



George B. Wright and Family Papers

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Jan 1, 1860

Mrs Lucia M. Wright
Care Rev C. F. Ames
"Box 282"
Bloomington Ill.

over

The fa-ble of the Milk-Maid
A sto-ry for good lit-tle Boys.



"Yes White becomes my
complexion best & green I shall be"

Jan. 6. 1861



Mrs Serena M. Wright
Care Rev. F. G. Ames
Blooming Grove
Illinois,



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{1860?}

Jan 4th

Wednesday Eve. - Good Evening

I thought - to add something
more to this letter but have
not had an opportunity & must
now mail the letter such as it is.

Shall I hear from you tomorrow?
- Yes I guess so.

I haven't written anything
I wished to in this, but next
week will try to do better.
I thought your Father was writing
some - has he written?

Say to all your folks - that
I love them, I am well
are you and yours?

I pray God, it is thus,
- Well - I wish I could see
him, I hear him saying "Good
Bye - Sis - tah" - as of old.

Good bye - God bless you always
Wholly, unreservedly Yours George

I am ashamed of this.

Play I never wrote it,
But I won't burn it, for I have
no time to write more & if my
letters are to you, what yours are to me
you will excuse me.

[1860?]

RKin Tuesday A.M.

Dear Wife - I reached here about 4 P.M. Mr Kingsley here - had a long talk with him - he goes today to St Louis - leaving here for good. I go down with him as far as Havana - where I am going is, I find, off a R. R. route. I shall probably leave the river (Ill) at Naples & go on foot westward to Barry - How often they have a mail I do not know

I want to hear every day if possible - Anything which I must know immediately, telegraph to me at either Naples or Hannibal (Hannibal is nearest) to be forwarded by special Express (hired team) to me at Barry.

I think I must have been insane to run off so; I shall be sick till I hear from you -

Bless you Dear - be good - be strong, - do not think of me as away - I am near you always -
evermore Good Bye for this Evening
Your Husband George

Years have more of sunshine
than of clouds, for you - but I
ask not for that, but rather
ask I that if the sun be with
drawn and clouds gather
you may have grace and strength
to rise above the region of
darkness and shadows.

Evening

Have you been writing one another
letter today. I hope you
have been better than I have
been today. I am home sick,
and wish I was with you.

It is so cold, & it is so dreary
and my head aches. Mother
we hope is somewhat better.

She has gone five days now
without having one of those
ill turns I told you of, though
she is now strongly threatened
with one this evening.

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I am growing to be less and less
impatient to learn from books.
It seems quite as worthy to learn
to do well and lovingly, little duties
of every day life knowing that
life is infinite and trust ever-
lasting and all things possible.

You will be content, won't you
if I know less than you expected
if I will only try to do good
and learn with you? Say yes,
and meanwhile cultivate your
soul to be very patient, resting con-
fused that great trials are coming
closely connected with what you
please to call a great blessing.

Your letter before this
last, was rather sad, and exactly
what I used to say George Wright
was. I love to think of the
times I have met you, always with

unaccountable interests, when I knew
no more of you than your name, and
what others pleased to say of you,
and cared not so much, perhaps,
for you as for Will or George Channen.
I like to think of seeing you one
night coming down the stairs from
Will's room, in the dark, and
shining twice Mrs. Channen I called
you George, and afterward said
Mrs. Wright: you had the tooth
ache, and I could not bear that you
should have. I remember walking
home to Mrs. Brown of feeling
the least bit in the world of
ridicule thrown on something I
said by you - I have felt the
same thing many times since.

I think it a great gift
to be able to give expression to
what is within us, a gift desired
the most of us and given to a

few whom we call men and
women of genius. But I think
genius is as rare gift bestowed
only on few, but universal; and
the inheritance of all; and I count
not expression genius, but that
which the most of us fail to be
far above our expression of
utterance. - I never found
but one who agreed with me
in my idea of speech. It seems
to me speech is evidence of our
fall from God as well as of
our superiority over the brute
creation. I never imagine
any language of words in the spirit
world, do you? And God is
Eternal Silence. When with you
I have sometimes felt something of
that close communion, I fancy
highest angels hold with each other
and with our heavenly Father.

Communion wherein words would
come as sacralige. My soul
can never approach God in prayer
through words, and I am growing
every day more opposed to public
oral prayer, and don't know but
I shall get to be a Quaker.

Do you have a new school
girl? I hope she is smart. I
have read of strange things about
country school masters and bright
girls. I am so frightened.

How is Elsie, is she quite
well. We shall see her and
Charles, in the Spring, when you
come, shall we? I have had
no time for two months to write
you a letter and do not expect
to have. I have to be hurried
for fear of sending nothing. Never
mind - I love you just as well
as if I paid you for your letters.
Sweet love - Goodbye Maria.

Tuesday Morning

Good morning. You have
just commenced school and
are marshalling the first class
forth on the floor, two to the
broadest crack.

It is warmer to day, and very
pleasant. We may have some
rain, I hope so, any thing but
freezing to death.

Do other letters come with mine
or do no more of mine come?
Mother I think is really better.
She has gone out to walk this
morning. The most she suffers
now is from nervousness, and
that is enough, mercy knows.
I pray you may not get
a nervous wife and I further
- more pray she may not get

a nervous husband. Unless
there is some serious reason, as
great disorder of the system
there is no reason for what
we call nervousness. When I was
a little girl I used to get
flustered and cry and fret
at any thing that happened to
come across my road cross-
wise; it is not so now, at least in
so great a few degree. Calm-
ness and possession of one's nerves
can be cultivated greatly; don't
you think so.

I shall get a letter to-night
maybe - I shall be so glad.
Be good and I will be good
and we will have a good time.
Good morning and good bye.
Serena.

Monday Eve. Jan. 2.

"I shall I read to you, Mother?"

"No. You tell Mr. Inright
I have brought home three new
books today. - I want him to
know how much I sacrifice for
his sake to-night." "I will - and
he will say, selfish girl, why
didn't she read to her Mother!"

And why didn't she? I think
it too bad now that for such
a long letter I should send you
so little. But I told you I was
sick yesterday. -

It is pleasant here this evening
a good deal pleasanter than at
your boarding house where there
are crying babies. I think
however, this winter must be
to you rather happy as well
as profitable, is it not?
A pleasant School-house and

The daily growth of children,
and the care and interest you must
have for them - do not those things
make the days bright and life
a continual blessing? You are
studying. I am not. You ex-
-pect me to know a good deal
more than I now do. I shall
not. It may be I shall get
through fractions - possible,
but I will not say probable.

Our Kate we sent away to-day
because we found her as much
trouble as help. We are look-
-ing for another girl, when she
is found, and Master is better,
and my eyes will let me, and
the Society don't interfere I intend
to study. I am sure judging the
future by the past that time
will be long coming. So be it.

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George,

Often by an impulse
such as leads me to kiss Chick
and tell him I love him, I am
sent to this writing desk. It
is my only way to you and
sometimes I ^{must} go to you
even if the road be bad and
tiresome and you will keep out
of sight. — Last evening I
got a letter five days from you
that is all. That so very far
off. What made you write
the first sheet of this letter?

Perhaps I can guess. You
gave utterance to feelings I
sometimes have but seldom do
more than hint at them before
you. Now let me tell you it.

does precious little good for
you to talk to me in this way
for I always take you closer
to myself as we do take those
we love when we think them
abused. But it grieves me
not that you should write
thus, but that you can feel
so, for no one can write as you
have written on this first sheet
without much sadness. You
have a better opinion of yourself
to-night than you had Christ-
mas Eve. I am nearer right
than you are, aren't I?
Say yes and be good.

You are worthy all mine and
all mine is thine; and I would
I had more to give that it
might be yours also.

Why cannot I be near you
to-night to tell you without

squadding that I don't believe
what you have pleased to say.

Christmas Eve — so that is
not the anniversary of our meeting.
I know nothing of dates whatsoever.
I only know I had seen you
several times before the twenty
second of December, for I
spoke to you the evening of
the supper which was Tuesday
night, the twenty second.
If the printers were to dine
at our house next day it
was evening before Thanksgiving.
I saw you first. I am sorry
I am so dateless, but I saw you,
thanks to friend Chas. and
to a greater than a friend,
He who leads us wherever
we go. Good night Dearest.
God keep you, Marie.

Jan. Seventh.
Another Saturday night.
Star-lit and calm, as Saturday
nights always are - wind and
rain have not power to make
them otherwise to me. Do we re-
member ^{the} raging storm and the
darkness of the last night
we were together? Not as storm
and darkness do we remember
them. - We are pleasant and
happy at home to-night, and
Mama just said, "How I
wish Mr. Wright was here".
Then our family would be all
at home. But, as Mother says
"he will come with the pretty things"
I had not thought, till then,
of Spring as Spring - the season
of springing grass and budding
flowers. See what you have power
to do - to fill and cover all the earth.

Whether we hope is better, we dare
 not say we know, for to-morrow
 may bring a relapse of all her
 difficulties. Our Kate I told
 you had gone. I get along so well
 I think I shall not have another
 girl. Kate was a good little Irish
 girl, but no more fit to work than
 a child. I liked her and didn't
 want her to go away, and we tried
 hard to make a good house-
 keeper of her, but in vain.
 I wish we could get a little pleasant
 girl like Kate, whom we could
 teach to do well, and one who would
 like to stay with Mama, for I
 may die one of these days, and
 I really do not know what Mama
 could do, in her present state of
 health, with one away, without
 some one who could, partially at least

Mother we hope is better, we dare
 not say we know, for to-morrow
 may bring a relapse of all her
 difficulties. — Our Kate I told
 you had gone. I get along so well
 I think I shall not have another
 girl. Kate was a good little Irish
 girl, but no more fit to work than
 a child. I liked her and didn't
 want her to go away, and we tried
 hard to make a good house-
 keeper of her, but in vain.

I wish we could get a little pleasant
 girl like Kate, whom we could
 teach to do well, and one who would
 like to stay with Mama, for I
 may die one of these days, and
 I really do not know what Mama
 would do, in her present state of
 health, with me away, without
 some one who could, partially at least

fill the place I once occupied.

What do you suppose she will do? You know I told you I cried when ~~six~~ ^{old} years, for fear of an event which would take me from my Mother. Think you thirteen years have changed me so much that I should have no tears to shed now at thought of parting with my Mother?

Dearest, I love your more than all the world.

Sunday — Good morning. I rose very early this morning that I might get the work done to write a little while before going to meeting. You do not go to your Forest City meetings. You seem to think them ever so wicked. They would do you no good but are you quite sure

even such meetings are not better for those who will feel inclined to go than no meetings at all would be? For myself I see no use for meetings gathering together in a Church for worship. I see no need of because I cannot worship God in a multitude, through one man, in certain forms, as alone with my own soul. But I know there are many who shall worship as they can nowhere else. I am sorry to confess I am less worshipful in Church than in many other places, and unless I hear something that pleases my head, or sentimental enough to please my heart I prefer staying at home. No, it is not right. I do not love people well enough, and very likely I love myself too well. Father is going to preach this

morning from this text, "Blessed
are the poor in spirit." I will
try to learn to humble myself.
Have you never thought of the
danger of a too great self-reliance?
I think sometimes possibly there
may be danger, and then again
it seems to me we cannot have
too great Confidence in what has
been given us of God. We must
"work out our own salvation, with
fear and trembling"—however.

I don't know but I am likely
to forget the 'fear and trembling'.
It really seems to me we have a
power within us, given us, of
course, by Him who gives all
things, — to do wonders. I always
feel it to be a great confession
of weakness to say I cannot
resist temptation, or even to flee
from the temptation, as if afraid of it.

You have changed me vastly in this respect of independence. I used to feel I would yield never to a man any power of strength over me. I would be myself, forever separate and apart. Even now I hope I am not lost in you; I could not be, for the Soul will assert its own supremacy at last and refuse to be overshadowed by another. But I do not feel now as when I wrote some of my last year letters. As we will never allow anything of weakness in the one we love, and knowing of weakness in one, I must, I suppose obey the law which commands us to prostrate ourselves before superior strength. I therefore it was, one day last summer I forgot myself and all my vaunted strength, and confessed my lord. Emerson says,

"Not always can flowers, pearls
fratry, protestations, not even home
in another heart satisfy the awful
soul that dwells in clay. It arouses
itself at last from these endearments
as toys and puts on the harness and
aspires to vast and universal aims."

"But in health the mind is
presently seen again, — its overarch-
ing vault, bright with galaxies of
immutable lights, and the warm
loves and fears that sweep over us
as clouds must lose their finite
character and blend with God, to
attain their own perfection. But
we need not fear that we can lose
any thing by the progress of the
soul. The soul may be trusted to
the end. That which is so beautiful
and attractive as these relations must
be succeeded and supplanted only
by what is more beautiful, and is forever."

I am going to Sunday School
pretty soon. I have been and returned
from Church. Papa preached
a good sermon it will be the hearers
fault if they are not profited
by what he said to us. He has
a congregation of two hundred
every Sunday. You think he would
have more hearers in Minneapolis.
I had a long letter from G.
W. Chosen a day or two ago.
He says they are blessed with
remarkable talents in the pulpit
this winter. Mr. King, Mr. Nichols
and Dr. Bushnell preach to
them every Sunday now. Are not
they favored? I can remember
when we had no preaching there,
can't you? Mr. Chosen tells
me of great joy and happiness
in a home he calls "Heaven upon
earth". He writes like himself

in only one particular - he begs
my forgiveness for neglect, and
bemoans his incapacity to do any
things decently. Why will folks
apologize? Let them prove their
sorrow by "fruits meet for repentance".

You don't apologize now but you
will say, as in this first sheet of
your letter, something even almost as
bad. This is such a precious letter.
All your letters are. I say so
little about them maybe you will
think I do not value them as
much as I do.

You ask a question in this letter
and as you have asked it once
before you expect a reply I
presume. I did not answer it in
any one of my last letters. I do not
know how to answer it. It seems
a little like putting me in a
queer position. You have heard

of the gentleman who proposed
May as the happy month, and
the lady objected. "Why, my dear
what objection can you possibly have
to May?" "I much prefer April"
I might not be so frank as that
lady, and — I don't know how
that gentleman bore it, but it
strikes me you would be a little
confused, ashamed, perplexed
or something, if you had imagined
five years soon enough and I
should "much prefer" June.

Indeed George I do not know
what to say to you. It frightens
me to think of it. I am not fit. —
I am afraid I never shall be, — and
I fear you will not be so happy as
you think you will. God knows
I mean to try to make your home
all you could desire and that

I would do any and everything for you, and He knows also my weakness and my humanity, my daily trials and daily failures. You say "before long". I do not know what you mean by long, but surely you do not want me before I am fitted for you. I know nothing of your plans for the future; nothing of what you propose doing when you leave Forest City next Spring. How can I wait till Spring to see you.

You feel lonely now, but "will not be so" after you leave there. No - "will not be long" for years go quickly by. And have you thought our walk "will not be long"? I do not know what makes me think of that, I never did before, in any other relation in life, so much, but sometimes now the thought is such a bitter one, that we may not cross

together "the dark river". I do not think I ever should have thought of it but for your brother. I ought not to say such things. I do not know what to write to you now half as well as I used to. I can only think, - he is away. How can I wait for him to come, - silly, silly girl. - Ah! George, George. Do not blame me, will you? But pray I may grow wiser, for I am very foolish. I do not know what I want, only you, to be near you a little while. You are writing to me now. Are you saying, "Maib, I love you"? George, I love you. Our Father is with you and with me. Sometimes it is so blessed to believe in that, for it seems we can not be far apart when he is with us both. Good-night
Serena.

Monday Eal.

I never like to find an unwritten page in a letter from you. — It is a cloudy, misty night. Mother and Pet are playing ball; Papa is finishing his address to be delivered this evening before the Bloomington Aid Society, formed last week, by suggestion of Phoenix Hall Society. Our Society is very profoundly liberal, as free Societies are apt to be, and first in every good word. When asked, of course, the orthodox people can but unite ^{with} them in such things as Public Charities and Temperance reforms; and, too, they are willing to help do all good things; but you see in this way we have to be acknowledged as having existence, which they have tried their best to utterly ignore. The Presbyterian Minister and the Congregational Minister have called.

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We are disliked exceedingly
but it will wear away in time or
out of time. I have heard nothing
of Boston since Cyrus letter which
I have not answered yet. I have
written by but one letter and a
note since I saw him go away
in the darkness. Too bad. - Mrs.
Chowen wrote no news. He said
times were harder than ever, but
I have heard that so many times
is no news. How much he
loves Sue. She is a dear woman
and I love her too. I do not think
our friends could have been better
matched. He does not dare to say
even now 'my wife' is speaking
of Sue, but says 'Companion'
which I dislike very much.

Do Elsie and Charley stay
alone while you are away?
Don't you feel almost like a man

with a family this winter with so many cares! You have hardly a minute to rest. How they must love and bless you. Your folks at home were very thoughtful and kind. It must have been harder for you to bear than I knew of. But I know you have not done any thing as a hard duty, but all has been labor of love. Do you tell me all, every thing as you fear and suffer? You will, won't you? Is not giving me only your pleasant thoughts, while you are doubting and struggling. "I better or worse". Always remember.

I must go read to Mother. Papa has just gone to his meeting. I am reading to Mama, because she is sick and cannot hear any thing hardly. "Chas Kingsleys" "Yeast". Good-night and Good-bye until next Thursday. Your Inaie.

At-Home. Sabbath Eve,
January 8th/60

Dear Marie—

In spite of the Adje-
=tives, Dear beyond word meas-
urement, Dear beyond all else
on earth, I am alone with
Charlie & you. All the rest
are gone to Church. For an
hour or two we shall be quite
alone. It seems very still
just now. A friend of Elsie
has been here for three days
with her four children—boys
too, rude & noisy. She has
just gone. Hannah (Elsie's
sister) has a beau—brother to
my young-lady scholar. He &
my pupil have been here all
the afternoon & H. has gone with
them to "meeting". Its singular

how foolish young people will
act under such circumstances

Richard & Hannah are no ex-
-ception to the rule. We - the
staid sober people hereabout
- have a great deal of merr-
-iment at their expense - I get
quite eloquent sometimes in
talking to Hannah. After all
they don't dislike being plagued
We never acted foolish
- not we! Oh of course not.

You speak of "calmness" when
Charley was present. I remem-
-ber very well - I'm sure
he didn't plague me any, though
certainly I could have wished
him in Africa, when you
came into the room that eve-
-ning. Ah well, I suppose
we too are foolish - Other people
would have thought so then, except
perhaps when they remember

something which has happened
in their own history.

Here is Charlie - by my
side reading a book on Agricul-
-ture. Have I ever told you
about him? He is really a
smart boy. He is now a little
over seven years old. He looks
almost like my Mother - the
only one in the whole family that
does look much like her

He has the same large blue
eyes, deep & soft, with the long
curved brows and dark heavy
lashes. - the same little turned-
-up nose that all our folks
used to laugh at Mother
about - It seemed so out of
place on her face! - and a
small mouth like hers also
- I think he is handsome, but
a picture of him appears to
be all eyes & forehead."

I said he is smart. I never
saw a more active boy than
he. Continually learning & never
forgetting. No book is too heavy
for his reading, & what he don't
know of words, he finds out, in
"Webster's Unabridged" - The Bible
- The Atlantic, all the newspapers
& books he can find are food for
him. It would be tedious to
enumerate all the pieces of
poetry which are "familiar as
household words" to him. Once read
the recitation naturally follows.
A year ago & more I remember
hearing him give "Terkle's Count-
=ship" from Lowell, with great
 gusto & effect, and he recites
hymns, like a preacher.

Lessons are play for him
- Geography, History, Arithmetic
- it is all the same; he don't
have to study to learn all

we care to have him learn.

Active & vigorous too. Though not as heavy & strong as he might be with a coarser organization. He is an Artist by Nature. He runs to fictional representation as naturally as water down hill. There is not a thing he ever does but he will picture on paper so as to be readily distinguished.

His men have the "grand expression" all over. You should see how his men stand up in courage or shrink & tumble with fear, or are doubled up by a blow in the breadbasket &c &c &c. One day last week he saw a house burn, since then he has taken to burning houses on paper, and the smoke & pointed tongues of flame are quite real. He seems to have

perfect control of his hand, with
a pencil - a trait perhaps inher-
-ited from both parents. He has
for 2 or 3 years past been in the
practice of writing letters to his
"relatives" in New England

Until of late these letters
were all in Roman type. I
saw a letter not long since
addressed to a lady of the mature
age of five years, which commen-
-ced with

"MY OWN IDA-" in better letters
than I could have done with a
pen. Ida lives at Iowa Falls
& was here in Nov to visit him
I cannot but think of "Edna"
- Charlie thinks so much of her
Now he will imitate almost any
handwriting, so closely as to
deceive almost any one.

Oh I assure you he is a "very
remarkable boy" for seven years.

Elsie is a dear good woman. I
will tell you more of her by
& by. I will not now for I
will come nearer home. Now
we are alone. Charlie has gone
to bed. It is a clear, still
moonlit night, and not very
cold. The moon broad and
bright, in its ~~its~~ meridian of
glory, its maximum of plethoric
prosperity. You are thinking
of me now. Twenty One weeks
since first we met - sixteen
since - we - didn't part.

Last Thursday I got another
letter - long & dear 't was too,

You wonder I was so brave
- brave (?) - I wonder why you
should still have faith to keep
writing such long letters when
you knew they wouldn't reach
me, - or at any rate when
the chances were so much

against it. I very believe
Marie, you do love me more
than words can tell. else you
had contented yourself with a
page every week, till you heard
that I had begun to receive
the letters. You do all things
& venture all things that I may
hear from you. I am glad.

~ When this letter writing life
is "gone by" and our life of loving
deeds commenced in its stead
we will indeed find it ^{an} expressive
true earnest language. A
language, compared with which
~~as~~ words are, weak, meager,
inexpressive. When I think of
this - and of the loss & waste of
happiness - never again to be
made up - in every day I am
away from you. I can hardly
content myself here. - I think
- oh if I could go - when - where

Rail Roads, telegraphs, -- how quick
 I'd go! -- We are some 90 miles
 from R.R. -- then to Dubuque & then
 as straight as the Ill. Central
 Road would carry me to Bloom-
 ington! For 4 days only.

What were Air lines & express
 trains made for but to make
 lovers happy, lovers whose
 hearts are like the two ends of
 an india-rubber string; let go
 of the one end & how it starts
 for its fellow. Oh course I
 have an idea of Bloomington
 & I believe I have pictured
 to myself almost every cir-
 -cumstance under which I
 may be likely to meet you.
 I hope no Charley may be
 there though. I have met you
 in the early morning -- in by broad
 & glaring but ever perfect & joyous
 day light -- at sunset, & in the

hour sacred to love & lovers - twilight
- and in the calm holy even.
- In sunshine; in cloud, in
joy health, & prosperity; in
sorrow, death, & adversity.

Sometimes with your Father, Mother
& Willie - and they are not in the
way at such a time, & sometimes
(as if it were possible) I have
stood beside you in your cham=
ber when you were offering to
our Heavenly Parent, your
evening tribute of praise and
thanksgiving - and, while ^{you were} breathing
a prayer for my safety & welfare
(far, far, away) I have knelt
down beside you and in the calm
still night have with you, thanked
God anew for His rich blessings
- better and fuller with every
day of our lives - and comforted
by the greatest of earthly gifts
- true earnest, self-forgetting love

thanked Him for that last and
choicest of all blessings, the
perfected union - presence after
long weary absence, holding
meanwhile your hand instinct=
ively clasped in mine, binding
thus together, all that to me is
sacred, "In Heaven" and upon
Earth - in one prayer, one embrace
- You are so closely linked in
my soul with all my religion
- My God - My Heaven - My Here &
Hereafter that it is hard to tell
how much it would all be worth
without you; I love met
you thus - in every circum=
stances, yet ever found you loving,
waiting, hoping, longing for me.
By & by, and God willing, we
will meet, and it shall be
to us all that our fondest
hopes, our wildest anticipations
ever pictured, Thy Darling, I will

Your letter was mailed Dec.
20th, I got it last Thursday
(Jan 5th) - 16 days on the way.
— A short note also from
Your father mailed Dec 21st
Did he write before that time
I direct to Elk Grove, or Forest
City? I get no letters from
Forest City, but every week papers
from Lyons (but it means that
they let the papers pass & stop
the letters, Verily if I do find
a trace of the mis-doer, retribu-
-tion shall surely follow.

I send herewith a couple of
Envelopes. If it were possible
to get letters sent by that route
I could get them in a week after
mailing at Bloomington

I have not heard from
Lyons except by papers yet, On
the last one he says - "Are you
Asleep?" Alas, I have written

him a half dozen good long letters, since I've heard aught from him in similar style.

This makes 5 letters from you since I've been here. One came to Forest City when first I came here & four to Elk Grove in the 4 weeks last past.

This is a dear good letter here before me. Surely day by day as we read & study each other more & more, we come into a fuller understanding of each other & of our own selves. We are learning what we are & what we may be to each other.

I don't think we shall quarrel slightly - do not think too much of that harsh word - we cannot disagree in anger now, we are too far away, & we shall get so well acquainted & so grown to each other & grown like w-

each other that then we cannot
quarrel. I feel that there is
no danger - yet wherefore. Are
we wiser or better, or do we
love each other more (& with
that love that breaks down all
barriers between souls.) than
the thousands who stand out in
life ~~in~~ with fairer ~~hopes~~ & prospects
than we, & who wreck on
the sands of ill-temper, distrust
jealousy, & hate ere half the
voyage is done?

Sometimes I have fears, 'tis
but an excess of Love.

I have noticed the little bar
of steel, suspended on a pivot
-walled in with glass & metal
but left free to show which way it
would go, if it could have its own
way, - the little thing which
is Addition Subtraction, Multi-
plication & Division to a

Said Surveyor - a compass needle
"in short"; - the stronger it is, the
more earnestly & ardently it seeks
its "better half" away in the
frozen North. The more excentric
& apparently undecided it is -
- the more it goes from one extreme
to the other & the longer it is
in finding rest - and even then, the
tremulous movement scarcely per-
-ceptible to the eye, tells the
operator of the throbbing heart
within its attenuated body of
poor lazy metal.

Just so goes the heart
that with its tick, tick, measures
off our ~~the~~ human life.

See Dear, I'm glorifying
fickleness as the height of
Constancy - ergo I must be
fickle. If I were with you
now, if I could take your hand
look into your eyes & press my

lips to yours. You would say
"No-No. - these eyes & that heart
can never be fickle."

I sat down to answer your
letter, & to say some things that
I have thought of, of late, but
(as usual) I did not succeed in
doing either. Ah here they
come from meeting.

No more writing this
night.

Here they are,
Good night. Good bye
Ever Yours
George

P.S.

57th

Wednesday (after
School) - 4 1/2 P.m.

Jan 11, 60

Good Evening,

Perhaps I
may have time to write
a little more. This must
be mailed to-night for the
tomorrow's mail. Tomorrow
I will hear from you again
- Your last week's letter is
not answered. We neglect
to answer letters now. Even
the choicest bit of paper
seems in the way when I
talk with you. I want to
talk directly. I remember
of telling you last ^{year} ~~week~~
one time that letters are
the connecting link between
Outside & formal acquaint-
-ance. And — something
else. I've forgotten what.
- Haven't we out-grown or

letter writing? Or in-grown
beyond them? There was a
time when I wished no better
mouth piece than a pen &
ink, to communicate my
thoughts to you - only regretting
my inability to use them
well - Now could I drive a
quill of a hundred, Emerson
power it would be unsatisfac-
-tory & poor; and, precious as
are your letters (increasing
with every one I receive), they
do not bring quiet & rest
I am not a good "filler," if I
was I could be content to
stay away when my duty
seems to require it. You see
I can stay away - but it's
with many an inward pro-
-test. You come to school to
me? No I hope not. How in
the world, could I get along

with such a scholar? In the
Spelling class? Oh no, It
makes me shudder to think
of it - two dirty ragged boys
below & three frowzy ill-looking
girls above. - trying to spell
"cutaneous" - with appropriate
gestures - the next word is
"contagious" & it goes around
the class. Hopsey, the one that
doesn't "catch it" either from
the school-master's switch
or from the more to be dreaded
youngsters who have climbed
Science's rough ascent.

If you come, bring an
Amulet!

Oh well, it's done
& I can write no more.

If I get no letter from
you tomorrow I will try
to answer yours next of
last week. Good night, Good
one dear, Good

Elk Grove. Thursday Eve Jan. 12/60
Marie:-

Good Evening - Another letter from you to-day, dated Christmas Day - It brings back to me my own days of weary waiting of a month ago, - It is a somewhat reflection of my letters, of that time. I will not feel badly about it for I know before this, you have received two or three of my letters written since I began to get yours. Tonight I do not feel like writing at all, very stupid & very natural. It is well that you find out in due season, how how "hig-
=rant" & stupid I really am, in my "Letter Writer" has quite given out, I've not written a

decent letter since I came
here. The atmosphere of this
place is bad for thought & guess
- To night I am just as poor
as ever. - I have no excuse
no reason for talking with you
- I have nothing to say - Will
you admit me to your presence
with such poor recommendations
- No passport but love. I want
to see you, be with you, talk
with you - that is all. May
I come? I am weary & would
seek rest & home.

To day I got 2 Christmas
letters from Cyrus. The first
I wrote since I bade him good
bye, at Faneuil Hall, one Monday
Morning last September - 4
months ago. I will not say
I was as glad to resume acquaint-
-ance with him, as I was a
month ago to see you after our

long separation - but I was glad
to hear from him. One can
bear to be divorced from a friend
for three or four months, provide
that friend is known & tried.
- but a three months absence
from our own selves in the
person of (well - as I'm speaking
of men I will say - "woman")
in the person of a woman - is
all the worse for knowing that
she is faithful & loving. - It
is somewhat like the modest
request which the surgeon
made of his friend - "to loan
himself - for one day only - ~~at~~
at the dissecting room!"

Perhaps one might live
without a heart - but it would
be inconvenient & on the whole
injurious to attempt it.

This letter is very very good
- I can hardly realize that I can

be from Serena - the Serena of
January 1859 - It is not I suppose
in the last before this you
rather favor the idea that you hooit
much heart. I don't agree with
you at all. This last letter is
enough to disprove all the testimony
you can bring up on the other side.

You say - that what heart you
have, is mine, for me, all! all!
(Excuse me for the comparison) - it
is more & greater than the load which
Atlas bore on his shoulders.

Yet I do not feel it to be an
oppressive responsibility.

I am almost of the belief
that beneath that firm, calm
& Serene - a exterior, you
have a deep & intensely passionate
=ate nature. I read it in that
more than positive face of yours
which your Mother let me take
when I came away from Sumner

There is a frightful amount of energy indexed there - though you say that in the direction of work, it is dormant as yet.

I cannot help laughing every time I read in the "Ministers' Wooing" about Mrs Stowe's marvels in the housewifely arts - her Mrs Scudder, & Candace etc. Was there ever anything like this. It reads like a 'Dying confession' - like the remorse of a man who instead of marrying roast beef & plum pudding (as he fondly hoped) has united himself to potato-skins, rags & dirt.

Mrs S. in a Pandemonium of a kitchen. Dreams of a very Paradise of New England Housewifery - luxurious in its way as Moore's Feast of roses, in Lalla Rookh.

Now let me see what your letter says
It is good - I do not know what
to say of it - if she had ^{that} passed
across that page had not parted
from it some two weeks ago - if it
were here too, and with it - as a
sort of "logical consequence"
a little woman - "here I love" - I
would be very happy. - Why don't
you forget to leave yourself behind
some day when you mail a letter?

Why not by accident read
yourself inside the envelope &
that when I tear it open,
something besides an imprisoned
look will come forth to meet
me? Even that is a joy. The
thought, that your eyes looked
last upon the little packet enclosed
is precious to me, & I thank the
brown envelope, that it tells no
tales & safely preserves the last look
the last touch, the last prayer from you

You have commenced counting the
weeks, till May, I hope to see
you - then? As soon as possible.
Perhaps sooner, perhaps not
then. And now, with that same
old doubt - - perhaps - never -
a great black curtain rolls
down between, - Four Months
- what may not they bring?

If on Earth - we shall meet
Do not love me too much
Marie - I know I love you,
- too much. I would not wish
to live if you were gone.

All my objects in life & living
Hark out from & came back to -
- just you - you alone.

I wonder. Can it be possible
that all this is in the human
heart. And then comes back
the ever increasing marvel
of our acquaintance, It seems
a vision of the glories of that which

we name Heaven - How strange
- how full of mysteries infinite
are even the plainest & proudest
of lives.

Here you say "Standing by your
side" - That carries me back to
Somerville - ~~Is~~ it all a dream?

Can it be that she ever said she
loved me - that I ever sat be-
side her - ever held her hand
in mine - ever drew her close
to my heart, the dearest object
of all on earth - ever realized
the answering of that ^{long} wish
all of Life & stronger than Death
in my heart? It seems a dream
almost.

You say you saw me once
in your sleep - but 'twas too queer
to tell now. You may keep it if
you wish - Some time I shall ask
you when you cannot help answer-
ing, - How fast the evening has

passed away since I sat down here
 - though I have not been more
 than half aware that I was
 writing at all. I have been
 with you, and the little or nothings
 which we would say if together have
 been passing through my mind in
 half vision, half reality &
 some of them have I think found
 their way to the paper.

Oh it is so good, so blessed
 to love thus - to have one in
 whose Heart is home, in whose
 presence - rest "

Always and ever Yours
 - No I won't say good bye yet.
 The moments pass by noiselessly
 - we divide them now - back of
 as they join again in the boundless
 ocean of Time gone by - And now we
 must part - Good night - no, a kiss
 first - nearer & dearer, don't so yet. Good night
~~never~~

Monday Evening Jan 16th 8 P.M.
In the School House - Audience
- Emma Marie - and - a large yellow
dog! Good Evening - Of course you
will not object to such a distribu-
-tion of my time - You may well
be jealous of dogs - There is no other
kind of domestic animal that I
can about, & cats - hogs & hens I abom-
-inate. I cannot be respectably
civil to a cat. A dog is the only
thing that embodies the idea of
disinterested friendship. When all
others desert us, the dog still contin-
-ues faithful & instances are not
lacking where the dog has freely
given up his own life for the good
of his friend & master. There is so
much of the better side of human-
-ity in dog nature that I cannot
help loving them - there are individ-
-ual exceptions but only as exceptions
You are not jealous are you?

How do you do this Evening? You
are saying Good Night to this
day just about now I suppose
& I may as well say "Sweet
Sleep" to you & write to you for
you to read tomorrow.

Are you better? well? - in
your house to night?

Your Mother will think I do
not care much for her. For during
all the time she has been so sick
& suffering daily such pain, I have
scarcely said one word. - I have thought
of her. - wished & hoped that every
letter I got from you would bring
the news that she was better & getting
quite well again. I need not tell
you to be the best & dearest of daugh-
-ters, for you can never forget, even
if I should, that she has ever been
the best & dearest of mothers to
you, & over and above that, you
cannot forget how much you love her.

-I only ask you sometimes to think
you are doing some things for me
& in my stead, which I would if
I were there. And when Fate seems
too hard to bear - when you are sad
& sorrowing - do not hesitate to tell
me all. What right have I to love
you or ask your love, if I share
not your sorrows also?

These two letters of
yours I fear I never can answer
It takes as long for me to get to
the subject I propose writing about
when I write to you, as it did for
Mrs. Bedott to explain the "Wilder
Jenkins" animosity toward her.

Let me see - Here you
say you are "better" - Have you
been sick? That makes me
think of some things your
Mother told me. I find that
if any ill fortune happens to you
- you think it isn't worth mentioning.

You never suffer or fear - only for others who are dear to you: - self poised - stout - hearted little woman (out side I mean).

I remember how she told of your journey from Min to N.H. in the Autumn of 1858. Can you remember any other moment of such joy, such relief, as that which at last brought you to her?

It was not was it not?

Now I read several pages, in which had I answered the letter as soon as received, I should have found many things to tell you my ideas about. The same things are there now but I have forgotten what I would have said.

You speak of the 'Professor' I conclude ^{from what you say, that} his name is the young Marylander - You think it cool & common place - Now Marie I

have not read it but I think it
must have been eminently nat-
-ural. People do not poetize
or stom or appear tragic. Either
they are singularly & falsely calm
or else very silly - always (almost
very stupid). I need not refer to
any example in particular.

