sorry if Cyrus goes away from there. He is so closely connected with all that which has so changed our lives. Sometime we hope to see that same spot once more & we would like to see you there too.

I must stop writing now for it is my supper time. They will not like to wait. Do you not think that I may the "more keenly appreciate a home from having so long been without one, & among Strangers?

"By & By" The days can not fly too fast for me now." Do you Count the months from now till the groves are leafy & the fields are green? I do. Now Good bye to you Dear, - heartless wretch that I am, to desert her (the Strange being whom Strangers call "her") for the sake of a supper.

I think of suppers in Somer=ville, and "a seat beside mother, opposite "Pet & I" which was reserved for me!

Good bye now George

Tuesday Night. 7 P.m.

A glorious night — the lamps all lighted in Heaven. The same pure silvery moon & bright twinkling stars that you see now. We are not far apart then are we? These clusters of gems in the skies are all there are here to link past with present. and they are enough

There now rising in the East is the ever glorious. ever grand and mysterious Orion whose coming I have watched with a strange mixture of delight & awe. from the east window of the kitchen. in my childhood's home. I see it now as then. There in the north alone is the polar star. — a sovereign among the hosts of Heaven. Around it in never ending, silent, majestic procession sweep the constellations of "bright and shining ones" - as solemn mysteries to-day as when three-thousand years ago the dwellers in the Orient, in wonder, awe and adoration, gazed upon their starry splendors.

Do you not see in these same stars, the lingering images of the eyes that looked upward ~~upon~~ them, many ages since? Photographs of the past; of that past which is always present, living, immortal?

We have pretty definite ideas of historic characters in our own minds. - Should we meet such faces or figures on Earth we would know them. I am sure I would know Alexander Plato, Demosthenes, Caesar Confucius or Moses, without an introduction. Whence & why? Have they not left reflections of themselves here on Earth?

I was going to write to you to night, and I have got "as far away as Paris is" & more.

I was going to say first however that this night is Minnesota-ish, just such an evening as you and I have seen there, & for which we love Minnesota more than anywhere else. (one of the reasons for it)

But now we will drop out the miles that spread in broad frosty dreariness between us & sit down to set together (In Bloomington let it be) & for a little while visit together.

Not that I have anything new, wonderful or of value to say, nor that I expect to hear from you (when I get no letters from you at least) anything smart or brilliant. Simply because I would rather be with you than anywhere else. It is home to me. — You love me & I love you, very very much"

It is a bright cheerful, pleasant evening (in doors at least) and we have been away so long — we are tired & to be together is rest, peace, happiness. Yes happiness. You alone can guess how happy the possession of your love has made me.

Again I am looking into your eyes — "Crystal gates through which the soulbeams fall to light the dark sad hearts of men." Again I hold that little hand, not with the wild tumultuous throbbing of a great hope answered; not as when with the quick tide of feeling came the assurance that you could answer my love, but with quiet full perfect happiness, with a full reliance in each other – As you have said – "with perfect trust & entire love" – blessed words; – how often have I thanked you for them.

There has always been a simple sincerity & direct earnestness, a trust & confidence between us from our first acquaintance which to me is now very gratifying. We have become acquainted, by virtue of that sincerity, we have loved each other, we shall ever continue to love each other.

I never wrote to any one else as I did to you when I first sat down & wrote to you from Forest City Minn. a year ago last August. I thought I could trust you & I told you freely that I would like to get acquainted with you. I am glad I did & could trust you.

It matters little what we say now when together. hand in hand. You are sitting close by my side. closer. closer. and I am telling you how much I have learned to love (not learned but - how much I cannot help loving you) how closely your life has become intertwined with mine, how we are one heart, one soul.

Close together, hand in hand wondering if ever before man and woman were blessed with such love or such happiness here on earth. It may be wrong thus to think & feel. wrong to put so much of one's life where it may be blighted torn & withered - but as this life & the joys & blessings of this life become dearer & sweeter, so do the hopes and desires, the attempts at and expectations of achieving the pure & perfect happiness of that life which is to come become stronger & more real.

With you here, this life is very dear to me. - what then may not be the value of that life which is as this but infinitely better & infinitely prolonged?

Hand in hand - close by my side - the hours are fleeting and the night wanes - One kiss Dearest - xx still close to my heart, floating away from the shores of conscious-ness into the unknown sea of slumber - Sweet sleep to you & a Good Night

Wednesday Morning. Good Morning Dear.—I have perpetrated enough for once perhaps, but I cannot bear to see a blank page (that might be written on,) pass between us. This is No 49 in less than a year. 38 rather. since Feb 3d of this year; I have written every week since I have been here.

About a year ago you were writing your "Autobiography" It was I believe commenced about Dec 1st and this is the last of Nov.

How I have wasted paper since Feb last — 21 letters since August 14th. Once for every five days. "Foolish Youth." You havent been so foolish. I have only received seven. Well - we shall see when the mail comes in.

Tell me how & what you do. & how your people do. — tell me the "News" for I do not hear from anywhere. Good Bye now May God bless & prosper you always
All & ever Yours. George

No ~~70~~ Nos 3.4.5. lost, Recd Elk Grove Dec. 15/59 77
" ~~26~~ No 27.28.29 lost,
No 30
" 14

Bloomington Nov. 30. 1859.

George "—

The wind blows—it is a dark night. Mother is sick, very sick and has been for a week—she has eaten nothing in that time scarcely and what has tried to take sends her into spasms of pain in which it seems she must die. To-day after going without food so long that she was most crazy she ate a little and was taken again with the old distress. Oh! it seems almost too hard—and in my heart I have been very naughty. God forgive—but life seemed of little worth and I thought, "That we were all no more would be a blessing".

This evening at family worship
we sang a prayer in which are
these verses

"While Thee I seek, Protecting Power,
Be my vain wishes stilled,
And may this consecrated hour
With better hopes be filled."

"My lifted eye, without a tear,
The gathering storm shall see,
My steadfast heart shall know no fear
That heart shall rest on Thee."

I was humbled, and could catch glimpses of that far off state of soul in which is perfect trust and calm love and could pray our Father to conduct & me hither. But my poor, poor Mother! You can have no idea of what she suffers. She has had such sickness before but not for a long time now.

Why do I give you sorrow and sadness by telling of our troubles and griefs? Because I love you. You have said in a later letter that you were very sorry for what you wrote me after your brothers death. You need not be, I am glad. I could not have you unhappy and I be happy, and do not think that words uttered in passionate grief I would consider upon as if written in sober earnestness.

But because the night is dark to me, and the wind howls dismally and my heart is sad I would not have you otherwise I than joyous and hopeful.

Thursday evening.

Not very cheering was my letter last evening but when you read it remember it was written on indeffinit indefinitely long time ago. We hope Mama is a little better she has eaten a very little twice to day and it has not yet produced that distress.

About this time you are bringing in wood and water - feeding the pig, milking the Cows and doing various other interesting things to pay for your supper which it may be Mrs. Stiles is now getting. Just think of the "Master" so far forgetting his dignity as to do chores. Of what grade and age are your half dozen pupils! What kind of a place is Elk Grove? How often do they get mails. Is is farther out of the world than Forest City? Six miles toward Christendom is something. "Darkness prevaileth"! I will finish the other sheet and send this in the morning. By-bye.

Nov. 20, 1869.

I have been writing on a sheet that I have left down stairs. I will not go for it but write on another. This night is one of the kind that always makes me think of Charlotte Bronte — dark, with a wailing wind that sobs and groans and dies away only to come again. It is a night in which I seek refuge from myself and every thing in the heart of one able to shield from all evil.

George, — forgive me, if sometimes I know no thought but you. Oh! Charlotte Bronte. — she is always Jane — Do you remember Rochester, when left alone, darkness within and without — the glory of life all fled, and every hope gone out; crying out in the very depths of passionate anguish "Jane. — Jane Jane!"

It rains. I got yours

letter mailed a week ago, to-night. A dreary winter you are having but it will pass away as other winters have and leave you stronger for its hopes and struggles. I am sorry you do not get my letters for I remember the nights I grew so sick at heart and cried so bitterly because I had waited so long and was so *tired*. "Spring is coming" and with it days when there will be no need of letters. You get papers do you not? and see the particulars of the great event which has set the ~~great~~ heart of our country throbbing with tumultuous hope and fear. Only one night more after this, and no longer a prisoner in a Southern Jail but risen with his crucified Redeemer John Brown shall rejoice in that martyrdom which for *Christ's* *sake* he suffered and for which we now wait with fear and trembling.

God sustain his wife! God be with him, for he is human!

For fear of rescue – he is to be surrounded on every side by militia extending a mile from him, on the day of his execution, within the ranks of which no stranger is allowed to enter. In numbers they are many but one old man is stronger than they all. Never before has the world seen a more striking illustration of the omnipotence of soul; where the grandeur and heroism of *one* is felt to defeat the soldiers of a whole nation. Papa preaches his funeral sermon Sunday.

It is getting late – all in the house have gone to rest, save me. Rest they in peace! May you, too, find new strength for to-morrow's work.

So prays she who is evermore your own.

Marie.

Thursday night

I am ashamed to send this, it looks so badly, but I cannot withstand Mama's reproof if I should say "I am not going to send this". She says, as little time as I now get it is doing you wrong to ~~se~~ keep any thing I can send. But I wrote away from the writing desk and pen on a book with an old steel pen. I could not help blotting it. Mama says she never has and never will forgive me for burning letters I have written her only because I blotted them, and desires me to say for her that you ought to labor with me for not sending a sheet the other day for no better reason. If I do not say it she says Papa shall, so I will to save the sting he might make of sundry other follies and weaknesses.

Papa has begun to write to you

Do you have no meetings in Forest City? What does the Pekin Post Master mean by not sending to you my letters?

What are you reading? Say truly, are you not ashamed of me, that I know so little — that I have never studied Geometry, never gone through arithmetic, dont know how to spell — in short know nothing! Of course you are sorry, but that may not be all. I am as sorry almost for you as for me. You may comfort yourself with thinking "She will learn — only nineteen".

I too find consolation in the thought that nineteen and even seventy years are only a spot in the beginning of my lifetime. But sometimes such reasoning seems stupid and I hold myself and my arguments in utter contempt. But then, contentment is the one great virtue — and Emerson says, 'if I am not Shakespeare or Plato I can be thankful that they have lived to show me what I might be - the powers of my own soul' - therefore *I* will say if I do not know as much as the man I love I will thank Heaven that he lives to teach me to become all his dear heart would have me be.

Papa sits by my side, at a little stand, all alive with thoughts of John Brown whose funeral sermon he is writing. How much have you heard - You say you have no papers but you have seen enough to know in considerable detail about this Harpers Ferry excitement? Father just now repeated some words of Brown - "It was the cry of distress moved me". And for *this* to-morrows night will find him among the glorified. Jesus said, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you" and for doing thus our *fair* Country kills a man. God said - "Remember them in bonds as bound with them". John Brown obeyed Him, and henceforth his name shakes l to its foundations.

Father says Brown is the only man who is calm in our whole Country. *Can he* sleep to-night, knowing to-morrow will surely come? Be he never so strong himself will not thoughts of home make his heart grow faint unto death? When I speak of Mrs. Brown Papa

say she is as heroic as a woman of Boston whose husband was going South to act in Brown case and who – so intense was the excitement and fear of southern men – thought he might never return, said "Go – I would rather be the widow of a brave man than the wife of a coward". But Oh! the difference is very great between the uncertainty of the one and the knowledge of the other – To ~~know that~~ I must write no longer to-night. If I could see you! Do you want to see me!
What may I say to you – anything
Iowa is a long, long way off –
The days are long and many
Serena is exceeding foolish
Marie will be a wiser girl
It doesn't make you feel badly for me to say these things – does it?
Would you rather I would say the months are short – time is passing – 'twill come soon enough the time when I shall see you – I like you but am willing you should stay away! – Both these things are true – Good-night – Marie.

Received 30th Octr 1856 – – – – – –	500.–
3⅓ years Interest – – – – – –	100.–
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Hannah Curley's letter
Decr 3d 59.

