

(John H. P. S. S.)

Parker House, Boston, Mass.

Sunday Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 1875

Why have I not written earlier since the receipt of your lovely letter from Macon. This is a question you might reasonably ask me, & yet I have not been up to the mark of writing to any living creature. The little bulletin of the day to my niece - is more than enough to satisfy me - how little strength I have to give expression to my thoughts, & how little freedom from the bondage of pain to allow the growth or development of a thought worth throwing out the window much less sending to you. And yet I have thought much about you - Thought is free - if one is not obliged to put it into words form. The lovely picture you gave me of your surroundings at Macon - the little boy's exhibiting their excellencies, to their wandering troubadour of a father, the mocking bird and the Lady May, whom though I do not know I can picture to myself perfectly. in my joy at getting you back - with a chance that you were carrying with you help & cures for the delirium of your health which has caused me such anxiety - you - yourself - looking upon them all with a little more hope in your heart - almost entirely happy. You made me see you all - just with those touches of your pen, which you are cunning in, & which only belong to the inspired people. I wanted to reply to you at once immediately - & ought to have done so to have carried to you truly the spirit of all I felt - for time has ~~not~~ stolen the bright edge of my thoughts - but I did not - I could not - & ~~therefore~~ <sup>thus</sup> must take a stupid prayer - as the will for the deed, I care for you no matter how feebly I express it & it is this that

You are now in Baltimore, a fixture for a time & wait for my body to be strong enough to carry out my spirit's wishes. How could I? The Dr says "Bethesda -

cidedly better! I am pleased with the looks & doings alto-  
gether & by New Years day, you shall be free from all great  
pain. The last week has made a very great change for the  
better! This should be reasonable inasmuch as I have endured  
worse pain during the last week or 10 days than I have ever done  
before & I have <sup>never so capably known what to do with myself & my eyes</sup> & yet for sleep  
I must have passed the boundary, I think! I am weak &  
tremulous. My appetite is gone for everything but my brandy  
& water - & I am altogether forlorn & we shall see. I will write  
to you on New Years day & you shall know how true a prophet  
the little Dr. is. He is surely the wisest Dr. I have ever encountered.  
He is the most daring too. I but he has some excuses for this -  
for people never come to him until they are in desperate  
straights - & every one else has abandoned them. He  
speaks of you very often & kindly & will keep you right if  
you keep to his instructions & write to him of yourself as  
you may need!

I heard that Lord Haughton was in town for a few days  
before sailing. He learned that I was here & came to see me.  
I had the opportunity I wanted of speaking to him of you. & gave  
him the copy of 'Corn' & 'Symphony' which you gave to me. He pro-  
mised to let me hear from him. I was so glad of the opportunity to tell  
to him of you though sooth to say the English hid is like that of a  
rhinoceros - & nothing penetrates for that they do not learn in  
early days at college. What do you think of his asking, in presence of  
Lowell - 'why, whether or how fellow or your fellows!' (Lowell among  
them). don't write something in the American dialect!! Considering that  
the English critics only acknowledge Lowell as 'Bigelow papers' this was  
stupid or forgetful to say the least - Rossetti said of us 'that  
seems the way in America - they do nothing but gibe & jeer at their  
one great poet - Whitman!!!'. So their opinion worth the having?  
Fields came to see me yesterday - why did you, not go to see  
him in Baltimore? He is a very useful man!

Now goodbye for the time being - Let me hear what you are  
doing - You made a very agreeable impression here & are remem-  
bered. Comment me to the Lady May & the bairns.  
& believe ever that I am your faithful friend,  
Charlotte Colburn

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