Even at the moment when
uncovering the deepest & darkest
secrets of their whole lives, they
are much afraid of showing them-
-selves in their true colors &
as they are. I do not speak of
women, as they have a great advan-
-tage over us at such a time
- They have the privilege of criti-
-cism, & may amuse or interest
themselves as they see fit, with
the foolish things we say.

But we are not like most
people - demonstrative - at least
you are not & so I am not

A true record of Aug 14th 1859, would
(as far as outside appearances go)
be calmer & cooler than the "Prof."
ever thought of writing. - Will C.
might describe it as "listless &"

Isis you think wasn't a genius?
Isis was simply what is in us all
- yearnings for immortality on
earth - half formed visions of
the glories of life, strange
wild fancies & freaks, and a
thousand queer, bright, frail & funny
things that go out & in and range
through our brain, turning all
things topsy-turvy - to which
~~he~~ he has sewed on a woman, but
it doesn't seem to match well.

And you don't like the babies
in a story? May I ask why?!

I like a story like Marcell's
"Dream Life" which takes its hero
from the cradle to the grave, through
a life not widely different from what

we see all around us.

I think Mrs Stowe has com-
=mitted a greater atrocity in bringing
James back to life than in killing
him - as every one says it's not
in dying that one suffers pain
- it is in the 'coming to'

After she had made many
more fit to die than live, I can
see no reason why she should not have
completed the murder which in
the three months previous she had
evidently premeditated. James
was only a spirit. Perhaps
I shall think differently when I
come to read it.

Well I must close & say
Good Night again. Perhaps I
may write more before Thursday.
If not - you'll not forgive me
(forget me I meant) ? Good Night
Ever and always Your own
George.

Wednesday 4½ P.M. Jan 18.

Good Evening

Marie. School is out - my family
all gone & I have the school house
to myself to add a few - what
to my this weeks letter. Not
thoughts certainly; I defy any
one to write as we do & produce
any thing bravely. At any rate
it is so with the way I write
For I get no time to think of
what I will write except
when I write. There's never
in my head the remotest idea
of what I'm going to say
but somehow I contrive to ruin
two or three sheets of paper
almost every time I commence.

Let me see, In one
of your recent letters you
say that Mrs Stowe & Charlotte

Brute as well as all the rest
make blunders in their stories

Did you never notice
what queer men Charlotte
Brute makes? Or are they
true pictures, from a woman's
stand-point? I believe her
experience was rather unfortun-
-ate - she was never acquaint-
-ed with true models of manly
character & in her writings she
has tried to make men that
should at the same time agree
with these inferior examples
which she had seen, & also cor-
-respond to her idea of what
men should be.

For many the critics thought
Carr's Bill a man. I cannot
conceive how any man after
reading her Robert Moore
could have made such an error.
She makes him a stranger

unaccountable & in the eyes
of Caroline who for the time
is Jane herself - a most
superior being. - Decidedly
above such weaknesses as
love. That strangeness &
mystery she carries through
all her works, dealing out a
liberal dose to every one of
her male characters. How
uncertain the views she gives
of Dr John as we look through
Lucy's eyes. Now it is a solemn
& most dreadful fact that men
are not such terrible beings
as she pictures them. They are
just as foolish - as women are
nor are their ways one whit
more strange or unaccountable.

How fortunate it was
that I got one letter from
you at Forest City. The first
one you wrote after you reached

Bloomington. I never got
another till I came here,
I surely would have thought
you were all lost on your
way West.

I never received any of
the letters you wrote to Pekin
after you heard of Rella's death.

A neighbor of ours told
me awhile ago of something
which happened to Rella last
spring, which will show you
something of what a man he
was. He was fording the creek
soon after it opened last spring
the water was deep and swift
at the ford & deeper just below
He had a little stick to steady
him in crossing. Besides some
things in his hands. He missed
his footing & the current carried
him down stream & beyond his
depth. He could not swim

No 21
" 37 Recd Feb 2 1860

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Sunday Jan. 15 1860

George — While dinner is getting I will come a minute to give you kindly greeting. I stand at home from meeting this morning, but instead of writing I read to Emma. She is sick yet and only a very little better.

We have been to dinner and now I have only half an hour before Sunday School. I am afraid your letter will be short this week but no matter so it be exact.

This week has passed much like its predecessors. It has been momentful like most of weeks and cannot wish it into the past not much for which to be glad or sorry.

Tuesday your letter came, bringing a blessing, as do they all. I see while we are happy with days as fine as Indian Summer, you are shivering with colds, and taking bitter six-miles walks over the bleak prairie. Your life is not all un-mixed; mine is, unless I throw into the cup a dash of prison stuff as I am too apt to do. But circumstances all conspire to make my living unalloyed joy. I do not suppose you either have any thing so serious in shape of trials that years hence they will loom up from out the past as great phantoms of evil. Colds and darkness, loneliness and discontent take to themselves wings and fly, we know not wherefore. — Father sends Pat to say we must go. So be it.

I have just returned from my class. Oh! what a teacher I am. I cannot talk so my girls can comprehend me. You see I ^{am} not accustomed to making my words conform to the minds of those younger than myself. I have lived entirely for years in the society of those older and wiser. I find myself in such an awkward fix trying to explain matters I only understand in certain sets of phrases wholly incomprehensible to my girls. I had four girls to-day. They are bright, quick to learn and willing to talk. I like them, and I guess they like me, and we have good times; only I do find it very hard. We don't get home from school till almost dark. I shall have to leave when the sun does and

it is ~~en~~ down even now.

This evening I will come to you
as I have not to-day.

Evening.

Now I come to you — my love.
Wish all my heart I could close
to your side, and put my hands
in yours, look into your eyes and
hear your voice. For a moment
I can do all this — then comes
feeling not born of your presence &
I know it all a dream. Is it
a dream? I look back one year,
think of the months that were then
to come, and know of a truth
they came and passed, and that
to-day is, but was not then; so
will the day and the hour come
that will bring you, and so will
they pass also. "Sufficient unto the day."

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It was a sorry thing to have you go away last summer. And it was so much harder to bear that you were only three miles off all night, yet hopelessly gone to me. When I think of your going I do not know which is worse to have you come and go or stay away. I think, however, I shall like to see you whenever you come.

Yes, I do remember two years ago last New-Year's Eve. I remember sitting by your side and feeling more gladness than I should have known how to define, for I did not like you as other than an acquaintance, who was not like other one therefore interesting and a study. It makes me smile to think where I first saw the first time I heard your

and mentioned — I think even then there was something within or without that began weaving the web of my destiny for from that moment all connected with you impressed itself indelibly on my memory. Where did I find you? Up, away up east out of sight. I remember my feeling of horror almost that I had got to answer your first letter. What could I say to you and how say it? But all those things are past now, and you are mine and I am yours. I have never taken you down from the heights where first I placed you, neither have I risen to your level yet we have met. Is it true?

Sometimes I fear on awakening that will open my eyes to find you have vanished. Suppose you should go? Why, I must I could live without

you. I wrote you a letter one night in Somerville and the burden of it was as follows. — It is a despicable weakness in woman that she has no strength in and of herself, — that she must lean until support fails her, and then fall. I mean to stand or fall by myself, Serena helps me — George I want nothing of you, be my friend while it pleases you, then depart.

Brave child! — I like you well; see you hold fast the good faith and fear not. That was well, but I love you now, I did not then, and we neither hold nothing from one we love. I have only granted you superior strength, not given mine away, and if I choose not to use it, for awhile, what of it. Ah! poor, deluded chicken, just as well, till her eyes are opened.

Did you ever read 'Aurora Leigh'
Any of Mrs. Borrowings poems?

I wrote to Cyrus
this week. I told him you had
not heard from him.

Chick has an idea that 'Mr
Wright's' is not quite what any
one else is in our family - probably
from seeing ^{you} so long last summer,
and hearing talk of your letters,
and where you are, and so forth.

It is really amusing to see him get
Mother's picture of you and look
at it - he laughs so funny.

He told Mother to-day, while I
was out, that he was going to
give sister to Mr. Wright. ^{Mama}
said, sister would go away then.
He was thoughtful a moment, then
brightening up he said, he should
send for Mr. Wright and give him
to sister. Wasn't that ingenious?

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He began writing to you before going to bed to-night, and wanted me to promise to write it for you as he read it, but I would do not, so he went off. It would have delighted you, no doubt to hear what he had to say. He has learned to read very well indeed; he reads in reading, such as "Many had a little lamb". He is my precious Pet, and I love him a world full.

I love every body. I would like to see your Mother to-night. It seems to me I could lay my head in her lap and be her little girl. You say you have one Mother, and could never have another. Of course so young a woman as my Mother would never even be other than a sister to you but I can take your

Mother into my heart as my
mother, too. Anybody that has
loved you I can love and do
love. So many things I used to
think of as so hard, - that now are
as nothing, what if comfort and
life be forfeited; willingly, for your
sake.

Monday night
Good evening. - Another day of another
week gone. Good-speed to it, I
am not sorry. It is a good deal
to know what you are doing all
these days; to think of you as busy
hearing little boys and girls read
and spell, recite 'Rithmick' and
'Geography', during most of the
hours of each day. It brings
me nearer to you. I got
up this morning at half past five
my usual time for rising, and
after doing a few little things, made

ready the breakfast, after that
was over did up the work; then
made ready for the washer-woman;
after which I mended stockings.
an hour or so, got dinner, washed
the dishes, swept the floors, cleaned
up the parlor, combed the family
heads, made Grand-ma's bed,
put on a new gown, sat down
to my stockings again, mended
awhile, then got supper, and
now I am doing my pleasure
dear Sir. Kindly for the you may
know how I am employed, for who
so knoweth one day's duties knoweth
all. While I have been sitting
saying these words to you Papa
and Mama have been talking of
our manifold blessings as a family.
Mama says, "we think three orphans
brought together from different parts

of the land to form one happy family - just think of it"!

How wonderful it seems. A poor abused boy, forever fatherless and motherless, who grew up forlorn and friendless - A poor, brave girl, always compelled to war with circumstances, and vainly struggling to reach a high ideal ~~among~~ rude people, content with living as the sheep live, and a little girl from a new town away down east, and how she came with them only. He can tell who brought us all together in one household of love.

Can I ever thank Him enough, my Heavenly Father, for all his loving kindness? How can I be so naughty every day?

I may tell you what Mama says;
 She says when ever I leave her
 she shall die. She is always
 so sick and Grand-ma is sick and
 I am the main stay of the family,
 so she says. I tell her to fear
 nothing, for I never will forsake
 her while I am needed, and beside
 all may be well before many years.

How blessed I am with so much
 love. If I could do something
 that would seem to say I am not
 unkindful of it. Dear George,
 what can I ever do for you?

I must leave you
 and read history to Mama. I am
 reading Prescott Phillips second.
 I read evenings as much to make
 Mother forget herself as to gain
 instruction. — To-morrow

I may hope to hear from you.
A week goes quickly by, does not
it? Two evenings every week
I give to a Singing Class, taught
by Prof. Cadiz. He is a good
teacher and I hope to learn some
what. What are you doing now
at Mr. Stiles? I see you.
I must go, without another word.
Good-bye and bless you.
Serena Marie.



Mrs Anna M. Wright-
Care Rev. L. G. Ames
Bloomington
Illinois

Jan. 20 1860

P. C. G. A.



Valuable — (for speed!)

At home, Saturday Eve Jan 21. 1860

Maria—

Isn't this shocking now. I sat down just now and looked for paper. There was none but this

When I came here I brought a little bunch (quarter ream) thinking it would last till spring. It is all gone. To day I enquired ^{at the} "Commercial Emporium" to wit Post City.

—Not one sheet of paper ^{here}—I am reduced to swamp Land blanks. It reminds me of the Album that Mr. Willis Baylord flack wrote in. It was a Milliner's Account book & so he ended each line with a figure—preserving meantime rhyme & meter, & ended by footing up the gross amount.

A love letter on a blank—and foal-scrap at that.

Good Evening—how do you do? I forgot to say it before. I got another letter from you last Thursday—The one you wrote for New Year. I am getting to regard these your letters as I do the daily sunrise—one of the fixtures & necessities of my life. You don't know what blessings they are here. Every week, Thursday a letter goes & one from you comes. At the same time with the last of yours, I got one from Sister Louise—she is now at home in N. It is the first I have heard from any of them since Oct 14th when Father wrote to me. She wants to know how many of their letters I have got—How many?

They are all pretty well & quite a house full there. She and her two girls & Bro. Norman are all there. I am glad. Father & Mother have sometimes been quite alone with the Irish girl

now & Saturday next to prepare plans &c. It was no use to say no, & the annual of it is that ^{next} ~~this~~ week I shall be laboring day & night to prove my ⁱⁿ⁻~~ig-~~
-~~no-~~ ~~ance~~ ^{to} day another bidder ^{was} ~~glad~~ ^{and} ~~me~~ & insists that I shall make a plan for ^{him} ~~me~~ Mrs Micawber - I shall be distinguished, at any rate, ~~notorious~~. Do you not begin to feel it in your heart to say "And I - never - will - desert - Mr. Micawber - !!"

I presume I shall not be able to write any more this week. - But you will be with me! Always as ever. I shall meet ^{you} at ~~noon~~ & even. Your Mother is better - I am so glad.

It has been very pleasant here too, ever since two weeks ago. The sun has all gone & now it's as warm as May. It makes me think of May & Bloomington, and of somebody by my side, and we talking over the past & planning for the future & - Oh yes, it shall all come very well & we shall be very happy. Sometime we will look at all our letters in a pile, How many are there of mine? How much I mean? About a wash-tub full I am there?

About a year ago I was writing my life for you - self murder. I thought & you were wondering why I did not write & if indeed I had forgotten you. Only a year, What a change a year may bring about! I cannot write more to night. Perhaps I may write some tomorrow. - If not - good bye! Say to your Mother, that I thank her very much for her remembrance of me. Commendable self-denial when she had three new books - cannot she carry it one step further & write to me herself some day when she

gets better? On the whole wasn't her self sacrifice
 simple justice, no more, no less? Don't you
 possess an "inalienable W(ight)" to write to
 your 'feller'? Pardon me Dear for attempting
 such a horrible pun as that started to be.

LIST OF
SWAMP AND OVERFLOWED LANDS,
 LYING IN THE COUNTY OF HANCOCK, STATE OF IOWA,

Selected and returned by C. R. WRIGHT, County Surveyor of said county, under the authority of the
 County Judge of said county, and according to an Act of the General Assembly of the State of Iowa.
 approved January 13th, 1853.

Parts of Section.	Sec.	T.	R.	Acres.	100ths.	Remarks.
-------------------	------	----	----	--------	---------	----------

— but I am tired & my head aches & I must
 sleep. So good night love. I will remember
 your last letter & try to, "be good" — I do try
 now all the time but without much success yet
 "Oh Rosa say good night once more
 "And I'll repeat it over & over"
 Haven't I said it times enough?

Once more only — & now — Sleep!
 George.

Sabbath P.M. — Good Day — How warm & bright
 it is out of doors to-day. I don't remem-
 -ber that I ever saw it so before. But earth
 & air never seems beautiful to me here as
 it used to in Minneapolis — or in Boston
 in Boston is a nice place — to remember.

I shall never forget anything I saw in Boston
 — The dark cloudy evening when I first went
 there — How we hurried along through the gathering
 mist — past ponds & fields & woods & rocks. — It
 was on the road from Springfield & Worcester
 — crossing the water & entering Boston from the
 South West. What a terrible long walk I found
 it from the Depot to 52 Commercial St.

I found it at last & by tracing the num^{bers}
 and came to a halt before the entrance till
 I discovered the sign "C. Wakefield" in the second
 story. — Thos's Cyprus looking over the desk

to see if he had a customer, & then turning for a moment to finish some other business.

Wasn't there an explosion though when he finally discovered my identity. That was Friday Eve. I met his son - small Baker that evening - We went to the Museum & walked all over the city. I saw the Common, first, that evening.

And we talked nearly all night - Saturday I went around the North part of the City - to Charlestown, Bunker Hill Monument &c, &c. I suppose I saw Somerville, for I noticed the road over Winter Hill & the ruins of the Convent, & further to the left the Red Church & what I afterward learned to be Prospect Hill.

Then I went through the Navy Yard & then home (to 52 Commercial St). And then - Scene 2^d - Cyrus said a great many funny things, on the way over to Somerville - at my expense of course - all of which I bore with commendable fortitude. He ^{has} never ^{tried} to hurt my feelings very much during all our 14 years acquaintance. I believe we never had a quarrel or misunderstanding in all that time. All things of course must come to a final termination & at last we got out of the cars at the great Elm trees, of which you had before told me. Of course you were at that moment in blissful unconsciousness of the immediate vicinity of any thing tending to disturb your peace & quietness.

I however was perfectly aware that I was there - which however did not trouble me materially. - and that you were there ^{also} - so some one told Cyrus at the door.

That there was an "Impending Crisis" near at hand came suddenly across my mental vision.

There are all such times a great many things crowded in small space — calmness is quite

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a difficult servant, it doesn't come at one's bidding sometimes. So we stood there waiting — Cyrus I suppose, laughing with all his might, to himself & I oblivious to all things save one, Well — we met — You remember that don't you? How did you know 'twas I? I can hear just how you spoke it, even now. It was half inquiring — half certainty & half — Is-it-possibility! — And then you — didn't stay — you had important business in your own room. I can fancy a very frightened looking young lady staring her mirror out of countenance in the attempt to look composed;

What 't do? And your Mother — she wasn't going to recognise me at all — but I'd not seen her for a year and a half — ^{she had not seen me I mean} — oh well we had all changed so much as mortals could in the time. — How much there is in the ten or twelve days following that we shall remember. — The Day at Mt Auburn & The Afternoon at the Athenaeum — The walk down across the Common — the Old Elm — Don't you remember where we crossed the "Long path" on the Common & told when I told you to beware — How firm & crisp the smooth gravel path — Then of a Sunday Morning — Cyrus concluded he was not necessary to our happiness.

Four Mather^{two} must needs go to church. No doubt they wished us very well, when we told them we would worship elsewhere. But when we were going home^{by car + d.} — we went by Prospect Hill — he gave me a lecture on my misbehavior — my neglect of to improve golden Opportunities &c &c. All in his serio-comic style that one can never find fault with & by which one may profit if so disposed, "The truth laughing".

I was too happy to find fault with him, but I assumed decided indifference to the whole affair — Before we reached Boston I guess he had come to the conclusion that I had concluded found out that ^{either} I didn't love you or ~~that~~ you didn't love me.

On one of your recent letters you speak of friendships most sensibly. I quite agree with you that James Fowler was in one very important thing — a fool! When did all that happen? Before I saw him in Minnesota — two years ago — or since you left Boston?

Don't you remember a conversation we had concerning him at your house in Minn. once. Somehow I did not like him though I could give no reason for it. I never have changed my idea of him since. Not that I dis like him, but there hardly seems enough of him to like. He isn't exactly tangible, too spiritual & balloonish altogether. — He is a sort of royal beggar. Of course that's wrong — but then I can only think of him as such from seeing him twice.

And as to Cyrus — I hope you will always love him, as a true friend of your own, as well

as on my account. It is not so perfect as some
~~time~~. I have seen smarter men. But he has
 a great deal of heart & ~~the~~ soul. There is as much

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genuine humanity in him as in any one I ever
 met. In loving you I never have loved him less
 than I used to. It doesn't interfere with a true
 friendship - Can the two be compared? I can
 see nothing alike in them. Though each in its
 kind seems perfect. - Would I be willing that
 you should love him as you ~~at~~ ~~do~~ love me?
 - And love me at the same time as now?

Yes, if you can - for you cannot do it? But
 for the present - Until - ?, you will always
 find me willing to say you may love any or any
 one else, better than you love me, if you find your
 happiness depending upon it. I shall never love
 another as I love you - selfish as I am I could
 say "go" - If I found your heart wished it - and
 should love you still. Even then I could never
 forget how much good you had done me.

It would not be altogether dark - the way
 thro' life - not so much so as if I had
 never seen you. But I can write no
 more & perhaps you will not sit much of
 a letter next week either.

Won't your Father & Mother write to me
 again? I guess I have lost no letters dire-
 -cted to me at Elk Grove. ^(change of address) Twenty Three Sunday
 ago. - (Aug 14) - Well, good night - Good bye till
 Thursday. - A kiss - here - now go, - George

Via Dubuque

P.m. at Dubuque - please send this by
way of Cedar Falls & Mason City
by so doing, you will confer a favor
and the letter will reach its destination
one week sooner than if sent via

Font Dodge & Algona } George B. Knight,
Elk Grove,
Hancock Co
Iowa



[Jan. 26, 1860]

No 38

Jerome M.
Jan 26/60 Red 22
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No 38

Elk Grove Feb 3, 1860

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" 22

Bloomington Jan. 22, 1860

George, I have just come in from
Sunday School. It is almost
sun-down. I hardly know where my
letter is to come from this week, but
do you know I have a long one
in my head duly colored by the
heart, whether you get it or no.

Good day. If it
has only been half as good a day
in Forest City as it has been here
it has been good indeed. Such
days as this and the two that
went before it leaves us nothing
to desire in heaven or upon earth.

"Saint Day, so cool and calm and bright"
"Bridal of earth and sky".

It is muddy true - but
we care not for that, we can feel the

new, green grass if we cannot see it, and it and you are all we need to make us know Spring is really with us. I can not imagine your presence as satisfactory as I can the grass and flowers.

I waited two days longer for your letter last week, but Thursday it came. It brought all with it I expected, and that was much, very much. Your letters do not bring as much and yet a great deal more than they used to.

If, last winter, you were satisfied with writing I was content with reading what you wrote.

This morning I did not go to meeting but read to Mother. I have read today Longfellow's "Evangeline". How charming it is. You have read it, I suppose. Patient, loving, gentle Evangeline. Could

I so patiently wait your coming through long, dreary years? And if you came not, could I with such entire love and faith look toward the home about? Oh! no, no, I could not. It will not ^{be} regained if one.

Mother is not much if any better. I know not what to say or what to think of her. She has been so very sick many times, and that gives us hope for this time also.

She is not sick every day now as she used to be a few weeks ago, and we hope after awhile she will be well again. She lies on the lounge most all day now.

She looks as if she shall I say half as well as I do? Yes, but she loves you most as well as she does me.

I just showed Mama that last sentence and asked her if it

was true. She says it is not.
And she says too, "half I do love
him is for your sake". Don't you
feel badly? But she does love
you more and more, - as one of our
family. Father and Mother both love
and think of you. As a man they
respect and honor you; and though
it may seem odd for one to say
what is an obvious fact, and what
you have a right to expect, it is
not strange. I have ever known
so few ones that to think of you as
being a man, and to know of your
being respected as a man makes one
prouder and richer than anything
else. I am glad you are so old
as twenty-four, and I am glad
I am twenty next summer.

2¹⁹⁷

Good evening — You told me
with your arm around me, (and
words which you have spoken are
doubly blessed, for they have not
been many), never to repress a word
of love nor keep back from any
action of fondness, and then you
spoke of your Mother. You did
not know what you said. You
would be overwhelmed, present or
absent, with nouns and adjectives
if I did not exercise a vast deal
of self-denial.

To-night I want to go home
to you. I do not want to go
away from here, but I want you
to come. I want to tell you words
are nothing, actions are nothing,
but love is every thing. I want
to tell I have grown so tired

and that time has been very long.

You speak of our meeting, and say "he will meet, God willing, by and by, and it will be all we hoped for. Will it?"

You tell of Charlie. Bless his heart, what a boy he is! You must do something to make him develop less fast or I am afraid the future will be robbed. Ah! so many children have appeared to us whose presence it would seem should redeem the world, but like lost stars they go out, and we are left with only the memory of their brightness. It does seem that nature must mourn, her bereavement of so many men. We see every child remarkable, not only to mothers and families but really new and wonderful

but somehow kept out the promised youth made, and things shroud away and Emerson say are "lost in the crowd".

Charlie is not saluted. Of course not. Who ever heard a strong mind being put in a round body. Does not nature work that her men shall not be whole, but only fragments? Charlie is a smart boy. I believe it runs in the Wright family to be artists and poets.

Ah! George Wright, why do you care for Serena Ames?

Could she love you too well that you have thought of her? Every day, since first I told you all my heart had I given myself over with all I gained to him who is my all in all on earth, and now do I

say forgive me, it is so little.

From what could you have thought I loved you that day we went to Mount Auburn?

You said you might have thought so if you would. Mother says

You might have known from her reception of ~~and~~ you that I was not indifferent to you, if you had known her frankness.

It will strike ten in a moment and I promised to leave writing then.

You are my own, here or there are you not? I am yours, now and evermore, am I not?

George - Dearest, I love you.

Maril.

L

Monday Evening.

Again I come to say Good evening
and a little else. Your daily
duties are through, and so are
mine. Supper is over, and the
gas lighted, and our little Sitting
Room as pleasant and cheerful
as can be. I told you so many
things about our home and our
soundings in those letters that were
last that I sometimes forget
you really know nothing about them;
and it may strike you I am ex-
ceeding negligent in not telling
you of many particulars. I never
can bear to repeat what I have
once said, if I know it.
I told you of the cases in our
beautiful parlor; of our parlor
and sitting room with folding doors

which being thrown open will make
a large Room. I told you, too,
of our high companionship with
Poets and Philosophers; of Emerson
whose face has a deeper meaning
every day, and whose continual
presence makes us almost forget
we may sin and suffer, and
makes me feel we can all be great
and live above this lower region
of doubt and darkness in the
heaven of love and endeavor.

Ah! our home is perfect.
You will come pretty soon adding
new light and warmth.

Chick is hopping around the
room with a cane. "Sister who
are you writing to", he says. "Mr
Wright". "Well, tell him I
send my love, tell him Mother
is unwell, and she sends her love
and Father and Grandma and

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, and
every body". Grand-ma, from
her room, out of this, says, "He
don't want my love", but she
gives it to you nevertheless.

Father lectures on Temperance
in Phoenix Hall this evening.
He is writing, from the same intention
with myself, the finishing strokes to
his address. Mother sits in the
rocking-chair by the stove, listening
to Pet, who has stopped sewing
and is telling the story of Joseph's
coat of many colors.

I had a paper from Cyrus
today. What a mute language
a paper from a friend speaks.
We look in vain among the types
for a kindly recognition, but
the wrapper, bearing simply a
name, speaks more than things all.
Bucher's lecture on Politics and Religion

was marked. — You must
have learned of Lord Macaulay's
death. Who that is great among
men, will be left? So perishes
our hope of the continued history
of England. You must have heard
also of that most terrible disaster
in Laurence Mass. the falling and
burning of Pemberton Mills with
such fearful loss of life. Appalling
as it seems, there are flashes of hero-
ism from out the intense blackness
of such events which make the
world brighter and richer for
all coming time. One little girl
in the Mills refused to be rescued
until another was saved, then it
was too late, she saw she must
die, and holding out her due
bill to a girl ^{said} "You will
Carpton."

get out, I shall not, take this
to my poor Father" She needed
not to pass from the body to
prove herself one of God's little
ones.

Do you suppose we shall
have a Congress this winter?

The black people exert a powerful
influence over the whites as
much despised as we account
them. They rule, do they not? if
not who does? Their servants.

... I have put Charley
laughing to bed. heard him say
"Our Father who art in Heaven" and
"Now I lay me down to sleep" after
which he prayed that we might
all be good; that Mother might
get well; that when she get to be
a man he may be better than Papa

and ended by asking that the
wretched men who have to be put
in Prison may be made good
for Jesus Christ, Amen. His
dear eyes are shut and he is fast
asleep. Father has gone to the
Hall. I have ground out, from
a little box, a dose of lightning
for Mama and have come back to
say Good-bye before I begin
reading Philip. To-morrow I
hope to hear again from you.

If not then - next day or the
next. Letters are not necessary,
are they?

The wind blows a mournful
feeling through me. I cannot resist
the influence of certain sounds of
the wind in a cloudy night.
It is as if a living soul were sighing
forth deep, deep griefs and
beckoning me for somewhat I cannot

give. I want you when the
winds sound as it does to night.

When do I not want you. Ever
and always. How I must leave.
I would say many things more as
wise as words already spoken.

I pray Our Father in Heaven
to keep you in His love, safe
from all harm, and that in His
loving kindness, He will bring us
soon to see each other.

Good-bye - Maria.

Sabbath P.M. Jan. 27. 1869

Mario -

You ask if I am "saying it" - Yes. I do love you, and I am saying ^{it} every day, first at morning & last at night. You never tire of hearing it & you say. I never tire of doing & saying it. Your letter mailed the 11th I got yesterday. I came up home before the mail came in. Hannah's "lover" brought that, with one or two others, besides a lot of papers, papers from Cyrus - from Washington D.C. & from Des Moines (our seat of Govt). I shall have enough to read this week, & besides I want to rest some. But this letter - dear precious letter it is too. You come nearer me in this letter than you have ever before done. There is a home familiarity ^{in it} & a kind of spirit through it all, which is not in words. It is the loving life that we have been looking forward to so long. It seemed as though you were really here at my side & that we were talking of the future in all freedom & frankness. There is in this letter more of that hearty sympathy & that openness of feeling which goes beyond restraint & knows that no offence will be taken. I am glad you were not so afraid of me. Did you ever

while writing feel that we were more acquainted than we had ever been before? It seems so. I wish you could feel so always.

I wish I could get your letters as soon as you get mine.

To-day it grows cold. This has been the warmest January I ever saw. Two or three of the first days were very cold. Since which time it has seemed like April & May. Next month will be cold I guess. These warm days of late have made me think of spring & have brought up the many things I have to do before I can get away from here.

Last week I was ever so busy. Day & night - I kept school Monday & Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday I worked on my plans. Friday I came home & worked on specifications & yesterday the bids were opened at Forest City. I worked every night as long as my eyes & headache would allow - till midnight sometimes, & then I would rest my eyes & think of the work to do next day.

Of course I didn't sleep much & (if I do say it myself "as shouldn't ought to") they were very pretty pictures when done.

Building houses, is not quite in my line you know but really I feel quite capable of doing almost anything now. Don't you remember how Aunt Maguire enlarged on the

variety of genius among the Green Mountainers? "Orectful fellows, them Vairmounters are. Husband says they come over the Green Mountains with a spelling book in one hand and a halter in the other & if they can't get a school to keep, they can stall a horse."

I am really getting quite homesick away from my family at Elk Grove. It is five days since I saw them.

Don't you see I've got some paper? Why didn't you speak of it before. You see it's first rate, just about like everything else here. I've got to have enough to last till spring.

I was going to answer your letter what I? And first, you have answered my question. It is just what I might have expected. But I'm always blundering into all sorts of funny mistakes. Yet it is better that we talk freely & fully understand each other in all things & too, it is right that I should tell you all things as regards the future I have marked out for myself before asking you such a question.

Don't think I could feel disappointed at the indefiniteness of your reply. I see good reason for its being such. I always love you better & better more and more for everything you do. I feel that you really under-

= stand what's good for me better than I do
myself." And now it seems to be a special
disposition of Providence that our two lives
should be counterparts, requiring both to make
up one whole life, as it has pleased our
Father to make each of us necessary to the
other's happiness, we should be all frankness
- our hearts all open each to the other.

And so let me answer the question I
proposed to you to far as I can, and also tell
you all I plan for the future. How absurd
it was to ask that question when I really
had no idea of what I was going to do.

Now my Darling, (no no I don't like that, I
started to write Dearest) Now Dearest, you
know as well as I do that in our hearts,
neither of us would much prefer "such an
eternity" as five years seeing, twice now &
the day when I might call you "wife" just
as I feel you now to be, without shocking
the world by such impropriety. Five, three,
or two years seems a long long time, & "before"
long must surely come sooner, but it so?

All days between now & then seem oppressive &
long. Is there anything except as outside of &
separate ^{from} our own selves, but days to us "as
soon as possible" - Did not you think and feel
so, when you wrote that our walk here will
not be long? And beyond where the dark river
rolls, there is yet doubt to me. We shall
not cross together & years will pass & then
shall we meet again? And if so, will not
we have forgotten? That has been a stumbling
= block to me. And beyond there I have planted no

loss of faith or hope.

In our hearts then we would that the day spoken of be "as soon as possible"

Now what is to interfere? Let us see. As I said before, I haven't the remotest idea what I shall do, or where I shall be next season. If possible I wish to get employment on some R.R. Years ago I selected engineering for a business. I like it very much indeed. It is my pride.

I have all the time had some I hope that in the Spring I might go back to Tekin. I have said nothing of it to you, so that per-
-haps I might by & by surprise you with good news. It is not impossible that I may go there though I fancy it hardly probable.

Mr Kingsley writes me that the work is going on very slowly & that in a month or two there will be a change of adminis-
-tration, the Bondholders coming into posses-
-sion of the road, I conclude he is now the Acting Chief Eng^r as the Chief resign-
-ed some time since. The Road will be finish-
-ed doubtless next summer. In his last letter, recd yesterday, Mr K. says that the roads in Missouri will commence operation in the Spring & speaks as though perhaps he could sit me a place

there, that he would at all events try to do so.

Well - there are two things - I could stay here, where there is such a drouth of people sensible enough to do business as it ought to be done, and do better pecuniarily than in either place before mentioned, so I guess (which is Yankee for strong affirmation), but you know this place don't suit me at all, and I blame. The people are kind - I like them & they like me well enough, but - (and a very large 'but' it is too)

I must go to Minneapolis in the Spring at all events, & if there is no chance for R.R. employment, probably I shall go there to stay permanently. If I stay in Ill next season, I shall go to Minneapolis first, If I stay in Minneapolis, I shall go to Bloomington first. I am beginning to think that I can get a living almost anywhere, though perhaps not a very good one. "We are all poor critters"

In Minnesota I have done considerable business for Cousin Carrie's husband, who is a shrewd money-making Yankee. He has some 12 to 15 thousand dollars loaned in Minnesota, Now I don't like to attend to such business, I am sorry I ever did anything at it. Though he has always paid me liberally for the time I have taken to attend to his affairs there.

But in the way of business my heart is not there. I can take no pride in it, even though I can take a deep interest in whatever I undertake to do. But with the greatest success would come not triumph as in my own profession, but self-reproach rather.

I hope to get clear from the business next year. (I ought to be away from it so long now) And then, except for you, there will be nothing to prevent my really becoming a "vagabond and a wanderer". One year in Maine & the next in California & next in the Fiji Islands perhaps. You had better plant a good big tree - tend it carefully & get it firmly rooted - then fasten yourself to it, for if once you start with me there will be no stop. Yet to no one can a home - one home be dearer than to me - a home of our own. All the little vine leaves & tendrils, the bushes & trees to be ours.

It is seeming almost impossible with my trade -

"In a pedlar - In a pedlar

"In a pedlar, from Connecticut"

It do not those who live apart so much love each other all the better when together?

It ought not to be so, but marriage is rarely union. Shall we quarrel? We never have yet & we won't.

Now while I'm telling all these things, it is well that I tell now. Men are not apt to tell their wives all about their business affairs yet I hardly know why. Many times I am glad to think it is an error of head because of too kind a heart.

We have no right to burden you with complaints or refinings because of adverse fortune yet it is not right to conceal from one of the partners of a firm anything of losses or gains in which both must share equally. I hope it will always be so that I may frankly tell you all my plans - the success or failure of all my endeavors.

I do not know that except in the way of increase of information generally and in a knowledge of the world and its ways that I have gained aught during my stays in the west. (Present company excepted & which however I don't put a valuation on)

Really I have hardly paid my way in Minnesota. At the same time I earned some \$800 per year & practiced close economy so I thought. I have used somewhat over \$1000 but not one by any people's call - & whether what I have in Minnesota is worth it is a matter of doubt. You perhaps know that I pre-empted some land at Forest City. That has cost me some \$600 or \$700 & for which I have received no returns save \$100 that I got for 5 acres of it. The improvements there are such that in a year or two they will be entirely gone.

have known though that he would have accepted
no such proposition. He don't care anything
about himself. We are not a race of
beggars though none of us ~~are~~ rich, & so. Dear
I have yet some hopes that with your
management - your housewifely talents &c &c
we shall get along famously.