San Jose Desember 3 1859

Dear mrs Clark I Recieved your very kind letter and I can tell you that I was very glatt to hear you all once more for I thought that you had forgotin me all togather I wish I could hair from you every week But I am glad to Know that you are all well you asked me how my health was well it is very well all But my knee and that trobbles me a goodale when I stand on it all day the docter thinks that I must have a seton put under the cup of it he thinks that there is water under the cup you asked me why I dont come home I dont think I will ever be able to get home the Docter says that it would kill me to go home now the climat is so cold there if five dollers tuck me home now I have not got them I hope that I well and that is all I ask if I could work as I usto I

could soon get home But I am
a fraid that I never will I was
surprised to hear that ned got
maried so young and in such a
hurry perhaps he will do better
than to Be single if he has got a good
wife I am sorry for mrs appleton
not having a boy this time
and poor elisebet is left a lone
I dont know What would Become
of me if it was not for mr and
mrs matthws I am staying with
them now you asked me if I knew
where cathrines husband was he is in
sacramento maried to a girl from
Boston there is a young man here
that seen him last weeke and he
says he is doing well he is worky
at his trade there I wrote him
a letter but he has not answer
it I told him that I had sent
to mr clark for the money and
now I have no more to say at presed
But remanes your cencer friend
Hannah Curley write soon

give my love to the younge
ladies I hope thie are well

mr clark if you cant send
the money to me dont put it
in the hands of the admiudration
keppe it your self it would
be worth nothing when the
would take there pay out of it
you have no erthly resk to ru
for williams kenney never aught
to get it is mine and he knows it
you can do as you plase aboute it
no more from your sarrvent hannah curley

No 15
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Elk Grove Dec 22. 1859

Bloomington, Illinois.
Saturday Evening.
Dec. 3. 1859.

George"—

Do you really dislike adjectives? Perhaps they do not mean much, but when I say My dear — and Dearest it seems something of an outlet for *me* if it gives *you* no truer idea of what you are to me than your name. And that is something, is it not?

Saturday night has come again. When will this night bring you with it? Sometime it will, but I am so tired. Are you not tired too?

It is a bright star-light night; on such an evening Forest City must be a pleasant place — and a restless, homesick soul must be quieted and made peaceful.

Dearest, I do love you with all my heart, and I would not have you lonely and unhappy.

Father has just finished his sermon for tomorrow morning. It is very good. "John Brown went up ~~to~~ higher" yesterday – as a Chicago Editor says. At a quarter past eleven in the morning they sent him into heaven. His death was as brave as his life had been. He went calmly from his Jail to the Gallows, riding on his white pine Coffin. His wife was with him four hours the night previous to his death. She afterward was escorted back to Harper's Ferry by a "grand parade of the military". Land of Chivalry, you know. They would allow none of her friends to accompany her – for fear of rescue. Ah! me 'tis a pity to have them so fearfully frightened. How relieved they feel to-night – as if one poor old man in prison and wounded could have burned their houses and murdered their wives and children. Ah! they are as much children of God as are we, but it is hard to think men who can laugh and exult over and visit by hundreds the rope that is to hang any man can have anything in them to commend them to him who is Good, but I remember He is also Mercy.

I did not inform you rightly – the soldiers were not all stationed a mile off ~~and~~ but no one was allowed to be near enough to hear anything he might say. You have of course heard all about it, unless as I often am inclined to believe you are

blessed with what Cowper so longed and prayed for—
"A lodge in some vast wilderness"—

You are with Elsie and Charley to-night. How they must love you, and lean on as their only friend and support. I am so glad for them every Friday night when you come home to them—it is a little like what it would have been if you came home to me every Saturday night this winter as I almost hoped you would. But we are both more glad as it is—are we not?—if not more ~~glad~~ happier in doing well than we would be not to do well. Forgive or think lightly of anything which seems to fret at separation, or that says it is hard not to see you. Believe that in my truest hours I am content. If there are moments when my soul with inexpressible longing seeks yours—it is only for a little while.

Marie.—

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Sunday Evening 4.

Cyrus — Excuse a name not your name — George is a much dearer one. I have no other sheet of paper here but this, and maybe this will remind you of another love than mine — a sincere manly love of a true heart — God bless Cyrus! — every thought of him is also thinking of you, for you are closely connected — at least he sprang from you.

Another day almost gone among the things that were and are no more. This morning eight or nine hundred people attended the funeral services in Phoenix Hall. Father spoke bravely, wisely, calmly. He is not so radical as I sometimes am

We can bear stains on a man and call him hero – he can admire and not worship, – he can love and not ~~adore~~ adore, – he can be reasonable and not a silly little girl. I do not think however I shall ever learn wisdom – if it be wisdom – enough to exalt a man into the high places, where the gods sit, with any earthly stain upon him. My heroes must satisfy entirely and when they are marred at all they descend to the level of common mortals. Therefore I talk not of John Brown's heroism at the same time I condemn his head and glorify his heart. I say not he was a blundering fool sent of God to do great work, nor, that he made a great mistake but to him all honor evermore.

This afternoon I went to Sunday School. We have a large School of most unusual interest more than a hundred scholars many of them middle aged and gray headed. It is really quite a sight to see so many men and women seated in classes. I have a class of girls nearly as old as myself! My school is larger than yours if you have only half a dozen for I have eight or nine. I think you make a famous teacher, and I can judge, for I have been taught of you in many things these many months. What have I learned? Of things higher than my lips can utter. I have been taught of God, of my soul and of another more precious than my own soul. And you have led me to the light that I might see to be true that which I had fancied was alone in dreams and books. Do you give such lessons to your half dozen pupils? I may learn to teach my girls somewhat of that I see in what we study together in the Bible, but now I find it hard to give language to my thoughts in speaking, and to enter into details sufficiently for them to comprehend what I have been accustomed to hear, read and vaguely have in mind without giving myself any definite form to it. It may be good discipline but not pleasant - and I fear for them as for myself.

Ten o'clock has sounded. All are in bed. You must get up early and walk six miles and leave Elsia and Charley for another week. You never will leave me so long will you! You cannot for I am always with you - Good-night - Mattie.

Elk Grove. Hancock Co Iowa
Tuesday A.M. Dec 6/59

Marie :-

Good Morning.

No letters; not one! It is too bad isn't it? It will be five weeks tomorrow since I got the first letter you wrote from Bloomington. I say first letter. You have written a second third & fourth havent you? I have not received them! - Not a word - not one from Minnesota since I left there - not a word from home or from Cyrus or all New England for six weeks. Only two letters since I came here. Isnt this an out of the way place? I find it little trouble to stop writing to the most of my correspondents, now that I do not hear from them - I think I never waited for letters from you, before writing did I? I'm sure I could not now. there are so many things I have to tell you. besides I know you have written again & again & perhaps my letters do not reach you any better than yours do me

But so long as I think you would like to read my letters - so long as you care for me. so long I shall inflict these weary dull scribblings upon you - You don't know how lonesome I get here sometimes.

(Yet I can never get so lonesome as I used to. I am more & (I believe) better compan=ny for myself. - You are always with me in spirit. And then all around me is the invisible presence of that greater & purer than any earthly love can be, and the visible manifestation of that love in every thing I see; in every blessing of every day of life and health.

I am not so lonesome only for you. It seems such a loss - such a waste of happiness - (too much for the short time we may be here together -) every minute I am away from you. I am writing this in school - interrupted every moment by a question or plea from some of my family - I think I shall get along pretty well here. I am not so cross (inside) as I used to be; I think I am not so cross outside either. I don't fret much - but "We're all poor critters"

You used to say that you could not write *letters* except you had mine before you, from whence to draw *inspiration*?

Do you wonder that I write so stupidly *now*. I think I have an excuse – your letters do not come. How *can* I write. Did you never notice that there are many things one thinks of, – thoughts that *almost* become concrete in *words* – (while opening and reading a good letter,) and which with the aid of pen & ink may be caught & caged; but if neglected never come near again?

It is so with me at any rate,

I am thinking of you as I used to see you in Minne=apolis. You were it seemed to me a little *queer* but smart different from other girls & terribly "strong-minded" as the world hath it. I didnot think you would ever make exactly a woman - and was not certain but the heart was entirely left - out of your composition - You appeared so unconscious & cool. I think of you as being at that time not a person but rather an idea - plenty of head. moral principle kindness. goodness &c &c. yet not x overburthened with feeling

And even this year - last winter when I used to get those long letters from you I used to think that you had a head a long way ahead of your heart. You used to write long criticisms - bookish articles and the like, and I used to wonder. Same as Croffut did "if she *could* write like *that*?" But I used to think that though you would be a good true friend, you would never acknowledge such a thing as love, I had got you marked out for a kind of Harriet Martineau, Rosa Bonheur or Miss Hosmer (You know we *respect* & *admire* them, but we would as soon think of wooing a power loom, a comet or piece of Statuary as one of them.

Indeed I felt afraid to think of you as being a woman, lest I might thoughtlessly say something to call out your contempt & censure. Some time early in the Summer however. I hardly *know how*. I found out that you were not what I had thought you – that you were a *real woman*, & I a *real fool* (or had been) to think of you as anything else;

Yet you are not like most others of your sex.

It was a good thing I *think* that those letters ~~early~~ (our first ones) were written – *perhaps* without them we could never have become acquainted, and if we had become acquainted without them, we should never after been able to write, what *then* seemed easy enough to do – *Suppose* for instance you would now sit down and try to write such a letter to me as you used to eight or nine months ago, you could hardly do it could you? By & by those *letters* will come back to us and seem to be a part of ourselves. but *now* they are too *cool*. *smart* & intellect=ual." I am coming to like your picture (the one your mother loaned me) better & better every day. There is in it the strength & positiveness of character for which I *respected* *esteemed*. *honored* & *admired* you. before I loved you — I could not ask *for a better friend than you are in that picture, the other is a better *wife*. I *love* *that*.

Marie — excuse this foolish nonsense I have written — it has been done a sentence at a time; divided & interlarded with & by interrup=tions of all kinds so that I have not been able to think of what I ~~have~~ have been writing.

Before I send this I will try to see you *alone* & have a quiet & *uninterrupted* chat.

George

Sabbath P.M.
December 11. 59

Marie:-

Another week - another mail - *no* letters. not *one*. I got a "couple" of papers from Cyrus, Mailed in November, & a couple of the "News" - and a Nov. *Atlantic* sent by Delos Hawkins. *No Letters*.

Where is Marie? Cyrus, who has always written me once in two weeks & whom I have not heard from since I left Boston? My Father? Brothers & Sisters? George Chown? & Delos?

Uncle Samuel - youre *mean*! Please keep account of the letters you write & in each letter ~~write~~ give ~~to~~ me a list of them. I want to know how many I lose

It is quite probable that some of Mine are lost too

Since I came here I have written you as follows Oct 30th Nov 8th, 13th, 20th 30th & Dec 7th, six in All

How many did you send to Pekin that I did not get?

From the "News" I see that Croffut has *left* - sold out to Uriah Thomas - Where has he gone? I wrote a short line to him last week supposing him still at *St A.*

He is a "dear good boy" as Ada used to say of him, isnt he? He is so generous, outspoken & genial. I like him."

My friends ~~in~~ at the "Falls" how they have *scattered*. You know I never *claimed* *many*. Four people in Illinois, Mr & Mrs Loomis in New York, Ada in Missouri & Croffut? And I am as far away as Any of them - I might as well be in the Indias as here

The Atlantic I have just looked in; the Ministers wooing is not finished I see, for its advertised in the Dec Nos Table of Contents

The professor has deteriorated I think, couldnt I write as well as that if I would try - I could *think* a vast deal better but alas for *words*, but the Song of Iris is beautiful

I will say something of the Boston papers by & by - this *evening*.

It is a really beautiful day to day, Friday & Saturday were very fine too, warm enough for September, sunshine by day, & moonlit nights The air clear as winter & soft as summer

Evening. — Still holy Sabbath eve how often have I met you of a Sabbath night - Are you thinking of me now? Perhaps you are writing to ~~you~~ me now. Perhaps - the thought makes me shudder - a blinding choking feeling as though a great iron hand were crushing life & soul; - Aye perhaps - for we know not what another day has in store for us. and a few weeks - how much may ~~to~~ be crowded in them - and it is six of them - this evening since you wrote the last letter that I have got - We stop here, on an average, thirty years, - two hundred and fifty times six weeks - Two hundred forty nine white globes in an urn; with one black one. We draw one of these little drops for each forty two days; blinded - and we know not till it touches our palm. whether it is life or death.

Six weeks. what have you drawn? I will not for I dare not think it is anything but a bright glittering that *most glorious* of songs. Sandalphon he felt ashamed of it and accused himself of *weakness* over it, ever unsatisfied, unquiet, seeking for what is beyond the range of human possibility?

ruby.. radiant with life and health (though that is red & not white)

Are you and yours *well*, quite well? Oh I hope so.. You cannot feel (unless *my* letters are lost too) *how* anxiously I am waiting to hear from you, not for what I *know* the letters would contain, not so much to read again the blessed *assurances* that you love me, as to *know* that you and yours (*ours*?) are living well & happy. *That* is *first*, & next— that you love me.