When we get rich we are going to Europe
you know - we will see royalty & ruins. - Dutch
land & Sweden & Switzerland & Italy & Britain.
- Heidelberg. Bingen on the Rhine. Rome &
St Peter's Cathedral. Strasbourg Cathedral &
The Basachs & Lochs in Scotland - Moscow, & its
domes that Bayard made me half crazy to
see. - the Paintings in the Louvre. Westminster
Abbey with its tale of the has been & Stratford
upon Avon, and the admirable of old fashioned English
Towns - Chester. and - and - and - Ah yes
The Alps of course, Wout we? When we
get rich? But I was going to try & find
out when the day - the day, will be -

As soon as possible - No - fracturable, & when
is that? If next summer should see us
both in Illinois with fair fair prospects of
not too sudden change in business affairs
- Or if I really get located any where in
America (I don't mean in such a country as
this) will so as to be sure that I shall not
be in another quarter of the globe in case

three months past - will the time not be as fracturable
- fracturable as ever? I hope we may be in
Illinois, Don't you.

Oh dear but you are but a little foolish
girl yet I hear you say.

You will be twenty & don't you know
that you will be at twenty older than
most women ever get to be on earth,
even though they live to be sixty?

That is something in which I am not
deceived or infatuated. What a pity we
are poor in pocket but it - Don't you wish
we could do as we pleased in that respect?

It is better that this is so.

Then my Dear, I have told
you a great many things that I would rather
not. yet things which it is only right you
should know & things in which you may
perhaps feel an interest, as all which concerns
me in any way concerns you equally.

Things I should tell you sometime &
better now than by & by.

Evening.

Good Evening. What are you doing just now?
Thinking of me I'll be bound. But it's strange
how all things are divided, spaced off and bounded
by just this one thing, this care for another.

I wonder if I can answer your letter this
evening, I haven't answered one of yours this

winter - Though I have tried to several times
I cannot help thinking what a different
being you are, in my estimation from what you
were a year and a half ago. We never would
have got acquainted but for our letters would
we? - When I saw you in the Registers Office
for the last time - (not the last time I saw you
in Minn) It almost surpasses belief - The idea
that you could have that within you which should
ever ripen into a love such as I feel that you ~~do~~
have since learned. So proud, firm, independent
self-reliant & self-possessing. I have many times since
then, at the same desk, thought of you & of how you
looked that day. I liked you then, more because
you were a fresh original character than any thing
else. Is it possible that that girl is my Marie
of to-day? Not a bit. It is twenty four weeks
to-day since you changed entirely & yet not entirely
to me, for you were quite different to me, last July
from what you were a year before.

Now I will answer your letter if I
can. I suppose it was wrong, what I wrote on
Christmas Eve, yet such thoughts will come when
I am soberest & it seems to me calmly & surely
right. And then too, it seems to me that you are
much like what I used to & still think your name
means. Not altogether human. Of course it is not so
yet you don't act like other women and I think -
- will we all have some of the divine in us too?

Thank you for the information in this - I can now find out when we first met.

I am so glad your Father & Mother do not think ill of me, and that your relations at home have always been such that you can be free & frank with them in all things. How few families are so. It seems nearly to that blessed life we all look for in the hereafter. Your Mother will never forget with you that she too has been a girl - in your heart's experiences she has lived over again a similar passage in her own life. Not as a thing that was & is not but as the first chapter in a life of Love.

Tell me more of them - I do wish she would write to me. This world is a good one after all - how much more of goodness ^{in it} than I used to think there could be.

Your Mother is better & your housekeeper. Do you not think of me Saturday Night, and lay a plate for me. "Opposite Pats & I" as at Somerville? I finally came there of a Saturday Night at perhaps you may remember. So too at Bloomington will it be, I am Willing.

"So part from your Mother" Perhaps not, all at once at any rate. Thirteen years have ^{changed} you but not made the name of Mother less dear or sacred. Her perhaps to you may well cry & part a deeper meaning than tears in saying good-bye to her. You may never find another heart so kind & true as hers. I hope you will. God help me I will try to be

good - to be all that with me to be. It seems to me I
could never be unkind to you - Yet I am hasty some-
times - Perhaps you may sometime have occasion to
try the calmness and strength of your own soul for
some such thing I may say - You would be grieved
& sad at the unreasonableness of what had been your
almost ideal, but you would not be angry.

There we won't have any thing of the kind though.
You have said in this letter two or three
times "I love you". These words have not lost their
savor. They come laden with a richer meaning than
when you first said them. Oh my much I want
to see you too - Is there any use in trying to express
in words the idiom of the language of love? It cannot
be done. We may say "I love you - love you with my whole
heart and soul" - the words seem poor, tame, expressionless without
you - Oh for your dear dear presence, my life. My all
your Earth - Once more to look into your eyes. Once more
to press your lips with mine - Once more to sit by
"your side" - but it tells not after all the love
that two may have for each other. We can only read
it by reading our own hearts. To be there the glorious
half of what with our other self is a perfect whole
now. What I feel in the innermost depths of my
own nature, I award also to you as the measure
of your love, & what you know yours to be, grant
also the same to me, I cannot tell it. Oh Marie
Dearest, What would I not give - could I give my heart
a full translation on paper. Now Good Night - may our Father
& his kind angels guard & watch over my heart, this night & ever.

Tuesday Eve, Jan 31st 1869. -
 Mary, No. No. Marie.

Good Evening Dear. Another month is saying "Good Bye" to us. - I will not let it go without making one more visit to Bloomington. It is very pleasant here to-night though cold. This week is great. I am resting which means to do a real lot of work after school at nights & before school in morning - But it is work out of doors & most wholesome - no headache & restlessness comes of chopping wood and milking the "cows" - The young men who boarded here are gone & I must do chores - I am glad to be obliged to have something to do out of doors. Are you real well and happy to-night? I do wish I could be there to see.

You speak of our Fort City Meetings - I think they do do good to some. Indeed there is hardly a form of religion but has some good in it. I would not except Jew, Mahomedan or ^{Roman} Catholic. Methodism seems to my nature almost as abhorrent as either, but I know there are many good Christians under Methodism that could not be, under any other system.

The new theology teaches Charity in its broadest sense does it not? Charity toward all beliefs & all creeds? Something we agree real "first rate" on most things, political, social, religious?

On the question of "Woman's Rights" I believe we agree pretty well & probably there are few who would say we are right in it. And our religion is just as queer & odd, & in that we agree. Isn't it a very clear case that out of all the worlds we have found our proper correspondence?

That explains why I used to think there was no one like you & that it would be the greatest thing in the world for you to love anyone - I didn't know that I was just as queer as you. On the third ^{part} of your letter you tell some rather funny things, showing that to me you are a woman much as other women are among men in general. And you give a novel explanation of the reason why women may think men - their own husbands & lovers, fit to be rulers, & worthy of homage. - You're not a bit of Practical Woman's Rights Woman in this letter. There are some things above reason and philosophy, like the two arguments which the Professor says always confounded the old school men.

And you have finally heard from Mr Chace? I have not heard from Minnesota yet, now between 3 & 4 months - I have written to Mr Chace, Delos Mr Barber & Mr A.C. Austin. I guess they mean to disown me entirely. It wouldn't be unpleasant to live in Minneapolis if we could hear such men as King Nichols & Dr Bushnell talk. Though you I believe, think talk don't amount to much.

Mr Chace is real happy. You cannot think how he has changed. He is moody & irritable & queer. But still he has a great true heart, but sadly covered up with rubbish. I guess very few ever got a glimpse at it. I did once - a fair view. Nothing ever more surprised me and waked me up to ~~as~~ a knowledge of the good in this world, good even in the most unlikely localities. Now I don't mean to say his is as good as some I've seen, but there is a thousand times more of it in him than an outside acquaintance would suppose.

Now I read again where you have answered my question (?) - There are blessed words in it - Oh you don't know how happy the knowledge of the possession of such love as yours, makes me always, when I can forget myself & think only of you. It's too bad you will love me so, what have I done that I should be so treated?

Of late we are getting homesick, almost lovesick I guess, both of us. I know my letters are very stupid - how foolish they will seem after we meet again. Now at we keep saying "I love you" & "I want so much to see you" - I can think of scarce anything, else when I sit down to write to you. Spring will remedy all this.

Well, we must say Good Night
Blessings - and Many happy days, yours

Wednesday Night Feb 1

Good Evening Dear. Now I havent a bit of time. It is mail time already but I will try to blot this last half sheet,

To morrow I shall hear from you again - last night you heard from me did you not? I am making desperate exertions to get the mail to come from the East. I have sent a map and statement of our wrongs to the Postmasters at Dubuque & Cedar Falls.

I do hope we will get letters from the other way.

Now then good Bye for now. Please say "Be good" in every letter. You dont know how it helps me.

There, now go - Good Night Dear

George

At Home 9 P.M. Saturday Eve Feb 4, 1860

Dear Marie

I am quite overwhelmed with blessings this week - I am luxuriating in the meridian of happiness arising from the receipt of two instalments of love from you. What have I some to be so blessed? Besides these I have lots of other good things - The Algona Mail brought yours of the 17th ult and your Father's of the 20th mailed 21st and (which came that way in spite of its direction) and the "Eastern" mail next day brought yours of the 26th with my long bill of exceptions on the outside thereof, & with it (in its train) other eastern letters & papers. Unprecedented fact. It was two days from Bloomington to Dubuque & Co, including Sunday from there here; just a week sooner.

Your letters are dearer and dearer every one that comes. With every one I resolve to live ^{better} & sometimes I think I can really detect an improvement, but I guess don't do. Oh Marie I love you so much - so much - The whole world - all space & time cannot measure it. Oh I am so glad. A thousand times blessed is it to love as I love you, and a thousand times a thousand, to feel that I am loved by you, as your alone of all the world can love. If I want a kamp Marie

I know I should grow better faster while living
such a life -

Sabbath Evening Feb 5th 1860.

Good Evening - You see above when my candle went
out & when I did not light another. To night I
commence again with a heart full of things to say, which
will probably not get said. How could ever repay you
for these two letters - (40 pages nearly of the most precious
of all things on earth?) By loving you with my whole
soul? It is all I can give & to me precious too.

As we love, people never love twice. They hove it
to give. Is it not then precious to the giver?
And it is blessed to receive is it not?

I shall Mail this next Thursday (9th) & you
receive it in 5 days - Tuesday 14th. Just a half
year after Aug 14th. Did you never think how
the "Sweet St Valentine" divides the years counting
from our Era? Ought not I to grow
poetic? Years ago at school I used faithfully to
keep the Love Holidays. Oh the poetry I used to per-
-fume, for I wouldn't copy.

How naturally boys & girls are attacked with
a severe stress of poetries while doubling the
sweep of moments of Feb 14th. I almost got as
far as to try my skill once, this year. It is
well that I have no time. Yet I may say may I
not = "With such a prayer on this sweet day
"As they mayet hear & I may say
"I greet thee Dearest for away"

following that text I did write something, but in
the first verse I told all - leaving the gate wide
open for a free communication. Spirit with
spirit, without use of words; to all my feelings
that I designed retailing out on paper, escaped
in one grand burst of silent eloquence & music.
(The last words seem absurd but you understand
them) x But you didn't expect poetry as one
of productions of this Iowa desert & so you'll
not be disappointed. Still you must think all
the sweet & pretty things, sacred to the memory
of this day (14th) for if any body have cause to
ling surely we have.

One day this winter when thinking of what
you said about me - "a vagabond & a wanderer"
and justifying myself therein with the very comfortable
reflection that there was honorable precedent for so
doing, since "G. Washington Esq" was once an obscure lawyer
& later that John Charles Fremont had lived at the same
trade, I fell into a train of thought which found
vent in rhymes borrowed for the occasion from various
authors. I had got as far as the end of the prologue
when it had something else to do & the piece was
never resumed & for lack of time my idea of self-
-murder was not carried out - luckily for myself, that
I escaped to safety.

It was a simile wherein Reformers & leaders
were to figure as pioneers & explorers. They were to survey
a road wherein the world might follow.

reminding me somewhat of "Spring-written in a lawyers
Office" & "Evening by a Tailor" from its comparisons
But let me tell it in the words themselves.

"Out from behind the mysterious veil
"Of the Ages past - where through vapors fall
"The half-formed ghosts of Tradition glide
"Dimly seen & with spectral stride
"Like the phantom hosts in our Northern Sky
"Portending wreck & tempest night
"When History's picture is narrowed out -
"Till its viewless point pierces might & doubt
"There's a line of light, a glorious ray
"Of Heavenly love - that marks the way
"Where the souls of the Just in their upward flight
"Girt with Truth & armed with right
"From the darkness of Then to the light of to-day
"Through forests of error hewed their way,
"And the great world followed awhile & cursed
"And called them heretic traitors and worse
"And hacked and burned the earthly form
"The fair apparel the soul had worn
"While their spirits from earthly load forgiven
"Unchecked, stopped not, this side of Heaven,
"Their soul-flight past where we stand to-day
"First tracing the line for the "Kings Highway"
"The rebel of then is the patriot now
"And the laurel graces the traitors' brow
"Their names are the watch-words of Freedom & right
"And the Heretic slain, is a saint in light,
"Are the noble alone among the dead?
"No blood heroic until 'tis shed?
"To live for our kind, is more noble & grand
"Than to die for our faith & our native land;"

© P. H.
The Kings Highway

I had got so far, when fortunately I found something else to do, I was going on to particularize some of the road makers of the present day.

Emerson I was going to give the character of the compass needle, whose ~~very~~ little aberrations only prove his general correctness; possessing a spirit more divine than human - ^{intuitive} ~~intuitive~~ - ^{always} ~~always~~ taking the lead in the right, not often ^{always} exactly right but never, ~~very~~ wrong. There is a heavenly glory round about him and he goes through the brakes & brambles without personal conflict & without cutting a concrete sin or leaving a mark on individual error, ~~at setting an individual~~

Yet if we keep in sight of him & we are on the great road to good, he is a light on a far hill over which the highway passes beckoning to us & still pointing upward, and onward

Then comes a man blazing the line, woe to the hedges vines brambles, brush & thorns, he slashes right & left - With one blow would he fell & with one hot breath reduce to ashes the most respectable of lies & abuses. The manto of his keen edged tongue are on the knottiest of evils, He fears not the boldest & most powerful of lies. The road is well marked where Wendell Phillips has been,

And then he whose hushed voice once thrilled us in Music Hall, A grand pioneer he is too, ranging far & wide & spreading before us the rich results

of his explanations: broad fields of Truth with few
-haps some patches of error, as in the forest of
virgin lands there are some walls & swamps.
He has given us a map of much on either side
& parallel with the Highway.

But the world calls them fanatics & wots
not that it is traveling the same road that
just such as they in the years ago, marked
out, & so I proposed to take two or three exam-
-ples from those who are captains among us, &
who, keeping along with but at the head of the mass
direct the word & ~~work~~ build the roads laid out
by the pioneers. - Beecher & Greeley & one or
two others were to figure. You may finish it, for
(I'm glad) I shall never have time.

On previous years I believe the month of
January had not passed without an eruption
of verse from me. I rejoiced that I so far escaped
this year. I think I must be growing sensible

Enough - say no more my dear Sir,

Monday Evening Feb 6th

Good Evening Dear. You're looking at
the moon now I suppose - It is very clear & the moon
is almost totally eclipsed - Our eyes met there just
now did they not? It is half past eight but I
will write a little while - your letter of the 17th
of Jan before me now which to make talk while
we visit. We do write alike. Elsie noticed it the
first time she ever saw your handwriting.

You cheat me though in your letters by spacing them - thus
- so - as - to - make - them - look - pretty - and - so -
not - write - so - much. You - think - I - will -
demand - four - or - five - sheets - at - all - events - &
you - act - such - little - fant - to - save - as - much
love - as - possible - for - the - day - when - it may
be - needed. Don't think I am plain, No. No. not a
bit of it. If any one had told me years ago that any
woman should ever write to me such letters as you do, so
often and so much, I could not have believed it.
How I love them. They are dearer than anything else I have
from whose blessed heart they come.

You may grow more in ^{your} teaching than I can here, yet
I learn something even here.

I guess all they ^(my little ones) like me for is because I don't ridicule them
when they are wrong. It seems to me they have feelings as
keen as us grown folks. People never thought of that when
I was a little boy. We not forgotten yet how it used
to hurt me to be laughed at. I would have rather taken
a whipping.

Now on the second page of your letter you tell
just what is in your heart. Dearest - I love you too
thus. You ask - "Is it a dream?" Sometimes I think
so - but for your information I will say there are
are six feet of homely reality, here, and a pair of
strong rough hands & a willing heart. (all of which
are no myth), which seem to imply something
besides the moonshiny uncertainty from whence
dreams grow.

Was it so bad, that I went away that day last summer?
I thought then it was best that I should, but I
remember how eagerly long & fondly I gazed from the
heights in Roxbury across the water to where the
five chimneys marked the neighborhood of your
home, five - two, flat + three, square, & I thought
I shall never look there again as now, It was
that Sabbath Evening, And the next morning
when the Can whizzed across the water & I
caught a glimpse of the red brick church on the
hill, I thought "For only just one moment alone, to say
good bye in a good bye kiss" - If I had reckoned on
the many weary months ^{before I could be as near you again} & the seven or eight weeks
without hearing from you at all, I think I should
have turned back even then, And when I did finally
decide to see you no more for all this time; - It was
a sorry day - I walked away out on the Bloomington
road to the bluffs that mark the boundary of the
valley - and looked away down the road into dim
vacancy (It was something even to look toward
Bloomington so near as that), and I spoke your
name to the winds, and - but you could not
hear - I was quite alone, Poor blind Rochester,

I believe you remember all about me
- all when we met &c &c, And you say you have never
taken me down from the high places where you first
placed me. Do please - be kind of standing there -
one might as well be in the pillory, It reminds
me of the easy seat the butcher by had when he "set up
on his own hook". Don't feel hurt now dear, but as is the

temptation I would not be the cause of one tear.
 even for the sake of kissing it into smiles on your
 cheek. You were to me too, as you say I was to
 you. "different from others & therefore a study."

Not as much so to me as was Ada Jefferson.
 I heard of her when I first went to Miss Minnie of Ohio
 (now almost 4 years) & though I felt very much interco-
 =ted to get acquainted with her, never saw her till
 about the time I first saw you. We were always good
 friends & never had a quarrel (but once & I didn't
 quarrel then & she got over it speedily. I used to
 visit at Mr Loomis' Once or twice a week last
 winter & Spring - we were very good friends indeed
 & I have to thank them all for so helping to make
 my life pleasant. I wonder sometimes that during
 all that time - feeling such an interest in them
 all & in Ada especially, that I did not learn to
 regard her with a somewhat nearer feeling than
 mere friendship. A living presence does so much
 toward it, but not a breath disturbed the calm
 of (either heart I guess) If you could anything
 then for me perhaps you might not have been
 sorry when in June Ada went to Missouri?
 Perhaps too you never thought of it. But as I
 used to think of Croffut & Will C. & (by name only
 that I trusted him.) it's not strange that you
 might think of Ada. But perhaps - we were none
 alike - not enough to get along very well as friends."
 & I'm sure I never could have loved her, or she me.

Tuesday Feb 7th 10 P.M. Almost too late to write
but I shall have no other time & I must
fill this sheet before it goes. Have I said I love
you in this letter? For fear I have not, I say so
now. I don't know much else. Did my last
week letter reach you to-day? If so you are thinking
of the same that I am. - Some things I said
in that. I am glad you have said some things
in this your letter too. I thought I loved your
mother; not only, that she loved you - not only
relatively but absolutely. but I had forgotten that
she needs you now & to her, your love as well as
time is more due than to me. I had forgotten
that she is sick. You ^{must} ~~need~~ not leave her while
she needs you. Yet every day seems visibly to
shorten the distance between us. If the mountain
cannot come to Mahomet, I guess Mahomet will
have to go to the mountain. If we were only all
in Minneapolis. - We must & we shall be
together - somewhere. Remember, that is my
work to be done - see if I don't accomplish it
somehow. - But will there ever be four of us, as
in the sense there are now three in your home?

I'm afraid not - I never & have passed through
the fiery trials that you three have, & I couldn't
be trusted - But tell me more of them - all of
them that is not ever more locked up inside
three hearts. - Tell me ~~now~~ just what you
like - and I won't ask for more. I loved them

ever ~~so~~ much more for just the little you did tell
me. - Oh Dear I'm getting into a train of thought
that keeps stopping my pen, & I see I cannot
finish this tonight. Are you not near me now
in soul? Are you not at my side? Even if you
do live in Bloomington & elsewhere, are not you
always with me? Father - give me a brave heart
- help me to say - "It is well - and I am happy
that it is thus & I can bear cheerfully the
few days, many of or few till I meet her"

Sometimes I can crush down a great
remonstrance which I feel in my heart every
time I say "it is nothing thus to be separated
I am strong, & happiness & quiet are my servants"

And sometimes I am all wings & then it
is - "Oh I cannot, cannot stay away from
her. No - for all the world I cannot stop
here" - Oh do love you Marie - Dearest
Dearest - I love you - love you - love you.

While you seem with me, can I let you go?
Oh no - come closer to me - It is us two against
all the world. We are one - Only in each other's
soul do we live. Closer, nearer, dearer, for we
must part again ~~next~~ ^{now}. It is all deception; &
here - in Iowa I am - all alone - but with
a true pure & earnest love all around me,
& another love, greater & better than yours
all about me too. Good bye Dear.

I love you - now - evermore. George

Wednesday - just before school - I have a few minutes before school - I will not let it pass without saying a word or two to you. How do you do this morning? Well & happy I will say.

I just took your last letter and opened it thinking I would commence to answer it but I will not, it is too good to be treated thus I will make a special answer to it my next weeks work or joy rather (but) then there is not much difference between all work & pleasure to me you know - it is an "agreeable duty")

I don't expect a letter from you this week for unless you sent by "Cedar Falls & Mason City" It will not come till next week. It is astonishing to me how these people here have for 4 years borne to have their mail so long coming. None of them perhaps ever felt as deeply interested as I do.

You don't know how glad it makes me to know - what you tell me in these your last letters, to know that your people recognise me at home & think good things of me I used to think they never would. I showed Elsie what Willie said - (when he donated me to "Sistah") She laughed - It was so funny. Of course such things might be said & convey no meaning - but where love is already we class such little sayings to our hearts. God bless him Tell him I return love for love, all he & "Mamma" & Papa & Grand Ma" & "Sistah" sent. Elsie likes you (from your pictures & for I never told her anything more only in a very general way) I don't not trust myself to

your people - Bye - Dear - Now - talk about you -

No 25
" 41

Red Elk Grove Feb 25. 1860

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Feb. 9. 1860

George,

I am glad to come to you, but 'tis only for a minute while Dr. Willard is talking with Mama.

She is certainly better, let us pray Heaven it may last. She has taken to-day a very little beef-tea and a spoonful of milk, and it has not hurt her, that is much.

She has given up wanting to die so much, Poor woman! no wonder, but she shall not get sick again.

Now, a word to you. I got your letter in due time, and you did say all the dear and blessed words I could desire. I do not think I could have borne it like a brave girl if you had done as

you partly promised, written me a short letter last week. But you were badly tired I know. I thought your letter gave me no clue to the fact. You must not work so day and night. You will spoil your eyes, and worse still your health, as your headache testifies. I must answer this letter, I suppose, to do you and myself justice. The wind blows like Walibroo to-day. The sun is setting with great glow. I must go — so by-by —

Friday Dec. 10

Please come a little farther to-day than Forest City, it is pleasant walking, and your journey shall have a good ending. It is a dear morning, chilly, yet Spring-like. Mama is, as she thinks, not quite as well this morning. She did not rest very well. Of course her recovery

must be exceedingly slow — she has got down so low, so very low. She can take nothing yet much like food. A spoonful of milk this morning is all she will take to-day. Of any substance. She is very weak. Oh! I wish she could be well.

Your letter was long. I like long letters from you, but not from every one. I thank you George for telling me these many things you had much rather not have told me. I felt no curiosity to know what you have told me, but for the confidence and trust that wish holds nothing I am very grateful. And too I love to know you feel that there is nothing of interest or moment to you that does not equally affect me. It would grieve me more deeply than any thing else that you should have a struggle unshared by

me. I would not have you feel that
you are to live for me, but we are
to live together, for each other
in fact. Bread I suppose we must
have, and shall have, sick or poor.
I fear not, neither do you, although
you may trouble a little over what you
know of my inability to economize,
my vast desires, my dislike of
labor, my good-for-nothingness
generally, and my littleness in particular.
But never mind any of these things,
only remember I love you well enough
to try to do all things willingly and
well. When all else fails we can
go to Granite City, cannot we?
What a community we might
have if the owners of lots would
build houses and occupy them.
Mr. & Mrs. Loomis, Croffut
and some good lady, Mr. & Mrs.

Ames and Mr. Wright. Perhaps
 something like Brook Farm we
 might have "a common brotherhood
 one family as it were with common
 interests. A new society organized
 on Heavenly Principles. Alack a day!

Saturday Eve 11

Good evening George... I care not
 a fig for your poverty or riches to-
 night, nor at all. I am sitting
 by Maria's couch. She is better
 tonight. She is very sick yet
 but she is well enough just now
 to laugh at me for taking refuge
 in Granite City. She says "I have
 always intended to do something
handsome for you, and I have con-
 cluded what it shall be - my
fair lots in the same City ^{as a dwelling} - a very

modest estimate to place on their value is "a thousand dollars".

Granny says "don't be too much elated but bear your good fortune well." But she says a great deal more than she properly will be gained. The visits of a Mother in Law are not considered very agreeable at all, and she says only as an Angel visits will she ever visit at Grant's ^{little} ~~place~~ not in bodily presence, therefore invisible.

But away with all such talk of lands and money. You may think, as I speak of these things first that they appear plainest in your letter. I have written a word at a time and so could not write about any thing that required thought or feeling. Excuse appearances. This is Saturday night as I have

told you. I will not say I wish you were here for you say we can think of nothing else, and I can think of many things beside that now, though I think of nothing I want more to say. But I will show you I am not "love sick", and be silent.

I can think of what you say in your letter, as I have been doing, several ~~thing~~ days. You say a good many things.

It is possible you may come to Pekin. And possible you may go to Minneapolis - the last possibility I don't mind, I make-believe you never said it, were possible. How we plan, and how busy those old women are spoiling plans. I forgot the Gates the other night and from your corner stone I laid

foundation and built a beautiful structure — to fall next day —.

You told me a story, I have one to tell. Would you like to hear it?

Say No. Well —.

Five years ago next June my Pet was given life. It was the price of another life that was paid for his. For five years his mother, and mine, has lived only by most careful and wise attention. She has come to the present time, through sufferings that even in the past, have more blackness than the valley of the shadow of Death. For five years I have tried, and if I have failed it has not been because of for lack of love, to guard from every case that might bring anxiety, to save from every step that would bring loss of strength — to keep from every

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thought and feeling that might
prove injurious. I need not tell
of Father's incessant watch and care,
he is her husband — but with all
we have done or could do, she is
just now coming back from the
grave to us. I do there much
hope, think you, that she will
ever recover her health again
so as to be very well " so she
can dispense with our daily and
hourly care? Do you think she
will be well enough this summer
for me to leave her, when there has
been no time for years that I could
do so? Do you think there ever
will come a time when I can safely
leave her? Leave her too with
a sick and helpless Mother
who has grown childish & exacting?

Sunday 12

My love, what shall I say to you? I thought of all these things a long time ago — was it weakness then that gave them no utterance. If I am to blame I know your heart will plead strongly for mine.

I thought not of any future — not much of any future — it was a long way off at least. Yes — "we should

be all frankness", our hearts open, each to the other. There — I hope

the foolish child has said enough to satisfy herself! I have no doubt if you were to come to her

this great afternoon she would meet you with tears instead of smiles — but she is very simple

I shall take it into my own hands to finish this letter. First let me look at yours, I dare not

much. You know of nothing, if your plans work well — why the

day spoken of be not as soon as possible — even this summer if you are here. I do. It is

impossible, that is all, that it be this summer. I of necessity

feel free somewhat delicate about disturbing too seriously the ways marked out by a man, much

more, too, when that man may have turned aside from his interest for my sake. I am sorry.

You will come soon, will you not and we will talk as I cannot write. You say you hope

I will always feel as unrestrained and free towards you as in my letter. I do not see how I can

feel otherwise. Forgive me, I have not written very cheerfully.

I do not think even if you get settled next summer in Illinois or "America" I could go with you

I will say nothing of unfitness now
but only of my duty which is also
my pleasure, and yours? Emma
says "I do not feel you to be under
obligations to remain with me."

Am I not? I am all of
Nineteen. Next Summer I shall
be Twenty. An advanced age,
truly! But I will not forget
you are next Summer Twenty-five

I can only say, if it was best
for you and possible for me, I
would say yes to all you may
desire. Now Dearest, nothing
remains but to live faithfully,
trusting to be lead by Him
who never leads astray. It
is a little thing, though the
days be long and wearisome
that come between us. I would
not have it counted sacrificial
all I shall ever be able to do

for these at home — neither will
 you account it such, but will
 pray God speed to all my
 endeavors. You are very good
 and I love you. Oh! I want
 to see you. When will you come?
 And you will come, perhaps, not
 to go again for a little while.
 That is more than I hoped.

Pet has not the same trouble
 you and I may have. Sister
 must not be given to you to go
 away, but you may be given to
 Sister, then all is right.

Father has written you a
 good long letter and intends adding
 somewhat to it I believe before
 sending it. It is apparent
 that he does not touch on
 what is in his heart to say.

Mama says "tell him I love him, and that I will give him more happiness than sorrow". She says she loves you more than any one beside us three, her husband and children. You are one of us.

You are really getting attached to your school. When more than she telling. How sick is it out? My girls had new shoes people's hearts, or to be neglected to-day by me. misfortune of any kind.

You may go to Minneapolis then to stay this summer. I would like to see Minneapolis. Mother has been talking of going there this summer. She may go with you. Won't that be nice?

I am not housekeeper now. We have a woman who is all we could desire. Not like an Irish girl. She has engaged to stay until May, we hope longer.

If she could stay always. Mama is going to work in the garden next summer all the time she can, and run about in the groves and on the Prairies. Some of the good folks have sent her in some plants from the Green House, and they have blessed her more than she telling. How sick is it out? My girls had new shoes people's hearts, or to be neglected to-day by me. misfortune of any kind.

It is growing dark. I will write a little in the morning to let you know how Mother is. She seems a good deal better tonight. I wish you were here or I there, a little while.

I have grown so much sensible since I wrote last, have I? Have you? I hope not. Excuse me.

Evening.

I can write a little more tonight. It is after supper. Have not Elsie, Hannah and, what is his name? gone to meeting and left you alone with me? If I were really with you while they are gone! What are you saying to me? Tuesday is day change after to-morrow. Will that letter be like this last one.

I have read nothing this week. I have taken care of Mama and Grand-ma and been pretty busy. This coming week I shall have more time. I have got to read Grote's history of Greece. I am real glad you are compelled to work out of doors. Staying in the School Room all day and then going home - not home but to Mr. Stiles and

reading or studying must not be well. I hope the "School Master" can make sense of that last sentence, I cannot.

The evening is beautiful. There is a star in the west that gives as bright a light as the new moon.

Emerson lectured in Chicago a week ago to-morrow night. Manners was his subject. A Congregational paper says of him, "his subject may be considered superficial but in the hands of the lecturer it became decidedly so. He said a few brilliant things and so on. I conceal myself with thinking he got a hundred dollars which are as good to buy coats with coming from a house full of Chicago as from

Boston people. Chicago may
listen yet awhile to Frank Taylor
and leave Emerson in Concord.

Do you get the Atlantic this
year? Dr. Holmes will kill
himself if he does not look out.
He has begun again in something the
same style as last year.

I wanted to ask, this long time if
you hear anything of Addie Jefferson.

Do you hear from Coffat?

Do you know how glad
I am you told me all these things
you did not like to tell me, in your
letter? I feel more surely identifi-
fied with you than ever before - not
so much yours as one with you
in thought, feeling and interest.

This letter has done more than
Fisher could do. My heart
feels no want of a few words, it
is only tired of this great gulf

of time and distance. Your
Profession is your pride. I am
glad. You have genius and
should grow eminent in your
Profession. Every man owes to
himself and the world the full
measure of his abilities, and
ability is measureless, is it not?

There should be no cramping
of interests, worldly and domestic
and in a life of harmony there
can be none. God must have
intended us to have happy homes
and also use to their utmost
the talents given us. I do
not think - do you - that much
absence endures love. I do
not see in families separated
one from another more affection
than in families where they
are always together. You
will have to be away from home

will you not? How much
light and warmth a man, obliged
to be abroad, must get from
the knowledge that he has a
home, where these are loving
hearts always waiting for his com-
ing, hearts hoping and longing
and with deeds of love making
ready a welcome. Dearest —
I not blessed about other women?

I thank our Father that I may
love you.

I must go — He will
be good now and always, will
we not? You are better than
I am, say to me be good and
I will try. Every morning and
every night, do you pray "Be
with my love to-day — to-night."

God bless and keep from harm
him I love more than all the world.
Good-by a little while — Marie.

Elk Grove, Hancock Co Iowa
Friday Eve - Feb 10th 1860 - 9 P.M.

Marie -

For the fifty second time within little more than a year I commence what has always been a most agreeable thing to me, writing to you. It is even so. This is the fifty second letter. Will they not average 2 square feet to each letter? Or say 3 square feet for both sides? That would make 156 square feet of surface or allowing three lines to an inch in width it would make a continuous line of 5616 feet - upward of a mile of affection.

If I stop here much longer we will have a spin & in track all the way from here to Bloomington. Now then Good Evening Dear How do you do? I did not hear from you this week but as she not yet got over feeling good on account of the two letters I got last week; it doesn't trouble me much. I confess to a momentary pang, when among my letters I found none from you - a moment when for very awhile you seemed dearer than ever & then I was myself again & I thanked My God - that I am so blessed. And then, I hope great things for next week. - Next week our mail comes via Cedar Falls, & so I shall get 2

letters from you. one via Algona & one via Cedar Falls. To night I got a letter from the R.W. at Dubuque & another from R.W. at Cedar Falls acknowledging error & promising to send our mail by the straight road. The fault was at Dubuque. The letter from that place was mailed Tuesday of this week. Now if you will mail letters at Bloomington so as to leave there Saturday Morning, Or perhaps even on Monday Morning, They will get to Dubuque so as to leave for Cedar Falls on Tuesday Morning & reach here on Friday. For 6 days only from your place. You can ascertain there how long it will take for letters to reach Dubuque & govern yourself accordingly. Oh, if we can be within five days of each other it will seem quite like home here for the remaining time I am here.

I am going to try what can be done in the way of investigating my missing mail business, as this week I am in receipt of a letter which tells of valuable papers sent to my address & as others here have suffered similarly perhaps some thing may yet come to light.

Thus much in the way of business and more - but stop - first allow me to say (assuming my much awful countenance which by the way is very awful indeed & calculated to inspire wholesome terror & immense respect) - "My Dear - keep account of all things - let not

the experience of a single day go for naught - nor the casts of a paper of pins be unrecorded - I can express my idea of the importance of this subject no better than in the following - entitled "The paid bill - a Ballad of Domestic economy" (to be read in a solemn & impressive tone)

"Oh! cast not that receipt away!

"Given by one who trusted thee

"Mistakes will happen every day

"However honest folk may be

"And sad it is love, twice to pay

"So cast not that receipt away"

"Ah yes - if e'er in future hours

"When we, this bill have all forgot

"They send it in again ye powers

"And swear that we have paid it that -

"How sweet to know on such a day

"We never cast receipts away!"

Then my Dear - be you not the heart of your husband is a thing to be considered inseparable from a cash account & daily memoranda.

Send your ear prophetically forward - ^{don't} hear you a "still small voice" like the morning of many waters "in the years to come - such as "Madame I insist upon obedience", It is a wife's first duty toward her husband."

What would you do then - I saw ~~two~~ pictures of you - In one, that little body seems to glow & blaze from head to foot like a live coal & (judging from appearances) I should say you were about 9 feet high

Oh Dear, I feel foolish - comic, tonight, no reality
or rather no earnestness at all, I feel just as
by & by it will be very pleasant to be, in the
way of relaxation. For the time I forget all
my high, ideal fancies of womanhood, with which
I have invested you; for the time the better side
of my nature is laid aside & is sleeping & now
I forget how you are so sacred to me sometimes.
You are like a playmate & I am laughing &
telling stories in the freest & most unrestrained
manner possible. There will yet be times in
our life when we shall be thus, I don't know
as you will, you haven't any of the comic in
you I believe - Mrs Lewis used to think me
always very sober & serious till once Mr Widstrand
told her how I acted at the fountain house.

He used last winter to be really afraid of
me & would hardly venture in my room lest
I should perpetrate something horrible in which
he should be implicated, I was finally obliged
to be more sober just on his account, else I
should have never seen him at all & I always
liked him & did not wish to drive him away.

But I have been sober since - nor have I had
one real train since I left The Registers Office.

Well Good Night Love - laughing or crying I
live & think of you always & even just here ()
I kiss the paper that goes to you, as I do that ^{on} which
your dear heart sends greetings to me. We may thus meet on paper
and my dearest Good Night & sweet slumbers. I love you George

Monday night Feb. 13th

Good Evening Dear. This is "Lovers
eve" sure enough - How many young hearts go "fil a fit"
& how many go "pity Zekel". too, this evening. How
the darling "missiles of cupid's" will go abroad
tomorrow; how many poor bleeding paper hearts -
stuck through by remorseless arrows & looking for
all the world like beads on a string, are this night
enveloped in lace & fixens, preparatory for the morrow.

How many a smitten youth will this night
besiege the paternal castle - "where the lily of"
his heart is snoring. (in blissful slumber perhaps
I should say) - with notes melodious as those
with which, one of old, softened the stubborn ^{stomach} heart
of Jericho's defences. Sure on such a night as this
a maiden must be clad in icy armor to resist
the brazen appeals of a "base horn" or the deep
drown sighs of a brokenhearted, broken arched violin.
- particularly when aided by the unearthly ^{vocal} accompa-
-niments of a young man laboring with influenza.

But really doesn't even the most ^{ordinary} ~~delicious~~
of music sound perfectly charming when one is
half asleep - half awake? It is music with all
its charm & potency unsullied by the reality of
waking life. It is the delights of fairy land
at home. The heart is peculiarly susceptible
to all tender & agreeable impressions at such a

time & I don't wonder at the risks young gentlemen will take: of being cowhided by the indignant & "cruel-patient" or of "waking up the wrong customer" - for the sake of persuading their lady-loves!

Music is a most beautiful thing is it not? No family seems complete without it. I have seen a wife produce an unanswerable & convincing argument in some simple little song; ^{with it} clear the frowns from the ruffled countenance; & the vexations from the troubled heart of the husband - frowns & vexations that hours of words could not have dispelled. There is such soothing rest & peace that comes of music.

I don't know that ever a husband thought of such a thing as singing, to divert the mind of the wife from care, toil, sickness & trouble. Oh no! this marrying is a one-sided co-partnership you know, & the wife is always expected to meet her wedded Lord at the door, with smiles and the thousand kind deeds & words known only to the married man & which therefore I forbear to mention. All this you know to cheat him of his weariness. It is vastly proper too for him to resist for a time these attempts to make him amiable & to grumble at all things till tea is demolished, till wife has wheeled the big arm chair before the fire - persuaded His Majesty into his gown & slippers, fixed his evening paper & &

Marie - If ever I do so - you shall call me a "brute" and a "Monster" - I insist upon it.

I sat down with your last dear precious letter before me intending to write about that but I have wandered far from it

To day I looked over some of your first letters. It being a long time - counting by change since they were written - These were two funny letters which you wrote, one in July & one in August & which were forwarded to me at West Milton - I guess. I must have written some funny ones too about that time. If I had seen those letters before I went to Somerville, I ^{might} (or at least a disinterested reader might) have thought that you were - - - a very good friend at least - Had I not seen you - or in my letters told you that I loved you, there would soon have been a tacit understanding between us in regard to these things, we had always been so frank with each other that it was not easy to conceal our sentiments from each other.

It is beautiful weather here, since only in Jan. we have ^{not} had scarce any cold weather.

There are some things very dear to me in this last letter of yours. Allow me to use here enough of this sheet to tell your Mother how heartily I approve her sense & taste in loving you. Why shouldn't she, & if through you & for your sake she likes me, I am very glad indeed.

Next? - to your approbation & esteem I prize that of
your Father & Mother. - and - my Mother too I
guess. I got a good letter ^{a few days ago} from a Milton
boy, one of my old schoolmates, & now a lawyer &
Clerk of the Court in Brooklyn N. Y. though only
22 or 23 years old. In one place he says "We
"have everything to gain & nothing to lose - nothing
"to lose but a fair Name and the habits which
"our Mothers, & none others, glory in as being good
"which we both shall be careful to preserve as long
"as we remember our Vermont Origin & Our Vermont
"homes!" And again "The man who has a mind
"a heart & a hand ^{to act & do} - a mind to plan - a heart
"to feel pleasure in Life & to brave disappointments
"and a hand to remove obstacles - and work for
"himself & his fellow men - Give me such a
"man"

I am sure there, a good deal of earnest
sturdy nobility of soul, I like it - "it comes out
stout & with true American Anglo Saxon ring &
bluntness" His brother 4 years older is Chief
Eng^r of one of the Minnesota R.R.'s a dubious
honor, though he is a smart fellow & thorough Engineer

You say I once told you, with my
arm around you, never to repress one word of love
to, and you say further that you have not obeyed the
command. My Dear, I am much grieved that
you should thus thwart my designs. Were I
now situated as when the command was given I
fancy I should kiss you into repentance for past
neglect, & a state of implicit obedience for the future

- Surely you will not persist in "Self-denial" as you call it, & in denying me also, my guaranteed rights, any longer? Remember if you do, I shall, like President Polk demand "indemnity for the past & security for the future" - & nothing less than "annexation" will satisfy the two conditions. This night in view of these many wrongs I have suffered at your hands, & I feel a very patriotic ardor & would gladly enlist as a volunteer, and invade a part of Illinois.

I do wish I were with you this night. Am I not all yours - and you all mine & are we not defrauding the rightful owners & in thus retaining property belonging to them?

I must say good night now.

You are "all the world to me" - take good care of my Maria, Father - be kind to us both, and bless her always & ever.

Good bye - just a little while
Your own Rose.

Tuesday Night - Feb. 14th

Good Evening - I did not succeed in answering to your letter last night - I never expect to in full, but I must say some things more before I get another one from you. Just six months ago this day - you & I did walk together - since which, we have been fractional beings

- forlorn & halves, of one whole life of Love & happiness.
You said recently that you might perhaps
get through fractions this winter. I hope so -
- I am looking forward to the time when we shall
at least get as far as the Addition of fractions
- where two halves are found to be not equal - not
- ing comparable with one whole.

A half year ago Dear - how quickly it has
gone! - Ten, twenty, or forty of them - are but a breath
- measure them all (even enough for a long life)
by the one just past & - - It's but a thought.

- How precious then they are - how can I bear
- that even one of them should pass, & you not
with me. I have heard Engineers anathema-
tize the profession that keeps a man from those
he loves. & they are competent to speak on such
a subject if any are.

Your letter again - Please now & don't exercise a
bit of "self-denial" next time you write - I won't
say a word against adjectives even though there
should be nothing else in the letter, I wonder
if you could not write such a letter as would be
yourself & not a letter at all - a letter which
if kissed, would return the compliment?

There are many things even in this letter
& that are so much like you that will be
always sacred. I was thinking even now
- that if Serena Ames should by & by come to her
senses fully & see how foolish she has been in

living me instead of keeping all her heart to her-
self as she used to talk of doing - and if she
should say good bye to me - and if she should take
any Maria with her, & leave me to reflect on the
past & plan for the future - I was thinking I said
that with these letters I could be happier than
with the love of any other woman - for the letters
are true & the hearts that spoke through them,
beat truly for me. & that was good, and that
goodness is a thing of eternity.

Now you ask a dreadful question - as much
as to say "Is it possible?" "Oh George Wright! why
do you care for Serena Ames?"

My Dear attend while I tell - But what shall
I tell first? It is because - to me as a stranger
she appeared comely, quiet, gentle, discreet, thoughtful,
sincere, earnest; positively & truly a woman.

^{because} As an acquaintance I found her intelligent
& cultivated; - because, as a friend I found
her all that I had pictured her to be, all that
is noble & beautiful & lovable in woman - because
this is good - because ever to think of her has
been to me a resolution to become good myself,
- because in ways of thinking & mental tastes she
"suits" me - because in heart and soul she is not
only all "true womanly", but my ideal; - because
most precious - above and beyond all things else
- she loves me, all this she is & all she truly gives
to me, without price - without reward. Tell me, any

one who can, why should I not love her, with all
my heart, - Why for all this - priceless, inestimable
- ble as it is, should I not give all I am - all I ever
hope to be or have. And these are a few of the
reasons why, & this is how, I love Serena Ames.

Do you want to know how I might have
guessed your heart the day we were at Mt Auburn?
I don't like to tell you so far away - but please just
come sit here by my side while I write & perhaps
you can read better than in Bloomington, Class; Class;
for the paper is half turned from you. There now
you can see - You remember how from the south side
of the Tower we looked away ~~across~~ across the many
villages & low spires of churches peeping up through
the patches of dark green shade - how at our feet
almost, the glistening still waters of the Charles
River ^{seemed} like a silvery fillet, binding up in its
many folds & careless involutions, bouquets of
field & forest, blossoming with country seats & suburban
villages - bits with tufts of verdure & "garlands of purple &
red", How there before us all around us seemed the great
heart of the world, & how the picture seemed half a
dream through the soft ~~in~~ ^{hazy} light of the still
summer day. - You remember it all, & how we
were standing there, talking, (you had passed beyond
where I stopped) "You were 3 or 4 feet from me
and (I don't think I moved for) - (probably you didn't
think you moved either) but I remember that, by
& by you we were standing close together - just so ^{just} ^{near}
enough so that had I been blind ^{deaf} I would have known
you were there, & as I remember it more I cannot but

think that you, as well as I, were glad to stand there by the railing of the tower on Mount Auburn & talk of the beautiful panorama of earth & sky spread out there before ~~us~~ ^{us}."

"I might have known" says your Mother, from her reception of me,

Perhaps to one whose whole heart is in any thing, that there are few of these little things that escape notice. To one constitutionally hopeful, ^{they} might mean positive assurances - while to the constitutional & practiced doubter, they would only bring a more bewildering maze of uncertainties. I was not blind, Maria, & if I had been judging for another, might perhaps have felt a certainty in things I saw & heard all around me."

Half a year ago - and away down yonder through ~~the~~ at the end of that smooth path beneath the pines, where two paths meet in one & are united thenceforth beyond forever, there is a tree, & we are there - There doubt became certainty - What made you hesitate so long when you knew I loved you? I will never forget how that little hand nervously crushed a leaf as ^{though} you were uncertain & would test it to see were it really your own hand yet. It was the last "Declaration of Independence" for a moment later

in its tumultuous march I had found my hand & yielded
itself for ever more a prisoner.

Oh Marie - can it be possible! Why
did you do it? I am waiting scarcely in
patience for the day when that same little hand
will be surrendered once more to me. That
precious little finger. Mayn't I cut it off
to keep with me, when I leave you again? It isn't
big enough to hunt any, to have it cut off.

This is the 12th week of School & yet it
looks just as uncertain to me, when I shall
get away from here, as ever. Mr Stiles is getting
better & has commenced doing some "chores". They are
great talkers here. We keep up a constant flow of
smart things & so far, I guess we have got along
pretty well - I like them very well, more that I
object to the way Mr S. used to treat the baby.

This Am., when I was engaged with a shovel & fork
in peckan labor I bethought me of a manner
of expressing my employment politely - Thus

"Translating the contents of an Ancient M.S."
Few would recognise in the abbreviation for "Manuscript"
the initials of Mule Stable & I have an ambition
for literary ^(clutter?) distinction.

Now I must say good bye
for a whole week. - Help me be good. I need such
help. Oh my God make me worthy of this great
love. I will no more call my letters poor, as I used
to, but I think of myself. Good Night Dearest Marie
George B. Wright

No 26 3 Red Elk Grove Mar 2 1860 ²⁴⁷
" 42 3

Bloomington Feb. 14. 1860

George,

I am real wicked to every body but you. I owe my sisters, my Aunt Lizzib, Dan L. Paine, Charley Hood & Cyrus letters. Shall I ever get them written? Doubtful. Father has gone to the Office but will be out some time before he brings my letter. What will you say to me? I shall see. We are nicely tonight considering how sick we are. Mother is better though she lies still all day long. She can speak to us now and will laugh sometimes and can take into his stomachs a little black berry water & strawberry.

I have sewed all day when
not waiting on Mama and Grand-ma.
I have not done much though, I
am not fast enough to be impolite
certainly — no reason in the world
why I should not be a lady
according to Dr. Holmes. You
like me to be a lady? Of course
you would. A woman, too, perhaps.

Mama and I have been talking
about you a little to-day. Do you
want me to tell what we said?

She said she wished you would
come and live near us next summer
and always. I said what a
fifty we are not all sick enough
to go where and when we please,
and not poor enough to be ruled
by ugly circumstances. A very
short sighted remark and to me
wiser very foolish also. Mama
said we plan and think things must

be so and so or forever more
our lines are watched. But we
are perpetually crossed in spite
of our desires and hopes, and
nothing comes of it only this — we
look back, sometimes only a very
little ways, and see how childish
and simple we were, and bless
Him who leads us right even in what
to us is darkness. The path
that leads me to you was not of
my own seeking. I might go
farther back, even to my childhood.

How we hoped and prayed not
to leave Wesley for Minnesota.

We were not heeded. How dark
and hopeless my life when my
mother died. But if to her it
was the entrance into a land of
light, to me it was "the darkest
hour just before day". How

sad seemed, the lot of the little
girl tortured from morning till
night with scolding and driven
about the house with hand and
tongue by a cross, cross woman -
but even then one step farther
would carry me home, which I
found at last, a spot of refuge,
and a place for rest. So has
it been all my life, what I have
prayed to be delivered from as evils
too hard to bear, ^{Ever - Personal?} a dear Father
has seen to be the portals leading
to joy and blessedness. Can we,
can I not trust Him? Sunday
I did not trust, and vainly thought
because with my dim eye I saw
a shadow in the future the eye
of Omnipotent must also behold
it. I am sorry I was so faithless
sorry I could have written anything
which may sadden you when you read.
Yours Marie

Wednesday evening

George, — I am disappointed.
But 'tis an affliction that will
last "but for a night". I hope
better things for the morning.

Oh! how I wish I was a
genius — what a fine letter I
would write you — so many pretty
things I would say. I have no
lack of things to say, as it is
but they may not be smart nor
pretty, but if they please you
I shall be quite content.

I love you to-night. — I love
you to-day better than yesterday,
better than ever before. Each
day do you come nearer. I do
not know but it should bring a
feeling of fear when each day

shows me how almost inseparable
from you are all my thoughts, my
feelings and desires. How closely
connected with you are all my
hopes of the present and thereafter.

I am frightened when I think
how little my life seems worth apart
from yours. — How much easier
to die for you than live without
you! Dearest! God bless you!

Thursday 16.

Good evening George. I am
keeping diary you see.

I have got no letter yet and
so do not know what to do but
go to you for comfort. May I
talk to you tonight just as I
feel? I feel tired away down
deep in my soul. There is such
a restless crying out and moaning
for something I cannot have.

When I have seen you once more it
will not be so hard to write will it?
Or will it be harder still? Will
you satisfy this yearning at my
heart, and give me rest? Wish
you I could better endure all things,
than bear this unutterable pain
of separation. Now, you give me
for I would not have ^{it} otherwise.

But it is useless to say — he still
be strong — I cannot change my nature
and I would not if I could. — in you
is rest and peace — my home — my all —
out of you — nothing I desire.

Friday Evening

You are at home tonight, aren't
you? Do you think of me walking
home Friday evenings — think of
me as thinking of you ~~as~~ going home
and wondering when you will come
home to me! Every Friday night
I do think of you about dark.

and wonder if Elsie and Charlie
know what it is to have you come
to them. Do you know yourself? Do
you know you are not at all like
any other man - not like what you
think yourself to be? To me you
walk the earth a glorified man
for you the sun shines - for you
the blue heavens stretchers bend above,
the stars come out, and moon shines
for you the birds sing, trees grow
and earth rejoices - around you
centers all light and love and
beauty - in you I live.

It rains - How gently it
falls against the window - more
like a memory than a sound
now hear - "it is always meaningful
the sound of rain in a dark night
against the windows - but not quite
real." It carries me I know not
where - rather into myself than outside

It seems to still all sounds of earth
to forget to hope - to tranquilize
all grief, and go with us down
among green graves, and into the
little field of childhood. Do you
ever think of my Father and Mother
who gave me being? I am glad I
know nothing of my Father. I might
find him what it would not be pleasant
to remember, and now I can think of
him as Father, without stain, unmarried
and half. I had a dream of
him when very young, that has always
remained reality, so that I see how
he looked. I was six months old but
never could I be persuaded that I
have not all my life kept the
impression of a kiss I gave him after
he died. I can see now how he looked
in the coffin. Of course it is all a fancy

or a dream but it has always been
as truth to me. When a very young
girl I steadfastly believed I remembered
seeing and kissing ^{him} and my Mother
could not make me think otherwise.

I do not claim to extend my memory
many months back of that.

So my Father is a mystery to me,
but not so my Mother. I loved her
with my child's heart just as with
my woman's heart I love you — with
all my soul. The grief of being
away from her, for only a little
while, was not little, would not be
little now. I feel myself standing
by a window, one evening when it
rained as it does now — my tears
falling as fast and silently as the
drops outside and my heart
full to bursting because she had gone
out in the darkness and I feared
she would never come back to me.

A day or two before she died a
cloud as of death spread itself
over me which I could not resist.

I felt she must die — the thought
came to me one afternoon, a warm
bright, still afternoon, I see and
feel it all, even to how clean the
floors were. Oh! such a deadweight
at my heart — it was suffocating me.
I tried to laugh and play with my
sisters, and think it all a fancy,
we put on our bonnets and went up
to see the new bridge our Father was
building. He had the boards
partly laid down, and he showed
us how thick they were and how
he was doing and I tried to listen,
talk and forget — how hard that
trying! I cannot breathe freely when
I remember it, and remember the
load of almost despair I carried
home! No one can tell what a

child may suffer and never speak
unless some experience in their own
childhood can tell them. The loneliness
and calmness of that afternoon
is so oppressive! Why do I
recall all this tonight. It is not
me — the rain & whispered it.

I have not told you of my Mamma
this evening. She is still very sick —
she has to live with so little food
that it may be called none. Will
she get well? She must. She seems
better, but, I suppose it must take a
long time for her stomach to recover
from its long abuse.

I want you, George.

My Love — Good-night.

Marie.

Sabbath Day.

I ought to catch inspiration from
so glorious a day. The sunshine and
calmness without, the brightness and
quiet within. Ought to catch in-
-spiration! — when nature — the heavens
and the earth seem so full of God
should a soul, for whom all things
else were made, catch this spirit
from outward things and receive
it in full measure from the Great
Source? How we have turned things
up side down! I have
been to meeting today for the first
time in a long while. Father
preached on the Holy Spirit, and
it was one of his best sermons.
He further proved his infidelity
to the good folk of Bloomington
by speaking in strong though kind

language against a furious revival
going on now in a Methodist Church
in the City. For near two months
hundreds of people have gathered
nightly to scream, groan, pray
and cry far into morning sometimes.

Even little children have been
persuaded of their great wickedness
and brought forth to the anxious
seat to be taught all unmanliness
and make their heads hot crying,
instead of being sent to bed without their
supper to cure their disordered brains.

Shameful! I can hardly feel
any respect for men and women who
are so wild and rude in what in
which we should be most gentle and
sensitive — in our relations to the
All Good and Beautiful. I find
much more to admire and love
in reading of the religion of the
Pagans. Indeed I am almost

persuaded to be a Pagan while
reading Mythology. I have lived
in Mount Olympus with the gods
and goddesses the past week.

There is so much grandeur and
strength in the thunders of Jupiter,
imperiousness of Jeno, and in the
masculine Minerva! Then I
like the fancy of the marriage
between Heaven and Earth. It
is so rich in imagination, and there
is such a magnificent display
of ferocity, and such an all-ab-
sounding and superabundant strength.

But this is the Christian's Sabbath
and I will not defy the heathen
gods.

Sunday Evening
I had to leave you to go to dinner,
and after that to my class, from
which I have just returned.

You know, perhaps, I got no letter
last week - the first week since
I began to receive them from Forest
City. Maybe you were too busy
to write - and maybe the letter
went away somewhere else.

I had four girls to-day in
my class. Our lesson was in the
fifth Chapter of Matthew. I
was not so well prepared as I
ought to have been. We have
a meeting for teachers every Tuesday
evening. They have been here all
winter until two weeks ago.

They were very interesting and instructive
I meant to have told you of them
before. Dr. Willard our Super-
intendent is almost always present
and it is really worth an evening
to hear him talk - he is so peculiar

so independent and withal a little egotistical. He probably contains in his small head as much as our whole head I mean Society knows.

I don't mean to say he is so very wise. I never feel particularly foolish in his presence. Dr. Wakefield

is another teacher. He is a very amiable man, one who does not say much but is worth listening to when he does open his mouth.

Dr. Fell finishes the list of medical men who teach "him" you know, I suppose.

He is lately a convert from orthodoxy and it is a little amusing to see him in our meetings — he treads the new ground as carefully as if he was afraid of burning his toes. He has read Combe pretty well and allows his philosophy to be pure gospel but

he pulls back, and whispers caution
at some of the questionings and
beliefs of those who are older in heresy
than himself. — Mr. Prince is a
young lawyer of average intelligence
and extraordinary purity of heart.
His face is ^{one} ~~one~~ always loveliest to see,
clean, cheerful and light-giving.
In our meetings he is studious,
thoughtful and well informed.

These I have named have met regularly
together with the Minister and
his daughter — every week this winter.

We have other teachers but they seldom
meet with us. Our pleasant sitting
room never admits of any stiffness
and they come in as though at
home, sit down, talk as easily
as Mama and I. Even I can
talk, I can quote the great I
as they please to call him, if
nothing more...

— — — It is now late in the
evening. Mama lies on the bed,
while I write. Papa has gone to
give the colored people of B.
a lecture on Education. Sarah
our girl, went with him. I ^{hear} ~~can~~
the Methodists singing their closing
hymns. Greenville sounds almost
musical on the evening air.

What have you been doing today?
Mama says tell you she will try
to be well enough by day to walk
out with you and show her pretty
plants, and to sit down and show
her hospitality by eating with you.
She says she will talk with you
and say those many things she
would like to have written. Is
it possible you are ever coming?

You are writing to me now are
you not? Tuesday is not far off.

Are you very well? I am afraid
you are not. Are you quite sure
you are perfectly frank in telling me
all that troubles and perplexes you -
all that grieves you? You will -
won't you? Do you always feel
there is nothing coming between
our souls - no feeling of unfitness
no want of sympathy - no want of
anything? I do - but it seems
to me you must feel some want that
is unsatisfied in me. Tell me you do
not. Oh! I could not bear there
should be anything to separate my
soul from me, but I could so
much better bear it now than a
little later. — I must go:
help me to be good this week.
Ask our Father to be with and help
us. Sweet sleep — and a
pleasant walk in the morning.
Good-bye. I will kiss your picture
and go to sleep — Marie.

Monday. Cal.

Mother says, "now you will finish Cyrus' letter, wont you?" and I say yes, and I will. But it is almost impossible, when I have a letter not yet sent, to sit down to write without saying a word more — "Good evening" and "Good-bye" "I want to see you" or some other equally new thing.

We have just received the "News". do you get it? I see our friend Willie has been admitted to the bar. It never struck me as being any thing strange or particularly what ought not to be for Will to study Law but to think of him as being now a lawyer invests him with a new character entirely. Of all things I

hate a glib, smart, polite
lady's-man lawyer. We all hate
mediocraty, and feel a man does
himself discredit to fall short of
eminence in whatever calling he
chooses to follow. Every man
should be wholly new; unlike
any other man and about every
other man in that which he is
best fitted for.

There — I have finished
Cyous' letter as I promised and
come back for a moment before
closing your envelope. Your eyes
will next look where I am looking,
your hand be laid where mine now
rests. Do you love me? I love
you. George — dearest George —
my own — not so much as I am
yours, yet mine, for better, for worse.
Nothing, we will part. Good-bye Marie

time of trouble. Dr. Fell particularly has shown himself a friend in need. For two or three days he has been running about town in search of a girl able to take charge of the work. There has been one found at last - an American woman who may perhaps do.

I am sorry to send what will make you so sad as my sad news. But think of next week and hope good things. I go to you in all my troubles and find a comforter. I do not sit up to night. It is evening now, I have written a word at a time today.

In two days you will speak to me. Say blessed words that will make sunshine where it is all darkness now. I must go - Good-bye - dearest, George.
Marilyn

been deceived in a friend, and I can never seem to him when he goes as before he came. But it was for no such benevolent reason, I fear, that my tears were shed. It was painful, the thought is painful now, with all the brightness that came after to look at it. —

Sunday Feb. 5. 1880.

The day is rather dreary outwardly, heavy dark clouds cover the sky, and the muddy streets and the thousand little drops on the leafless tree boughs tell of rain just fallen.

Is it that the inward darkness is so much deeper that the gloom of nature has no power to move us to feelings of sadness and discontent? Mother is still almost as sick as

when I wrote Thursday night. She does not suffer so much pain, but whether that indicates any real improvement I do not know. Her stomach will yet bear nothing.

She, I think, has almost abandoned hope of life. She does not desire to live and thoughts of death are pleasant. It is no wonder, she has suffered so much and is so worn out. The best we can hope is a temporary renewal of strength to be again exhausted by suffering. How blessed must come the hope of that life not cumbered with this distracting body! Although I do not fear this attack will prove fatal, or do not fear enough to cause deep anxiety the thought of her going from our sight is made less intensely bitter in view of past agony and of future freedom. It is often hard

to look up through these nights of affliction and behold God unchanged in goodness, and to say "His loving kindness is over all His creatures". The discipline of sorrow and disease is hard ^{to} learn or to attain.

I believe people deserve no praise for doing well; that we are spoiled and spoiled by giving great credit where a person has done simply duty, as if we expected every body to do wrong, but I acknowledge my thanks with the thanks of our household [She is called away for a minute, & something which must be obeyed - else 'twouldn't - prompts me to grasp the pen, just to say that I - am called away too. Reflection: Life is over an unfinished plan] are due to the people of our parish for their unceasing much kindness and ^{many} loving actions in

came what my heart said, and your
presence, and telling you what I
had never confessed to Leano; and
Oh! the shock of coming to myself
again - back to truth and propriety
was so great, that for a week
I could not recover from the rebellion.
It seemed to drive me with great
force back into myself, and hence
my conduct that so perplexed and
almost chilled you. It was not
just an - it was a sad reality, and
I was compelled to do as I did.

It was more than I could well bear
to hear you say when you went away
Friday night that I was not
the same girl who wrote your
letters. I cried bitterly, but even
then I said to myself 'tis more
for his disappointment than anything
else - it is so sad to find one has

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Elk Grove Feb 18, 1860

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1st

Tuesday, night Jan 31, 1860

George,

I have just read your carefully.
I did not see but 'twas as well
on 'Lecrofs' as on Commercial note.
I have tried hard to write to some
one of the several I am keeping waiting,
but impossible. I could not think!
I have so little time to write that
I neglect every body but you.
I do not neglect you, do I?

How busy you are! Oh! it
is such a plague, I mean it must
be, to be a genius, to be able
to make pictures and draw fine
straight lines. Perhaps you
will get business that will keep
you in Forest City a little longer
than you expected. If you are

no sleep now they will not so
rapidly decline in business as
to have no work days by and
by. It is hard - though, is it
not. But you are patient.

Possible there may be a more
tangible reason for self-denial
and much labor than simply
obligedness, but how unspiritual
and, and mean, for me to
think of so substantial a cause!
Ah, well!

Yes - I have told you
in a last letter all about my
meeting with George B Wright
last sixth day of August.

It is very well you were blinded
by some inside power. I had
thought of little else than you all
the afternoon and laughingly
dressed for you at supper time.

I was singing to Chick when Charley
came to the stairs and said Mr.
Wakfield was down stairs. I passed
through the dining Room while
the girl was getting a light, what
good Angel stored the coming
of the light until I had entered
the Room where you were? When
Mr. Wakfield said "a friend
of mine, I brought with me", I
simply wondered at the absence
of a name, then, in a moment,
before Cyrus spoke, I felt who
it was, and a part of me was
not surprised at all, and I was
expecting near forgetting externals,
forgetting all chick I had put
upon myself "that possibly you
were my friend George the same as
when two thousand miles away, here
near was I to forgetting all things

2^d sheet, read from ²¹³
1st to 3^d - this is
interpolated

Thursday night Feb. 2.

made no impression on her. I
thought I should be glad if
she were to pass to that life where
there is no more pain. You can
have no idea what it is to see her
suffer so day after day, and
never to feel secure a minute!

Two o'clock - a Journal of
the hours of a dreamy night.

My head aches, from the Chloro-
form I guess. I have just put
Mama to sleep - it will pass
off shortly though. I do
not know as you can read this
but 'twill be as well if you cannot
The pencil is outrageous.

Good-morning - sleep a
little longer - Elsie and Charley
will see ^{you} before another night - I shall not
Good-bye love - Maria.

George. I hope even pencil marks
will be greeted kindly. If I can
afford to pay postage, you may afford
to read. I am using you as

many would use brandy - to keep
my eyes open while Mama sleeps.

Mother was taken yesterday very sick
worse than she has been at all. She
was exceedingly sick all night, only
kept from keener agony by being
under the influence of Chloroform.
To-day she has been but little
better and I have scarcely left her
only when she was sleeping from
effects of Chloroform. — She
is sleeping now and I to keep
from sleeping take a sheet of
paper on a book and a pencil

and think of you - for as 'stupid' as you are, in and of yourself I never get stupid thinking of you. I wish you were here, we could watch together.

It is now half past ten - the house is perfectly quiet - all asleep but one. You are asleep too I hope. Sleep sweetly.

I sometimes see you in my sleep but not often. One night I saw you and you were sick and I knew it was that that brought us together. So I was not sorry you were sick.

Your presence was so real to me that for two or three days I felt I had just left you. I took your hand in mine and felt the blessed assurance that there was none in all the world who could so rightly claim to be near you in sickness and suffering.

Manshorm says a man has it in his heart to hate another man when ill. If true, it is not wise. In health a woman feels a man to be so much the stronger that she confesses herself as it were conquered, and devoutly says I am forever thine. But when her idol is prostrate as very weakness before her, she rises in power, holds a prisoner her lord and master saying Thou art mine.

It is nearly one o'clock now. Since I began to write I have strove for mother most of the time. I do not suppose there is danger of death in such sicknesses as Maria's - a chronic difficulty of Stomach - but there is that almost as bad. Last night when she was worst, when morphine that would have killed half a dozen

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Oak Grove Feb 18, 1860

little scornful even now, whether
at myself or you I cannot say.

I will say though that I would not
wonder if you felt slightly troubled
particularly if you have had much
acquaintance with affectionate women.

I have been disgusted by too profuse
display of tenderness many times, but
certainly I should not have been
had such evidences of ^{regard} ~~tenderness~~
been given privately, without my eye
witness. After all it may be public
avowals we dislike. We hate

any thing approaching affectation
or silliness, and we seldom affect
anything alone with one we love.

I was thinking perhaps you would
be afraid if I was so impatient
now to see you of the by and by
when settlement had somewhat cooled
the man and the leaving of all
but one made more dependent

Monday Feb. 8, 1860.

George

I sent this morning a letter
telling you of Mama's severe illness.
That is wanting you to remain a whole
week in suspense and anxiety. I
will send another line in the morning
which will probably reach you the same
time with the other. You may
have thought that unless I had
something favorable to report I would
not have written again so soon.

I hope Mother is better, it is so
slight an improvement however that
I may be hasty in hoping so much.
She has seemed so much more like
herself today that she has inspired
us all with new life. She said
as I sat down by her to write, "now

you will make him think I am most well." She has been talking with me about dying. She says she ~~wish~~ is almost afraid she will get well. She has had such sweet thoughts of going home and meeting her two sisters, and Father who went so long ago to the better Land. And then she spoke of her Mother who would soon perhaps go away from us, and of her three girls who would stand waiting to welcome her coming, with her husband mourned for so many years. She spoke of being with and watching over us who would still remain. You see these are thoughts born of sickness and pain. They do not trouble me at all and they will be not unpleasant to remember when she is well again as she will be in a few weeks.

She speaks of you and wishes you were here. You are not here but five days off. To-morrow I shall catch a glimpse of you. Do you know how fast the weeks are going? This is December - a short ^{month}, they say, but it seems as long in getting to Twenty eight as any other month - well, this month is partly gone, then there are March and April, which will come and go, one at a time.

You do not sometimes have uneasy feelings about a time to come when a weak, childlike woman will cling too closely, impeding your progress, and by too much coaxing thwarting your desires, making you less free to go your way in the full liberty of manhood, do you? The very thought of the possibility of such a feeling makes me a

the woman. Be that as it may
 I am impatient of the many days
 coming between us and sometimes
 grow sick and tired. But you
 do also, and you have said
 "we shall meet" and 'till be all
 we could desire. More than
 ever do I want you now, but no
 more than in happiest days
 I have you.

Tuesday morning
 Good morning. Bright and beautiful.
 Grandma slept very nicely most all
 night, and seems quite cheerful
 this morning. She says she is
 afraid she will get well. The fear
 will soon vanish when a little strength
 has been given. Next week I
 shall send a more hopeful and
 welcome word. Wait patiently.
 I shall hear to-night. Good-bye.
 Serena.

here together more than five or six years? Rella & Elsie lived together ~~from~~ years & one year he was here & she in N.H. Sister Louise was a wife but four or five years. Oh the strange, sad, cruel, mysterious of this little breath of duration, which we call life. Just when Life seems dearest - just when the world in new & fairest robes of brightness & most beautiful hues, spreads out before us, a broader field than ever before - when we have just entered upon a new life of usefulness - a life of loving kindness toward all, when it seems that for ourselves & for all around us it is well & desirable that we should live - then we must learn that it is well to die.

If, in all soberness - in the full possession of my reason, not pressed & prejudiced by my sympathies hopes & wishes - or by pain, sickness & sorrow I could feel clearly & in full faith, that the future is what we picture it - that we shall meet again all of us (or any of us) & that it shall be to us a more than realization of all we hope, and that the purest & most perfect unity of souls here & but the shadow of the ~~Thereafter~~ - where all shall be in perfect harmony. If I could feel assured that it is not all a fallacy & that the Heaven of the future is not given us merely in fancy, that thereby we may be better on Earth - that the reality to us of a Heaven does not spring ~~from~~ from our dread of annihilation, our natural

fear of Death - and from a desire to gild over & quit the weary life when it fades out; with the promise of living again - if I could answer all these doubts satisfactorily within myself at all times, I should no longer fear or dread Death either for myself or for any other, & should only weep, as parting from those dear to me for a time, just as on earth when forced for a long time to part. But I doubt!

I wish I could be a Spiritualist - for I fear I shall never feel fully satisfied in my own hearts (or soul if ~~there~~ there be) of the reality of the future, till I have had some tangible proofs that those gone before, still live & await my coming too. And I have prayed the saddest & sincerest prayer I ever felt or named, that those I have loved, those who have "gone before" should come, along with me, & tell me that it is no fiction, what I would believe.

I am not a medium, they will say - but it does seem to me that if you were in Heaven & wished to talk with me you would come to me, not through the mouth of a stranger who holds audiences with souls for pay, but alone to me & would speak to me (blessed words of peace & assurance). Oh Marie - it is so sad thus to unfold to me I so love, the darkness of my soul still wandering in doubt & unrest. I do not always nor often feel so, but it is so sad, sad indeed

for me & my unbelief. Marie - you can ^{surely} ~~for~~ give me for that in which I am sincere, I ~~would~~ do no wrong - but can you love me? You ~~cannot~~ honor & respect me; can you love me & bear with my doubts & teach me to believe, always & ever? You are free you know, for my life I would not ask you to do other than your whole heart sanctions. To me you are all the world, & where your happiness is at stake, my own is but a trifle.

And I do, you will, the severest afflictions the deepest sorrows, will but bind us closer together & will teach us both how to live better & happier & holier lives here on Earth, trusting that the future will not belie what seems a fant of us; the natural certainty that for all of us there is beyond the grave, a glorious immortality.

My own heart is too dumb to say to talk further on this subject. I will read your letters in that find some things to set me in my right mind again, & so instead of coming to me in your trouble & sorrow & in my heart finding rest & help: I must seek refuge in your heart, for those very sorrows" but

We are together - let us help one another.

May God bless & keep you ever, my dear wife - for to us, alone, that name is not improper.