Isnt it foolish?— Below *a man's* dignity to admit that *love* is as *life*? Wont you *despise* me, for it?

I have read a little in the Atlantic & the Boston papers. It did not bring pleasing, satisfying thoughts.. *Why* was not I made like them? How far the appreciation of a fine thought

-the sensitiveness of the poet or artist -and the longing (I can hardly dignify it by the name ambition) to *be* *as* they, is ahead of the power to *do* what they have. Is it not *cruel*, thus to be given the feeling of a fine nature, and with it, the weakness in Mentality of the rudest boor? I can never read a lecture, a sermon or essay of marked ability without feeling somewhat - perhaps *all* - of the aspiration, the exaltation & fire of the author - ~~Sometimes~~ I have been I am tempted at such a time to take up a pen - I have done so; the half formed thoughts curdled, clouded, faded - a dead blank. Tempt me no more Hope! Point not upward - that way is not for me.

Ignorance & imbecility, yoked with sensitiveness & unholy, unquiet yearnings for earthly immortality. Why was it thus? How many there are too who can say the same.

Do you recollect in Gray's Elegy

"Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
"Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire
"Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed
"Or waked to extacy the living lyre. —
"But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
"Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll:
"Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
"And froze the genial current of the soul —

Another thing I think of too

"And the legend I feel is a part
"Of the hunger and thirst of the heart
"The frenzy and fire of the brain —
"That grasps *at* the fruitage forbidden
"The golden pomegranates of Eden
"To quiet its fervor & pain"

I was going to write more - it is too *sad*, I cannot.

Yet is it not as well? Was ever ambition satisfied? Do you not suppose that when Longfellow wrote

Wednesday Dec 14. 3 P.M.

Good Evening –

I thought I would have time to write more before now, but – havnt. The regular four sheets will be abbreviated somewhat this time. Yet I am sure you must admit that I have good courage, & faith in the future to scribble as much as I have to you these six weeks past – about a hundred pages note I believe, You know I told you that the first suspicion I had that —— did not love me any more than I did her; was born of her neglect in writing, I'm not using that as an illustration or suggestion – the cases are totally dissimilar – Why did I say anything

about it then? I dont know—
Forgive me "Marie". I have
never spoken her name with
yours I could not now. It
would be—sacrilegious—at least
wicked. I was going to say
that I would have no time
to write except now. "Chores" to
do in the evening & the mail
closes to night; Will tomorrow
bring me a letter from you?

I have taken a moment
now, just before the Spelling
classes come on— "taken" it
via et armis as the book
says, to add a few good-for-nothing
words to this weeks
bundle of love— Love, fragile
ware—volatile breath of
sentiment, lighting for a moment
on some soul driven at bay &
finding refuge in mortal clay.
And then (the Love you understand)
—evanescent as frost work under
ones breath, flies off—a viewless
spirit, only to gain footing &
become concrete i.e. a "true
real love" somewhere else
—Incomprehensible, intangible
love. Your Mother sent
some once to me— All lost
out you— "Secure the shadow
&" she did not heed— didnt
pack safely— should be preserved.
Apple jelly—peach
sauce or cranberry tart."

Does it all lose out
of my letters on the way
I might "do it up" in
"Sorghum" & Ruta Bagas, The
only preserved fruit we have
in Iowa,

Good Night Darling
—soberly, seriously.— God with
you— May He guide & keep
us both." One kiss. Good Even
George

No 17 Rec'd Elk Grove Jan 5. 1860 113
" 33

Bloomington Illinois
Friday Eve. Dec. 16 '59.

George,

Good-evening.

You got two or three letters an hour or two ago didnt you? Say yes, do. I hope for my sake you will hear pretty soon. for I shall get to thinking you a hero. Why — how bravely you bear it! I am so ashamed of myself when I remember how for a whole week my heart went down forty degrees at sight of Papa's face when he came home from the Office and looked such a dolorous "No". And Papa and Mama got to sympathizing with me very deeply and Father dreaded to have the mail come for fear of a disappointment. That was the experience of one week and now for five or six weeks you have heard "nothing from nobody" and yet are as brave as can be — as far as I can see.

A young man has been in this evening who goes to-morrow to Texas on an Engineering and Surveying expedition. After he had gone it was remarked you also was "a wanderer and a vagabond" on the earth, and that you too might be "going to Texas". Father said he wished you would go somewhere in the world, where you could hold communication with the inhabitants thereof. But I trust to-night will set us all right and you will go to sleep with the satisfaction of having rec'd somewhat that gave you reason to hope we with other of your friends are still in the land of the living.

I received Tuesday night a letter sent five days before from Elk Grove. — I am glad you are blessed with such an unlooked for mercy as a decent School House. I would like to go to School there myself if you were to be teacher — that is — I guess so. I am not sure I have reached that point of essential goodness and greatness of character where I would be willing to take my proper stand before you at the foot of the spelling class and among the students of "twice two make," how many? I am a coward, you see. Yet a while longer — and then all masks will be torn away by stern truth, and I shall stand before Him of whom I am afraid just as I am. It is after all something of comfort to know it will be so, for it gives one an unpleasant feeling of insecurity to be playing any part, *necessarily* even, for you must feel that there is something besides *fate* that binds us to act what a better man in us cries out against.

Is it really true you hear no *news* at all — know nothing of the goings-on in the big world outside of your Cage? Don't you think to-day, in mind, as one to be given in history as

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a day of *glory* to *four*, and a day of humiliation & and shame for millions — *yourself* among the rest? The *third* great act in the Harper's Ferry Tragedy has been played before an approving audience of thousands, with grand effect, and to-night Heaven greets with applause the successful actors. — Ah! how much care is lifted from the hearts of many friends and relatives, many right-hearted and many Christian people as this day goes out into the past. We may thank God for it but also thank Him that it is gone.

You said your landlord took the Era. He may have subscribed for it but impossible he should ever get it.

We are not very well, at home I regret to inform you. I might make a long entry of divers woes and complaints from which various members of our family are suffering but I forbear mentioning only a few of the worst. Mother is sadly off still, can scarcely eat without paying the dear price of great pain. Grand-ma is not nearly so well and suffers greatly from real and fancied evils Chick is sick with scarlet fever. I will go no farther.

Saturday night.

Good evening, George. I left you with a groan but not so I seek you to-night. Pet has seemed rather better to-day and we hope he will get along now without trouble, though he moans sadly in his sleep this evening. He has not been so very sick as children often are with this disease but he has been and is pretty sick.

Mama we hope will prove this day better than any she has lived for four weeks — we cannot tell, however, until it is several hours later. Grand-ma is about the same as last evening. I am _better_ and Papa is well enough to have gone out on a rainy dark night somewhere.

Now — how do _you_ do! The wind is rising and I am lonely. Ah! foolish maiden, to sigh for the company of one buried in deepest solitude in the deep snows and dark clouds of _nowhere_. I hope tomorrow may give you rest. It is exceeding tiresome to work seven days out of seven. Is it pleasant where you are! I hope so. On a winters night it doesn't matter much what is going on without provided it be bright within - indeed I think a hard storm adds to the comfort of a fireside, if there are no whisperings of the heart that the door is closed against one that we would have in. — The household is abed. Good night.

God with you, Dearest.

Marie.

Sunday morning.

It is snowing — the first real snow-storm of the season. Yesterday sleighs were out for the first time this winter. We have had the finest weather all the Fall and through this month, scarcely colder than a pleasant October day in Minnesota. How strange 'twould seem to go back to thirty degrees below zero again. Last Winter's snow-storms, which £ gave us two or three feet at once, and then, high winds and blinding clouds of snow and sleet, seems a dream; hardly more real than a visit to the Arctic Regions seems after one has read Dr. Kane. The blue Hills which were our only friends — save two or three —

for many months do not thus fade away, but more and more vividly do they stand forth.

Why do we sigh and cry to look again when we have seen glory and beauty, as if they were not more real and enduring in the mind that has once beheld them than written on Earth and Sky! How we fly away from ourselves, who can contain the whole, to look at parts and particles.

Father has just returned from morning services. His sermon was received with great favor, he says —. He is liked ever so much by his society, which numbers some over sixty. The congregation is over two hundred, usually. Our Choir is something extraordinary of its kind. We have twenty singers and for accompaniment a flute a violin, base viol and Meladeon. Enough, you see to make a noise where they give forth music or not. — Most decided opposition is offered by other Christians to the ~~Phea~~ Phoenix Hall movement, as a matter of course. But being entirely let alone they may grow tired of fighting without any help.

I have been again looking at your letter. I am glad you *cannot* get so lonesome as you used to, and that you are better company for yourself. I do not believe many people know how blessed it is at times to leave the world and be alone. I do not know what a feeling of real discontentedness and lonesomeness is — perhaps I ought rather to say, if it were not for you I should not know such feelings — but you are *nobody* as other people are counted; as I could never be away from Him who is Omnipresent, so next to Him I would not fly from you. — — Here you tell me what I used to seem to be to you. Oh! fie — I supposed you were a man of more penetration than to look at such an ordinary child in such a way. I account for it in this way — I was Mr. & Mrs. Ames girl — "necessarily there must be something about her to notice — what is it?

She is very still — does not say much — because she *thinks*, no doubt. I will see — She can understand what I am talking of — She can talk of one or two books — (wonderful, hearing nothing but talks and reading more than most girls can afford to do) Now I have found out she is able to write letters not like other girls letters — (yes, long sermons or something of the sort I having been brought up on sermons and having beside an aptitude for *preaching*.) She has not heart I conclude because she uses no words of endearment and does not sign her name, "Yours in *eternal* friendship".

She has *head* because she can quote Emerson an use others ideas. — Very *true* in some things were your last year opinions of me — I have *not* an overabundance of what is called heart — not so much as women are supposed to have — I am indeed critical and overbearing toward the world in general; and I am *exceeding* aristocratic by nature — so much so that I have to call into action a better nature I possess before I can take notice of common humanity — not because their clothes are not good dont get me worse than I am.

I dislike very much to touch your *Marie* with such dark spots of earth — but I get so humiliated every letter I get by your false estimate of me that I must — to do you justice. I would rather you would *now* think justly than have a *great* awakening by and by. At any rate — what heart I have is yours, and sometimes I fancy I am all heart when I think of you. Good bye a little while. I must to Sunday School. —

Sunday Eve.

I am sorry I have written as I have. It seems like slandering one you love; and you may think it rather presuming to tell ~~as~~ you you have formed wrong estimates when I know not what they are. Oh! I do wish you were here. I will take back every thing I have said about contentment and confess I am sick at heart. Fudge — so I *won't*. —

You want to know what I am

doing and reading. Nothing
in particular. We have a
Girl who somewhat takes my
place in the Kitchen. At present
my time is mostly employed in
looking after sick folks and
trying to amuse Willie, who is
extremely fussy. I have been
reading, I told you "The Professor".
The love part dont suit me.
They are awfully cool and
Jane-ists. They are represented
as being but volcanoes inside
until the time is come for the
breaking out of the fire that is
within, then they are altogether
too tame — it is all settled
in five minutes and they are
settled down into the calm
passionless life of husband &
wife. Oh! I like a due degree
of Calmness — especially if

Charley be present — and husband and wife is not a relation that I think of as very prosy and dull, but it is not true to my own experience that there are no tumultuous heart-throbbings, no wild joy that defies all law and order no deep silence too sacred to be broken by sober speech taking thought for worldly things. They all do err sadly. Charlotte Bronte and Harriet Stowe are not ~~too~~ wise yet - quite. Emerson and Shakespeare are the only ones who can talk of love — save George & Serena.

I have been reading too a little of Lamb. Not very well, do I like him. He is too trifling in what I have seen. He goes far round and deals in words.

I have read in history the life of Romulus. I have read and worshiped Emerson.

Have not yet seen the Atlantic? Well - Holmes doesn't do much though he finishes very prettily - leaving out the babies I never want those in a story. I dont like it that Little Boston was not loved more than the young Marylander by Iris - and Cannot see in what Iris was so great a genius - she only ~~a~~ made strange figures and wrote a few verses and was named Rain bow.

I must leave you a little while longer - I shall hear in a day or two. Forgive me and love me, wont you.

Good-bye

Serena.

Monday. 19.

My dear George — I thought to have sent my letter without saying more but I neglected to give it to Papa this morning to carry to the office. I am *glad* to have an excuse for saying again to-day —— the same thing I said yesterday, I suppose. Do you get tired hearing it! I never get tired of hearing *you* say "Marie, I love you". It means a great deal more to me in your last letter than it did in your first. When shall we get past this epoch in our lives — ever! Yes, we shall grow to *say* loving *words* less than now I believe, but loving *deeds* will take their place and we shall not miss them. — You ask me if I

Care not for what Mr. Morse and our friends in St Anthony please to say of you and me. Ah! if it gives them pleasure to talk of our affairs, "Let them rail". Nothing care I for their idle words.

I am always proud though to hear my name spoken of with your name.

Father is reading, as I write, Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner". What do you do evenings? Do you _talk_ to Mr. & Mrs. Styles? I have heard nothing that speaks intelligibly of Cyrus in a long time. He sends me papers occasionally, I got one the other day, and it tells me Fanny Kemble is reading in Boston now. I think I would give more to hear her read than to see or hear anything else in the whole world.

I never shall feel content that we left Boston without hearing any music or seeing any acting. We were there the wrong six months in the year. I am thankful for so much and I do not _measure_ the blessing, neither compare it with any other blessing that _might have been_. — Dont you hear from your mother at all — alas I forget you hear _nothing_.

You must by this time have got the Atlantic which finishes the "Ministers Wooing". Isn't Mrs. Stowe a little too common place? Her story, in its ending, only differs from common novels, in her extraordinary power to give _dress_ & and _life_ to what in others is tiresome and old. James was a sailor — he was drowned — his Lady love was in almost lost to him forever when he suddenly returned from among the dead to create a great fuss which should end in great happiness, a wedding and so forth. Isn't it wonderful — the book and the author's power. These little things are not worth mentioning and I seldom think of them.

Will your letter come this time as soon as last time. Will it say ever so much to me, and may I know you have heard from me — and will you help me be good and bear myself bravely through all hours of sickness and of health.

I thank God for you and pray to be soon with you, when the snow is gone and Spring come. Good-bye till next Thursday —

Serena.

Elk Grove Hancock Co Iowa
Friday Dec 16th 1859 3 A.M.

Marie:-

Good Morning? No. but "Sweet sleep to you" I hope youre not up yet. What one of a thousand things shall I say first Thank you! Thank You!! *Thank* You!!! comes first to my lips - silence broken at last - how dear are the words that I hear again, Then *next* - I am with you in *sorrow* - Your Mother is sick, very sick" I love her - through and beyond *you*, I see in her, those things for which I love you, how can I help loving her. To *me* - never *Mother*, but a dear Elder sister & friend, I *have* a *Mother*. There can never be to me, an*other*. She was better when you finished your letter or you would have told me — And what I wrote in the letter I sent yesterday was no prophetic dream. No. No. It cannot be. I cannot have it otherwise than that she is well. God grant it is so!

Oh *how* dear *was* that letter to me. From Nov 8th to Dec 15th — not to hear from you. I knew you had written, I did not *fear* (only that you were sick) or doubt yet 'twas pain to wait so long "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick" says proverbs. Oh *what* joy once more to meet you face to face, heart to heart, soul to soul as it has ever been with us in our *letters*. Could I have said a thousand things, *all at once* to you I would have done so Did you not *hear* as '*Jane*' did your name spoken ~~by~~ in the winds in tones that *you* could not mistake?

You spake of that in this letter — I have read it often. It always seemed to me the expression of through *inspired* pen, of the most intense of the passions of the soul in its *deepest* intensest form ×

It was the Death Agony of that which *was* *stronger than* *mortal* Life — I can only think of one comparison — it was when the "vail of the temple was rent in twain" & when darkness covered the heavens even till the ninth hour.

"*Jane, Jane. Jane*" — and like an electric thrill, she felt it all & "answering spake",

There is no *picture*, no scene in Tragedy, nothing else written here on Earth which *so* vividly paints the (not *passion of the soul* or being.) but the *passion* — in which —

all else. heart & soul is last—swallowed up. Ah Charlotte sad & lonely as was your life here—You have now friends—friends ever-more, through all the countless myriads of cycles of—Time was I going to say? No not that but—?

Not in that mood, but as heart=felt (No I will not say as intense for nothing but a death struggle can be so)—as earnestly & as truly in my heart, I spoke your name with thanks—Thanks to our Heavenly Father & to you that I was so blessed."

I was going to write last night, but could get no word even edge-wise on the paper between the squalls (Domestic squalls Dear?) of the darling Baby—"Inky, pinky rosey posey. Mudders darling—bless um lit-tle—heart—so he might" Baby squalling & letter writing—incompatible!

This day (Dec 16th) was appointed for the execution of Brown's confederates— I have not heard whether Brown was executed the 2d instant or not, though from your letter I conclude that he *was* unless rescued. *Here* we are alone, there is are not people enough to raise that ~~popular~~ excitement & feeling which is born of *crowds* & rubbing together of individual minds. The *nerves* of society do not reach *us* — What is revealed to us in Newspapers seems like a Post-Mortem Examination, rather than vital fact; & we hardly realize that there *can* be any reality in the outbreak at Harpers Ferry, or if there *is*— that there can be excitement following.

So all that I have *felt* or *thought* on the subject has been

in coolness— and as *one* person— I
have not borrowed from any popular
feeling. You know I said I am not
a "Radical Abolitionist"— I am *as*
W.B.C. might say "apathetic"—

Even if I possessed the heroism
& moral courage of John Brown
I should not have done what he
did.— I could never have come to
a conclusion that it were best
for me to throw away my life so
cheaply as such a foray would
be sure to do't. if I earnestly wished
to bring about the abolition of
Slavery. The attempt could but
result in failure, or if successful
it could only be through a chapter
of the most horrible & bloody
brutality— You or I living in a
Southern State could hardly feel that
we were responsible for the evils
of Slavery & would hardly like
to be included in an indiscriminate slaughter." Yet perhaps
John Brown *was* right, not
insane—but clearly tracing
cause & effect; & gave himself
a sacrifice, that the principles
he loved might be the sooner
Established on Earth. If all
men in the north had the soul
that John Brown *has* Slavery
could not exist an hour.

As an example of cool intrepidity, uprightness & firmness in the
consciousness of having done *right*
in the sight of God, he *has* no equal

Is there a *man* that puts the
chain around his brother's neck—
who in the hour of peril— or
afterward when the last *hope*
dies out, could stand up as John
Brown did? Not *one*!

I *think* his scheme was rash
& will be productive of no good

Should it be otherwise I would

rejoice — should it have the effect to *fix* public sentiment more strongly against Human Slavery & to inspire *others* with that courage which God gave him to go through all. it *will* do good.

I respect & honor him as a Hero, a patriot & a Christian. he is a vile knave & *traitor*, only because he did not succeed.

I wonder not at his course The history of his life for five years *past* is sufficient explanation.

God grant that the sacrifice of such a noble life has not been in vain.

Adieu for a little time I can write no More this Morning — Good Morning — I see you are rubbing open your eyes. — Yes, *daylight* if you please — time little girls were up. Good Morning & good bye to you

George

Written between 1st & 2d sheets,

Ah indeed! Here's a choice bit, a savory morsel to roll under my tongue – here's a chance to exhibit ~~talant~~ talent & to lecture you.

I shall not let slip such a chance I assure you. Oh no! The complaint is laid in as follows. in which by the way you have turned States Evidence against yourself – informer against your own practices – upon complaint however of another. How kind, how self sacrificing thus to put yourself in the lion's jaws.

Crime – burning letters because you blot 'em,

Now then "Mr Oppressive Erudition proceed with your castigation – there's a fair field before you – a chance to win laurels & "your own Dear" the choice subject of criticism

"Respected Madam" — (Ahem — doesnt that commence beautifully — with what a delicate blending of polite severity & cultivated — I might say polished deference — with what subtile & delicate tact does the critic commence. The distance and respectful manner, suggestive of the past, when we were strangers — the subject (criticizing your actions) an epitome of the present (underlying appearances always of course) and the use of the term Madam. at once comprehensive & ~~phro~~ prophetic of the future — the future when we shall Miss you no more, from our (Editorially speaking) heart & hearth — or as defined in Legal Notices of "Beware" — A mensa et thoro. Ah Most profound critic; your pen seems inspired to pierce the depths of the past and from the dark waters of oblivion to drag up with its ~~p~~ barbed point, (the pen's point of course) the forgotten "blind eels" of "a~~n~~ former generation" (Credited to D. Webster)

And with scimetar edge of flashing light to sever the curtain which limits our vision & bare to our wondering gaze the misty glories of a far off & unseen future" (warranted original)

To proceed —

Respected Madam: — It is with feelings of the most profound regret, that, most unwillingly I am compelled to address you upon a subject." Ahem — the first part is right, powerful, courteous, striking & original — I know it is, I have known it for a long time. It was early implanted in my childish mind, that the first part of the above sentence was and is ever original

& unhackneyed - so for I am right beyond that I am Wright - just as I told you in my last. when I undertake to write a brilliant thing my pen always makes in "letters large than plainest might read the word - Stupidity!

So I see I shall break down in my criticism" My respects to your Mother

Cecily, between ourselves, I am sorry - so sorry - that you let one word - one mark or even one ~~f~~ blot that you have made, go to feed the fire. It is a dear (in more senses than one) kind of fuel.

Could you have seen me this week? - A blot - only so that it came from you, would have been precious indeed, Save them, Save them

I doubt not it may be better for you x, an excellent discipline may be, to let nothing leave your hands till it is finished. But just think of me! I will take the blots as refuse if you say so, but please allow me to keep such rubbish x

4th

Friday P.m. Dec 16th

In the school room – my half dozen dirty children all around me. How happy they are – I rather like it, this teaching – and the little ones are so honest innocent & frank. They are so near the beginning of educa=tion that one may see them grow daily in knowledge. By & by they will get stupid. Bless the little ones, & may they all have mothers who will wash their faces & cure them of the ______ "contagious inflammatory disease of the cuticle" isnt it they call it?

I love 'em even if they are dirty. This is the third week, & so far I have had no occasion to correct or speak harshly to one of them. Isnt that nice? They do just *what* I tell them. *when* I tell them & *as* I tell them. I think they like me. Your picture is in my desk — I think they *mind* me better because you are near me. — Helps me keep school eh. I get the *pay* for it though, which is supposed to be the mainspring of action. —

Tuesday 4.35 P.m.

This sheet *called* the *fourth* is *seventh* in reality. I have written *three* more at home since I left off above last Friday —

— Good Evening — I am *glad* to see you — Your two pictures are open before me. Those and a letter from you would be *next* to *seeing* you. Yet it's a *wide* step between. Literally these are the "*nearest* 'shadow'" of your self. To day for a moment I looked in a number of the Atlantic & read for the first time the scene which in one of your letters you criticised as being unnatural. It is when the *news* Came to Mrs Marvyn of James death or rather the scene between *her* & Mary afterward.

I do not think it *wholly* natural. & yet we can hardly appreciate, living in *these* days how universal & *unquestioned* was the belief in puritan New England, that those things (which *She* so abhorred & condemned) were positive facts

From infancy she had been taught to believe the doctrine of endless punishment, fore=ordination & election." We do not always *know* what we *do* believe, Almost all of us are *educated* to things, which in the light of those guides that God has planted within us, exercised soberly, would appear most absurd & monstrous." Yet to us now those same absurdities are realities —they have *grown* to us, as the idolatrous "Fakeer's" fingers grow to his palm, in the course of years of penance. Nor do I believe that *Nature* which in itself is *at* first always *true*, can after years of mis-education assert its supremacy—& believe only what *is* true, reasonable & right, any more than by an exercise of the *will*, the converted Hindoo can open his hands as God intended he *should* do,

A sudden blow—a great sorrow—a deadly shock—may sometimes come between the soul & its educated belief like a blade of steel

5th

At Home. Sabbath Eve
Dec ~~2~~18th 1859

Serena— It is a long time since I have written that name in a letter to you. It reminds me of those days last Summer —Sabbaths when I used to call you by that name— —I remember May day & then again two weeks after. and— —several others. Those are blessed Memories, & have done more to make the Sabbath a Holy day to me than all the preaching I ever heard —I say it in sorrow, yet tis the truth. Eighteen Sundays ago,— the grove— the long path with a tree at one end, and a bit of white stone with a name & date, at the other.

– between which, solemnly pledged
we walk together. You remember
I told you I couldn't keep step
with a woman, but we will
learn to walk together yet.

Eighteen Sundays – How they
have sped – I can hardly think
of anything I have done since,
yet I have been pretty busy.

I have heard (by papers) from
Cyrus, so I know he is yet in
Boston. The piece which I
enclose with this, (perhaps I
commenced this sheet with
"Serena" in consequence) was
from him & the words at the
~~top~~ beginning of the article are his.