Except for that one thing, these letters are most dear & precious - dear because perhaps never before you so fully need of me & my sympathy - you have carried that feeling in your letter & the expression of that ~~xxx~~ feeling ~~there~~, met ^{each} a response in me as I have never felt before.

The pencilled sheet is more yourself than I have ever before seen in your letters - I see it all, I see you as you write it, sad & weary - and the hours were long & dear, but your whole heart is in the writing & in all simplicity & trusting faith you gave it all to me.

Now I talk little things & if I can say something dull (and I can), I will be thankful & say perhaps she will sleep over it and in pleasant dreams forget all things else.

You think perhaps a more substantial & graver reason than disinterested friendship & prompted me to work nights, partly that & more the ambition of a workman & pride in my work, for I have both & the ambition is to be as good as the best in my profession. - remember that is simply the ambition - & speak not of lack of ability & opportunity which, (and not lack of ambition) must ever circumscribe my sphere of action & the results therein.

Thank you for what you say of August 6th & of our meeting then & there. Oh it is blessed to think of now. Suppose you had forgotten propriety then & that I had too. (of which there was more danger)

and - well - suppose Gus was holding his hat ^{Scrap 3} & his
breath to see - "what next" - and suppose the
light & a girl with it had come in, & well -
- suppose a very awkward though very happy
scene. Not so to be however.

I guess neither of us were very natural
that week! Something very large was in our ^{throats}
making talk very laborious & painful. It will
never be so again. And you cried did you
that I thought you seemed not the same.

If you had been the same I could not now have
been happy in knowing that you love me.

I am very glad you couldn't talk.

It is now 5 o'clock. I must go & do the
chores & then in the evening I will be with you
again. Good bye then for a few minutes.

Evening.

What will I say?

I don't feel at all like talk - If I was with you
there would be no need. We could understand all
that we would say, and in better language
than that of words. Elsie & Charlie are here
to-night. Hannah is away - Elsie is talking about
going home, & what we must do here first. Poor woman
- life is but a sad prospect for her & I have
too much of the gloom in my own nature
to know how to cheer others. It does seem
worse for a man to die than for a woman
- their all in life is not as with women. Their

love isn't like woman's love.

Oh if (the same wish over & over again - day after day) I could only be with you tonight! Are you not now writing something to me, are you not telling me good news?

I hope so - Your Mother you said fears she would get well, I hope those same fears may be realized & not the fears you have. It can only be when every moment of Life is agony, that one could willingly close their eyes for the last time, shutting out the light of this dear earth.

Yet death is not always harsh cruel & unwelcome - May I die the death of peace & hope & in full possession of my reason, & that would not be hard. I will write more before I send this, - be good, Dearest, be brave, nothing is in vain - I am with you ever in spirit & by & by I shall be with you in reality. I am glad now that you are there & that with me here, you have now opportunity to repay somewhat of that great debt of love & gratitude which to them you owe. God bless you dear. You will be worthy - you will do all & everything for them that is lay within the limits of human possibility, to do.

Have a care of yourself too. You are more so precious to me, too much mine, that I should allow you to kill yourself. Do you want it should go to Bloomington? Say yes & I will go. Give them my love, & may our Father bless & protect you all, is my fervent prayer, George

Smiling & happy - just as two friends meet
in the street & chat of the weather news & bus-
iness & then part - each going to look after his
idol - fame, wealth, or honors it may be.

Part thus - just as though our very
life was rent torn from us. There are tem-
peraments that can do so, their love is always
violent and rash (that is, all outside) & they
part as careless & smiling as though it were
the lightest matter in the world.

How such sober serious & perhaps foolish
people as we are don't do so, Love to them
is everything. They dignify it with names
and attributes Divine, & think without it
life would be nothing.

There now - I have spoiled this ^{mess} then.
- It has been pleasant & quiet to me.

But it very invalid? or invalid?
I thought of you all the time I was writ-
-ting. You see the subject has inspired me to
say brilliant things - I feel to-day just as
though labor is degrading - I would be
a gentleman & be waited upon & you should
be a fine lady & we should have nothing to
do, not even talk, write, study or think - we
would be dreadfully idle & very happy, sit
in big easy chairs, in slippers & gown, - with
tea & toast, before an aristocratic fire place
&c. &c. (Oh the dreadful reality) I don't like to
work to-day - But I love you for all that, George

Fragment 4.

Wednesday AM 8 o'clock, In the School House
Marie:-

Good Morning - I don't know
why I am writing to you ~~unneces~~ ^{because} because
I can't do anything else - just like a
married man who stays at home when
there isn't anything where else to go.

But really I can't work, or study, & I
wouldn't undertake to write a business
letter or anything of that sort, with
my head so muddled & fingers so unma-
-agable as they are now; so in the way
of a soothing medicine, I write to you.

I am sitting on a bench by the stove
- toasting my feet - a book on my knee
for a writing desk and the inkstand in
my hand. I have seen the time, when I would
have dared to sit down & write to you in
such a plight, or if I had I should have
burned the letter, when done, but we don't
write only our best thing to each
other any more do we?

"Id's o'dly a cō'd, by Dē-ah - ad idfluedza"
with its usual accompaniments - head
like a Reservoir, & nose a very faton
Aqueduct & Mouth disagreeable & unpoetic
of all ailments, Now I pray you don't crit-

icise, for I don't hold myself responsible for any thing I may say on this sheet.

It has been very dry here all winter till now three days past it has thawed & rained, & every body has colds & coughs.

Last week our mail came from the East for the first time, I got - eight letters - I believe - two from you, two from Cyrus - one from Delos Hawkins, & one from home. It seems quite civilized here now.

Letters sent from Birmingham Saturday will reach me Friday following & those sent Tuesday not till a week later.

They are going to "lay out a town" here - in which I am to be implicated professionally - provided they can get money enough - a matter of some doubt & therefore a favorable symptom for provincial surveyors who can take town lots for pay.

Since I wrote the above, one of the interested ones, has been in & talking of the Town. It is now "school time" and the four scholars (for all the others are sick) are now busy with their reading lessons - in a few minutes comes "Fifth Reader"

You asked me once if my young lady pupil is bright & pretty. Fortunately she is not. I own I was quite shocked at her composition, at first. She evidently was not

much used to writing - Its funny to think of - such Syntax."

Another thing is fortunate too. I came near having another pupil - a Miss Church of ^(20 miles from here) Upper Grove, a friend of Mrs Stiles. She was going to board with Mr Stiles' people & go to school here.

She is 17 - pretty - intelligent and altogether a very lovely girl (so said to be) - and the belle of the region thereabout. I saw her once, in Sep 1858 & again last November when I went to Upper Grove. I don't know what I came very near losing my heart there, for I hadn't any to lose, but I think that any young man possessed of such a thing & anxious to ~~spant~~ ^{spant} with it could do so successfully there. She made me think of you by her ways & manners & therefore I liked her.

Would you glad that such a dangerous pupil stayed away?

I am supremely indifferent about it. There's no doubt it real meant for me to tell such stuff. Forgive me dear.

I think, - if you continue to love me that I shall yet for a little while have some little kindly regard for you & shall think of you as a pleasant friend - and by & by say a real pretty Good Bye - and go my way

After noon - 12 1/2 P.M. What else shall I do
but keep writing to you? I ^{am} here by the stove
again. I wish I could say something bright
but I can't. It don't make any difference
does it? Let me see; my last letter, you
have got it by this time, so you must needs
think of me. You know, week before last
I got no letter from you & last week when
the mail came from Algona I was so dis-
-appointed that I got no letter from you & the
mail from Clear Lake did not get here till
Saturday night. I bore the two days delay & the
doubts & uncertainties contingent thereupon
with less fortitude than I did the six or seven weeks
during which I heard from you not at all.

Since I came to Elk Grove I have got
Eleven letters from you - what a correspondence
we have carried on - To be sure we don't write
much now & say that would interest any
others, but it is very good to us. We love the
letters (our old ones) as we love the path in
the grove; as the road wherein we walked
together toward happiness, Denying that what
has been, was to be, and it is a most wonderful
chance that we ever got acquainted at ~~any~~ ^{all}
- You in New Hampshire & I in Minnesota
- across the whole & width of this "Glorious land of

"Liberty". There seems a fate or Providence
in it, though there isn't I suppose."

Now Day February seems very long
in numbering up to Twenty Eight, - twenty nine you
might have said, for this is the year so longed &
watched for by antiquated maids.

I cannot help thinking how in 1896 there
will be lively times among the girls - how they
will "look out for No 1" - she that misimproves
the glorious opportunity will have to wait
8 years for its recurrence, as there will not
be another leap Year till 1904, and sweet
sixteen will be mature 24, and she who
has passed the "first corner" i.e. 20 will then
be acetic 33, fallow & hapless.

Oh blessed Year, I doubt not that girls
rebel at the arrangement which fixes
 $365\frac{1}{4}$ days in a year instead of $365\frac{1}{2}$, so that
they might have leap years, alternate with
the others.

I must say "Good bye" again for
a week - tomorrow this will go & next Day
I will hear from you. Meantime I will hope
that a brighter Day has come upon you &
yours - that you are well & happy.

Peace be with you -

I love you Good bye.

Ever Your Obedt
George

his lady - what fulsomy has in
store. What wonder if I tremble
a little? But George,
you are very nice about little
things, are you not? About keeping
accounts - having every thing in proper
place - keeping letters in perfect
order - dreadfully systematic and
particular? You have sometimes
said you have confidence in what I
say to you as being fully said and
worthy to be heeded. Pay attention
then while I speak. You will be
unaccountably worried - perplexed
and vexed beyond endurance
by me sometimes. So, my dear
begin now to school yourself in
patience and calmness under dif-
ficulties, or, better still, ask for
divine aid to rise above the fret
and sting of trifles, above earth
mist, into the pure heaven of
stars, and blue, and everlasting great things.

No 27 3 Red Elk Grove Mar 2 269
" 43 1868

Bloomington Feb. 23, 1868

George - Once again I come
to you through paper. I am glad
to come and you are glad to have
me. Two precious letters came
to me Tuesday evening. Why may
I never give you anything to tell
my more than thankfulness for
all your gifts to me? I wish
I could tell you how much nearer
I feel to you than before I got your
three last letters. Is it so with you
too - is it as though we were one in
the truth, more than ever before?
There were no unwritten words that
whispered themselves to any soul
from your soul - and there went
no message from me to thee that
said - "I nevermore" - till - "God will",

were there? Oh 'tis so blessed to
feel there is nothing - nothing now
to separate us!

Friday evening.

This letter I must put into the
Office tomorrow morning, so it can
not be much. I will write again
Sunday and put it in the Office
Monday, and it ought to reach
you the same time this does, next

Thursday. Will we not have
moved nearer each other when
there is no Sunday between?

The State of Iowa I hope
will move you a vote of thanks
for looking into and correcting
their mail arrangements. Is
it not astonishing how long
they have done what a little
energy could do away with?

I sincerely hope you may bring
to judgement the Forest City Post

Master if he it was who kept you
shut away from all creation so
long a time. My letters are nothing
since you now hear from me but
valuable papers may be of much
account. And I really don't
care about the gentleman making
my acquaintance in quite so loving
a manner as it ^{would} be doing to read
some of my letters. Thinking of
these things makes me think, when
you were writing of Past Masters
and business, you stopped and
gave me a talking to and a
verse about keeping accounts and
keeping receipts. I patiently bend
my head in token of humility and
beg pardon for natural propensities
and promise unconditonal obedience
to your early commands - until I
forget - wondering meantime if my
Lord begins thus soon to command

to give". Do I not know if you
should try forever you could not
write such a letter now? Never
since have you written me a letter
that told more of you in most
soul - more of the struggle and the
yearning for something, you knew not
what. Dearest - I see it now,
'twas not that you loved me but
that you did not love —.

We are together now. For your
love, I have given you all - all.
It is little enough, but if God
gives me more. It also shall be
yours. For the richness of your
heart I am unworthy, but I love
you - love you, dearest and best.

Sweet sleep - with our Father
and his Angels watching over you -
if I were an Angel I too would
watch you sleeping. Marie, —.

You know I would not trouble you for the
world, but you will be provoked, and
that will make me silent and provoked
too, because I don't like the calm
dignity of manhood, or womanhood
disturbed by little things. I do
realize that these ten thousand
daily trifles make up the most of
life, and that mosquitoes can bite
a big man crazy, if there be enough
of them, but, somehow my philosophy
is not quite clear on this point.
I think I can see we were not made
to bury ourselves to death for
things that are crooked beneath
the heavens, yet, how we are to get
out of this horrid mist and not
be stung when we have nerves, is
a mystery. If time cannot solve the
riddle, perhaps eternity will.

I knew Ada and you were very good friends, and further more she told Mama how very much she liked you, better than almost anybody, and I thought you were both so odd, you must come together a little differently from most - yet it never entered my head to be afraid of her. You know for a long time I

had no right to be troubled by her or anybody else, and I was remarkably good, and until you came last summer if I had been told you were to Ada what now you are to me I should have crushed down my heart, and humiliation would have so overwhelmed me for having thought of you as caring for one like me, that I should have hid my face in silence, and said, 'tis very well.

I will confess to a feeling of nervousness not anything like fright, but of

slight irritation, when Cyrus asked me if I really supposed George was more than a friend to the "School Ma'am". He said you had told him a good deal of her. I replied - I did not know - it might be so, I knew you were good friends.

When they told me in Maple Grove you surely were - what shall I say? - never mind - I did not believe them, thought they gave me good evidence. I said to myself, he could clear himself, I know, and I gave it no thought. Probably I would have believed it, as it was nothing to me, if in your letter to me you had not said so earnestly, "I never was acquainted with any one yet." Ah! dear, I would like to be, to see how it would seem."

And all through that first letter was plainly written - "I have my heart

letter, precious & dear as it was to me, for even had I not heard from you, I knew what you would have done if you had time, and without any wavering of faith could have waited another week - (think of it - a whole week without any doubts about you - what immense patience & trust) But this letter from your Father was new. I have felt the same presence "many a time & oft" heretofore, but have never had it sought & garnered in unmistakable black & white tie now.

And I said I was sad in reading it - you were sad when you wrote it, for or I cannot speak of necessities which must keep us mostly apart for years, perhaps even, without some sadness, even when we feel that it is right & well. I cannot but love you more than ever, with every new opening up of the depths of your heart, and I feel one satisfaction in thinking, that, while I am unworthy of such love & unworthy of such a wife as you would be, you may still love me as being better than I am, & while we are apart I may feel blessed with that honor esteem & love, which you give me, which if we were together I fear I should lose. It seems almost like "special pleading" - like torturing a consolation out of what seems only a cause of regret, & but still perhaps we should never be as happy, as husbands & wife, as we now are, feeling safe in each others love & only counting the days that separate us,

Elk Grove, Iowa, Monday A.M. Feb 27, 1860

Maria - Dear Maria.

A. very Good Morning!

The opening chapter of a very Good Day.
Oh what a beautiful, lovely, holy Sabbath yesterday was. It was as warm and still and calm as May, and in it that crisp freshness & new life of Spring which we may feel but not tell. It was a Holy Day. I have seen none before like it since I came here. I felt a Thanksgiving which I could not express to the Great Giver of all things good, for these blessings all around us, I felt that it is indeed a blessed thing to live, and that this Earth is inexpressibly beautiful & dear. - All the trees talked yesterday, and even from the prairie, brown with withered grass leaves, rose a silent anthem of praise & thanksgiving. - The Spring and song of the myriad lives singing and welcoming the approach of their deliverer. In a few months they will lay upon the altar of offerings, their tribute of thanks. Oh it was a lovely day! The soft air, was indeed the "Breath of Heaven" - silently whispering to every soul the glad "peace & good will" which makes our lives happier & better. I had reason too, to

offer (as I did), deeper & more heartily praise yesterday.
Yesterday I knew no doubt - Heaven was
real - and the fairest of Earth was but a faint
foreshadowing of the coming life. Oh how glad
I was, when for a time I knew no doubt or fear
& only implicit faith. How can people worship
in churches? The glad sunshine & free air
- the blue of Heaven above, & the broad Earth beneath,
seems as necessary to me, as does a fire, a
roof of gilt & tracery, and stained windows, and
pictures of apostles & saints, and sculpture & decora-
-tion, to others. I am so glad that worship
means to you what it does to me. There is to me
in a single tree bud, more that is wonderful &
more to make me think of God & Heaven than
in the most costly & magnificent of Cathedrals
or Abbeys. The highest art of Man can never
make a single leaf. We will not Ministers
tell their hearers in the sermons that Nature
would put into their mouths instead of from
books, which after all are but the ideas of God
& goodness, crystalized & set in men's words, &
no man can preach from those words without
a second remove from the Spirit of God, & from
trees & flowers he may draw his inspiration,
direct from the source of all inspiration.
As among trees & flowers he is with Our Father
& in direct communication with his Spirit.
"These are but the varied God".

To day I would recall all I wrote last week about
the uncertain yet to come! Are you not glad
with me that I can this morning feel full
faith in a loving life yet to be, - eternal &
glorious & ever widening, growing better &
better forever? I know you are.

Oh it was a blessed day yesterday.
I got a long letter from you, 20 pages - this week,
and another from your Father of 20 pages more
- I believe they made me gladder & sadder too
than anything I ever got from you before.
I thank him, Oh so much, I see him
in this letter in his true, real, earnest, & better
self. I cannot answer it, but I shall
write, this week there will not be time for me
to write much even & your letter will I
fear get a short answer too, I always think
when I sit down to write to you that I haven't much
time to write & that your letter will be short
- somehow I forget it though & I guess my letters
are longer than yours generally, but between
now & Wednesday night I'm sure I cannot write
much. I do not mean that his letter shall
go unappreciated even though unanswered
& perhaps in the course of some years I may
be able in part to answer it, if not in words
in a better manner. I was gladder to get such
a letter from him than I was to receive your

you now are, so long as they need you & so long
as you can do them any good - It is enough
that you think of me - I am blessed beyond my
highest hopes of (only a little while ago) even in
these your letters - but there is nothing more
selfish, more exacting or unsatisfied, than the heart
that loves. I can never feel though, even when I
so much wish for you, that you are under any
obligations to me. I see you only what you
are, & as being made so through & by their
help. (I never gave you much credit did I?)

That debt you can never repay. It is your duty
as it is your happiness, to do all & every thing that
you can for them. I can love you the better for
it, not that it is a sacrifice - but that you are
good & a Christian. God bless & help you
always.

But there is something has kept
saying to me, for these two days - "You will never
marry, Serena Ames" - It is all a fancy I think
& not perhaps ^{either} at all, for the same thing has been
telling me for some time past - "You may hold up
one hand & count all your years & more on that."

Am I a fool? I suppose so. You don't
find two of my letters in the same mood do you?

I am sorry you love me that is all -
I might love you & you never know of it &
all would be well - what I was I before I knew
you? It would have been an incentive to a better &

Elsie is a dear good woman - something has hap-
-pened here which I will tell you sometime, which
shows me more of her than I ever knew before.

Here is a part of her letter written yester-
-day to my Father & which she requested me
to finish. As it was a business letter partly I
asked permission to read it. & I don't feel that
I violate any confidence in giving a part of
it to you. I want you should get acquainted
with her & here is one opportunity.

Look, under your breath, & see what you think
of her. She is a good woman. But Oh how sad.
Still this place is very

"dear to me - none other will ever be so
"much so - It was our home, here we thought
"expected to live many many happy years
"+++ I try to reconcile myself to the decrees
"of Providence, & but I find it is easier to say
"or write "reconciled" than to feel it, +++

"Darling Charlie, how little does he feel his
"inseparable loss. Every day he needs his
"Father's hand to check & direct him - I am in no
"way fit. I know I make him too much my
"idol, but I pray God to spare him to me, for
"without him, life would not be endurable.
"I have not one wish to live, only for his
"sake" I don't yet dare to say anything to her
about it, for the first keen agony of her grief is not
yet gone - poor dear loving woman. I do seem too bad

It is now P.M. school has commenced, & soon the reading will begin. I have 9 scholars today. You should see their heads, their luxuriant top-knots of every varying shade of dark getting brown & flax & in every possible stage of disorder - Unwashed, unkempt. is the broad platform of personal habits whenever they all meet as equals, & blue dressing gowns & caicos aprons. Prayers & c. If I could have time between classes & they would not suspect me. I would send you a pencil sketch. They are real good children & I can't help liking them, for all the dirt & distress they are in. Good by now & "Fifth Reader" takes the floor."

4.10 P.M.

They have just gone, & I can hear them shouting & playing all sorts of vocal accompaniments to the popular old piece "Boys just let out of school". I am here alone with you for an hour. The days lengthen fast now, & I - (didn't write any further as you see & it is now evening & I am going to write now. I had just commenced when interrupted by two "citizens" who stayed through the hour I was going to write. I am now at Mrs Stiles' (instead of the School House which of late has been my office) at request of Mrs S., as Mrs S. is gone away this evening & she is "feared" to stay

alone I guess. That makes me think how you went from Minneapolis to Dover a year and a half ago. Weren't you "scared"?

Only two weeks more of school after this. To look back how swiftly the past seven months have sped. At the further end of that time I see a foolish young fellow on the eve of a pilgrimage, himself feeling somewhat in the suspended state that good Mussulmen believe Mohammed's Coffin is.

Oh but that's long ago - we've forgotten all that. I have now to do only with things of today & particularly this 20 paged message before me.

There is a round fair beauty about its "personal appearance" as it lies upon the table before me. How I love it - almost as much as you - Don't be jealous of your own little dear, but they are near & you are away, perhaps I shouldn't kiss them, if you were here.

Since I wrote that letter, to which this of yours is an answer, I have written a retraction of all I said in that letter & yet when I read this letter, it seemed to ask all about me for a little time. It seemed that you were away - where I should never see you again & I grew tired of living. I could not would not either ask or permit you to leave where

Tuesday Morning before school.

Is't possible that I shall get any endorsement on the back of these silly things I wrote last night? I will send it - you shall know all my plans. There was something else though that happened to come into my head last night when I was writing - an uneasy apprehension that I shall not get over for the week - It is a part of a story of which I have hinted in this letter & which I will tell you all about when I see you.

Even daylight doesn't dispel it altogether. You may if you please call it my excuse for the gloom of last night.

Here is a map of Massachusetts before me - the matter of fact City of Boston. It looks very good to me. I wish I had a map of Somerville too. I trace one route that seems pleasant indeed - from Haymarket Square - Tremont Row, & Pemberton Square in its quiet retirement to the Athenaeum - And then down Beacon Street & into the Common, to the Old Elm & then by the path which leads across to the corner of Tremont & Boylston, where the Library is. The paths are marked - and the spot where we crossed the "Long path" is there. It rises before me more vividly than any picture could show it. We don't remember unpleasant things as we do those which are all happiness. Blessed Memories -

... all will not soon forget Boston

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holier life. Even that I knew somewhat of & loved you. but that you should love me thus giving me power to make your life miserable, even as I am doing now. It is too bad.

Out of this same picture we will seek the good rather than the dark & evil view.

I can never love any other, nor should I ever wish to, nor would you I believe. As we love, people never love but once. It is first, last, eternal. Even though we are never nearer than today, this love shall evermore be sacred. The years shall find us as now true & loving ever, & (not as now) patient & hopeful - and where we lay down the dear mantle, that has warmed & housed our better & inner selves, & seek that glorious life beyond the River, we will do so in calm peaceful truth - in a union there that shall be pure & perfect. Oh my God - Thou hast blessed me beyond my deserts, Thou hast ever watched over me with tender care, Help me thus to act my part.

Oh Marie - I tried to build a philosophy to reconcile me to your absence even on earth - I had to for - where I stopped above, I could go no further - my heart was too full, - and I own, I cried for myself & for you. Oh no, I cannot have it so, - to lay forward

- to make all this anticipated happiness a mere
dream of the past - - It cannot be
it is too cruel - to go down to the grave & never
see you again - Oh how my poor silly head
aches - I believe I am half crazy to-night
- It is no nervousness, I am as calm &
quiet as ever in my life, except these & tortu-
ring doubts & weird whispering of Fate.

I will no more of them - away foolish
fancy, leave me Marie. bid me fold
you to my heart, Oh how I love you - My
all on Earth - - - - There it is again - "You will
never marry Serena Ames" whispered hissing close
to my ear, I cannot divert myself of the
horrible idea, It is a kind of mental "Delirium
Trimmis" in which I see strange shapes

Let me talk about little or nothing
for a little while, I am in the School House
again, I had been at My Stiles' but a minute
or two when the hopeful eldest son commenced
his uproar as usual, That's what first made
me come here to write, I bore it a minute
or two & then thought refuse me more here
- but a man & a boy came along & interrupted
me an hour or more, It is now near 10 o'clock
P.M., You do not & cannot feel how sad
ashamed, humiliated I feel to send this what
I have to night written to you, but I shall

send it, I will not suppress one word,
you may see how foolish I am, you
would some time find it out, better do so now
I say to myself, Oh but I am so torn, I cannot
always feel in good moods,
How my head aches, I would I could cast the
foolish thing in your hands - That would cure it
Get a few days - God willing I will be
with you - for an hour at any rate, & then
that little hour we will be happy in each
others love & dear presence & then by & by, we
shall part no more.

"You will never marry Serena Ames" hisses
the Demon - ^{yes} ~~Yes~~ I will "is my retort
Good Night - God bless you ever &
keep you from such phantoms as this may
to-night, grizzly neighbor who insists on
a negative - an antidote to happiness."

Good Night dear, Don't hate me
& I will be good tomorrow - Remember in
all this to-night, I loved you all the
time. In whatever I have failed I have
not failed there.

Good Night Good Bye, George

either, I'll neither cut wood or milk the "kew" cows
You shall all wish me in — Granite City.

You tell me a story — You're a good girl
Marie. — I wish I could ever be worthy of such
a woman. I have always pursued only self-
interest & have intrenched myself within a
row of selfish maxims for safety. I don't know
that I ever did a really generous thing in my
whole life — I don't recollect one.

Are't you ashamed of yourself that you
ever loved me. Or is it a part of your self-forgetful-
ness, all done so as to do me good — to make me
better? It is astonishing to me — I can't really
comprehend how it's possible for a ^{rich} very little
woman to hold so much good —

I love her though notwithstanding all these draw-
backs. You say of a certain thing — "It is impos-
sible" — Your name is "Jane" — I looked at your
picture to night to see where the Jane was. I found
it in both eyes & all about the mouth. Even if
I wished otherwise, I should no more ^{more} try
to persuade you from your decision. Than I would
to soften cast iron, in soap & water.

I am glad you don't love me enough to be per-
suaded from what you think is right, by any thing
I might say. If a different set of motives, ruled
you, we might perhaps come to a disagreement in things
essential sometime. But I wouldn't think of ~~persuading~~ asking
you to change your opinion. I could only say "Good bye"
& go my way in peace, leaving you to do the same.

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Tuesday Evening — before supper.

I'll be really good now, for just the
few minutes I have to talk with you. I
wish I had commenced a half hour ago
— but I sat down & from looking at your picture
commenced trying to copy it on paper. I
have often done so before, but I never could
get one that looked a bit like. You are not
enough stranger that I can get a good picture
of you. There is that unmatchable something
which we call soul, which my pencil won't
copy. It was all last time.

You are glad & grateful for the confidence
& trust which withholds nothing from you
— to you say — My follies & foolishness, you
like to have me tell them? One of these days
when I have told a few more of them, you
are going to pack up all my letters & send
them back. Do now please — there's a good girl,

I've never forgotten what your Mother said
about the possibility of the future believing
the hope of the present — "Stranger things than
that have happened" — It has kept me a little
more on my guard since. We never quarrelled
& never intentionally have we hurt each other's
feelings. — never wantonly at any rate, & we
have been pretty good friends this ever so long

nor are we wholly indifferent even now.

When all else fails we can go to Granite City you say. You think Granite City will stick by us & survive the ruin of fortunes & the wreck of Empire - Granite City cannot be shaken off. - Happy mortal that I am - Let Granite City be the bond between us & we shall part no more forever. Don't be too Elated My Dear

- Let not visions of "Corner Lots" disturb your slumbers - Forget not however the coming years of peace & domestic felicity - at Granite City under our own vine & fig tree - which means green brier, cranberry brush & witch hazel - lull'd by the sweet "oork-oork-oork-chug" of the amphibious vocifers, & the dreamy hum of the near & dear musk-eat-us-ies, like well-dressed soldiers presenting their (not exactly arms nor yet legs) by platoons, after the fashion of doing military honors. Oh yes my Dear will live at Granite City. Evening.

Our Correspondence is like a suit in Chancery - I wish it was settled & done with - I'm very particular about the mode of settlement though. I am obstinate on that point & rather than settle the matter in any other I would keep writing as long as I live. In the words of a distinguished Southerner in the House of Representatives

"Let discord reign here forever"

I'm ashamed to write as I do this time. To keep from saying things worse I write all the frivolity & nonsense I can think of.

Did I say "passi-ble" I go to Peking? Nothing is impassible, but I don't think it probable. There are too many things must be done first & even if I could get a position there, you remember if I go to Lee, I must go to mine - a pole's first & things ^{then} are getting into such a beautiful & tangled complication, consequent upon the decisions of The Honorable Supreme Court (Emmett Brandrean & Atwater), and the pretty legislation which has been done this winter that perhaps I may have all I shall want to attend to for some time - Oh Dear I don't like it.

And as it appears that the Mountain won't come to Mahomet, why I don't know of but one remedy: that adopted by the prophet himself - I must be near you somehow.

On half a mind to stay away from Brown-ington altogether this spring - because if I do go to see you, I can stay but a day or two or that would seem worse than no visit at all.

Oh well, I'll think of it & if I think I can perhaps I'll stay away, and get ready to much sooner, to go & make a long stay there.

I'll tell you how I'm going to be revenged - If you won't come & board with me I shall go & board with you - and I won't pay for my board

But then you know we're not going to disagree, I
We cannot. It is very well this you have
written - you are a brave good noble woman
- I don't believe I could have done what ^{you} have,
had I been in your place,

Don't this writing
of mine sound hollow? I cannot resist the
feeling that you are a thousand miles further away
than you were a week ago. Don't cry Dear
- Don't feel that when you came to me &
asked my help, I have been faithless & heartless
- I do love you - Ever and ever so much.

Your Father says he has not written
to me what he purposed. what was it I wonder?
You know, but I don't.

Does your Mother love me? I wouldn't
think she could - after what I have said & done
- I should suppose she could ever forgive me
for my attempts to get her little girl away from
her. You may tell her that I am desirous
she should get well - because - that same little
girl won't leave her while she is sick. Of course
I haven't any ~~any~~ other reason.

There Mary Marie - I have said
cruel wicked things enough for me, to say
nothing of the foolish things. Next week I will
be good, Forgive me Dearest, be good be
brave & by & by shall all be well.

I must write to your Father to night
Good bye God bless you (Horse)

Wednesday Eve. In School

- Lasts + latests.

"I am pretty well I
Thank you but alone +
lonely" (Wolboro Feb 1859)

- A year brings
plain tales dont it
sometimes? I am not
afraid to say "I am pretty
well I thank you" but
I love you + therefore
cannot ^{but} be "alone + lonely"
whenever away from you.
God Day Dearest.

George

I did not get
off with a short
letter after all
I shall have to
use infinitesimal
note paper I guess

No 45 } Recd Elk Grove Mar 23, 1860 ²⁸⁹
" 29 }

Bloomington Feb. 28, 1860

George —

Do they bring you nearer, as trouble and grief always bring nearer than we love, — My love would be not worth your notice, if my soul went not near in hours of darkness and distrust to carry light, if it have light — comfort if it can find comfort — God, if it have a God. I know very little — ~~nothing~~ — of what it is to have doubts concerning the future and my immortality. I believe as fully in eternal life as in this present life. You say you believe sometimes, but 'tis when you are desperate in your desire and must have it so — but when you are soberest and wisest you doubt again. George — I doubt your soberness and your wisdom. Oh! I should die to be enfolded in such dreamy questionings! This life is nothing if it is all. I would not like to have you

You were sick when your letter which I have just read, was written, were you not? I cannot bear that any thing should be the matter with you. It makes me want to be near you. It makes me entirely homesick.

Dearest — don't be sad — be good and of strong heart and all will go well with us all. I love you for a longer time than a few short years. Can that which is more than life — than death — which is subject and object — the hope and aim of my existence here, be destroyed by a little accident which separates our bodies from each other. God for bid God with you Love. — Marie.

Wednesday, Feb. 29.

The last day of another month.

By-by to you, Feb. — I hope you are better than last ~~fourth~~ day. It is warm and rainy today, — dark and half gloomy. I don't feel gloomy; not at all. Mother lies on a couch in our sitting room — where I am writing. Papa's Father if you please, is reading his next Sunday's sermon — it is about Jesus — a doctrinal discourse — he is preaching a number of such just now. Only think, I have heard Father preach but once in more than a month — I know, though, what he says every Sunday.

We have a visitor — Mrs. Jewell — she is writing off that beautiful poem in the Allantic, "Maud and Madge". How exquisite it is! We have been getting at well but disgusted with the Allantic, but when I read to Mother several poems from ^{old} ~~old~~ numbers this

morning she said we must not give up the Allantic — Oh! no — I expect it every day. I don't read the Poofers story — silly thing it is. Why didn't he know enough to stop with the ending of the Autocrat? Because no man knows when to stop after he has made one brilliant success — perhaps I might say woman too. Though I really think she has more tact, and can look a little sharper into the future.

We are none of us any too bright about some things. We easily get spoiled, — a little praise, and the homage of a few small great men will make us forget the beauty of our humility. — Your precious letter!

Think you any words you might say of fears doubts — beliefs or unbeliefs could make

How still it is ! I can fancy ^{I see} your
School Room this afternoon. There
is now quite a long rest for you, since
the reading classes took their seats--
You have had a fire, but 'tis too warm so you
have put up a window--the children are
buzzing, some about their lessons, some
about private affairs, some for the sake
of buzzing--you look about you, but the
sound of their smothered voices comes
to your ear not unpleasantly, but like
a sound coming from afar off--you wander
away in a dream that cannot be remembered
pretty soon you come back again, look at your
watch absently--recollect this is Friday
and if you are like me your heart beats
a little faster, and you have a feeling of
silent gladness as you tell the Grammar
Class to back, ~~their~~ come forward to
recite. -- You speak of your young
lady pupil and say she is not very
smart. I must have been a duncel in
School. I doubt if you had looked
upon me when I was seventeen as any thing

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a Spiritualist as people are known
by that name, but enough one to believe
we are only separated from those whom we
call dead by this thin wall of flesh.
I throw aside all logic--there are some
things too high for reasoning. Believe in your
intuitions as in God, Himself speaking
through you without aid of Christ or
any medium.--

"Life loveth life and good: then trust
"What must the spirit would, it must;
"Deep wishes, in the heart that be,
"Are blossoms of Necessity:
"A thread of law runs through thy prayer
"Stronger than iron cables are;
"And Love and Longing towards her goal
"Are pilots sweet to guide the Soul.

Mother wishes very much she could
see you. She also is a doubter on this
same subject, at times, and perhaps
you and she could find comfort in

talking together. In the Bible she finds
blessed words of Jesus which dispell all
clouds of unbelief, when she will heed them.
It does not seem like a Good Father's
love and wisdom to implant in the universal
heart this all-controlling passion for
life and immortality only to crush it.
Alas! you will yet see the light of
truth leading you forth from this pre-
sent night of disponding fears.

It grieves me to have you in trouble
but would grieve me more to have you em-
ceal from me any thing which affects your
happiness or well-being. Not so - my dear
I am not at liberty to go from you - not in
free to withdraw what I have given. You
have not the power to break asunder the
bonds binding me to you. One word
in this your letter makes you powerless
to bid me go - me powerless to move.
If ever hence will find me no more yours
than tonight, for life and death.

So, do what you may, I cannot go -
Is it so with you? Yes - as much as
it ever can be - though I do not like to
say you would have no right to go were
you to find me not your Marie at all.
I am trying to be what you would like me
to be - so you may not grow tired ^{before} you die.

I love you, now and ever, so don't
heed my words, three times saying one little
word makes no difference after all - with
you.

Friday Afternoon Mar. 2.

How can you stay in a School Room this
beautiful, beautiful day? Don't you feel
in yourself the freshness of the springing grass
the softness of the new sky - the music of the
coming birds, the gaiety of the young
children, and comes their note to your
manhood sweet memories of your childhood
half mournful in their sweetness - doesn't
all these sights and sounds seem more
like memories than reality?

as I ought. But the Professors did not seem to expect anything from me - Like Uncle Lewis, they evidently imagined I was too small to amount to much,, when asking me a question they put on a tone and look which said, "My dear can you tell me". I do assure you I am not and never was asleep awake.