The marks & marginal notes
are mine, and the piece is mine
also, I shall ask for it sometime
– I remember our discussion
on the intrinsic character of
the name: Serena & Marie.
& I smile as I compare my
Serena (of that time) with
the printed one here before me.
– Dont blush when you read it
– the authoress perhaps never
thought of you when she wrote
it – I fancy it made Cyrus
laugh though, as he compared
my accounts of you, (he has
only known you as Serena)
with Mrs Mowatt's ideal.

They Dont differ widely;

Evening:–

I cannot think of anything
to say. There's so much noise that
it scares all my timid thoughts
– Here is your letter, open before
me. I will see if from that, which
brought to me more joy than any
thing else since August 14th.
I cannot "draw inspiration" &
write something passable. I am
always sorry that I cannot

answer letters when I first read
them, for lack of time & opportunity

The night before I got this
letter, I went to the Post Office
(in my sleep,) three times, after
letters, I dont remember where
the Post Office was, but it was
in some large place, I did
not expect a letter from you at
Elk Grove until that week ~~t~~ as
there was not time for mine to
go & yours to come before.

I presume all your letters
directed to Forest City are
lost or perhaps read by some
one else. There seems to be
fault at the Forest City Office
for all letters, from West & North
as well as East. have ~~got~~ been lost
& the mails have come regularly
& brought letters for other people

If you have kept account of
these, please tell me how many

you have written since I last saw you. Or since Oct 1st."

Has your Mother ever written me?

Thursday next I shall hear from you again, - To night you are thinking of me, Are you not? Your Mother - well or ill? I wish that thoughts could carry reliable news"

I was speaking of dreaming - It is a little singular that all those people I love most & who occupy most my waking thoughts, I never visit in sleep. Cyrus was telling me last summer ~~that~~ it was the same with him, I don't know but it is common, but it seems singular.

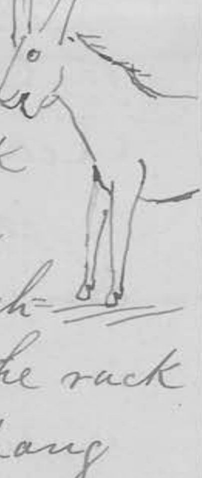
I could not help thinking while reading this letter of yours for the first time, what a wide difference there yet is between us. "It seemed to me that I had forgotten all the good I ever knew." You are where you cannot forget, if you would — All about you, in every day and hour of your life, in all things you do or see, is the spirit of that living loving Christianity, the influence of which has made you what you are.

You wrong those whom you call by the holy names of Father And Mother, every time you say that I "help" you through toil + sadness, so much."

What would that help be worth had not they already taught you how to be strong in yourself — and how to depend on One who is "Able to save"?

On the fourth page (I am writing a regular review as of old, you see) you speak of my doing chores as a set-off against my apetite

I have not done them but a few days since I have been in Elk Grove + perhaps may not, there has been a couple of young men ~~have been~~ there, + I have got somewhat interested in my studies, so it is doubtful whether I shall decend to plebean pursuits this winter. I have however done the chores four or five days. I have ridden the donkeys to water + milked the cows. I can never think of the mules (they call them rabbits here) without laughing. When I put hay in the rack before them — to see them hang back at the ends of their halters — the apparent surprise + fear, which



they put on, is enough to convulse one, How their eyes project, & their ears & fore feet - how they stand out in front,

You ask some questions here - I have anticipated & answered some of them,

They get mails there once a week - On Thursday, It is about 8 miles South East from Forest City, 8 Miles nearer civil=ization (by the road) but 8 miles further for letters, Our Mails come from the west, All the coaxing will not persuade the Post Masters at Dubuque & Cedar Falls to send our Mail by the direct route, which would bring our letters a week sooner - The Mail goes right-on West until it gets to the Des Moines River, thence up the River 75 or 100 Miles, Then directly East across the bleak open prairie, where there is not a single house, 40 miles to Forest City & thence to Elk Grove & 24 miles beyond to Mason City, which is almost back to Cedar Falls where the same mail started from, some 2 weeks before. "Haow shiftless!"

You speak of Charlotte Bronte – It awakens thoughts & feelings which no other name but your own can – Strange that the memory of that sad suffering woman should ever & always be such a living power in the hearts of all who knew her. A thousand years from now I shall expect to see her writings "familiar as household words." There is that in them which must make them immortal

Do we have meetings in Forest City?
Yes. & I am tempted to say *more's* the *pity* — A *Methodist* Revival is in progress — a back-woods Methodist Revival, of the type of forty years ago. I hope it will do them good, for I honestly believe there is as much need of *true* moral influence here as in any place I was ever in. Methodism seems to be necessary for some people — it is the only thing that will reach them, ~~It~~ but to me a Methodist revival is as painful & disgusting a scene as I ever witnessed

The worshipping of idols & burning of widows could scarcely be more repulsive to me.

Ashamed of you? Should I be writing *this* if I were? I *love* you & am *proud* of you, Every bit of it.

You ask to be forgiven: For what? That sometimes you knew no thought but of me,"

Forgive you for a thing which is dearer, better & stronger & my very Life? Forgive you for what of all things makes me love you *most*? Forgive you for the blessedest words you ever spoke? *No* of *course not*!

Your Father *has* begun to ~~write~~ a letter to me. I hope *he will finish it*, and — leave it "to be continued" If I can only get him to write to me perhaps I shall *drop* you.

~~It~~ I shall never forget the first evening I visited at your house, now almost two years ago," — It seemed to me that if I had had such influences to grow up under as you had, that I might have "been somebody" – I never could talk with your Father without feeling & I hope being better for it.

There is an argument in such a thing, that weighs more than all the assertions or proofs to the contrary, in regard to the good or bad that is in a man.

Some have the power to impress on others, for the time being, their own character, I think your Father has.

You came near saying that you wanted to see me. Oh you need not be so careful, I know you want to see me, – We shall as surely meet, as two little bits of wood on still water, are.

Well, I must say good night – I hope you are well – I hope all your people are well – My Love to them, God bless you all.

George

No 32
" 16

Elk Grove Dec 22, 1859

97

Dec. 7. 1859.

George,

Rather useless to write to you isn't it? Are you ever going to hear from me or anybody again? I am surprised at the fewness of the letters you have got since you were in Somerville. I have written oftener than before though not so long - as many as two a week sometimes. Ah! well - all *right* sometime. I received yours very regularly eight days after you send them. - *I* think that a long, long time, and often between the Wednesdays I get very tired waiting. Cyrus writes too - I have had one letter from him wherein he speaks of getting a letter from you and of leaving me to write to you. Oh what a place is Forest City. "Spring is coming".

A dear letter came from you to-night, and now while every body is in bed and I alone I will speak to you a few minutes.

I have been reading this evening "The Professor" by Charlotte Bronte. A quiet story, very like her other books but not so powerful as either of them.

Does it Es matter much what we say to each other now when "close together"? Are you *quite* sure of being able to *forgive*, pass over - *know* me to be as others and still keep my place in your heart? Do you think we had so much one soul that you could bear with me - my follies and my weaknesses as with your own?

When I think of what you now imagine *Marie* to be and know what you surely must find *Serena* to be I am very sorry and my heart almost fails me. Do I never fear for myself? And think my ideal George differs necessarily from the real man? No never - for *I know* but *you* do not.

It is so hard to write - and yet it is the easiest thing I do. Therefore take for granted that every thing is hard. Yea verily. *One thing* is not hard, but *Marie* I trust has sense enough to keep that to her self to-night. Here comes a struggle - and I have half a mind to prove Marie silly and a sinner, and nowhere near immaculate. When with you I might with great propriety *feel* - say and look all

foolishness imaginable, but Oh!
what a slave pen and ink create.
How queerly words look by broad
day light that moonlight may
have seen - and thus, I sometimes
say, will my words look to a
sober minded - cleared eyed -
sensible man - so I grow ashamed
and add a little to the fire, I
may again to-morrow morning.
I must away - Good night
my love - Ever and always,
what I am now, with God's blessing.
Mariel.

Friday Eve. D. 9.

Give me credit for much self-
denial for I have written to
Charley Hood most all the eve-
ning when I wanted so much
to write to you. - I have
been visiting with a good many
others this afternoon, I started

just as long as I could then excused myself, as best I might without excuse, and walked home in the moon-light to you. I wonder if you love visiting as well as I do?

Are you fond of Society? I confess to a fast growing dislike of general society. Papa and Mama talks to me for its - and when I say "I cannot afford time to stupidly stare at people and ransack creation for some empty speech to call forth a meaningless reply from men and women who left all their sense and thoughts at home when they put on their handsome gowns, as did I," they tell me I am selfish - that if I get no good I ought to be willing to give good. The simple idea of the good I could do sitting with folded hands and dumb tongue and cold heart and critical eye is ridiculous. I cannot feel sympathy for a room full of folks, — they seem all and each to stand aloof from me and mine, — I do not need them neither they me. In a crowd I have no love for those I see as a whole; they are disagreeable; their faces are ugly and I dont *like* them. But take any one of them separate and apart from the rest and let the masks be dropped and soul meet soul and I can love and be glad in them and count them brothers or sisters.

Not any more to-night. Rest in peace away way off. Father and His Angels keep watch over you while my heart blesses you.

Saturday Eve. 10.

I think I am sober enough to laugh — I mean write. Dr. Milliard and his cousin have been here a little while this evening and the Dr. and Papa got to telling *funny* stories and we all being in a funny mood have laughed until we can laugh no more. Let me tell you about Dr. Milliard. He is our *dearest* friend, rather he and his wife are our dearest *friends* in Bloomington We love them best because they are not like most others here — wherein I can scarcely tell, but different — more *congenial* I might say if I did not positively hate the word. An acquaintance of mine who was fond of getting hold of new words and using them regardless of meaning or fitness, asked a friend if such a person had not a very "congenial mind".

The Dr. is a little, black eyed man – his wife is quite large and commanding. He is a queer mixture of a pagan and Christian – entirely original; thinking Emerson the greatest Philosopher living and having read him much unconsciously *living* him a great deal. He is not connected with our Society; and is a Catholic, Congregationalist, Swedenborgianist and several other things all at once – believes as fully in an eternal Devil and the positiveness of evil as in God and good. He has banished, so he says, *conscience* and *duty* from his Dictionary and knows no such things, being all the while religious and very active, busy every minute Sunday, teaching several classes, and is Superintendent of our School.

He thinks forms but shadows; is a Universalist; a Unitarian after Swedenborg and still declares himself nearer Orthodoxy than anything else. He has read very extensively, and is at home anywhere; believes science all a whim, and himself made to think and to create; and knows nothing only that he is. He is just such a man as Emerson might influence to be himself — no doubt he would scorn to be told he was made by Emerson — as I should — but nevertheless I think he was to a great degree. — If I change my mind, as I most assuredly shall, I will tell you wherein!

This evening he got down on his hands and knees and went around the room in quest of a mouse, which had run into the room, laughing like a boy at Papa's joking words and pretty soon jumping up and bowing himself out as dignifiedly as if he never played bo-peep with Mousy.

Yes - this is Saturday night, warm and bright. The moon and Jupiter are trying to outshine each other. Again you are resting from your weeks labors with four little girls, and are with Elsie and Charley. This week, all it has been or may be, is fast gliding forever past - Good-bye to it. Good night to you.

Sunday morning.

I have been taught to think each day sacred in itself, and all hours holy ones, but a quiet Sabbath morning like this, when the sky is flooded with soft sunshine and the whole earth and all nature speaks only of rest and calm, it seems that again the Angels must be singing "Peace on Earth, good will to man".

Evening.

The glory of the morning has passed away but night is with us with the brightness of a full moon and clear stars.

I have spent the evening in reading to Mama, who is still quite sick, not much better as far as we can see though we hope she is really improving. She does not suffer so but seems all the time on the brink of torture.

I have been reading, but to no avail. I read an Essay this forenoon that has made me bless the writer all day. It was very good, and I felt half inclined to quote it all for you. I have not been to meeting today only to the Sunday School this afternoon.

You ask me to tell the news. Oh! dear, what do you mean; about the great fuss our nation is in — the wars in Congress — Illinois wire-working — town gossip — household tactics — personal experience, or what? The news. Another hanging next Friday! this week. Oh! my soul! I am sick, and turn from our Country to I know not where to seek for justice and honor.

Do you not know I would do most anything simply because you desired it? But I cant think of any thing new, because I suppose, I am more interested in something *old*. Dont you get Papers and Letters yit.

I shall come next if I dont hear soon, so unless the mails "get good" expect a *fifth* scholar — a little girl to take lessons in *counting* and making "figgers". — Do you know what I would like best to do to-night! Pet sometimes in the fullness of his heart trys to express to me what he feels, "Now sister — do you want to know how much I love you! "Guess", he will say to me — so I say "a world full". "Oh a

great deal more than that".
"Well the moon and stars full". "A *great* *deal* more than that — *Heaven* full".
& *that* satisfies *him*.

It is late; excuse my letter and if you ever get it be thankful if you can; and Good-bye a little while.

Serena.

No 18
" 34

Recd Elk Grove Jan 12, 1860

Bloomington Illinois
Wednesday Dec. 21. 1859.

George,

What is the use of a good Demon if they stand not by to serve us in an emergency! If I bid mine fly to you bearing "tidings of great joy" to your Genius, who shall convey the message to your soul, and am not obeyed, what am I to do! Perhaps Angels attending one person are not able to leave for so long a distance to go to another. Do Angels count on distances as mortals do! I fancy not. And my Angel must know the way to where you are if he, or she, or it attends me in all my goings out and my comings in.

Listen to night, soul of my love, still all tumultuous feelings and passionate yearnings and see if that in the calm and deep quiet, thou canst not hear a low murmur, as of an Angels voice, saying "All is well — fear not, but be of good cheer."

How many six weeks will there be before you come? not a very great many, for you come with May, do you not? January, February, March, April; four months beside a little of this and I do not know how much of May. Probably nearly four more six weeks. Worse than I thought, but they will wear away, as all weeks are sure to do, bring they joy or bring they sorrow, and if in all that time you do not hear from me I am sure your faith and hope will not wear away, even if the shadow of a feeling of wonder and misgiving has visited your mind connecting for a moment the painful past with the happier present.

You cannot tell how we all mourned last night when your letter brought the same old story of continued silence and isolation.

Papa studied up several plans of getting some word to you but none of them seemed advisable until he thought of sending a letter by way of Dubuque, which he did this morning. — Shall not I go to you and let the letters go where they will? You say will I not despise you for thinking love is as life. Yes — if you confess to me that I am despised because I say it is more than life.

Is not love the all of a true souls life? Not love alone to George or to Marie but love to them to others and to our Father? They tells us "God is Love". ———

Evening.

Only a word — as I would speak to you if you were here before you went up stairs. Can I speak as I would then? I fear I might be seized with my old complaint — standing by your side. I will wish you sweet sleep, pleasant dreams. I never dreamed of ~~you~~ I think, only once, and that was so queer I dare not name it now. — Do you really guess how much I think of you and how much I like you? Sometimes I rather rejoice to think you can know nothing about it. Emerson says when you are away I am all memory. Oh! no. [illegible] not right. Serena

1st

At Home. Saturday Night
Dec. 24th 1859

Marie:-

Good Evening - Saturday night - Christmas Eve. All at once, as I sat down to write something in the way of an answer to *two* letters (bless=ings on them) that came the day before yesterday. The days of separation are over. Sad weary lonesome days they were. What shall I say - *Unworthy* is the only word. Unworthy? Who & for what? Poor *I*. Unwor=thy of such love. Unworthy to receive such letters. Unworthy of *you*. What a sad, sad contrast.

Oh Marie - dearest - you do not know me as I *am* - How poor foolish, weak, *base*, I am. Hardly less strong than my love for you - is the conviction, that I *ought* (for *your* happiness through life) to say farewell to you.

You will be so disappointed - *I am not indeed what you think* me. *Marie* - you start, you tremble at the thought, the mere *mention* of the words "Good Bye".

I *could not* say them if I tried My very *weakness* & *baseness* forbid.

You deserve *better* than I am - but Oh I *love* you - *love* *you* - as my very *life*.

May God in *His* infinite mercy grant that it shall prove for the best, that you love *me* too.

But Oh darling I *fear* - I *fear*." I never thought you foolish, but in that one thing - *Why* did you not love a "Some=*body*"? Oh Marie - It is *too bad*! I wish —— "Father have *mercy on me* for what I would say." - All may yet be well.

I was going to write pleasant things this eve. but I have made a sad commencement. Can I not tear the bitter rebellious thoughts from out my heart & brain, they poison my blood, with every pulsation & poison all I say or do.

Forgive me - Forgive me - I *will* be a good boy hereafter."

Christmas Eve, 1857. in the town of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Do you remember it? It seems but a step back on that road where we will never go again Crooked as is the path, we can see it all, every turn, every winding.

We reckon this an anniversary do we not? Two years since our first acquaintance began. There is a vivid picture now before me of a room & the contents thereof where I *saw* you & heard your name called as "Our daughter". It doesn't seem like the same room where I ~~saw~~ saw you several times afterward I remember it as being "turned around" — that is, with the outside door fronting the *South* instead of *North* as it really did. I could place a chair on the very spot (*to an inch*), where one *was* placed for me at that time I remember a girl — perhaps she might have been 14 or 15 years old, certainly not *17* & more (as she really was) — sitting on the front side of the room (though it *seemed* to be on the back side of the room, for as I said the *room was* "turned around") & keeping quite in the back *ground* with herself. You *remember* how she looked to me? It makes me laugh now to *think* of it & I say to myself "How *could* you?". I do not see your face now at all — Through it as a transparency I see only *you*

- And there was a little boy baby, — just now he is in my brain. I feel him, coming out of other room with his books, and showing them to Mr Chowen, whose time he mostly monopolized. There are large apples too thereabout, rich, juicy + generous, and the quere - "Another Apple?" meets with an unequivocal affirmative from me.

"'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour"

It seemed to me that I heard more good things that evening than in all my life before

I was hungry + thirsty, tired + homeless — There I found the green grass + fresh water, the rest + shelter. It seemed that when I stepped into that room + was whirled round + round in it till finally it settled down

with its front door toward the South
- I passed out from the world I had
for years lived in, & back on
third Street in Minneapolis, discov=
=ered the portals of the real Utopia
— And when we walked home, I remem
=ber the warmth inside - the kindling
up of the fires of our better nature
- how new, how good it seemed to see
real live souls, at large, perfectly
free - not even with blinders on.

I did was not ~~use to~~ be happy in
those times, What I knew of it once
I had forgot x As I afterward told
you I was acquainted with not
one, I never was acquainted with
any one until you wrote letters
to me. & since then I am getting
acquainted with my own folks
- and dear good folks they are too.

Cyrus told me once that I was
more acquainted with you - or that
we were better acquainted (we
meaning you & I) by our letters
than we would have been if you had
staid in Minneapolis - That was
in July last I think,

I think he was right. If your
Mother had staid perhaps it might
have been otherwise, but after you
left that house I felt like a
stranger, - I used to look at the
house wistfully, as I passed, long
after its tenants had deserted it.

They (house as well as people)
were all strangers to me at Mr
Browns & I used to hate & fear
strangers & so I increased the number
& the dread of them,

Now you have changed me in
that particular, Now I neither dis=
=like or dread strangers - but I
am getting a profound disrespect
for them, particularly if they are
at all distinguished, have titles
& pedigree or hold Offices of "trust or profit"

-*so many* I have seen of these *celebrities* - that "burst upon our vision" with a great "flourish of trumpets" who wouldn't bear close acquaintance without betraying the inner *brass* deftly covered with golden varnish *that* I intuitively percieve (or *think* I do) the odor of the base metal #while it is "yet afar off"

It is but a *very few* years, (not more than three or four) since almost *every* man seemed to me to be a *marvel* of talent & sagacity - I could only wonder with open mouth & projecting *optics*. *Now* I am almost as far toward the other & infinitely worse extreme - I can hardly take *any* thing for granted of *men*. They *must* *prove* themselves worthy of *respect* before I *can* give it to them. My ideas run off & like (Mahomet's coffin is it?) hang suspended between heaven & earth - just *now* near the earth. * Nothing would be broken by the fall if they should *drop*.

Sabbath & Christmas Day. 1859

"Wish you a merry Christmas" I wonder how many times that is said today? I have not heard it at all. - Last Evening I did not bid you a goodnight - please excuse the neglect?

I have been *at work* today - I found the cellar freezing & *fixed* it. What a time I have had with this cellar - I first banked up the house on the outside & thought the cellar would be *too* warm.

One night the frost paid a visit to the "esculent roots" - The cellar is *not* as large as the house (in plan) & *then* I stuffed the space around the cellar & inside the foundation wall. full with of *hay* (a *ton* more or less) — Then I said "now it *cant* freeze". But it *did* freeze.

Then I covered all the vegetables to the depth of three feet. with old clothes, carpeting, bedding & hay & said again "*It cant freeze now*" and last week it — *froze*; & the potatoes rattle like marbles when handled. — *Some* are left however & today I dug a great hole in the bottom of the cellar & put the roots in it; with & the earth from the hole over the tops of them & *now* I say "if they freeze I shall not be troubled about them until Spring.

"Domestic difficulties"!!! I sat down with your letters in my hand, to answer them but they must wait while I ask you *one* question. — perhaps *more* than one. You know we reckon Dec 24th the anniversary of our first meeting. & now that I think of it. I am in doubt & (as a consequence,) in *trouble*, for I have a *mania* for precision. Did I not see you *before* Dec 24. 1857? Were you not at the celebration of "Forefathers Day" by the "*Sons* of *New* England" at the Cataract House. two years ago this winter & did I not see you there? & was not that *before* Dec 24?

(Your Father was one of the *Speakers* — perhaps he would remem=ber *when* it was.

The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Dec *20th* I believe, Dec 20th 57 came on Sunday & did they meet on Monday Evening or later?

The idea that I am wrong in a *date* annoys me dreadfully.

"Look out for your measures & weights"
"Your *time* — he's as fond as an *Arab*, of *dates*"

I am quite sure I never saw you before the evening when I was first at your house. Was that the night before Christmas? Or Thanksgiving? The "News"-boys were to dine at your house next day.

"Let me not burst in ignorance"
"Help me Cassius or I sink"

And now for your letters. Here it is - beginning Dec 3^d before me. You are afraid of blots - a perfect Miss Ofelia for neatness - I shall say a few words only as I turn over leaf after leaf of your letter. When I read it I might have said something perhaps. These letters came to me an hour before time to dismiss school. when I was busy with my classes. - I guess the scholars thought I was insane - between questions I could only think of the letters & I could not read them then. After school I read them & was

a half hour later at Mr Stiles'
than usual."

Do I dislike Adjectives?
Of the kind referred to. I dislike
to use them ~~yourself~~ *myself*,
-but *not* to hear them from
you. I *know* you have not
been as wasteful of such terms
as most young ladies of 19 or
20 are. *They* *mean* *more* when
you *do* use them. But if the
letters which are now written
could be preserved a few hundred
years & then judged by the terms
of affection used therein, the
antiquarian who deciphered
them would think that the
Millennium ~~had~~ was *past* instead
of *to* *come*. You shall say
"My Dear" & "Dearest" *just* as
much as you please & *from you*

I shall consider that such words mean all that the words can express. I shall be glad to have you use words that I know are an outlet for you~~rs~~.

"So tired"? Yes, I am too. -weary, waiting. The four weeks that were to pass before I could see you again, have lengthened already to fourteen & the half are not done yet. I have twelve weeks in School yet & then I do not know.

By and by - God willing.

Here you talk of John Brown Again - His last hours & heroic death. I got a Boston "Courier" (pro Slavery) from Cyrus the other day. It says the death of Brown was strange - remarkable; that it exhibited a new feature in ~~psycology~~ psychology. - such a man (villain) dying in such a (heroic) manner.

Mr Courier, there is nothing strange at all in it.

You speak of Cyrus - he has written to me. - It seems good to hear of him if not from him. Oh Dear, isn't it mean the way they have acted at this Forest City P.O. - Once there was a package of letters came for me from "Pekin Tazewell Co, Ill" - came for somebody, no one knows whom. They have made a wholesale business of stopping my letters

I shall get letters at Elk Grove I think without trouble.

Evening - I must write all I can in this week's letter to-night. I shall have no time again. The Superintendent of Roads & Bridges wishes me to furnish him a plan & Specification for a Bridge across Lime Creek & have it done by Thursday. - Of course I agreed. So this evening we will make the house merry & spacious as possible. Your Father is meeting with good success in Bloomington is he not? I _know_ where he would have _more_ success than in Bloomington. - ? - In Minneapolis! Even though he _has_ been a "Rascally Register of Deeds" &c &c. there - But when he is as well known in Bloomington, they will like him as well.

Do you never think of the grove on Nicollet Island? And say to your-self - "When will I see it again"?

God willing it will not be _long_ Will it? I asked you something once that perhaps you have answered in some of the last letters.