I am indebted to your friendship for making me aware of my perpetual state, but even your love has not the power to put new life into my brain, that I may wake up, without my will be set to work.

I began to talk about that young woman you are seeking to instruct. I presume she has never hardly written a letter in her life, and precious few Compositions of any kind. Without practice one cannot compose, be they ever so much a genius, and one certainly must learn by much trying, to "put into Grammar" thoughts or words. I wish I could gain courage to show you some of my old productions. I

cannot come across one without blushing, even these ^I wrote in Hillsdale, and fancied ^{fine}, would ~~ever~~ feel no shame to keep company with such as your scholar might write. You never will see them.

Evening,

It is still. Mama is asleep. Pet is in bed. Papa and Sarah have gone out. If you were here! Will I ever cease this sighing and crying for a presence I cannot have, do you think? There is no use in it. But I always like to have you tell me you want to be with me. It is hard, George,, it has been a long time and I am tired waiting. What word is there, I have never used, to tell how much I love you? I would speak it now. You must have smiled at my "self denial" when you remembered my letters. Often, from inability to tell you anything of my heart with language I can command I say nothing. I have said Dearest many times, and that word contains all

other adjectives and names within itself.
You have called me dearest many
times but it ^{means} ~~means~~ to me in your last letter much
more than in your first.

I cannot say anything tonight to sat-
isfy me. You ask if I want you to come
to Bloomington. Yes - yes, do come.

No - certainly not. Mama is improving
as fast as we could hope for her to. She has
gone from a teaspoonful of milk to a tumbler
and a half, taken with some bread. We hope
by the time you come she will be well enough
to walk in the woods and on the prairies
and all over Iowa with you.

Poor Elsie! What is she going to do?
Is she and Charley going home to your Father's
this Spring? Oh! I know I should did if
you left me as Della left her.

It is hard to comfort one broken-hearted.
What can you say to her? You will not
leave Iowa before she does, will you?
It would be so hard for her - so lonely
and sad. She must love you very much.

I love you. I think if you were to go
away now to come back I should love but
whoever had loved you best.

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uncommon to say the least. I know I
seldom learned a lesson that I did not
like, yet I never remember being reproved
for a bad lesson, and my teachers always
seemed to like me. I think I was much
more active and bright in appearance
when I was quite young than I am now.

They used to praise my bright eyes, and
I suppose, took it for granted I could see
into whatever I pleased. I had, too, a few
surface acquisitions which served me very
well, and looked more than they were. I
was good in Grammar and in Analysis,
could write better compositions and write
them faster than the other girls, was rather
forward in answering some questions, ^{and} was
never wicked to my Teacher. When I
was at Hillsdale I was troubled a great
deal with my eyes, so I could not study
more than half the time, and I am sorry to say
I do not think I improved that half as well

as I ought. But the Professors did not seem to expect anything from me - Like Uncle Lewis, they evidently imagined I was too small to amount to much, when asking me a question they put on a tone and look which said, "My dear can you tell me". I do assure you I am not and never was asleep awake.

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L^y N 504
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I hope you won't come any sooner for my wanting you to. I could not bear you should come and feel in a hurry to go away.

I hope you have those letters of mine to read this evening. You are at home aren't you?

You got last week my letter in reply to yours received three or four weeks ago.

Foolish letter, I hope you will forgive it if it offends you. I felt sadly puzzled, and I confess I feel no less so now. It

is quite impossible for me ever to go away from home as I see things now, and it is no less impossible for me to desire you to forsake any interest for my sake.

You must not, either. I should feel uneasy all my lifetime. No, Love, you must wait until you can call the invitation to you and never move a step out of your way. I know how all that would work very well. Separate interests, separate duties would inevitably lead me away.

So there is nothing to do but for you to

do just what will best for you to do
if you were alone," but please don't think
you are alone. I will try and be a good
girl. I am glad for all the words you say
to me about being good to my Father
and Mother. I am not to them what I
should be. I am not at all what I ought
to be. Not what you think me. I am sorry.

I suppose I can wait till Tuesday
to hear from you again. I think every
time I get a letter, it was last Tuesday
a week ago, now another has come - will
seven days more ever go? And I am
always doubtful. My letter is not
so long this week, but perhaps enough such
as there is. I have put my words
together you see, am I not obedient?

I must say Good-bye for ever so long.
I measure time to night not by common
rules, I cannot conceive of any time so short
but 'tis long. George, Dearest
with prayers and thoughts of you I close
this as I do all my days. You are mind
present or absent - are you not. I am yours
now and evermore - Serena.

There are 30 pages in these two letters - more I think than I ever received from you at any one time before. yet I have ~~read~~ ^{read} it all several times since Friday night. - I too, must neglect my other correspondents to write to you & to read your letters - by now we are not written to for a month.

Here before me are some 14 unanswered letters. I got one last Friday from A. H. Austin. I am glad he is maintaining his ancient good nature & that if ever hereafter, we should visit them, we would be as warmly welcomed & kindly treated as ever you or I have been among them. I am always at home at Mr Austin's & in a measure so too in the whole neighborhood. - and so I guess 'tis with you. Long & happy lives to them all.

I have been looking at this old paper & a host of thoughts crowd up & play all sorts of antics between me and the paper - It covers all the past four years, & four years seems almost all my life. I believe I told you a year ago that the next year would be more to you than the two years before; profound prophecy.

What a valuable lot of pocket furniture I have - There is an old black handled pocket knife that in its youthful days cost 62½¢ - I had it years before I left - Oh for the first time, now nearly six years. I remember that an old knife then. It has been with me in many a desperate

"March forth" '60

Now:-

I didn't write to you last week did I? Please play I didn't. I have been so ashamed ever since, - and since I got two letters from you Feb 23 & Feb 25. (letters such as you never wrote before) I have been more & more ashamed. Forgive me Dear, & think I had some excuse for writing to. How I am glad this week - Friday night I got the Mail - 8 letters & as many papers, - 2 letters from you & one from your Father. Oh I was quite beside myself with boyish joy.

The world has seemed very bright ever since you make the sunshine & the grass grow & everything seemed lovely to me, How foolish to be sure, & yet it has ever been so, since Adam & Eve first walked the Garden together - just because two people love a care for each other - the whole world with all its vast concerns means less to them than each other's name. What queer composition are we of.

These are the best letters you have ever written to me. I tremble to think what my letter will be to you next Tuesday. When you have come so much nearer to me, that I should tell you as I did last week, that you seemed two thousand miles away. Forgive me Dear, & tell.

I got a letter from Ada - in Dutch - Is it she or
adding? It was mailed Carondelet St. Louis Mo.
No. 1 & was merely a query if I had written her.

I suppose the Dutch was in offset to a valentine
which I sent her & Sue Hawkins, some 2 years ago
- written in short hand & which they never quite
forgave me for. I don't quite remember it
now, but (a la M. Lou Bedott) it ran somewhat thus:

"For fondly Thine These mystic symbols cover
The impassioned thought & language of a lover -

"Just to the ladies, whom we first adore

"As the sylphs & angels or something more,

"How easily are people gulled & charmed

"By what at first they do not understand."

These were the days when my long eared untrammelled
"news", breaking out into an "impossible conflict"
with rhyme, sense, & meter, was wont to "kick up"
& go it rough shod through the flower gardens of
prosody, & the more sober & useful cornfields of
& cabbage patches of everyday syntax. I am
glad that the same perverse "father of all rabbits"
has finally cleared all the fences - taken good leave
of me & sought the green fields - Farewell my
Muse - thou hast "gone to grass" - mayest thou
long stay there."

I wonder does Ada know anything of
what we have been doing? She will of course for
Minneapolis people are very wise - and - talkative.
You told me all about what you used to

think about Ada & I - I really wonder myself
that something more than a very evanescent friend-
ship didn't come of our so long & intimate ac-
quaintance, with her. After all our acquaintance
only went as far as meeting with others once
or twice a week at Mrs. Loomis's. I believe
I once walked a part of the way to school with
her, just before she went away - "only that &
nothing more". I used to hope that Ada & Craffut
would walk off the stage of chances & possibilities
together. Whenever they went anywhere, Craffut went
too, and - I didn't.

I would sometimes like to see the first
letter I wrote you. I wonder what I did say - I
guess not very cheering. I used to be lonesome
in those days. But you have spoken of that
letter before & I shall begin to be vain of it &
think it was something awful unless I see it.

Your Mother told me it went to her in
N. H. while you were yet in Minn. if I am mistaken
not. You speak as though it contained some
treasure to what was there. Don't you think I
could write another such letter - never hereafter?

Oh you don't know - I couldn't to you of course,
but couldn't I to another stranger? If not it
must be very queer indeed. It is very true as I
you said that I "did not love" - more the shame
& perhaps I may add - greater the happiness now.

Evening - I feel almost kind of "picky" to night - not much like writing & yet I will not throw away a quiet moment like this - for I shall be more than ever busy this week & perhaps shall not take up a pen again till after Thursday.

I am going to survey the Village of Elk Grove this week & they are in a great hurry to have it done very soon & at the same time very nice indeed

The worst of it is I haven't any compasses, for I lost the needle of the one we have here to Troy N.Y. to have it re-fixed. I have borrowed one, but it is sadly cracked & as all the residents of the city in years to come may not be affected similarly or in the same degree, I have some fears for the result. So I am going to survey the town without any compasses. Carpenters say that any fool can do a piece of work with good tools, but that it takes a workman to build a meeting house with a Jack knife. So this week you can think of me as among the "dear delights" of the craft. Wouldn't it be nice if we could have a cosy little place of our own & where we could always be together & where, business, bread & butter, would come at the calling - Oh if I could only say, after the manner of the toper who agreed to dig the potatoes, "If you want your Rail Roads built, bring 'em on".

There's a problem to be solved in this same question of harmonizing my trade, with my duty & pleasure in other things. A problem very blind to me.

The Geometry which I studied taught the

venture since then "scapes by sea and land" - there is no accounting the fine sticks which it has resolved into their yanked constituents, viz shavings - how many times have I lost & found it in a most unaccountable manner, & yet there it is -

Here too - an old wallet, that has traveled with me ever since the traditional days whereof we have heard but remember not. - sadly suffering now 'tis true from a visitation of the Elephant - and a deep moan of financial distress - a sense of "giveness" appealing to me from its innermost depths, - no idle change escapes from the gaping wounds in its venerable sides - for why, there is none to escape, & yet 'tis the same old wallet & has seen happier days - It too has been with me in prosperity & adversity - "many a time & oft" it has yielded its all to me, for a couple of postage stamps or a half dozen sheets of paper. It has followed me ever & been my confidential adviser (ever faithfully keeping secrets) while I have bought presents for the girls. It has known & sympathized with me in my innermost depths of "commercial reverses" & "financial troubles" & often have I perforce followed its advice in matters relating to personal expenditure. So too with all the other valuables I find in my pockets - comb - keys - ink stand - &c. &c. Not one but has been with me for years. I am no Yankee for I never swapped Jack knives in my life - This pen - that has

been with our as knife & wallet have not. Not a joy or sorrow have I known but it has been informed of. It has been my confidante in all things - save a hope that I never spoke directly, but which the pen must feel have felt every time last summer when I spoke your name to the paper.

It seems as though the pen ought to have considerable soul in it by this time, just as we find that every bit of steel after considerable use becomes magnetic. - I find that your pen has considerable attraction.

Every letter I have written to you, has been I believe written by this same pen.

In four years it has written not many less than eight hundred letters, to say nothing of miscellaneous scribbling too numerous for mention. Last year it assisted me to the writing of 245 letters, and this year - so far 50 letters I believe.

My Dear - I am forced to stop here & contemplate something in the future. - The conclusion is thus

Undoubtedly in the future - autograph letters from my "gifted pen" (mark how the pen always has credit, instead of the one that drives it) will be highly prized - just as are the Autographs of "G. Washington Esq" at the present time - but I very much fear that our heirs will never realize the profits which a descendant of the aforesaid has, in his dickering off the bones of

his illustrious ancestor. for although you will leave to them a considerable stock-in-trade, in the letters you already have & which you expect me hereafter to write. but the trouble will be that there will be too much competition - too many "G. W. Esq" in the market "from other sources."

How unfortunate it is - do you not feel for them - poor unfortunate, wrinkled, gray-bearded orphans, unable to appease their rapacity by the sale of their ancestor's love-letters.

My Dear - the subject too sad to contemplate. "I move we adjourn."

Oh Dear - there isn't but the faintest margin of everyday common sense, a mere film between, ludicrous absurdities on one hand & sadder gloomy absurdities on the other, and the two things are pretty thoroughly saturated across the whole Autocrat of Breakfast Table - who tells all about that or something like it.

I have had to move my paper from the table & have partly forgotten what I set out to say. I believe it was my object in starting & in my inventory of pocket-valuable to give you an idea of my extraordinary constancy.

I guess I didn't succeed very well did I? Well it is about supper time - I am under the necessity of leaving you for a time.

So good bye Dear. I'll see you to-night when it is all still & we will be alone together

- but I guess not, unless Slavery rules us & I forget
to bow down at its beak.

So my Dear, don't you see what you must
prepare for too. I shall be very glad to escape so
easily as to Offset carelessness for carelessness.
Though in accounts I am somewhat particular
I've always heard that there's no accounting for
women's ways, or of the husband's means.

(Observe my Dear - there is no meaning attached
to all these words - they leak out just as they happen
to come into my head. I classify my themes. Begin
ones you see) Now I will commence at the
beginning & if I don't come directly to the point
it will be for lack of good intention.

You speak of your sisters & of your step-
father but I never heard their names. What are
they? When is Mr Taine? I remember how
he said to me (He has an odd face anyhow) "Back
to work?" You think perhaps I would like to have
you a lady & maybe too - a Woman?

My idea & for which I am glad is that you are
neither a pretty toy nor a beautiful lady, nor
yet what a certain class of young men consider
the re plus ultra of feminine perfection - a
"magnificent creature" (just as another class
say "splendid boss") - I was glad that you were
a true & (as I fancy) lovely woman. I'm not
sure that "Angel" is a bit better name than "Woman"
when "Woman" means all it should, ^{good bye dear I've not} got over my funny fit

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relation of lines to each other, but the various
lines & courses of conduct were but very imperfectly
touched upon. Perhaps your intuitive Mathematics
may enable you to reach a proper conclusion
- or as the Yankee says - "guess" what's best to do.

Tell me all these things just what you think
I'm not obstinate I open.

I wonder what's the matter. My pen will
not keep any where within the bounds of reason
but goes off in tropes & metaphors & unheeded
of & far pitched similes. It seems incited
to night. All words, words, words.

I've seen the carcasses of fifty sheep compressed
into a cheese as big perhaps as a wash basin.

I'm afraid if the same pressure was were applied
to my letters, I would need a microscope to
see them. How much time passes water in what
seems to us useless & absurd as letter writing.
Every little while I think, well maybe I must
write any more only what duty seems to
require of me. (I never think of your letters
so) Well I sit along a little while so, & then
I break out in a worse fit of chirography
(That's right ain't it?) than ever.

We are pressing under the clasp
of "New of letters" aren't we? I had all your
letters together yesterday, in one bundle & I
thought they looked formidable. I think there
must be near 500 pages of Commercial Notes

Who would suppose that any young lady who "don't
love to work" could be persuaded to do this much
in a year. You never write the same things twice,
but I think my letters are like a mad mill,
I go around half-a-dozen times in a year.

Your letters - Thank you. You don't know
how much you give me in every one of these
letters. (I was going to try to estimate the value of
one of them - and my evil genius as usual sugges-
ted "Bushels of Minnesota Bonds" - I am
more foolish to-day (if possible) than usual - I
have scared & spoken half a dozen words to-day (except
to you on paper), which I intended to be taken as
I said them. Hannah & I have been bantering
all day. We are both "teething" - I thought I had
got all the teeth any reasonable mortal ought to
have, but *volens volens* I must have more.

I insist upon it that Hannah - dear infant
(only 17 1/2" Fairbanks measure) "is threatened with
croup," and that children are "always cross when
teething. poor dear!"

You don't like pen do you? You'll
have to keep a fair 7's birch wand & give me
a browsing daily with it in order to keep me
"unble". I'm an "impossible" here.

Well I don't wonder you are serious. But
you have what's better - serenity of mind &
cheerfulness (How many to there?) People whose
spirits are sometimes high i.e. "high" on spirits

are now "at as low an ebb as the foot of the gutter"
- but he or she who hath always a quiet cheerfulness
-ness nothing can harm them.

My Good Angel - God bless you, you are just
as my highest wishes would have you, - except
perhaps I may say, that I would you were a
"married woman" ^{one} of these fine days by & by.

I had a "good deal rather" it would be five
years (monstrous & unhead of of as that is) than
not at all.

The letter you said you would send on
Monday did not come last week, - perhaps Monday
would be too late. I thought perhaps letters
mailed & dispatched from Bloomington on Monday
morning early would reach Dubuque & leave there
on Tuesday A.M. perhaps 'tis presuming too far
as Uncle Samuels vested rights to expect
so much. - But six days from you are not
many, I was going to try to answer your letter
to night. I shall but make a sorry failure
of it. You think you will cross me & make
me cross to you by your neglect of in keeping
accounts & receipts. I was just thinking how
Mother used to talk to me for always hanging
up my hat in the middle of the floor, my
coat as a chair, & for distributing my muddy
boots freely & promiscuously over the house &
for losing my mittens, etc. She used to say
I would lose my head off for very forgetfulness

Monday Evening, March 5th

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Good Evening - Unexpectedly I am in the school house this evening & so I write to you. But I cannot write much or very well - I am tired. We have been surveying today, the St. Lawrence has been dazzlingly bright all day & my eyes ache.

I look again at your letters. - It always seems a wonderment how you could have passed through such experiences as you have & yet be what you now are. - You are forever deeper now. You have learned the sad lessons of affliction & grief & those things worse than either. But still you have an abundant & overflowing faith in Humanity - I'm sure I couldn't have. If I had passed through such trials.

But I cannot resist the temptation to quote. "So has it been all my life, what I have prayed to be delivered from, has proved too hard to bear, a dear Father has seen to be the portals leading to joy & blessedness." I insist upon making a literal & personal application of the above. I never knew before that you ever had such a struggle.

You speak of not getting a certain letter of mine. It came afterward didn't it not? I have written every week since I have been at Elk Grove. I could do no more

You have written many blessed words in these letters - I cannot write anything good to night to pay you for them & indeed I do not suppose you want pay for them. If it is with you as it is with me, sometimes, the blessing comes with the writing & the relief that comes, of telling all that the heart is overflowing with, is reward enough.

But "I love you" Maria; and the deep wondrous mystery of those words isn't exhausted yet, much as we have tried to explain it. They mean more than they did half a year ago. - Half a year ago? That makes me think of what I read in one of your old letters, (new letters - they are never old)

Just seven months ago today you wrote "You said you were going away - you are here - come home now haven't you" - Just then I was going into Boston for the first time - Almost home barely.

You tell me here of a memory which runs real to you. Dating back almost as far as my earliest ones go. But not quite for mine go beyond Aug 6 1840

I have often thought of your Father & Mother now no more here, & wondered if they were like you - Do you know nothing of the families of either of them? Who they are & where they are? And do you never long to know them? There is a strange bond in blood. The how or why is hard

to explain. Your life has indeed been checked⁵
- why don't you write a "Jane Eyre Autobiography"
- There is material enough for it & you could
if you would. It seems so strange, so different
from all other lives I ever knew of, so full of
contradictions - trials crowded into the first years
of life & blessings almost as numerous, closely
following for a little while & then - the future
trials & sorrows again perhaps more than
hearts can bear.

Tuesday Night March 6th

Just about seven years months ago this night
we met in Somerville - a happy birthday -
& though hardly a joint one. You told me
all about what it was to you in one of
your late letters.

I only remember that when you
came into the room I became vividly (what
a word) conscious of your presence & that
as Cyrus spoke to you & that you spoke my
name & came forward. That there was a
salutation too, but how or in what manner
I cannot remember, and that a moment
later I felt confused & embarrassed - and that
at the same moment to it seemed did you
- what was uppermost in our hearts stood
in the way of other words. - Then your
Mother came & you were gone
Just seven months ago today!

Tell your Mother I am very thankful for all
the proposals to do next May to please me. I shall
not forget it, if she does. I wish she could
write - It seems very long till May to wait
for the many things she wishes to tell me,
- but I can wait.

I cannot write any more
this week - It is very poor, but I cannot
help it. I am sorry, but I love you & could
not think of not writing by every mail.

You never tell me you are tired & ~~worried~~
weary with watching & work, but you are
sometimes I know. I know nothing of
sickness, for though never well I have never
been sick, nor have I seen others sick.

I was going to write to your Father
to-night but cannot. I must at any
rate send him a short line acknowledging
indebtedness - & I would be quite bankrupt
if I undertook to pay him what I owe.

And ^{as} for you, Oh Dear there is no use in trying
to pay you - I am hopelessly mortgaged
- won't you foreclose soon. The debt is fully due?

Good Night Dear - Say to all your
folks, not forgetting the boys who propose to donate
me to "Lisbah" - that I love you all more
than ever before. I'll not say how much I think
I love you best, you may think the story too
monstrous for credit - I will just say, it is more
than all else. Good & Bye, I mean, God keep you safe. Love

me, it is true but not so much
but you could calmly say my
friend, if so it was to be - so
Dearest, not only did I go close
to you in the tower - but under
the tree, before you asked it, had
I given my heart - yours while
time is for us two - to love you, as
never before it had dreamed of
loving - to sing and pray - laugh
and cry for you, till God should
"put asunder" what He "hath
joined". —

I had no time to say Good-
night - but now, Good-morning.
It is again the Sabbath day - ever-
blessed Sunday. The sun is shining, and
it looks warm and "Spring-like". Winter
is over and gone". I am well to him,
a joyous leave-taking too. I have not
been to Church - have you? No - you are
a confirmed Sunday breaker.

No 28, 3 Elk Grove Mar 8, 1860
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Saturday Evening

George, — Just a few minutes before
bed-time I come to you to say
your name to you once more before
the week goes. Yes - the weeks,
and the months too, do go very
quickly. I feel like saying to them
as they go, fly away, you are very
well but better are coming.

Oh! very naughty, I shake my head
at myself, and minorally whisper
"We know not what a day may bring
for us". "Time is short", beside the
many reproving things I think, but
do not whisper. Alas, I am
exceeding wayward and would if
I could with a single bound pass
March and April, contain they
much or little, joy or sorrows,
life or death, till I stand the other side

on the verge of May, ever perfect, ever
joyous, which, pray I may be ever-
lasting.

Father is out, Maria is asleep
I think. She has not been quite so
well for a few days, but we hope
no serious relapse. I am afraid
you are early to-night over the
news of her illness. I wish I could
have spared so much pain.

Your two letters are not with
me as I write, they are full of
what we could talk about.

Did I then get closer to you
up in Mount Auburn Tower?
Did you remain a fixed star, while
I approached? Your attraction
was strong to attract me towards
you thus unconsciously. I am
willing, I am glad to have gone nearer
to you. I respect my better self for
not standing waiting to be invited

home when the door was open.

It was not courteous not to say
"come in" when I stood on the thresh-
hold, was it? I remember all
I saw - the misty hills afar off,
the calm, still water, the spires,
and Silent City among the trees,
it was a beautiful, glorious
frame for the picture - that was
him I loved.

A half year,
is it? Since we went to worship
in the Grove. Half a year
since we joined hands beneath a
leafless tree which is ever-green.
Why did I wait so long when I
knew you loved me? Because I
did not know what to say to you.
Do, ^{you} remember you asked not for my
love then, but only that I might
grow to love you at some future day.
You said not, either, that you loved
me ever much, you said you loved

stumps and bushes. Wendell Phillips
sees all obstructions past, present and
to come - you see he is indispensable, what
could you do without him. don't blame him
then if in his zeal he sometimes cuts
down a beautiful shade tree. Do you
hear any thing of Mr. Parker, I do not.
We have sent for the Tribune, then we
shall hear of every body. Do you take
the Atlantic this year? It is surely
not so good as it was. I miss the
essays we used to have. Do you remem-
ber "Ideal Tendency"? I liked
it when I read it more than a year
ago, but I dare not stake my reputation
of saying I like it now. How we change!
Have you ever kept any thing like a Journal
of your thoughts and feelings? If so -
do you not feel astonished beyond
measure - ashamed and incredulous
on looking it over a year after writing
the record? I have not attempted
anything so foolish for several years, but
occasionally I come across an old
entry in a book, or an old composition

I speak after the ^{manner} of the Pharisees, when
I say so. Papa preached a good
sermon so they say. I don't know what
it was about, and I guess I won't ask him.
How exactly the birdy sings! You don't
like jets - I must be enormously enough
to confess I do not - at least I want nothing
to do with them, if pretty I may like to look
at them, but this bird, we name him Chitty
of Mama's is very pretty and sings as
sweetly as wood birds. He brings into
our sitting room trees, groves, bubbling
streams, glorious mornings in summer
e'er yet the dew was up - long, long
days of childhood, you and heaven -
wonderful bird! You like dogs
do you? I am glad - for I just hate
them. I am more afraid of them than of
lions and tigers, if I knew one was taking
a walk down Washington St. and I had

business out the same time I should prefer going a great deal out of my way to take Front Street. Bless their hearts, our "most Christian" Mayor has appointed every man Police to kill all ~~good~~ dogs found with open mouths. I don't like Kitty either. Excuse my putting babies with cats and dogs, but I want to tell you why I don't like a baby in a story. I don't like any thing prosy and real in what is ideal. There is a prosiness of detail in bringing a baby before an audience, and I always wish they had been kept in the cradle out of sight, for they are blessed little darlings to imagine ^{and} to see in certain places. When my love story is written I do not want it carried beyond the altar - henceforth outside eyes must not peep in. When life begins at home, and husband and wife first know

what happiness and contentment mean; strange that to all less vitally interested dullness should supplant delight, - strange, but 'tis always so with me, is it not with you?

Do you want me to tell you why I love you? It is because I love you; because you ^{are} all worthy of much better love than mine, because you have loved me, so little deserving of so much.

How ridiculous you are! Come down ~~down~~ from Olympus, if you like, but be no more Jupiter.

I am sorry you did not finish the "Kings Highway". It is nice - and I think what you did not write is better than what you did write. The conception is new and odd, and ought to be carried out. Emerson's book, or rather mission in the world's great field is defined finely, if I think rightly. I think he knows precious little of marshes and

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and they make me bluish all over. Myself of a year or two ago I am so sick of, and wonder I could ever endure myself - as I trust it will be in a year or two more my present self I shall feel no better towards. Do you outgrow friends in something the same way? I do. I used to worry myself not a little with ^{ing} ~~think~~ I should most assuredly cast off lover and husband after looking at them several times. I often am shocked at the hardness of my heart. These are days together I think of no one living save you, and those I happen to be with that I could give kindly greeting to, perhaps I rather should say, warm greeting, for I feel not unkindly towards any. And I am apt to retain this apathy in my intercourse with those in my own

sphere in life - I mean those with whom I come in contact. I seldom have a positive feeling of liking for any of them when they are away from me "but for very poor people whose lives are on a plane I please to consider below my own, I often feel admiration as well as outbursts of love and enthusiasm. I am a strange mixture of ice and fire, I don't know myself, what I ^{may} develop into.

I have not accomplished much this past week. I have read considerable in Coates's History, beside reading to Anna a little in Mrs. Snowatt's life of herself. I like Mrs. Snowatt.

Reading of my particular latent I always wonder if I have such - so I wonder if I could act. I fancy I see myself going off in such a stiff, precise faint or screaming so delicately. You fancy me assuming the abandon necessary for success in acting. - I know what

I have latent for doing - writing to you. Maybe you will get three letters next Thursday - you ought to. I am going to put this in the office tonight.

Next Tuesday what a horrid I make - it is an I but 'tis made worse before I think) yes in two or three days I shall hear.

Father comes to the window and says, "It's too late to do that thing" I replied, "I've only got to finish," he says then put down my name.

Love - I love you, and this warm February night - I would give the world if I might see you, but I can wait, can't I? - can't you?

Our lips did meet on paper, I kissed where you had kissed. It is quite dark - Good-bye George. I am entirely yours, Am I not?

I Marie

No 46 } Reed Elk Grove
No 30 } March 23. 1860

March, 6, 1860,

As you say you do not know but you will stay away this Spring, and come the sooner to stay longer. Do not come to stay but a day or two. I am sure I could not bear it - to have you go away again so soon. I have counted the weeks to the first of May, and find them ten - the time seems so long. I think it matters little whether it be ten weeks or ten months. Do not work and get sick - come rest and stay with me forever. Are you sick? Don't be afraid to tell me. I cannot, cannot be away from you! I am not farther off from you, am I? You never was so near. Did you cry for you and me? Blessed tears. Don't you wish you and I were together in the next world? I do. No more to part forever - no more these fears that cast a shadow over the present sunshine - no more night after the glad morning, no more longings that make

George -

I have just read your letter. How - my Love, I do not love you so little. I thought you meant to make that whispering demon true, by killing me, with this your letter. You deserve no letter at all, and my eyes feel precious little like writing one.

Are you sick, George? Let me see if I cannot make you cry half as hard over my letter as I have over yours. I said, when reading, I mean thought I wished I was - away off where you could not find me. Jane in that is not there? Brave woman, too.

I am sorry for your poor, dear head, and I would give my life to hold it for an hour. Oh! George - George.

Wednesday 7. 1880

This is the loveliest of Spring days.
My head ached this morning - because
yours ached a week ago - I could not
read, so I put on my bonnet and
walked away off where I have never
been before, off toward the west where
there are trees and no Town. I put
a fence between myself and the world
- all but you - sat down under a tree
and read your letter again, read it
more calmly than last night, though
it is so sad, so very sad.

Evening.

Mother, who has had a dress on to-day
for the first time, has gone to bed.
Chick has closed his eyes and is
still for the first time since dawn
this morning. Father is out to
a social gathering of the Society, our
girl Sarah has gone to meeting.

Grand-ma is quietly lying as is her
wont. - Dearest - I come to you -
as near as I can come. Oh! it is so
far away. Tell me truly, are you
sick? If you do not I shall prove
my sight to be called Jane, in earnest
I shall take ^{up} a solarsome march, over
hill and plain, sleeping by the way
side, asking bread of pitying sisters
as I journey, pausing not nor resting,
not, indeed to get away from Rochester
but to find my Lord, to see if he can
tell me with his living voice anything
to quiet my soul.

Oh! George
I love you too much. I never knew how
much until last night and to-day.

Last night I saw you in my sleep - was
with you, your dear arms all about me
your lips to mine. The waking to find
it all a dream has made to-day so
void of light, my heart so restless
and full of pain. I am not brave

Evening - Pass on to sweet third - I forgot this so must write a line. You are with Elsie - don't you love her? What can we do for her? Did you mean this face you sent in Papras letter for my letter? It looks as if, as my picture looks, a little bit. It has a fierce disagreeable look that struck you when you sat by your table in Minneapolis and first looked at my picture.

Saturday Morn. Let me look towards you a minute. What do you do Saturdays? - I am just going to send this to the Office. Mama is a good deal better - she sits up two or three hours in a day - if she don't get sick again she will be well pretty soon. - Good morning - may this day find you as bright and happy as itself - Your own Serena

the heart is deathly sick and faint, Oh! I did not know love cost so much, it has more pains than pleasures. You can feel "twas better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all".

I cannot. Gladly would I lose existence if nevermore I was to know you, neither in this nor in the coming life. How I used to talk of weak women who lost themselves in other lives. Of women who for love of one would die if left alone. I smiled at broken hearts, and was sensible of much dependence. I only know to-night I am utterly wretched because a man is five hundred miles away from me. You will not stay longer than you must know. Do not heed such horrid fancies. You will not die, and you have called Serena Ames your wife. Please tell that phantom when

rent it dares to approach you, that
you have already done what it so defiant
ly proclaims you will not do, and it
will forever depart from you. God
bless you, my precious one. Dearest
and Best!

Yes, I do rejoice with you that you
no longer dwell in darkness, but can
believe in eternal life. Pray for me
you are good and your prayers will be
heard. Pray I may not forget my
Dasher, - that "my feeble hands and
helpless, groping blindly in the darkness
touch God's right hand in that dark-
ness and be lifted up and strengthened."

One reading my letter would really
imagine me a martyr, or at least a
woman with some trial to bear, some
sacrifice to make for studies sake, in-
stead of which I am a rosy cheeked
little maiden of nineteen in the dearest
of dear homes, with the dearest of

Georgies not far away, who never
knew a trouble, with future bright as
all good things can make it. A wo-
man's a woman 'for a' that'.

You will not be sad, will you? You will
not work hard, you will be well - and
you will come quickly, never, never to
go again and leave me. I will be good.
I love you, love you with all my soul.
I will be patient. Good-night.

Thursday.

I think I was naughty to write so last
night. I am sorry, but 'twas very hard
to sit down and go to this dull writing
and want you so much and you so far
away. But that is not the hardest, -
I think. Yes, I think, I could bear like
a good girl this absence from you if
only I could be very sure you are perfectly
well and happy, but I never can be sure
till I look into your face. Do you know
of one thing that makes a woman as

You must not sit up at night, when
you have a headache to write to me - but
go to bed, to sleep, forget me and
never mind mind if I go without a letter.

Friday - 9th.

Your school is most out. You will get
a letter pretty soon. I believe I could walk
home with you very well if only I could be
in Elk Grove at four o'clock. When this
letter reaches you, your school will be out
for good. I am glad, sincerely glad, though I can hardly give you sufficiently
good reasons for you. It seems somewhat
of a period - a full, round stop in your
life - you will begin anew again. I
fancy, too, teaching does not agree with
you. How are you to get letters?

Shall I begin to endify with living
words your Amiable Post Master
at Forest City? Maybe I had better
send them direct to Washington with
a plea that they may be allowed to
remain till further orders. Go to
Minnesota. I guess Drama will go there
this summer. As you love her most

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nervous as to have her baby ailing? I do.

Poor Elsie! She has Charlie, he
will not assuredly be taken from her!
Must she leave her home? I do not know
as I understood you.

I trust you have forgotten that crazy
night your headache made you write so
wild a letter. I am glad you wrote just
as you did, if you felt so. "For two
days"! Yes - ever after you got my
letter, I ought never to have written, you
had those fancies and notions. The
most natural thing in the world. What
is most desired seems most impossible.
It must have been very, very hard for
you to bear - harder than for me, it
may be. Mother will soon be well, I
hope. I will all be well with us two
folks. We are led in ways we do not
understand. I am hopeful, very, are
not you? We are both young yet.

Seven months ago you told me when we stood in the Grove, you said in five years, you might safely say, we could stand there again, but not as then.

There truly was a time I can look back to and say, five years ago, and it was not so very long ago either.

So five years will go, dear, but I do not fear, neither think that all that time will go before — Mother gets well.

You are very wrong to tell me I owe you nothing. I hope I am not ungrateful to those who have been my more than Father and Mother for most six years. I will give them all I can, a heart of love and everlasting thanks, but to you do I owe more than to any other, save Him who gave you to me, and for me to say before the world, "I take this man to be my husband", will make ^{me} under no greater obligations to care for you in sickness and in health, to be

to you a loving and affectionate wife, "till death us do part". It is no woman's fancy, but to me as true and real as my love for you, so remember, Dearest, whatever may be, my highest duties I owe to you, first and last, and ever more.

You fancy you could take my hand and count my fingers and say, "so many years I shall not live"! What makes you? Are you sick — got a cough? I will keep my love from all harm. Nothing shall come near to harm him. Tell me, please do, you do not think so any more. Tell me you will be an old man after I am gone. Tell me we shall walk a "long path", not a short one, together. Can not you see me an old dried up little thing, sitting by your side, while we look back to this time we are passing over now? Is not that school house a gloomy place to write in so late at night?

Aurora greets?

--- "Oh! my love,
"I am changed since then, changed wholly, —
"If now you'd stoop so low to take ^{for indeed,} my love
"And use it roughly, without stint or spare
"As men use common things, with none behind,
"To any mean and ordinary end, —
"The joy would set me, like a star, in heaven,
"So high up, I should shine because of height,
"And not of virtue."