(When will we say to the world the same we have said alone to each other - "Henceforth we are one - through Life we walk together"?)

Heroes - & Heroism - Only two places Have you no middle grades of excellence? Give you, no man credit for heroism, who has done one noble, brave, self-sacrificing act? Can you not call him very good - very noble, worthy of reverence - and most heroic - who has yet a single stain of earth clinging to him?

No? Where then is the Hero? Has one lived yet - since Him who is called the Man of Sorrows?

Have mercy on us Marie, Sabbath School me Now I love you - more & more, better & better

Did I not tell you once that others might yet thank you, for what you now thank Your Father & Mother for? I have already learned to thank you. Others will as they learn what you are, &

from you, learn how to be better & happier than before."

I have had nine Scholars also & Last week averaged Eight. They are backward. but pretty "bright" and very good — You think I might be a good teacher. Really I am flattered. But you were an apt pupil — And, by the way, did we ever study but one lesson together? — and did not you hear the recitation? Your lesson was a short one but well said. I am sometimes inclined to think that 'twould had have been better for you had you made a mistake & answered the only question I asked, in a manner illy suiting your preceptor.

Do I "give such lessons" to my Scholars. Not quite. Excuse me Dear. The lessons you spoke of were not like that — You are doing well — I am in your class of Sabbath School Scholars & have been for a year. It has done me much good. I am not what I was a year ago.

No other person has ever changed me so. I am beginning to see a reality & earnestness in life, that was all sealed & blank to me until I knew you.

Page after Page I read, till at last comes ~~&~~ the "good Night" not to separate. but only to slumber for you repeat the assurance of Ever presence — Always with me — allways & ever. with me now. here at my side — not as the girl I love — a thousand miles away but as my Dear. ever blessed wife — ~~Her~~ for whom I live — She whose smile is my Heaven here below — whose cheerful voice drives away all anxiety & darkness. the touch of whose gentle hand soothes pain + cools the fevered restless brain - She who is all in all to me. in whose heart is my home always + evermore. Blessings on her.

Here at my side in spirit + will ever now. Can the wildest tales of fancy equal the wealth of one who has the ownership of a true heart - the priceless gem - a true noble woman's love? # Poor in all things else I am rich beyond all computation in the gift of your love - Ket may well say a "great deal more" than Earth Moon + Stars full, is the measure of that which the heart gives when it gives all, Life, earth + the visible Universe seem as but as little specks in that ocean of feeling which is broad as all Space, High as Heaven + infinite as Eternity in duration.

Does that seem extravagant + ill spoken? Perhaps it is, yet I cannot but feel that it is true.

The night wanes — I must up at five tomorrow Morning. Do chores + after breakfast go to my school + reach there by 8 A.M. Enough to do. — How do you do to-night?

Is your Mother better? It is two weeks since you wrote in this letter that she was easier though perhaps not much better.

Ask her if she remembers how Eben Jackson was going to New England once, + what for?

I remember just how she looked when she asked me when Eben was going East. I guess it was the last time I saw her until August last when she would persist in not knowing me. Dear Minneapolis You were pleasant then. Then I loved your Father + liked very much your Mother + Serena was yet something in the *future*

I remember though of sitting at the table in the corner of the room & talking *books* with you & of playing *Chess*. There was where you obtained your Chess education of which you spoke in one of your letters?

Was *that* intended for *me* – as a reminder of bygones?

Ah *well* I must stop writing. Say to your people all – *I love them*. & forget not *Serena* in saying so. I have neglected *her* of late.

When will your Father write to me?

Good Night Dearest.

Sleep – And kind Angels keep guard. In the morning I am with you – at Even, put your hand in mine & we will walk – *The* grove, shall see us & so shall Minneapolis, & now

Good night Good Night, Your Own George

Bloomington, Christmas, 1859.

George,,

A merry Christmas, I wish you. —— If my *wishes* could avail *I* would have a *happy* if not a ~~to~~ merry Christmas, for I would have you here. But then—to-morrow would come—and another day, and still another, and you could not always stay.

This is a glorious day—fit to be the Day of Jubilee for a world. I hope the glory of this blue sky, warm sun-shine and soft air reaches Forest City, filling your soul with somewhat of its own life and gladness. If you were staying in Pekin you would be with us to-day—but I will not think of that, I can imagine you here — wont that do as well? We will make it do.

Evening.

I had to leave to go to Sunday School, and since that Mama, Papa and I have been out to one of our friends, to a sort of Christmas dinner, and I have just returned and now I have not much time to write. I am afraid your letter this week will not be as long as usual. Pity to allow the dead letter Office to know of any diminution of regard, or give it any occasion whereby they can conceive of a falling out. They shall not have the satisfaction of looking over a volume of my letters and reading there the history of a love — beginning with its beginning, and finding a sequel of tears and mourning.

Mother asks me if the fact that you do not get my letters does not make it less easy for me to write. I tell her no — for I always think of you as rather present with me than away off when I am talking with you on paper. Are you quite sure of always being present where your body is, these days!

I got a letter from Cyrus yesterday. He says, in a letter his Mother asks, "What has become of our jolly friend George Wright?" She says she used to hear from you often but now she hears nothing at all. And Cyrus adds, "He treats me so too", but he thinks he can see a reason more plainly than his mother can.

So you see while you are wondering over your friends unusual silence and thinking "is it possible he too is going the way of all friends, he also is growing to believe his place is being filled by another and is hearing nothing from you. It will all be well when once these few months have past.

I am sorry for you, and I am sorry for Cyrus, for he has told me many times, with real sadness, how much you were to him, and what he now expected, and that to no other that he knew would he be willing to give his place in your heart, ~~xx~~ As though I had taken it! If he could only see aright he would know instead of losing he had found love. Would you be willing my love for him could compare with my love for you? Our friend Fowler had a friend he loved as himself – more than himself. better than any body almost — well when he was married he introduced him to his wife, telling her what perfect trust he had in him, and that he was willing she should love him as well as him self, her husband. Now, to James Fowler it might seem a very great act of unselfish friendship, at that time; but if his wife had a bit of sense she would have despised him for his *generous* offer. Friend James got into exceeding great trouble, whether through his *foolishness* or not, it was at any rate through this same friend whom his wife concluded to love *better* than her husband. All I meant to say was that I do not think any one who can compare one liking with another has any *great* liking, and any one who is willing to share equally with a friend, never so dear, the affection of wife or husband has shown sufficiently well that they are not fit for not worthy the love of either husband or wife. Why I asked you such a question was simply that I thought of Cyrus and of his relation to you and of James and his dearest friend and the woeful trouble he caused. —— ——

Ah! me George — since I began writing to you this evening I have had to leave off to wait on Mama, who it seems to me is almost hopelessly sick. Most of the time she says she feels as well as she ever did. Even when I sat down this evening to write she was as well as usual and as she had had one of her dreadful distress spells today we had no fears for to-night. I have told [illegible] you all about her sickness in my letters of the past six weeks.

She is not able to scarcely any thing. Sometimes a mouthful of any thing will throw her into the greatest agony. She was taken sick five weeks ago and though she is so she is up and walks around the house I cannot see she gets any better or that she is likely to soon.

She suffers more than you can conceive of if she eats, having to find relief by expelling the food from her stomache, and if she eats not of course she suffers extremely.

It seems to me I cannot bear it. What could you do — that I cry out so for you! Could you help Mother? —— ——

Monday night.

I had no time to finish my letter last

evening. — Mama is not yet so sick to-day as yesterday — She has eaten a little, very little to-day and all the evening has been in the first stages of the old distress. No one can say _what_ it is. I think she is easier now, she seems asleep. — Chick, who I told you was sick with scarlet fever is getting along nicely, almost well. — Have you got no letter yet —. I have written, at least, eight or nine, you have not received. Did you say, you did not get any letter written to Pekin after I heard of Rolla's death? _Just_ how many I sent from Mass. I cannot tell, but I wrote often and short for sometime before we left there. I have always written since _every_ week and once or twice oftener than that. — May the Fates forbear, and grant that one _little_ word may go from me to you.

I have got every letter you have sent me. — —. It is hard to bear, but after night morning always comes. — Now I must soon bid you you good-bye, I hope for only a week, but be that as it may — what? - nothing.

Croffut has gone East and I hear from Dr. Gell he is going through Yale. Success to him. Yes, I do like him. What a fall the 'News' has had.

I care not for it any more. While Croffut was Editor it seemed only a continuation of Papa's paper, but now ——.

Minnesota seems precious little like the dear home it was a while ago. Go back, that I may love it. I dont know about Mr. Chowen, he says nothing to us.

Excuse me, but I am fearfully extravagant. A sudden change but Papa and Mama are giving me a lecture, because I said "what use to think about wood and gas, 'twill go, and then 'tis gone".

Mama says, Come.
Tuesday.

Good morning. Good-bye.
Marie.

Friday Evening Dec 30th 1859

Marie:-

Good Evening - I am at home, I am with you - You are at home - You are with me, - we are together - we are a thousand miles apart, absurdities & *facts* every one of them.

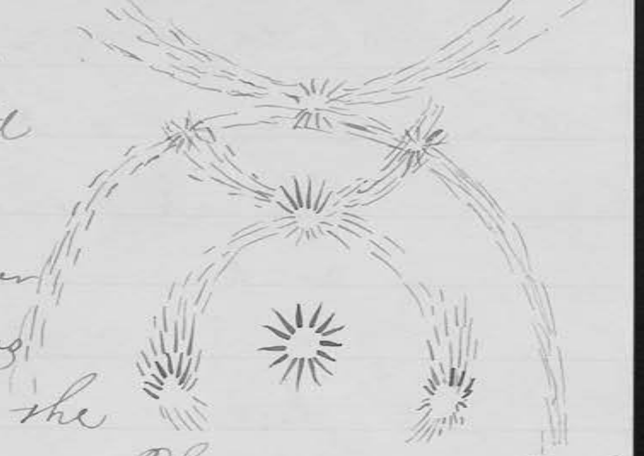
It is *very*, *very* cold - and that means something, on these broad open prairies, different from what it is elsewhere.

To night I walked up from Elk Grove in the face of the keenest of North winds:- sharp points of *cold*, pushed by straight shafts of North Wind, a hundred miles long, every one of them

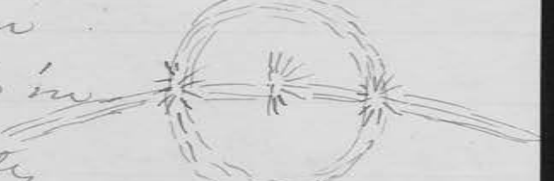
They all said I would *freeze* - I told them I'd do *no* such thing & I *didn't*. But the night _'s_ cold. bitter cold. There is a _glory_ in these fierce wintry skies though; that the New Englanders knows nothing of. It is like the broad glare & red crinkled lightning shafts — and the crashing thunder (now pealing overhead & now rolling away in the distance among the clouds) — in its style of irresistible & celestial grandeur."

All day long & day after day. the Sun sweeps through our Southern sky, with a host of lesser lights — guards & _sentinels_, all around their Sovereign. On either side, a tall column of strange misty light vivid with all its uncertainty, — a veritable "pillar of fire". On the side next the Sun these are almost blood red, & on the opposite side, yellow-ish white. A bright ring almost always encircles the Sun at the same time

— This morning, half an hour after sunrise there was the most brilliant display of mock suns that I ever _saw_. The form was somewhat like the sketch here given. The glories of the Sun were repeated in a dozen different forms.



To night there are regular mock _moons_ too. I never heard of them before. The Moon is in the South West & pretty high up. The circle around the moon is crossed by another large one quite encircling the heavens & at the points of intersection there are bright spots of light. The air is full of frosty particles & the whole sky is dim & hazy. It is _bitter bitter cold_ God have mercy on him that is abroad this night. — Good Eve. George



(Not as fine as
(Some in the
athenaeum!

Sabbath Day. 2 P.M. Jan 1st 1860.

"I wish you a Happy New Year"

I wish I could be with you - It is cold, very cold here.

Oh dear what a place this is. It seems to me that I never saw such weather. A month ago 'twas -20° I'm sure it must be -40° now. Last night as has been my custom in years agone I wrote to Cyrus, I think it will remind him of olden time when we kept up a foolscap correspondence of formidable proportions. I believe I perpetrated 10 pages foolscap besides some scattering remarks on several pages of smaller size. New Year Eve is an anniversary with us of personal Experience. Five years ago last night he & I were together"

4 Years ago I was in Orwell Vt

3 years ago, in Minneapolis - in the little brown House back of the "Bushnell"

2 years ago at Mr Garlands - you were

there too — a very "fish out of water"
— You remember it do you *not*?
And were disgusted were you not?
A crowd of sensible people together
for the only purpose of acting *just* as
silly & foolish as *possible*. It is
astonishing what capa*bilities* there
are in us all. I confess to
being as silly as any of them.

I believe you did *not* act
foolish (after the manner of the
most of us at any rate) that
evening. I thought you were
a little on the *other* extreme
— as though hardly daring to *trust*
what was *in* you, lest following
example you might too become silly
— You appeared dignifiedly frightened
in "There *goes* *pride* & nothing
else" thought one — "Miss Ophelia"
was in the mind of another

— I remember what I thought — "There are *twenty* stereotypes here — girls put together like their dresses — "fearfully & wonderfully" 'tis true, but all after one fashion. negative characters all. I see only *two* exceptions — Ada Jefferson & that little dignified woman yonder. I think *they* might prove a refreshing *variety*."

I am somewhat of "Mrs Loomis" manner of thinking in one thing — — I dont like (*She hated*) "respectable people" — the good, soft, passive souls in society, people who always have their hair trimmed & brushed to that nicety, that one of Shakspeares Characters tells of.

"But in the way of *business* mark me "I'll cavil on the *ninth part* of *a hair*." so do they — the misplacement to the extent of the ninth part of a hair's =breadth in their outward appearance & deportment would be "unheard-of" & *atrocious*. The fear of Mrs Grundy's "private opinion publicly expressed" is stronger than their own *ideas* of right & justice, & when the Higher & Lower Laws conflict, they always lift their hands in Holy Horror and with mouth pursed to the Meridian of Propriety mildly say "Treason" — or like the Old Gentleman in Hood's "Miss Killmansegg" when her horse ranaway with her, give utterance to their overflowing feelings in such impassioned words as these

"How *very* improper"

I dont like them — *respectable*" people

There is something awe-inspiring, sublime and terrible in the death of the Year, and the birth of another. To sit alone in stillness & darkness & listen to the low faint pulsations of Time — tick-tick; — to watch the finger on the dial plate — to look out into the clear chill night - and feel you are with infinite space - to look up, up, into the skies where for a moment all are motionless as marble counterfeits of Life,

The stars hold their breaths - and stand still - no twinkling, trembling motion - but to the eye each is a clear pale beam of Light.

Did you never notice it - the still fixedness of the universe at the moment when the Spirit of the Old year departs?

In that moment comes to us all the past, all the future,
What we have done with the one
- what will the other do with us.

A year ago you were in Wolfboro - counting the weary days till your Father should come
I do not wonder that you thought I had gone entirely out of your way - You mailed your life to me in Dec - (12th,) I did not answer it till Feb 3d (almost 2 months) six days later you said "Perhaps you have not received my 'Life'"? - You must have been lonesome

more to them I can be here. for Yours are always with me.

I could be lonesome here. but I wont. At Home, & among my family of little ones at Elk Grove, I am happy enough - but sometimes I am lonesome at Mr Stiles'. They are ~~smart~~ intelligent good people & Mrs Stiles is smart - she is a good wife, but really I do believe Mr S. is more lazy than sick. He sticks to his bed faithfully. It is not because his strength returns to him periodically; at meal-times, or that his apetite is good, or that he has no pains & looks well, nor because he reads newspapers all day - but I do object to his refusal to "tend baby" when Mrs S. is busy, (as she always is early & late) and to his disinclination to pick over enough beans for his own extensive dinner

– I *do* think the man is lazy. *She* (just the way with a woman) hasn't the slightest idea that she is making any sacrifice, or that *other* people think *he* might work if he was so willed. Oh well – I won't talk about my neighbors. "bear & forbear" you know. I did not get a letter from you last mail as perhaps you may have *guessed* ere *now*, I should have said something about it.

But I got something *else*. A *paper* with the Funeral Sermon for John Brown in it. It was *good very* good.

"Bravely, wisely, & calmly" indeed Always true & earnest & sometimes eloquent. I said to myself, "I am *glad! glad! glad!!*" – that such words he had *said*; that they were *printed* & that I had read them.

Since John Brown was hung & particularly since the more recent events in the South, all my latent Abolitionism has *come out*. I had been *thinking* & *thinking*, till when I got *that* paper I was ready to take it all (nearly) as an ex-position of my own views, better than I could give it myself.

But *I* cannot believe that there is that *danger* which most people seem to think there is, I have always felt a sublime *contempt* for Southern bluster.

The South *dare not* secede & with the hollow echo of every step beneath their feet, *dare not* attempt a trial of strength with the north. We have supported them too long for them voluntarily to throw away what we are constantly doing for them. If every Northern man will but calmly & firmly say, "Slavery shall go *no* further – and every child *hereafter* born *shall be* free," they will *do* it. So far as the perpetuation of Slavery is concerned: Secession is the surest way they can take ~~to do it~~

All along the Northern tier of Slave States, what would Human Chattels be worth. Secession would simply move a Canada down to their very *borders*. Between Escapes to the North + Sales to the South, every Slave would be driven out of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia Kentucky + Missouri. From *that* moment their every interest would be with the Free States + *they would join us*. In the same way Slavery would abolish *itself* in less than 25 years. No! No! They *dare not* secede. Their Only hope was to make a *National* thing of Slavery + force *us* to support it. "Let every northern man do his duty + in five *years* the question of Slavery will be resolved into such a form that it will extinguish *itself* in time."

Good night—perhaps I'll write more before I send this.
Ever Your Georgie

[1859?] 3

Dear Marie. Good morning!

This is Wednesday morning a few minutes before school time & as I shall probably have no other time to write I will say a few words here.

The Mail comes here & leaves again on Thursday of each week — You see why I have departed from our time honored custom of Sabbath writing, but here=after I shall try to write some on Sunday too.

"Dear Marie" — It does seem queer to call you thus. It is all true now, but only think back one year. How scrupulously you used to sign your name "Serena" — no complimentary flourish before it, because we dont

believe in compliments between
those who may be friends &
are certainly not enemies
— and nothing affectionate, for
that would be hardly admissi=
=ble. Once I thought you
were going to say something
complimentary or — .
You went as far as to say—
"And believe me"—
and then you added — . "Serena".
leaving me to guess how much
might be locked up in that word
Most young ladies in their
Correspondence are as prodigal
~~of~~ & lavish of adjectives of affection
as are some penniless but "nice"
young men in their display
of brass jewelry".
I remember that once you
did get as far as to say "My Dear
friend" — and I do not know but
that was in response to ~~&~~ one of
my letters similarly addressed
— but you speedily relapsed
into the old style & called
me, "George" ever after. Once
you have said "Dear George" &
I felt that you ~~&~~ meant all
that the words could mean—,
And I thanked you for it, in
my heart. Now you are "Marie"
to me, & I am "George" to you
— may it ever be thus.

I should not like to open
a letter from you and read
"Mr Wright" on the top of the
page — or "Miss Ames" how it
sounds — it makes me think of
the miniature & of returning
it "when I got tired of it"

In your letter of Nov
1st you say that your Father
(Do you call him Father because
of what I said once? I would
have you use whatever term

seems best to you) — that your Father had a letter from Mr House in which he mentioned our names as being sounded together, by the "Rumor" family. If it would have done any good I think I should have been vexed.

I wonder what particular interest it can be to St Anthony and Minneapolis, whether we do or do not, propose to do as "they say".

Do they care so much about us as that seems to imply? I never knew it before. But where did the news come from? Is it one of those "mysterious providences" through which it is said that "murder will out"? Is it simply guess work, or a well-established fact? I wonder if it is fact?

Now I do not care much. I am not ashamed that it is so & should not be to acknowledge it. and I hope *you* are not. Yet it seems to me that the good people of St Anthony might better employ their time than in inquiring into our doings last summer. Dont you think so?

"What Shall I *Say*": I used to have *news* as a last resource - I have *read* nothing since I came here - I have *studied* a little, but a discourse on "geometrical projections" lines shadows. machines. plans & elevations would not prove very interesting I suppose.

What are *you* doing this winter? What do you read & study? With whom ~~do~~ have you got acquainted & what do you know about Bloomington? It is a

place of 8000 inhabitants & rather
pretty you say — I have a
"blooming" idea of it — tell me
the details & particulars of the
place, which though I visit
every day I know nothing about.

Of Boston & Boston News
too, and Minneapolis also, for
I hear nothing from there.

When I get one of your letters
I shall be able to write
— till then I expect to spoil four
sheets of paper per week,
in telling you nothing only
that I love you

You have made me
anxious to hear from & know
more about your Father & Mother
by what you said in your
last. If 'twere not that I
am ashamed to write now, after
having been for two months
away from a civilized land
and my reflected light all gone
out, I would be tempted to
sit down & write to them this
evening. No that wouldn't
do. I must write to my own
Mother first.

Our winter commenced
in reality with this month
— Last Thursday was very
cold. 17° below zero, & it
has been cold ever since

— I would have written
last Sabbath but had to work
I thought it a Christian
duty though. I don't believe it
will be reckoned against me

I must close must I
not? Well perhaps I will see
you tomorrow when the mail
comes. If so well.

Goodbye & Goodbye

Truly Your own
Georges

My Love to all of 'em

No 19 Recd Elk Grove Jan 19. 1860
" 35

Bloomington New-Years Eve 1859.

George "

It is along in the last part of the evening, now, and I can say but a little, but I could not let this Year, that has given so much to me; may I say *you* too! pass away without going to you, and joining my hearts gratitude with yours; and giving thanks to Our God for his loving Kindness. Other years of my life I know all my years have been full of blessings but the memory of no other year fills me with gratitude so deep; no other year has opened such depths of life; no other year has given me such glimpses of Infinite Love; no other year has brought with it so many hours evermore holy and sacred. No other year ever revealed to me my own power of loving you — and no other year ever told me I could be loved by such as you. — It is all true — this year has been — but is almost spent. In an hour or two a New-Year will be with us.

Serena.

Sheet No 8

Continued from Sheet 3^d

[1859]

between the fingers & palm of the Fakeer, Sometimes but not often.

And so I conclude that Mrs Stowe's "Mrs Marvin" does not act wholly unnatural either. We do not believe such an abhorrent doctrine as Mrs Stowe has here held up to view in all its deformity - and she did not write the story for us. We could never quite understand it. There are those who believe that doctrine, & for them she put such words into Mrs Marvin's mouth.

Mrs Stowe never writes without a purpose, never writes simply to make a readable interesting popular or "powerful" story. (as powerful is commonly used) Even to paint true pictures of humanity, or portray the deepest emotions of the soul as

Charlotte Bronte has, is to *her* lost time — a waste of the powers God has given her. No one who has watched the movement of "the Beecher family" for a few years past, from Congregationalism & other kindred Orthodox beliefs, out on to the broad Church platform — but can see in the language she speaks through Miss Marvyn & black Candace, a *purpose* to make *others* see a God of Love where they *now* only find a Deity of Wrath. In the few words with which & Candace softens the agony of her mistress, till the bursting heart finds relief in tears, there is an argument beyond *all* creeds & articles of faith." Just read it again & see if you do not find in
"Cause as we's got to live in dis yer world, it's quite clar de Lord must ha' fixed it so we *can*" & in the "Why, de Lord ain't like what "ye tink, — He *loves* ye honey! Why "jest feel how *I* loves ye, — poor ole "black Candace — an I ain't better'n ~~[illegible]~~ "him as made me!" — an argument that with one breath, sweeps away the sophistries that for ages, our creed-mongers have been so busily weaving around us?

We saw & thought & felt all that before, but to those, for whom the story was written — ~~to~~ to the *Enlightened Christian World* the idea that God *can* be a being of Mercy & Love must be novel?

By the way — how *wise*, *we* are aren't we?

To day I had a new scholar — a *neat*, rather pretty wholesome-looking & moderately intelligent young lady, — 17^{x} years old, — She looks like somebody of whom I once had occasion to tell you somewhat - when you told me you hated me? "just the same" as before. Can there be anything more forgiving and at the same time more exacting than a womans love?

My family today numbered eight. Such a crowd it seemed - I could not get around till half past four P.M. to close school.

It is cold - wintry - but away toward the South East there is one spot to me ever warm & sunny. - How I do wish I might see you. - Next spring - It seems so far away. It makes me feel queer & faint sometimes to think of it

Just now - Are you thinking of me?

Are you well? And your Mother too? Shall I hear from you the day after tomorrow?

Remember Dear - dont waste a single blot - they are too precious to burn, - Alas the End - and here I must say Good night - A Dieu - George