Mama says, — don't wonder at my telling you, for nothing is more strange between us two — she says — tell him I am not a hard parent — and that if he pleases we will foil the spirit of evil which whispers such things to him. — She says, you will have to be away a good deal for several years and why cannot I be at home, when you are necessarily away as well as in any other place? She says that will answer her wants perfectly, and might not suit you badly. If so — well, I will be nobody for awhile, you may do just what, with all wisdom you can get, something good for you — for

as well as you do me, to see her will be most as well as to see me. We hope to see Mr. North this Spring. He is coming to Chicago in May and it is not far from there here. Papa has written him to come. In June the Western Unitarian Convention will assemble in Quincy Ill. Then we hope to see at our house James Freeman Clarke, Fathers and Mothers Pastor. I love him more than any other Unitarian. I could not imagine unkind words coming from him. His spirit is worthy a Christian, and I know of precious few Ministers whose lives bear witness to an inward Christliness. In a Monthly of his, that came last evening, he replies to Dr. Huntington, who has lately left the Unitarians and gone over to the Church of England. It is very kind, worthy of the man. I will give you his closing remarks, which ^{will} ~~are~~ a fairly illustrate the spirit of his long article.

"And now in taking leave of our brother
and of this discussion, we would reach out
our hands to him across the dividing gulf
of opinion, and say, "God bless you,"!

We stood near you at your ordination, and
sympathized with your emotions then in
devoting yourself to the service of God.

We have seen the manner of your life. —
earnest, true, devoted. We are sad at
this parting, but believe that you are not
wholly taken from us in heart. A few years
brother, and we ^{shall} know all which we now
see in a glass darkly. Meantime, let
us remember the words of Melancthon:
"This is to know Christ — to know his
beneficence and not his mode of incarnation."

A good many of the Eastern Unitarians
will be in Quincy. Papa is anticipating
a fine time.

We have read this month's At-
lantic. Very good — it is called one
of the best. It has a Religious article

a scientific one, some stories, and
two poems that do very well, though not
the best. "To the Muse" is the best,
and must have been written by Emerson,
whether with his own hand, I cannot say.

Do you remember "Carnille"? She
says —

"With joy that dulled me to the touch of scorn
I served; — not knowing that of all life's deeds,
"Service was first." . . .

I scorned to learn that lesson a
year ago. If George Wright had
told me last March that a year from
then I would be willing to do and be for
him what now I would do and be for
him I would have said, You do not know
Serena Ames. With Aurora Leigh
I felt,

"I would not be a woman like the rest
"A simple woman who believes in Love
"And owns the right of Love because she loves."

Would you like to know how changed

what is well for you, will be pleasant for me. Am I not dutiful? I only don't want you to be distressed, I cannot bear that - so I tell you what Mama says, that you may think and plan as you please.

You feel, perhaps, "I do not want a wife not all my own". No, I know you do not, but I wish you had a debt to pay that we might work together in a labor of love - nor call it work, - no think of debt. Please sir I have just had a new thought, unwise to tell you it, but I must, like a little girl, which I am "when a man takes a woman for his own, he also, so says law, takes all debts for his own contracted before marriage and is henceforth responsible for their payment. . . Reflect and beware.

I love you, and would do right by you, and be good to you. I know you love me, and would do right likewise.

I feel happier than for a week; is not happiness, like sadness, catching?

There is only two or three days to Tuesday, four rather; it will soon come. The weeks go so swiftly they will soon bring the month that will bring you, be it Spring month or Fall. I shall see you; and thank my Father as never before, because never before so great cause had I for thanks giving. Oh! to see you, George, Lou.

The night is coming "you are walking home with me in your pocket and in your heart. Joy, peace and love attend your steps. I love you ever. Oh! so much, I cannot tell you.

I am happy because, I hope, you are happy, and your feelings travel faster than your feet, and farther.

I must go. God bless you with his light and love. Good-bye.

Your Marie,

I guess this week your letter will be a short one. I am going to try to finish school this week, & also finish my maps, so I work Mornings before school & evenings after school at the maps - I am getting in a great hurry to get away from here.

So if you don't get a very long letter this time you must let it down to excess of zeal & anxiety on your acct.

You have it set down that I will "come with the pretty things" - How absurd to put me in a bag with the "pretty things" - long, black, gaunt, - big feet, pepper & salt top-knot &c &c - Imagine a drunkey in a variety store & then think of this deponent & the "pretty things".

In a week I can begin to guess when I shall be able to get away from here, & perhaps in a two weeks I may begin to find where I may be next summer. My dear doesn't it seem like a rather queer & unnatural way of doing things, for us to meet perhaps once or twice a year for a day or two at a time, & live thus for years - yet to come? It does to me.

Marie:-

Good Evening - It is almost 9 P.M. but I cannot let the Sabbath pass, without seeing you for a few minutes at least. I am at Mrs. Liles' having rode down with Hannah's bean. I was going to write a long letter today at home, but you see I did not.

Last week I only got your letter of the 25th Feb. - the one you expected would reach me a week ago - Friday. I got also a note from the P.O.D. stating that a special agent would investigate the matter of mail losses here. I guess they don't look very hard though. You are very dear to me this week. It seems as though were almost here. Oh you have written such blessed letters, these last two or three. This one I received Friday is almost playful. It is very pleasant. There seems around it the glad sunlight of home, where you and I - a cosy fireside & books & papers and and. Oh lots of fine things! do stand out before my mind's eye. All the world on one side - wealth power & fame, but half as much

A part of my letter I have forgot to put in it - will put it in next week.

1860
Sabbath Eve March 11

as just that one little word home implies.

You are glad you came nearer to me
now on a sunny day last summer and almost
think I should have said "come in" then.

I did not know that you would care to "come in"
but I did feel glad that you came nearer
to my side. I did not dare to analyse the
fact to determine if it was the result of
accident or design brought you there.
but it was so pleasant to have you there
that I forgot almost everything else. That
it must be so that I could not stay there
only for a few days & it would have been a
long time before I would have said a
word to you of what was in my heart
lest the pleasant dream be broken too soon
& you no more come nearer to me.

I love you to night Marie - with
my whole heart & soul. I love your name
- I love to think of you & of your people - my
father folks almost they are too, and of the
day when we meet again, and for the thousandth
time I picture what that meeting may
be, and I think how blessed is he who
owns such a love as this which you
have given me. Oh I love you - just
as I hope you are loving me at

this blessed minute, I'm sure you're now
thinking of me, and wishing I were there or
you here. So strange, so funny, such charms
such happiness in this love. I used to think
I should never know anything like it, & even
in my wildest dream I never imagined
how much it were possible for me to love
as I have since found out.

Oh if I could mes so by Telegraph
I would now this instant be with you
- I can fancy you turning very white
& then very red & it seems to me I should feel
perfectly happy and - see finish this to-
-morrow night perhaps. "Good
night & good Bye" for I shall not leave you
- but sleep dearest - sweet precious num-
bers. Still fancy I hold your hand in mine
& that with the first blush of morn. a
"welcome" & "Good Morning" I shall press
"for your lips - setting there your head
upon my shoulder, picture to the sweet bliss-
ful vision of pure perfect fully answered
love. Sleep Dearest & the vision shall be
a true prophecy

Monday Night 8 P.M.
How short the evenings are getting are
they not. Spring is coming surely,

Tuesday Evening 7 1/4 P.M. Good Evening. - This is
my "Daily Journal" you see. It will carry
nothing of importance to you, only that I hope
you will find the daily repetition of that old
story which is ever new, may not be tiresome.
Some people do not weary of it in a life-time
why should we, however ^{far} it may be told
tired of saying or hearing it in a few months?
We shall not I trust, - Another month is
gone. This is March 13th - tomorrow will be seven
months since Aug 14th, every day the earth
comes back nearer to that blessed day. In a
little while it will be a year - with all it
has brought me, the year will be the shortest
I ever knew. Now that I am so near
the close of one thing which has for months been
one of the things separating us, (my school)
I am doubly anxious to get away & to see you.
It almost seems a little while only.

But there remains much to be done, much
that is most disagreeable to me, the settle-
ment of my Brother's estate & the disposal
of property, the getting ready & the going away
& the thousand things consequent thereon. Of all
things I ever tried, I became most thoroughly
disgusted with life "in a store" - Trade I abhor
& here I must trade & dicker for the next
three weeks or longer. It is a thing I have
no talent or fitness for, & I have dreaded it
all winter. Oh I wish some kind power
would send me unceremoniously into the middle of

2
Since about Jan 3^d we haven't had any winter
at all. I never knew so mild a February
before. It has been like May too all this month
except one or two days of March winds.
- It is very pretty & pleasant but I don't
like to stay here. Forest City is a queer
place. I guess they are pretty much all
thieves & scoundrels there. Every day or two
I hear of something new going on there.
The last thing is the issuing of a kind of
relief currency, which throws Minnesota
financing into the shade. It is nothing
less than imitation of silver coin of the
United States of America. I have not seen
any of it as yet, but am told that it
looks nice & passes first-rate & that the
mint is at Forest City & no kidding
about it. But this is a decidedly moral &
religious place? Whisky is the chief article
of export & the only necessary of life that
they are aware of.

This place is a pretty good place. The
children at any rate are real good - I shall
be sorry to leave them. It has been very
pleasant here. They say they wish I would
"keep school all summer" - Today I talked
one of the little girls if she was not glad

that school was "mostly out" - so that she would have nothing to do but play? "Oh no -" she wished I would stay. Dear little heart

It seems too bad - some of them are just getting awake & are trying hard to find their way into a brighter & higher sphere in life than their fate seems to point out to them here. It seems too bad to have them here.

The people here are mostly good simple folks, without the remotest idea of all that is grand & noble & worthy of living for in this life or the next, - to some of them the school-master is a scientific wonder.

It makes me think of Goldsmith's School-Master.

"Still they gazed & still the wonder grew"

"How one small head could carry all he knew"
It really seems funny - how they stick out their eyes when I tell them something which they never happened to think of before - as much as to say "If the school-master did not say so, it couldn't be believed"

Mr & Mrs S. are exceptions to the rule they are intelligent people.

But you of course can see & realize that it must be rather dull & tedious here notwithstanding I now get double the number of papers that I can read. I long for the living presence of

those who can talk & think & appreciate every thing in somewhat the style of those with whom I have been acquainted in years gone by. I cannot but contrast my present mental facilities with those of a year ago - the circle that used to meet at Mr Loomis's I never talked there, I never cared - but used always to sit stupid as a block all the evening & listen to the others; they talked so brilliantly I could never muster courage to say anything; but I enjoyed it keenly even though sometimes I would go home thoroughly vexed with myself for not being able to think of a thing to say (just when I wanted to), which should be apropos; sometimes even resolving never to go to the brown house again, as I once made a fool of myself & was sure they must be thoroughly tired of my stupidity; - which resolution generally lasted about three days.

They were brilliant. Their tongues as bright & keen as razors. I used to think I would give anything for the quick ready thought of Craffut. He could do everything I could do nothing.

Again I must say Good night - listen while I tell you something new & strange; something that has been in my heart a long time - "I love you - will you love me?" Is not

Rehau - I have heard that people only get themselves into trouble by telling of such things, but then you knew of it before, & besides, my Philosophy says - "These things have been & are now - they were necessary for your growth & improvement. They were necessary, that at the proper time you should love the proper person in a reasonable sensible manner; rightly & understandingly. Now you now love, it was you dating from the beginning, you shall love her all the days of your life, better & better & more & more with every day you live."

In our intercourse with each other from the beginning I guess we have been different from what we have to other persons. It was so with me at any rate. I never wrote to others in the strain that I commenced writing to you - how or why I know not, some time I'll tell you all about when I first had an idea that perhaps I loved you - I was fancying (my mind when I am going from place to place, particularly if on foot, always is making pictures & castles for amusement & to cheat me of my weariness) I was fancying that we were walking together of a moonlight night just as we did once in Minneapolis, only that there were none others ~~now~~ present, and that I had held of your hand carelessly swinging it back & forth (just as you have seen school children do in their play) & was telling a story in which by an abrupt but quite natural

(not "next week") but of the month of May³ - because I feel that all these disagreeable things will be done before that time."

A lot of such things await me in Minnesota also. I ought not to think of them but their approach & my dread of them, compel me to.

But I am going to be pretty good this time I said enough wicked things week before last to answer for some time. To night I must be good - impassible while you are so far away. If now for instance instead of Elk Grove, this were Minneapolis - and this small wicked, low candle, pouring torrents of grease for lava all over the table, were but a gas burner, & imagine a tiny little parlor - just about big enough for two, with arm chairs &c. - and a glowing wood grate (I hate coal - there seems something demoniac about it) - and a pretty carpet on the floor & deep recessed windows (not exactly suitable for a cottage & besides we would never have any use for them, but then some of our friends meeting with us sometime might - behind the heavy curtains - looking out the windows upon the garden & down the lawn - is such a charming place for quiet talk when people have anything special to say & and the weather out of doors is not pleasant)

Imagine just that place & then two of us - no more & certainly no less - you imagine

just the place I am thinking of, & fancying I might be pretty good. I wonder if we will ever see such a place as that? Sometime you are all coming back to Minneapolis to live are you not? And then it may be perhaps I have regarded Minneapolis as my home for almost 4 years now. On the 20th day of April 1856 I first arrived there, - just now I do not forgotten how it looked to me when first came in sight of it from the bluffs below St Anthony (I was on the top of the stage of course - I always choose that place.)

When were you there? You were not even "sweet sixteen" in those days. We wandered around for a considerable length of time on this earth each profoundly ignorant of the inevitable fate in store for us. I never even dreamed of you in those days - either waking or sleeping - unromantic to be sure. But following the advice of Tupper in whose writings I had long before learned that my future wife even though unknown to me lived somewhere - I thought "kindly of her" & hoped she would make herself known speedily. But I never thought it could be you. When were you in Hillsdale that is on the Michigan Southern R. R. is that? I passed through there six years ^{ago} since May just when you went home to live. I went away to "seek my fortune" as "Lizzie" bid to me

the day before I went away when I saw her for the last time until last summer.

I left home as boys always do, fully convinced that the fruit, - weath, honors & preferments - was fully ripe & could be had for the picking.

I guess I told you in one of my first letters about Lizzie & how my boy heart stuck to her faithfully for many long years & even though I had not seen her & knew nothing of her for a long time before I left home in 1854. I had by no means forgotten her, - Some ten years ago - when I was the whole of fourteen years old I thought Lizzie nothing less than an Angel. Boy Affections are not generally remarkable for lasting fidelity I believe, & if my man's heart continues true & single to you as did my boy heart to Lizzie I shall be a shining example of fidelity."

I believe that did me lots of good, I have always loved & respected women as women ever since as I should not & but for that, & now I see that Lizzie is no such a woman as I should wish to marry & had I not let my juvenile affections run loose after a pretty face & found out thus early how much a pretty face amounts to, perhaps ere now I should have fallen victim to, and married some pretty face, and now instead of writing this letter to you, should be repenting in "broadsheet, &c" for the folly of uniting myself with the pretty face' aforesaid.

I was up again, ate breakfast & started on horseback for Upper Grove ~~at~~ across the width of the Co. some 22 or 23 miles distant, just as the first blush of dawn appeared in the east, I had not been on a horse for some 5 or 6 years & none but those who have tried it can appreciate the effect of a long ride on horseback, ^{the help of} being unaccustomed to such exercise, By the ^{the help of} stars I steered straight across the country ~~across~~ marshes streams hills vales & prairie, & when the sun rose I was a long way on my journey - At 8 1/2 AM. I reached Upper Grove, having travelled nearly 7 miles an hour all the way.

I found things not quite so bad as represented & when the Judge appeared in the ground (about 11 AM.) it was all over with him - He had a lawyer there all the morning to see that the voting was all done right (that is, in the Judge's favor) but to no purpose, The scheme couldnt bear investigation & the voting went against it, Oh but wasn't the Judge wroth, He said a good many things - but as I had accomplished my purpose, I felt too "smiling & happy" to be at all disturbed & so of course had all the advantage.

The lawyer before referred to had been obtained at considerable trouble & expense from Webster City some 40 miles from here on purpose to carry the scheme through, but alas for

(continued from letter sent March 15th)
Change, I told you that I loved you & you - well I dont know what you said, but I remember that I thought I had never built a temple of fancy which so disturbed the even measured flow of the life currents. The great clock inside was counting hours & days & months in single minutes (I have never known it to gain time so, but once since, & that was then when you put your hand in mine for the first time & as I knew & felt - forever!) It was a strange result from a simple fancy & the castle I built then was ever after haunted by good spirits I guess, Moore says

"Yes, loving is a painful thrill" & so - from the symptoms I judged the unaccustomed irregularity of heart must be caused by love & prescribed accordingly, with what blessed success I need not say, & yet I may say there is a vague yearning & sense of 'longings' where I used to have a heart, ~~now~~ That perhaps may in time be cured - I know of only one remedy, - It is a young woman held close to the place where the heart was - for further illustration, I will refer you to the time when next we meet & when you happen to be sitting close by my side.

Again I must leave you - perhaps I may write more tomorrow night, If not Good bye & God bless & keep you always, "I love you" to night too - One kiss - good night, George

Wednesday Evening - Good Night Dear -

I am going to scribble just a few minutes & then close the envelope. I am writing in the school house. There is to be a meeting here to-night. A proposition is on foot for this lot to sell the Swamp-lands (the same we surveyed last year) There are about 52,000 acres which are worth to the lot \$1.25 for an acre - having been sold for that by the U.S. from whence the lot will get the money. Our lot judge is "moving Heaven & Earth" in a small way of course to sell the county's right & interest in the lands & fund, for \$2000. to be paid in bridges.

It is a most rascally scheme, but he has already bought enough voters to almost carry it through. The Election is to be held tomorrow & to-night the judge & the prospective contractor are to talk to the people here - I shall answer them to-night on some things - but I am so vexed I shall not be able to say anything. I only heard that they were to be here, a few minutes ago, but I shall protest against the rascality just as strong as I know how.

Friday Evening March 16

Dearest - I am so lonesome to-night - just because I got no letter from you, that I cannot resist the desire to talk to you for a few minutes

kind sleepy & sore as I am - let me explain - You see I stopped abruptly Wednesday evening. The meeting that night was prolonged till 12 o'clock - terminating in the total rout "horse, foot, & dragoon" of the lot judge clique in this precinct, & resolutions "strong as boarding house butter" passed unanimously & a pledge & signed by every voter to go against the plot. But we had information that all the people at Upper Grove where the judge lives were going for the sale & as that settlement was the largest, we felt doubtful about the matter. So at the request of the people here I undertook to go & see about it

(In sending my letter to the P.O. that night, I forgot this sheet until I sealed the letter when I recollected that this was left at the school house, & I had not time to go back & get it, but you can put this sheet with the three I sent them & the story on the first page of this sheet will be all together)

It was about 1 A.M. when I commenced trying to go to sleep with but indifferent success as the excitement of the evening particularly at it was the first political "affair" I was ever implicated in, had got me thoroughly "waked up" & the work for nearly day looked pretty hard & on the whole dark & discouraging. About 4 1/2 A.M.

Sabbath Eve 5 1/2 P.M. Good Evening Dear,

I am at home - School is among the things that were & are not. Last night I said "good bye" to them & gave them bits of silver, with holes punched through for a string. They were sorry to go & I was sorry to bid them good bye - It has been very pleasant there & I guess I come away with the best wishes of every one (large & small) for my future well fare & success. I am glad for it is pleasant to have friends & not pleasant to have enemies. But I suppose our best Judge don't like me.

Where are you dearest - I am so low - The last letter I have from you was written three weeks ago to-day. I hope you are well & yours, well also. I only got one or two letters last week & those were written in Feb. so I expect ^(you know?) you have written & I will get it next week.

To night I will write more - I got a letter from my cousin Whitcomb (farrier's husband) last week - He was just going to start for Greensboro Ga. with a drove of 13 horses & would be gone 2 mos. & in June would be in Minnesota & I must be there too. So I presume all my R.R. ambitions must be dropped for another year & I shall probably see you before I go to Minn. Well I am glad at some acts & on some I am not. I am glad to be able to see you very soon, & sorry that I must leave you again, unless - Don't you want to go to Minneapolis Dear? When your mother is better you know,

all their plans. Altogether I enjoyed it highly. There was excitement & novelty in it, besides the gratification of being on the winning side and the happy consciousness of being on the right side & of being honest in it.

It was not the first time that a "plain unvarnished tale" has "put down" "Falstaffian pretensions and legal sophistry."

After all the whole thing was absurd & foolish & I don't wish to be in anything of the kind again - It may have done me some good in the way of giving me confidence in my own voice - but further than that, I must own that though the people here are not displeased, I am myself decidedly ashamed of myself for being implicated in a controversy even where there seemed a necessity for, and a righteousness in doing. One can scarcely go into any thing of the kind without violating feelings of self respect; & honor, for one's own dignity & respectability. It seems to impair the ~~reason~~ ^{reason} which we feel for in regard to our better nature. At 4 P.M. I started for Elk Grove and now - without even seeing Miss Church (of whom I have spoken heretofore) though urged by her father to stay all night at his house. There now my dear

am I not a "good boy"?

I reached her last night at 8 P.M. (just about 24 hours after I stopped writing to you, night before last -) feeling ^{now} the better for my 45 mile ride to day nothing off the rest of my day's work, and sincerely hoping Election day wouldn't come again very soon.

A grand jollification Meeting ensued & then Election was over. & today I feel like a victorious prize-fighter - trotted into one conglomerate ache - one indiscriminate jelly. I am very lame, sore & stiff & so without further prologue will address myself to the duties of the evening viz Sleep! Oh but I wish you were here now. It seems so lonesome to get no letter from you. I cannot realize how much I am dependent upon you for my happiness till such a thing as this occurs - It is well that sometimes I do get glimpses of you as you really are to me - as my very life, Dear, Oh Marie what would I do but for you - I live for you, I think and all do, all & everything for you. You are good and I love you - Oh the wealth and tenderness and goodness of that which which we give when we love.

Marie, Marie Marie - only to be with

you. It is too cruel thus to be separated - It must not last long. You must tell me you love me, that there is nothing between our souls, that we are one, in perfect love, and I shall kiss you, and again & again with you thank Our Father that we have wrought more to ask - that we are so blessed, so happy &

Oh I am lonesome tonight. It is hard to part with you even on paper. Come near me & whisper dear loving words while I sleep. - I wish I could see you thus - I would be real.

So Good Night - Dearest - Darling - My own precious Marie - my life - my soul - My Marie - Oh I am so lonesome

How poor are words - If I could only put down here something that could tell in the least, my heart. Only one word which should be & mean to you all love & tenderness - But when you love me most - when all the world seems nothing - when your heart will not be still, but cries out with impossible longing, when for a moment nothing here or hereafter seems too precious to fully give if but for a moment you could put your arms around me & press your lips to mine & hear me say "Dear Marie - my wife" - then think of me & think how I too may love, and so

Good Night - Your homesick lonesome "lover" ^{brother}

I don't know that I am very much acquainted
with you, but I know I felt more acquainted
after you had written two letters to me, than I ever
did with any one else. It seemed so pleasant, such
a joy to feel that one ~~was~~ upon whom I had no
claim whatever could be so kindly disposed toward
me, one that as a stranger could be kind & could
wish me happiness.

How foolish Marie to tell all these
things over & over so many times, but you
do not get tired of them do you?

There is a rich variety & incomparable novelty
even in the very sameness of love, that flows
on in even measured tide all through life -
It will ever be new to us, even at last
when we have loved all through our walk
here together. I cannot write much this week
I must do other things. But I love you
just as much, perhaps more if that were
possible, as the time draws nearer that I
am to see you. Oh for May and all
the disagreeable things between here &
there, then a thing in the forever past.

Good bye Dearest - I love
you ever so much. Say good things (love
among them) to all your folks
Your Own George

Tuesday Ev. March 30. 7 1/2 P.M. Dear Marie

I did not write to you on Sunday Evening as
I purposed - so I must add somewhat to my week-
ly scribbles to night & if I have an opportunity
send them to the Office tomorrow. You must con-
tent your poor heart with thinking that for
every sheet of paper that I write less than I
used - I will be with you an hour sooner. I do not
know how long it will be before I can get away from
here, but I hope within (or not beyond) three
weeks, & then unless something I do not now
know of, interferes, I shall go to Bloomington.

Do not expect me under three months though,
for the possibilities & contingencies hedge up the
way & make visions of the future even more than
usually vague. We have many things to do - One
law suit it is probable to attend to, besides ever & ever
so many things to do. How many kind & officious
friends the widows & orphans always have - so long as
there is any chance for each of said friends to
profit by "looking out for Number One" They all
show their true colors very quickly at the money
test. Forest City is no exception to the rule.

I am very glad that I have got into habits of
strict accounting in my business affairs. I find
now that in almost every instance where I relax
or neglect my rule respecting accounts, I have
afterward ample reason to repent of my
negligence. "Oh cast not that receipt away"

Four weeks - shall I see you? Only four weeks - I was gone four weeks in Oct last fall - It did not seem long - Did it to you? It will not be long - I shall say "good bye" to Elk Grove - three wearisome days & then I will see the cars once more. In a few hours Dubuque - a few more Bloomington - You remember I came here with my old clothes - I've bought new ones - I think I will buy a pair of overalls and a straw hat at Dubuque & then I'll go "sparking" - I cannot realize that you are the Serena Ames whose picture I saw in April 1858 - the same picture now is to me all soul & love, the shadow of the type of womanly perfection - the embodiment of all that's lovable, and then I could hardly realize that Serena Ames could live.

Let me see, it is precisely 20 minutes past ~~seven~~ P.M. of a spring-summer evening the clouds are red in the west & a broad crown of daylight spreads North & South, a fan like blush of twilight reaching to the zenith - but shadows crouch in alleys & door-ways as if afraid they are a half hour too early. Rap rap (I don't know but it's a bell though) at the front door of the heretic's house - the serving maid opens the door leaving it entirely ajar with the mysterious raffer to go or come, walk out or in - ask for the Master or leave an errand, As it is a "land of liberty" the raffer walks in & inquires for Miss

Ames - The maid deposits the raffer in the adjoining room - The raffer is blank, unconscious, innocent Miss Ames is sent in - After a custard of old, she recognizes the raffer. The maid - dis-maid & thunderstruck, "peeks" through the crack in the door. Miss Ames - the patterns of conversation propriety in manners is evidently crazy - gone mad. The Old folks fly to the rescue.

Curtainfalls with grand Tableau of the Happy family - "Animals of adverse & contrary natures, living together in peace & harmony"

Oh Marie - I think this all over twenty times a day & vary it in every way I can think of. I don't believe it will be possible for us to meet in any way I have not already arranged - except one & that I do not consider possible - which is that you meet me with indifference coolness, reserve, or even - if alone - with embarrassment. There is perfect trust & love between us two I believe - and you will be as free to ~~come~~ come to me & put your hands in mine & say "George I love you - all I am is yours - are you not mine also?" in all frankness confidence & trusting faith, just as you have in your letters. It seems to me, I shall feel so & do so there. Even in the presence of others I could pleasantly say "Good Evening" - Though it would be hard to stop there, even in presence of others I am so glad - so happy that you love me

brought face to face with the great world -
losing friendships very dear - enduring
sickness, and most painful anxiety because
of her husband's illness; when she had,
through seas of troubles gained success,
whereby money could be gained, and
saved from ruin or dependence herself and
husband - when a second time her husband
nearly blind - lying on his dying bed
told her again they had lost all, and
she knew - sick and worn out as she
was, she must go away from him to
act a part before men that they might
laugh or cry - after all this - a life
of devotion and self sacrifice - after a
parting we may not speak of - she is
accused by the public of running
off to the stage in a most heartless way,
and leaving her husband to die alone,,
just a fair example of an actress: a
cruel, abandoned class of women!

Darkness cometh - Good-bye.
I love you, George, do you me?
Marie,

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" 47 } Mar 23 1860

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Sunday Mar. 11 1860

George - What a summer's day!
Don't you love it? I do - and you.

We have a queer man here to-day.
He has talked a steady stream ever since he
came home with Papa from Church. He is
sensible and nonsensical. It is pleasant
to hear him. He said to me at dinner.

" Sis - I suppose will always remain single
for fear of being the slave of some man or something.
I suppose she will like every body pretty well
but no one very much". Ah! Mr. Phaenix.

Very likely. He thinks she would all
out of tune, and he proposes to redeem it
by working on the coming generation - training
up our children to good habits. He!

I say it matters little whether we be slaves
to one thing or another, if we be slaves. I
tell him to work upon Mr. Phaenix and
teach him to practice instead of preaching and

the world will go well enough. Is not it wonderful how we all go abroad to begin our work of reformation.

I must go to Sunday School — come with me.

I have come home again. The School was very good. I had four girls. They are really interesting.

I did not tell you how glad I was to have you tell me you were happy in believing in a glorious future. How unfinished would our lives be if this was all. What a mockery, even to us who know best how to improve these few years and of them, ^{make} the most possible. I have had such feelings as these — in doing something; in trying hard to learn, or in doing a hard thing I pleased to term duty. I have felt, "Of what use is all this?" — do I know I shall live forever; do I know it will amount to anything — is not all this living

illusion? And in that I have felt what blankness and darkness to the soul must a belief in death bring.

You go to worship out of doors, in Forest City, do you? Are there woods near you? Oh! my

love, I wish I was with you. A little while tonight.

I have read a little today, to Mama, from Mrs. Nowatts Autobiography. What a sad, sad life!

It seems scarcely possible for a woman, so ill prepared by the circumstances of early life, to endure so heavily distress and trials.

She was a noble woman. She has taught me many things for which I am grateful.

She shows us many things of life on the stage which will or ought to make us feel more charitable towards a much abused class.

She gives instances of self-possession and heroism unparalleled, among actresses.

After having gone to the stage to retrieve her husband's lost fortune, and suffered as only a timid woman can suffer when

happiness, and wonder if some terrific
cloud will not soon burst over my head.
I have got to have whatever is needed
to arouse me from this life of aimless
ease. They say, you know, there is
a road we like to travel that is not
smooth. I have tried to fancy what
mountain of hardships or valley of
grief and despair I should find in
my onward journeyings. If you are
still with me I can fear no evil.
If you get tired and left - why - I
should let you go in peace, I trust,
and if I found my path too rugged
I should seek a new road, and pass on
another way.

I feel it my duty to bid you
an affectionate good-bye, for to-night
sleep sweetly dearest. Do I not love
you more than you do me? I hope so.
I fear I am not good to give to one
man so much, which is all I have
and am, myself forever, Marie,

Wednesday, Mar. 14, 1860

Benedict - Good-evening. I hope
you find yourself well to night. I wish
I could find you well. Is it a private
opinion of yours that I cannot write
a letter without wishing vain things, and
giving utterance to foolish desires?

I love your name, George.
It is for that reason I seldom use it,
only to you. I say, when speaking of
you to the family, Mr. Wright. Very
disguised! I dislike to hear a man
when speaking to his wife at home, or a
woman to her husband, say Mrs.
or Mr. You and I are George
and Marie at home, are we not? How
pretty our names are. My name is
beautiful when you write it. When
you came from Vermont last fall
you called me Reno, the only time

I remember you calling me by that name.

I like the name. It was given me by two little children I loved dearly.

I see you as you said it. You sat in a chair a little way from me, where I sat out on the sofa in Mrs. Blaisdell's parlor. Charley was by the piano. I was just ready to cry, because so far off from you, because I loved you, - because I didn't know why, - when you said "Aren't", and asked me a question about drama.

It was said so gently, - was ever tone so gentle? none ever so dear to me.

Did I then ever see you? It seems impossible. When I sit down

to write to you I do not write more than half the time, I keep stopping my pen, or my hand stops of itself, while I am saying, No - no, I cannot, cannot, cannot! What? What?

I got your letter last night. It was not like last weeks, was it?

Do you sometimes feel despondent and hopeless after reading my letters?

Oh! you ought not to work so much. You tell me every week you do not feel well, your head aches, or your eyes, or you are tired. Please do not, for what should I do if you were to get sick? Again I say do not sit up to write to me when you would feel better in bed. A little disappointment is soon over, and these little things wear out ones life. This sitting up when we ought to be in bed, working when not able.

And it does trouble me exceedingly that perhaps for my sake you feel you must do all you can. Indeed George, I am not sad, I would love to do anything or any way for you.

May I ever do anything for you? You misunderstand me. I never endured a trial never had one. I think I should faint under the first blow. I sometimes tremble in my

When she thinks she may have no ground for thought. Well—we deceive ourselves we try to deceive ourselves, and go on receiving and giving tokens of great regard. By and by we are made to consider what we are doing, — again we reason and grow vexed with ourselves and say shall I treat this my friend in a manner to repel him, for no better cause than that I fancy as all women fancy, he is in love with me? No—I will not. Next comes the denouement. "So is me!" I was a fool not to see all this, — I may well be accused of trifling, — he may say I have given encouragement for hopes which I now crush! It is hard. It must be hard. I am only twenty (nearly) and not having been particularly charming in my earlier days can scarcely tell by experience much of these things, yet I pity those we call flirts and count them not so cruelly wicked as they seem to be.

Friday. — Don't you really feel sorry to say "Good bye" to you little pupils? It is almost time — past four o'clock.

Haven't you sometimes felt it a great responsibility even for a few months to stand as Teacher and "Master" to so many little ones? I wonder at the carelessness, rather thoughtlessness of Teachers when I realize that they must have been all children themselves once, — must know how supreme is the control of Teacher over pupils, — how children look up as to a being scarcely human to him or her who daily meet them in a School Room; know how to them all wisdom, goodness and godliness centre in the one person of Instructor. Children are abused.

Now, it makes one feel sadly indeed to have any body love one more than I can consistently love them. I feel I am in some way doing an injustice. It always

humbles me exceedingly to have looked up with love and admiration to a person one thinks of a class of women we are apt to be indifferent to one. I am vexed at the teachers now I used to like so much vexed at myself for wasting so much where I was not wanted. - But I had better get vexed with myself for being foolish now. It is not the same now though, I love for the sake of loving - I see something admirable where I see something admirable. Children feel alone often, I think, their parents spend no time in listening to their small talk about nothing, their whims and fancies; they live in a little world by themselves, and want and deserve notice. You say you love your children in spite of unpleasantnesses. What has made you so thoughtful, so tender of others feelings, so sensitive for others nerves, so almost a woman in heart?

Speaking of its being so hard not to love or have a pity almost

love for those who give us love makes up with love and admiration to a person one thinks of a class of women we are apt to be indifferent to one. I am vexed at the to talk of as heartless creatures. I think there are very many women set down as Coquettes who have rather an amiable weakness to contend with than a passion for conquest and power over men.

It has often been said, and I think truly, that no woman need be under the painful necessity of refusing any man who offers himself as lover. That she may know in the beginning whether things are tending, and only through sinful dallying on her part will a climax be reached that she desires not.

I have no doubt this is true. But suppose we have a friend we like ever so much, but do not want him for a husband, perhaps he may, as a acquaintance progresses be more attentive than common friends at least, he may make us think what makes a woman blush to think when

It is difficult to walk straight through this world, nor stumble sometimes.

Love of admiration leads many to do what is afterward bitterly repented.

Have you not sometimes trembled at the thought, "What if, after all, I find myself mistaken in this I am doing"? What think you, you would do? How we blame, as we blame for as others sin, what we call sin — breaking of oaths, and disregard of plighted faith. We hear a man has broken an engagement with the woman he promised to marry, what do we set him down as being? We are quick to see not to regard Jesus, and "Judge not, that we be not judged".

I always said, for fear of mistakes and deceptions, I will never enter into an engagement to marry any one, then we shall both be free. Like a thousand

other things I forgot all about my
resolves, & after, I seemed to remember it,
for in my love must be faith and trust
as implicit as in heaven - in reserving one
thing I remove a corner stone & it may
all fall to the earth presently.

I would disdain to go near a man
who could feel a woman must guard
herself by reservations. I despise a
woman who is forever talking of prudence
and fear.

Saturday Morn.

The Mail closes in a few minutes. It makes
me nervous to send such a letter. If you
got two or three a week 't would be different.

Our new hope is improving
though but slowly. I have not had
half a chance to write this week, and
what I have written has been a mind
reading and talking and when I was
in a hurry. I believe I have used
several words over and over again

and made my letter to consist of them.

I will write next week as slowly as I
please if I have to do it after they are
all asleep. I hate hurry. It is
too bad for you to get this.

George Wright, I love you.

Marie Ames.

but crude ripeness. I had pictured
for him a glorious future—a manhood ex-
ceeding the promise of his youth in vigor
and brilliancy. But what do I know
of these things?—Nothing—Murphy
for Ada! She has been, as Coffin
tells me, driven from a Pro-Slavery
neighborhood, because suspected of being
an Abolitionist from Canada. But
I say, with him, I have no fears but she can
care for herself, having all faith in her
"self-reliant strength". She is a brave
girl—but I have such feelings of pity
when I think of her—as though her life
seemed to herself—sad—unfinished—half
way and aimless—as though the
future to her was not so bright and
free from every cloud as mine is.
I have half a feeling that I am a shadow
in her life—that she never could like
me, that something always has and ever
will separate us. — In deed I sincerely
wish she was married and was settled
for life in a home which would be her
ideal—where she could have the society
she desires, and be happy. Don't you?
I think the men "are and far between".
That could make her happy.

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" 48
Cek Grove Mar 30 1860

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Bloomington, March. 21. 1860

George—

What shall I say to you this week?
You said a good many things to me last
night, and how you left me; right
in the middle of the road, leading—
where? from Minneapolis to Glenwood
perhaps, for you told me you carried
two or three of my letters and that they
were company. I wonder when
I first loved you? Do you know?
To-night I think, I have been mistaken
every time I have told you I did here-
tofore, but now I love you, and can
call you Dearest, more truly than ever
before. I smile sometimes when I
think of what I thought when you were
with me last Summer. You spoke of
our love growing, that what we then
felt for each other was as nothing to

what we should one day love. I supposed gentleman, which he terms "characteristic"
it might be so with you, but my heart "I believe my name is" Geo. B. Wright,
contained all it had room to hold. for that is what they call me, but I shall
Ah! me. What may the future bring? not sign it to this seraph, for I feel
Can it bring much? Each one I am not the same fellow you used to know
day finds you dearer than ever before, So you have all winter given me the
more mine. Dearest George! I am brightest side of your dismal life, and
afraid sometimes my "Experiences" told me only the pleasant things?
may be not unlike that of which Very considerate, but I do not much
a poem in Apolo Atlantic speaks. thank you for it. Croffut is such
of. I must go quick. By. as me to condole with him, for he has again
Thursday 22. gone into a New's paper. I confess I am

How do do? And what? sorry enough to do so in good earnest.
Do you ever hear from Serena Mrs. Ames? Foolish man! I have been congratulating
I had a letter from Croffut to-day. He himself that he was safely away from the
says, "do you ever hear from Geo. B. Wright heretments of an Editors life for the present
and where is he?" He tells me he had a I thought he was in school, where I think
letter from him some three months ago, he ought to be. If he were not half so
and favors me with the information that smart, nor half so capable of being an
he was then in Iowa. He says, furthermore Editor there would not be so much danger
that you "had the blues awfully". of his slighting his manhood by a too
And gives me this quotation from the early maturity, which is not maturity

Sixteen in July - but they are children
I was older at fifteen than either of
them are. They have been to School a
good deal, but their Father knows
nothing about what is well for them, farther
than to keep them in clothes and see that
they have a place to stay at. They have
changed about, first here, then there, and
are really spoiled girls. So sadly do
they need a home and a mother! Of
course they will not, - they know not
how to confine themselves to anything.
They have "learned" scarcely anything
at School. Hannah is frail and
fair, with ^{little} very energy - pretty and
the best of our Mother's three girls.
Lourinda is smart - and when I saw
her last a wild little witch - homely
and wide awake, and can take care of
herself better than either of her sisters.
It worries me exceedingly to think I have
two sisters broad cast in the land.
I write to them and they to me.
Hannah came near getting married

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She came to see me the night before I left
Drumapolis. She tried to be cordial.
I endeavored to be warm, talkative, and
show her my heart really had love for
her. We tried to part affectionately, but
Oh! how strained she was, how crilly I
felt. "How forced our conduct was"
and how freezingly loving was our adieu.
I do like her, though.

I had a letter, too, from my sister
Hannah, this morning. You say I have
told you I have a step-Father and two Sisters
I have, I suppose. I love my sisters
dearly, and my step-Father much better
than he does me. You see - I left
his house to go to stay a few weeks with
Mrs. Dorr, and I never returned again.
He was kind, - no Father could be kinder,
and he would not consent I should call
any other place home but his house, but

when Mrs. Dorr went to him and begged I might stay with her through the winter. He at last yielded, and the winter proved to be an indifferent time - and Mrs. Dorr became Mrs. Godon, and considered Dorr here for good or bad, I guess. He broke up his family soon and got my sisters boarded out. He came to see me occasionally but did nothing for me, neither did Mrs. Godon desire he should "neither ought he to have done anything. You know, how after a while I went to Mr. Ames. He expressed himself surprised at my ill-treatment from Mrs. J. and would not have had me remain there at all had he known anything of it. He came occasionally to see me at Mr. Ames' but much more seldom than he had been accustomed to. After a year or so I thought 'would be a nice thing to feel secure and change my name from Huntley to Ames. I would not do so without speaking to my step-

Father, of course "though I intended to do as I choose, he having virtually left me to myself. My name was not his, nor my sisters, or I would not have done as I did. He, when I asked him about it would say nothing in favor neither much against "I spoke something of the disgrace I was bringing on my family." I thought I alone was accountable for the disgrace so I had my name changed and became the daughter of C. E. & S. J. Ames. How some people are always bringing in the "adopted" before daughter! It always vexes me. Mr. Setchell came to see me once afterward "I have forgotten what he said but they were angry words. He has not forgiven me, and probably never will. He dislikes Papa so much he will not even look at him in the street. — My sisters are good little girls. One - Hannah is eighteen in June, and Louisa is

I am altogether to find pleasure some things Serena imposes upon me.

A very pretty home you have furnished for you and me. You have shown me now the inside of the "Cottage" you made of one of my letters year ago last summer.

Did you know Lizzie Kimball in St. Anthony?

I have been thinking today how happy I shall be in that home you have told me of - for this season

I can be as silent as I choose - as still as if I were in the room where I sometimes wish I was. I get sick and

tired of seeing so many faces - sick of talking - of being obliged to speak when I

have nothing in the world to say. It is not because I do not love every body, but

why does not every body like to be alone once in a while? I do dislike to

have to do anything for duty's sake. It is a poor, miserable way of doing, and there is no virtue in it. I always

feel mean, and I hate so fully to feel mean to do - not for love of doing but

two or three years ago. I talked to her and used my utmost influence to ward off so great a calamity as it would have been for a child like her to have taken such a step. Poor child! She

did not do it. She is not well very and I have hoped our Father would see

it best to take her early - it seems such a dangerous thing for a child like her,

so weak and sensitive, to walk the earth without home and ^{with} her friends. But

God is here as well as there, and he can be to her more than Father or Mother.

I do not fear as much for Louisa, she can do a great deal better anywhere,

Yes, I do know all about my relatives, where they are and how they do.

I suppose there may be a strange attraction between those born of one blood. I like them well where they are but I do not care

to be any nearer them. Very likely I am
unnatural and ungrateful. They are well
enough I suppose; quite as good as I am.
I never will bear to do another the wrong to
feel towards them something akin to pity
or nothing of shame, - so I rather not see
them.

A new and disagreeable aspect
in which to view Miss. Ames! Yes, but too
well. They were a rude people and I
shrink from coming in contact with them.
They have always lived in a little New England
town by themselves, have never seen anything
of the world and of course are contracted.
I love my mother's two sisters and three
brothers, and I hold correspondence with
one of my Aunts. But relations further
removed, I care not a fig for, those I
have seen I dislike as do no others in the
wide world. Some of them used to be
at my Step-father's in Minnesota, and
exceed the word, I hate them. Don't
imagine I feel any ill will for them, Oh no

but I never can forgive what, child as
I was, I used to see in them, - and I avoid
thinking of them because I just hate them.
Oh! I assure ^{you} I am wicked, but I must
excuse myself for being of any kin to the
wretches. I am sorry dear, to tell you
but I can hate as well as I can love.

My Grandfather and Grandmother
Huntley are living and well. I would love
dearly to see them. I was a favorite Grand
child. I remember when I was a very little
girl my Grandfather would walk two or three
miles to see me and bring me a piece of Cattle
Sugar.

I am afraid you will
not like me so well for telling all these things.
You must like me, - I could not live without
that. I wonder so much why you ever
did think of giving me so much! I feel
almost too much humiliated sometimes
and wish you wouldn't make me feel so.

rather you would never go away from me again? How can you do such cruel things? You made me sick last summer. Of course I shall be more than sick next time, for I didn't love you any then to what I do now. Ten years you are going to keep repeating this going and coming! If it is necessary for you, and you can bear to be away from home I should think I might be brave to bid you Good Speed, and to bear it at home. So I will be. Dearest - I love you too well to be a baby, and stand in your way. But you will sometimes forgive me if I feel sorry for this, and if I pray - if it can be, may I be spared this pain of separation. It is hard for you - it is hard for me - we will comfort each other - George - I am so sorry for you! Are you not sorry for me? This winter is most gone - next month will soon go, May will come, so will you - better than all the "pretty things". Do you know how much I love you? Yes, you have told me you look into your own heart and grant me the full measure of what you there find. I love you so much I ask our Father to help me be good for your sake - and I know He will hear my prayer. I love you more than heaven - I am yours. Marie.

because I ought simply. I ought. I love and I will, should go together.

You don't want to talk always when we are together. At any rate you do not always talk. What a funny time you and Father are having. Mother and I laughed so heartily at Father's last letter to you that he had half a mind to burn it. But you are so long coming "directly to the point". Such a long prelude to what should be taken for granted. Laying out a plan and then going to work to construct a friendship upon it, does not work so well, in my opinion as the same process in building a city or a house. Friendship and love are of spontaneous growth. You and I would have written introductory letters till this time if we had begun as you and Father are doing. But perhaps I know nothing

of the difficulty men have in showing another man their heart. Why? I found it very difficult to keep from showing my heart to a man. With all your preliminary remarks you and Father will not be half as free to talk and reveal any of the inner life to each other, as you and Mother will be, and for this reason that you have tried to create a state of things whereby you will be able to do so. —

It is about as amusing to think of Father's plan for Farming. Poor Tom. Let me tell you what a former your partner is. In the first place he is utterly discontented when not preaching. He is nearly wretched. He has a bit of land in Bloomington. The other afternoon he spaded an hour or two, and came home so tired out he could scarcely stand. His head all out of tune and stomach all gone. He bought some peas to plant, put them in the oven and burned

them up. He had a farm two miles from Minneapolis — he worked a day or so, and the sun nearly crazed him. And I wish I could tell you of his wonderful success in such things — take you two together, both hating the work that must be done but liking the result well enough. Wouldn't we be rich rich. I mean and I would have to do all the work — beside making butter and cheese we would have to plant corn and hot potatoes.

Evening — Good evening and Good bye. I must pretty soon leave you for a week, — a long time. You say the time seems almost short till you shall see me. 'Tis not so to me. And then suppose it is short, — but it is too bad in me to fret about another absence before this is over, — to cry over the parting before I have given you greeting. Did I ever tell you that I love you so I would

have a sadder and more womanly setting,
and the sweetest of young dimples, that
were deep enough to sink a man's
heart in, have lengthened into wrinkles,
and wrinkles have become acquainted with
the multiplication-table since I went away.
Many an old seat is empty in the center
church, or filled with a new listener, and
my old Sunday-school classes are crowd-
ed with intelligent inquisitive faces that
I never saw before. The "devil" of our Dis-
trict school twelve years ago, is de-
scribed. My old school-mates have all mar-
ried each other from "A" to "Z", as if they
must, like so many Quakers, and have
crystallized into Dads, and mammys, little
shavers whose highest ambition was marbles,
have taken strongly to plow handles and stove-
pipe hats, and little "sissys" in pantalettes,
and with dolls in their hands, have gone to
having beaux! How startlingly sad are all
these metamorphoses to me, who still
try to affect youth, and am not mar-
ried to anybody to the best of my
recollection!

— Speaking of being married — my two

slaving neighbors, because she was suspec-
ted of being "an abolitionist from board!"
But she will take care of herself in the midst of
Enemies. I have great faith in her self-reliant
strength and prudence.

Danbury, Conn. March 12. '60.

My Dear Friend:

Making up the accounts from
the posture of our correspondence, and
after the manner of fashionable friendships,
I "ow" you a letter; but I flatter myself that
you have not missed it much, — and that
you have now have it marked upon
your ledger against me, is very doubt-
ful indeed.

Quitting Massachusetts as I did, brought
me an unvoluntary experience. It was not
a "rending of heart-string" exactly, You
know, like that which afflicts all our
sentimental young ladies so many times
a year; but I had formed some pleas-
ant, and, I thought, desirable and

Heard from Miss
Jefferson the other day. She
"Carroll" it, I think, &c.

profitable acquaintances there, and to
cut adrift from them all, never perhaps
to meet them again in time, gave me a tem-
porary "fit of the blues". Finally, I resolved to
retain some of the choicer spirits as long
as I could, and keep up, across a thousand
miles of prairie and woodland, the
dull pleasure of a nodding acquaintance.
There were Mr. & Mrs. Bobbitt, the Fales, Rev.
^{Dr. V. Fell,} Mr. King, ^{Chowan,} Jos. B. Wright, Miss J. J.
person, Mr. & Mrs. Loomis (whom you could
not know too well,) ~~and~~ the Barnards (whom
you did not know well enough,) and the
"House of Kimball". With some of these I
have kept up an epistolary nodding,
while others seem to be beyond my present
horizon. I need not, I know, tell you that
yourself and your parents were included
in the circle of those whose acquaintance

I thought worthy retaining if I could.
Since I left there, however, my time has been
so engrossed in cultivating the acquaintance
of my father and mother and my little bro-
thers and sisters who I had known some
years before, that I have not, in all
cases, done myself the pleasure to commence
the "retaining" process spoken of above. And
among my home-friends! I did not think
a short four years could make such havoc!
I really had to have a formal introduction
to my little half-grown brother! (The first
six years in a boy's life make a deal of
difference with him!) Fresh mounds have
risen in our village Church-yard. Grey heads
have been resplended, and bright eyes have
lost some of their choicest rays, and weary
steps have become feebler, and manly forms have
been bowed down, and girlish mouths

(5~

Marriageable sisters have
"thrown themselves away" just
as I got ready to enjoy their
society. It was a sensible "fling"
though, for my brother-in-law are
very worthy men.

Would you believe it? - I be-
seech you to doubt it - I have
started another newspaper! - this
time a new growth on new soil.
I send you the 1st number with
this. I am near my old home
- "the spot where I was born." My
relations are all about me - prob-
ably a thousand of them within
a radius of ten miles. Sympa-
thize with, and commiserate
me! But the opening is a very
promising one, and the patronage of
the people thus far is very flatter-

tering. I receive the Falls News regularly, and missives from my friends in that quarter irregularly. Clark is married. Have you heard from Geo. B. Wright lately? Where is he? He wrote me some three months ago from Iowa; said he had the "blues" awfully", and closed characteristically thus: "I believe my name is Geo. B. Wright, at least, that's what they call me, but I shall not sign it to this scrawl, for I feel that I'm not the same fellow that you used to know!"

I heard Milburn the other night - what a miracle of eloquence he is!

Have recently also listened to Beecher (on woman's rights,) Lucy Stone, Chopin, and "Grace Greenwood" (Mrs. Sara J. Lippencott.) The latter has a

"painful lisp. She talks about
 "Florentine Nightingale", and about
 The "thad pettulent that thought
 the thitty of Norfolk!" Thuch an
 infirmity it's thertainly ditagree-
 able! Groce has a very ungraceful
 "thpeech", and should confine herself
 to paper and type. I spent several
 days in Washington in February, and
 made a good many desirable ac-
 quaintances. Will tell you further about
 them in the paper - if you will per-
 mit me to send it to you - I fear you
 will suspect that my opium of letter-writing
 and my promised newspaperial attention are
~~caused~~ prompted by a hope of Eliciting some
 more correspondence from you for the Jefferson
Review. Such, I assure you, it not the case,
 though such a favor would be very grateful to
 me and my readers here, as they always
 were in "the land of the Dakotas". How
 are your parents? Present my compli-
 ments, and assure them and the Doctor of
 my highest regards. Pardon such a long
 incoherent batch, and reply if you have the incli-
 nation to do so - ^{supprising in the first place,} that you have the
 patience to read it. Yours very truly, Wm A. Crockett.

- It was for the moment real - You looked just
as when I saw you last. It was at Bloomington
of course. There was a parlor full of people there
and we were very pleasant & agreeable - you on
one side of the room & I on the other & when
the dear good people - blessings on them left
to go home, just then - I wrote,

"I was ever thus"

I found myself instead of in Bloomington
- here five hundred miles away. You can sym-
- pathize with me can you not? But I
am not going to feel bad about anything. The
weeks must soon pass. It really begins to
seem near at hand. The day when I must not
look in dreams to find you. But wasn't it
provoking to have the vision vanish thus - I felt
sorry that I hadn't gone & kissed you - right before
company."

Don't you see how poorly
I write. My hand is lame, I hurt it, & besides
Hannah & Richard (her he) & his sister Mary
are here & I have written but a word or two
at a time since I commenced. They are
on a real train & of course I am not except

To night I will write again & visit with you
after the house is still & we are all alone.

I shall never be able to answer your
letters, but I will do the best I can - & that
is to love you, with my whole soul now &
ever. For a little while. Good bye Dearest.
George

Elk Grove March 24. 1860

Marie:-

Dearest, good morning. I am very rich
today. Friday evening I got three letters from you
- one from your Father. One from Ada. One
from home & one from Chester Evans in Minnesota.

It is good that others think of me kindly
- I am so thankful for friends. I almost found
to open your letters. Always before I have antic-
ipated only pleasant happy things in your letters
but I had not heard from you for two weeks &
here were three letters. There could be in them
much of joy or much of sorrow to me. The one
I saw best pretty well, but when I think of
what the other might be I say that I could not
bear it at all. One of these letters was dated
Mar 3^d & "missent". Another March 10th, the third
March 17th. The Dubuque p.m. is careless &
sends our mail sometimes by Post Dodge yet
They were like all of yours. Most dear
blessed good letters. I am so happy, only when
I think what I am, & what you think me to be,
and of the days & miles that part us.

There isn't a breath of blame in them
& I shall not feel clouds & gloom any more.
I guess. Even though you say in one place that

you don't love me a bit & that I said cruel things
& made you cry — I don't blame you
at all. It is too true that I wrote just as
mean as one could, but I am ashamed of
it & sorry for you, and will try as best I know
how to make amends. Haven't you noticed
how a shade of sadness goes from one to the
other of us & then back again & so on. We have
been 3 or 4 series of letters all written this winter
— just as many different kinds as it takes
weeks for a letter to go from you to me & an answer
back again.

But all is well now. I will not
let the shade fall upon the paper — the phantom
vanished as soon as he had prompted me with
the diabolic fancies that I pursued one night
in the school house. When I am with you
I am going to be good & you will forgive me.

I wouldn't make you feel badly for the world
dear, yet I have done it a good many times & will
probably many times yet. It is too bad. I love
you more than life. Without you life is not well.

I guess I shall be with you by the first
of May. An anniversary with both of us.

It is very slow tedious & disagreeable trying
to settle accounts & dispose of things here, but I
have made some progress & hope that 2 or 3
weeks will see us ready to leave. I expect to
see you then, first of all & oh it will be

so good won't it? I want to be in Chicago
at the convention if possible. When is Mr.
North to be at Bloomington? Before or
after Convention? I have read & reread
your three letters, (some 50 or 60 pages in all)
three or four times since Friday. Notwithstanding
I am so busy. How our love has grown since
last August. Few people ever loved more
each of the other, than we do, — so far as letters
go. — But how very slight has been our face to
face acquaintance. You never saw me more than
a dozen times. To speak with me, & then even
nothing was ever said that gave us any idea
of each other. Before last August: When you
left Minnesota we were strangers; since then
— how much? Between August 6th & 18th
and again three days in September, 10 days in
all — a part of which time I was with you
— (or 7 days perhaps, & that is all. Oh I see plain-
ly I must stay in Bloomington a long time
this spring & get acquainted with you — a long
time — as much as — two days any day.

I am too much in a hurry — I haven't
any right to love or be loved until I get over
my haste.

Friday Night, after I
had read your letters twice, and after canvassing
the subject & came to the novel & unanimous
conclusion that never was mortal so blessed as
I, — in my sleep I saw you for the first time

Miss Church is to be my successor at Elk Grove. The summer school is to commence in 3 or 4 weeks. I hope she will do well by my little ones. I was there yesterday - how round & bright their eyes looked when they saw me coming. You tell about your school days - Did you ever like Grammar? Dreadful study in Geometry now is really beautiful.

Oh Marie - I must see your ^{old} compositions. Of course they are absurd enough. I believe I have a lot at home. You shall see them. They will be real good to laugh over. In a year or two these same letters will appear just so absurd - or would only that they are so intimately connected with that in our lives so far above all mental or literary considerations, that none of your letters to me or mine to you ^{can} ~~will~~ seem absurd - except to the writer perhaps.

Oh yes I must see your compositions. In the course of these three letters you have ^{touch} upon the subject of our future - I like what your Mother said - I love her real much. but the idea was not new to me - nothing but the fear that you & your people might feel as you feared I would about such an arrangement prevented my speaking of such a thing myself, before now. Now that you do not say "It cannot be" I am happy. I think now we can when we meet, talk it all over fully & propose all the plans that seem feasible and pass

3^d shut After Suffer. Sabbath P.m. Now I open one of your letters. The first of the three. Nos 45, 46 & 47. I will look it over while the others are yet here. by & by we will be alone. You commenced real good - you want me to have more faith. Yes Marie I do feel sure & certain that even years of absence would in no wise lessen the bond between us. You would still love me, even though heart sick for "hope deferred" (Remember here I change ^{in writing} just as the subjects you speak introduce change.)

The Atlantic - I do not read. I scarcely read anything - I shall get the back Nos of The Atlantic in Minneapolis. The Professor says. Even the best of us find it easier to make fools of ourselves than otherwise, & yet in condemning, the reader is in fault as much as the writer, more perhaps. Of course the accumulation of beautiful odd, fine & quaint thoughts & fancies, have by this time got considerably drained out, but the epicurean taste of - My Dear, if you please - (every body is so to a greater or less extent) has tired of the style of his discourse & fancies that the fresh mental acumen he dispenses, is stale. I haven't seen the story except his ~~adventurous~~ ^{adventurous} with a "gallah dog" - You would agree with the Professor in his estimate of the canine brute. You should like the story. I perceive his story has a muscular moral to it. Good. It is needed enough among those for

whom it is written, What has set Boston crazy about skating? Ask Dr. Holmes.

To be sure they make fools of themselves by carrying to extremes, because fashion always compels its votaries to do. But the tendency is very good. Feminine Boston on skates by day light is vastly better than feminine Boston on jumps by gas-light. Don't Abuse the Professor.

Eternal Life, Oh I am so glad that you can have no doubts. Woman's faith is not the same as man's faith. A woman says simply "I believe" - a man says "I believe, because", the womanly intuition forbids question on what her heart says is true. A man undertakes laboriously to hammer out a belief with that useful mechanical contrivance which we call reason, & makes wretched work sometimes. He is troubled as Aëchides was once, when he found no place wherein to fit his machine that he might move the world. "Indeed there are some things above the scope of reason" - so woman says - "But why?" is the response from the male biped.

Sometimes I can believe, all-almost always I can, or think I can (I will think so) - and sometimes - I can't believe, - all I wish.

I was going to write what I believe, my creed but really I don't know what it is. Sometimes I fix one, when I review it, it looks absurd & I reject it - After all, the creed isn't indigenous I guess. All

but one or two strong rooted plants of faith, are likely to exotics, & every frost cuts them all down.

You quote some lines from — ? Whittier? They are beautiful indeed - and you are a good angel to speak such words, soothing & quieting the restless & anxious soul. You say you cannot go from me, that neither you or I have power to sever your heart from mine. So with me. I may easily imagine a case where I would say "good bye", but none where I should love you less than now. Do what you would. Your fancies about my school-room did not make me feel once more among my scholars. Half as much as it carried me back to the days of school-boyhood in the O'Shea School House on Hat Summer days in August - Days of bare-footed runs & of cotton pants, reaching half way from knee to instep - of black horned hoops, proof against thistles yet concealing many a throbbing aching "stone bruise" - Days when flies were mercilessly slaughtered & banneted in imitation of the beef-facking establishment near. Now the boy at the South end in the capacity of New York butcher, used to crawl under the slats & negotiate for fabulous quantities of beef & pork with the ~~great~~ sukal carnivore, paying therefor in bank notes from the margins of his "dinner paper" - Days when - but there's no use wasting paper in telling of it. I heard that the dangerous

& when "Mother is well" &c Oh how I love you - there never was another woman like Serena Ames.

We will see - perhaps next summer - perhaps not so soon; and Serena Miriam Marie Huntley Ames will add another name still. Think of it - All the party wiped out & you will be simply "Mrs W." & I suppose it is all right though.

My friends who are good guessers tell me of my serenity of mind, & that my Ames in life are good & noble.

To you I suppose they say in the words of the "Great Communion"

"I had rather be Wright than President"

Tell me truly My Dear - are you quite sure there are not 18 or 20, desperate - infatuated masculines hopelessly in love with you? It seems they must be - all of 'em - if they have good sense.

Are you sure there are none of them who would rather be Wright than President?

I remember once (you were a stranger then to me almost - I hearing the remark in nearly these words "That Barney, used to be infatuated about Ames' daughter" Barney you recollect was the business partner of La Fayette Cook, National Public Abstractor, peculiar Deputy Register of Deeds &c &c

I must close now. I was up last week till 11 P.M. every night. I will keep better hours this week, Am I sick? I guess so - I weighed the other day 165 - 10 above my usual weight. Don't be faint. Good Night Dear. One kiss. I don't wake you and am sleeping now while I write. Your own horse

Sheet 3^d
upon their respective merits & demerits. All will be well Dear. We must have a grand convention of our letters this spring. I have a curiosity to know how many times I have contradicted every proposition I have advanced - as a measure of prudence My Love. You know it requires a good memory if one commences a falsehood lest all parts of the story do not correspond.

I think too, by the time we have lived over our last year and a half, we will be able to talk.

Once fairly loosed, how your feminine tongue will fly? or is that an unjust conclusion, a libel on your sex? We will be very happy and your dream of two weeks ago will be waking realities. How can a fellow who has all things to win (except one thing) - who must achieve honors & must to say nothing of the "material aid" of which we hear so much. - How can such a fellow, waste two whole weeks in telling over and over again to a select audience of one (with proper responses of course) a story which is old as Adam & Eve?

The idea is simply preposterous - It is unacceptable how any one could do it. Not I certainly.

Marie I am real sorry for what I wrote that made you feel so badly. I want to do so more & I will not dwell on the subject now lest the shadow come over my spirit while I write. No I'll not do so again. I love you just as much as it is possible for me to love. I will be good.

And you are not for from me now. You were never nearer, - not even when we sat together in Mr Blaisdells parlor. Dont you know how afraid I was of you even then, after you had told me you loved me wholly & entirely, that without reserve without one doubt or fear you had given your self, your life, your happiness into my keeping - Not perhaps afraid - yet I would hardly have dared to take your hand & only that you had put it in mine voluntarily & had held mine so closely, when we walked in the grove - and I kissed you too, but even that seemed almost sacrilegious. But 'twas a very short acquaintance - why should it not have been thus?

Now, though no less sacred to me, I shall not be so afraid of you.

And you are never going to say there is more pain than pleasure in love, or that you would gladly welcome annihilation, any more. You were almost as rebellious then as I was a week before, but I was all to blame for it. Nor will you be ever "utterly wretched because a man is five hundred miles away" again though I hope you will always love me enough to wish I were with you, when I am away. I shall always love you so much as that I guess

How many dear blessed words there are all ^{these} all these three letters. How for two or three months past our letters have been regularly bringing us nearer together, & learning us more & more of each other. We are not what even a few weeks ago we

were. Our Mutual flame too has risen to the dignity of a conflagration of terrific dimensions - a conflagration ^{for} against which Insurance offices afford no recompense & against which steam fire engines offer no security.

This may read very absurd to you but it is a most solemn & momentous fact to me that

"It is a very fearful thing to love as I love thee" What should we do if this love should meet a reverse? We would not die - though we would wish to perhaps. Oh will it not going to be so, if you please?"

It is not wrong to call you "Dear wife" after what you have said? - so far as we (you then & I then,) are concerned we could be - as you say, under no greater obligations to love, to care for each other, had we stood before the altar & made public avowal of our mutual love & unity of life.

And in our hearts, in the deepest recesses of our souls - judged by all that is holy, and sacred in Marriage are we not to each other Husband & wife. My Dear Dear Wife - come what may, by virtue of love now & ever you can never be less to me than Wife.

Here is the record "I ~~that~~ take this woman, Serena Marie Ames, to be my wife, God helping me I will love her all the days of my life Amen" George B. Wright.

You think it will not be five years till your mother is well. Oh Marie why didn't you say till - you married me? You have said "happy day"

I always intended to treat them as though they were
somebody & good for something, & they liked me
because (I believe) that I never ridiculed them.

Ridicule barricades the ways to the heart more
effectually than any thing else.

Now give a long chapter on cigarettes
& an excuse for them. You don't describe a cigarette
at all, according to my idea of a cigarette.

And any man possessing a moderate degree
of common sense can easily detect the difference
between a true woman who fearing to destroy a
friendship makes a bad matter worse, & the who does
the same thing in the mood of school-boys sticking
a pin through a fly "just to see 'em buzz"
For the last, when he comes to his senses he will
heartily detest her, but for the cigarette such as
you describe, no true man can have any blame.

It matters not how deeply infatuated he may
have been - or how severe the blow - he will always
love that woman - will trust her as a sister and
when the first shock is past, will love her as a sister
& treat her as one.

Many other things you have
said, I will not stop to review them - nor can I
write more, - I am sorry that I can send nothing
more or better for you now. The evenings are short
It is nine & I must say Good bye - Get a
few days - & then joy & happiness - I am happy now
Am!

Serena Maria Ames. I love you too.

George Wright

Sheet 4.

Monday P.M., March 25th

Good Evening - I will
commence your letter when I left off yesterday.
When will you direct letters? To Elk Grove
as usual. Though in my next week's letter I
hope to have matters so far advanced that I may
tell you to direct to Bloomington Ill. You will
of course want to write - to keep in practice &
as a safety valve. Will your Mother go to Min-
nesota with me? Last summer Mrs Lomis used
to say I should go east with her. Oh Dear, what
was to be done? I never travelled with a woman
in my life, and the vision of bondboxes, satchels,
shawls, umbrellas, overshoes, smelling-bottles, trunk
work boxes &c &c was enough to shake stronger
nerves than mine - and then the woman herself
- How in the world was I going to get along with
her? I was ignorant as a horse - what should
I do? Chance favored me & I went East alone
& rejoicing. But now, well, things is changed
I fancy I should like to travel with your Mother
- she is a more experienced traveller than I am
Beside, I suppose I have to learn sometime
how to travel with a woman & it is quite time
for a first lesson. Am not afraid of her.

My "boughtage up" never involved any exposition
of the "usages of society" - naturally awkward &

until of late (since I have learned that women are not such terrific creatures as I supposed) exceedingly timid and bashful in society. of course I make dreadful work in undertaking to do the "civilized" among polite circles. Indeed I never tried it very much. I never took a lady to a ball - nor (that I remember) to a private party.

I have suffered very much in my "philinx" from ignorance of etiquette, but even when I see a thing handsomely done I remember nothing about it, how it is done. It's just like grammar - The rules are arbitrary & so I forget them.

I would like to see James Freeman Clarke, of whom I have heard so much - that is good.

You quote a lot of fine things "Camille" & "Aurora Leigh" It is all new to me. You know I never read anything.

Sometimes I am almost glad it is so. My thoughts are more my own thoughts, more original (to myself at least) than they could be if I had read much. Every little while I read something, which though never seen before is in no way new to me, something which I have felt but not read.

Tell me Dear when you think you loved me first - I cannot believe in sudden conversions wholly. Our love like our religion is a thing which of growth. These things which shoot up like Jonah's gourd, wither very soon.

Tuesday Evening - Good Evening - I must finish to-night, what I write you this week. I am pretty busy, you know. Just now I am at work on a les. Map - one that we (Rolla & I) commenced in December 1858 - I will take 3 or 4 days more & finish that - It will do Elsie \$25. good. The people here will pay that for it.

I told you I received a letter last week from Ada. It was written immediately on the receipt of mine - I will show it to you, as I used to think you & Ada were anomalies in human nature & all women are - not alike - but all are women for all that. I think she has changed since she left Minneapolis - I have been hunting a long time & just found ^{her} letter & was going to make some extracts from it, but I guess I will wait till I see her.

In your letter, you call me "Burdick" once - Dont - Of all names I do believe that is worst - I knew other people called you "Reno" It always sounded queer to me. It must have been at great sacrifice of personal feelings, that I ever used it in speaking to you, & to others I have always said "Miss Ames" or if intimate acquaintances of your people, sometimes "Serena" - No one knows "Marie" and Reno is a stranger to me. You think I had more regard for my pupils than Teachers generally do. It always seemed to me that they had feelings as keen & sensitive as grown up children have.

yet I am a little girl that holds things together.

Friday Mar. 30.

What a nice letter you will have this time. I have been busy cleaning house to-day - and Mother says, "My dear he would really think you were doing wrong to write to him tonight." Do you think so? - Making ready for you, you know. What a fuss you do create. It would all have been done just the same, but somehow I feel you to be the main spring of all my doing. Cleaning house is indeed sad work. I advise you never to leave a house to clean for the best of them will get dirty. Do you want to know what I do when I am tired? I cry. If I have ever done any thing I remember as very wicked I cry about that. I never cry alone, or seldom, because I am tired, but for some time my tiredness makes me think of. Dearest - shall I tell you the greatest grief of my life? That I cannot give

Bloomington Mar. 29, 1860

George!

I find it hard, for the first time ~~since~~ this winter, to write to you.

I cannot compose myself some how. I cannot think of any thing good enough to say to you. - I had not thought it feasible for you to come so soon. Are you really coming? It makes me grow sick at heart. I cannot tell why. ^{How} Can I. So near and yet so far off. Come now, Dearest!

I dread meetings almost as much as partings. It is sad and always makes me want to cry - not for joy as some people do, but for very grief at what I have so long borne. It seems like the breaking away of the gate that has kept the rebellious waters from

giving way. Couldnt you and I
talk freely when I last saw you?
I am not afraid that I shall meet
you with confusion. Yes, I can put
my arms around your neck and say,

George, I love you. And because
I dont say more will be that I cannot.
Could I say to you how much I love
you. I ^{will} try to teach the years to
tell you how much you are to me.

Oh! how many impossible things I had
promised myself to do for your sake.

One thing I fear I can never do ^{all}
for you. Be worthy of you. I never
never, never can be good!

Are you coming? I am glad,
glader than ever in my life. So
glad I cannot write "cannot do
any thing but imagine you are here
with me," but think how happy we will
be. Please dont wonder if I dont
talk to you for a little while, "will

be enough to look at you, to feel sure
you are really near me. And you will
put your arms around me - say "Maril!"
put your face close to my face; and
what need would I have of words?

Oh! my love, I love you — more
than I can show you when you come,
more than any life can let you know
all I am I love you — my love is all
I am, and that is yours. You will
not go very soon, will you. Stay till
June? That will be a little while.

You ask me would I like to go to Trin-
neapolis. Yes. May I? Mother
will not be well. If I go out for
an hour even I find all out of tune
when I come home. Grand-ma is waiting
Mother is impatient for something, Will
is, teasing, and so on. I am a
necessity, sure enough. They all compose
though I am not careful, not considerate
not always amiable and without 'slack'

to you a wife free from stain of sin —
pure as your own heart would have
her be. — — I would be so much one
with you that I would have you know my
soul as it is, — see all my imperfections
fallies, sins, I would be open before you
as before my Father if only you could
know my shame, repentance and sorrow.

Oh! I love you George, God knows I
do, and if He could He would make
me worthy your love. — You must
have a remarkable woman for a brother.

I know it is not always true that other
women feel toward those they love, as
I toward you. If I could I would
fancy I did not love you only as I
like others and see if I found your
nature still the same. It seems to me
that separate from my love, I have a
reverence ^{for you} and confidence in your souls
purity and honor that would cast out
all fear and make me go to you as

come go to Jesus - feeling though he
has never gone astray he can & yet so
gently and tenderly lead those who
have. - You are good. - I must
leave you - Mother wants me.

You are mine! Say yes -

Marie.