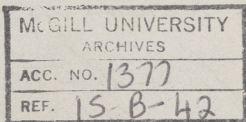


Friday March 1st

My dear friend

I have now two letters from you to answer - to each of which I wish I could write a worthy reply. I have, however, more inclination than capability, so one, I think, will suffice.

How truly you depict my feelings when you talk of the vast number of things you have to say, yet cannot reduce half of them to written form, with the difference, that mine wholly evaporate. At this time, for instance, when I began to write instead of fixing my thoughts on a subject I wished to communicate & writing as they occurred, imaginations went a-roving & I started to find my paper still unnoted tho' I have had a deal of conversation & in your company traveled & saw many of the scenes you described in your letter of Oct. This time laden with useless thoughts has passed. - I have awoken from my reverie not at all inclined to be pleased with the matter-of-fact method of using pen, ink, & paper

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I wish my Ocean divided friend's clearer head would
his course ^{some} sympathetic mode of bringing "the far distant
near". At some time may elapse ere this non
Quintessence request may be complied with, I sup-
pose it will be best, for the present, to condescend
to the usual vulgar medium.

My time is necessarily much occupied at present
I'll know you will be sorry to hear the cause. A
week past yesterday, Mother was seized with violent
pain in her right side; on calling the D. he declared
it inflammation & bled her copiously; it fortunately
checked it immediately but has left her so weak
that she has not been out of bed since. She is to try
to rise to tea tonight. - I know I shall be frequently
interrupted so you must be very lenient overlooking
every fault. - I am the more anxious to write by
this packet, as probably (God willing) I shall leave for
London at the beginning of next month & thus prevent
writing for a long time. It is partly pleasure, & partly
to escape the West winds, that usually prevail here
about that time, that is the cause of my going.
I am quite well & have been so through the winter
tho' still the D. insists upon strict obedience to the
Restrictions he has laid upon me & promises that

it shall be repaid by being able next winter if spared
to resume my former liberty without incurring the risk
of a return of my complaint. I have got quite used to
those temporary inconveniences & no longer feel them
restrictions.

News men entertain the thought that I shall be
weary hearing of your country. Every incident connected
with it interests me & a glimpse of any of its familiar names
in the papers or elsewhere immediately arrests my atten-
tion. - I thank you for the love you bear to mine;
you know few things gratify me more; for I do love
old Scotia. With all my love however, I do not think
I wd. become an active politician - even tho' I cd.
do so with propriety - for it causes one to have so
many enemies. Viewing in this light, the zeal you put
you took at the late contested election - I admit it is a
very selfish one - I cannot rejoice with you, it seems
to me so fraught with danger: - unprincipled people don't
care what they do to advance the interests of their party.
I like much better to hear of you making a discovery
in geology - writing about it - or lecturing on it or any
other science - or of being a successful ^{candidate} for a professorship.
By the by you mention having received an amount
of the reading of one of your papers, I suppose the one you
sent to Edin.,

but do not tell how it was received. I guess modesty still predominates in your character. The account has been so flattering that you have withheld telling me. Now I request you shall not do so again, for what is pleasing to you is not uninteresting to me.

With much pleasure I have read the books you sent. The Lancers contains many beautiful & instructive moral stories. In Dr. Alcock's "Young woman's guide" there is much original & useful information: but don't you think what is in itself good is frequently dressed unpalatably. He writes as for a child, frequently explaining the meaning of what is already plain. Excuse my boldness, - you asked my opinion, & this is what occurs to me in reading it.

Miss Isabella Mathew is the name of the young lady you refer to. She is indeed a superior & excellent girl & is one of my few intimate friends. I was at Galashiels for a long time last summer & passed much pleasant time in her society. One thing I regretted exceedingly - she wd not ride, as I had obliged to do so for three or four hours we were thus often separated in our amusements. Notwithstanding we managed to take a few excursions partly together. One of them I remember. It was to visit a farmer about 4 miles from Gala. We took a very early

times, then Isabella along with some other young folks
 set off on foot for the destined place of rendezvous, while
 Mr. McTeith (a gentleman who occasionally accompanied
 us in my riding excursions) & myself mounted & took
 a much longer but very beautiful road by the side
 of Tweed - crossing some hills we arrived not much
 later than the pedestrians. After doing ample justice
 to a substantial tea provided for us, we strode out
 to see the reapers, 30 of whom were busy at work
 superintended by a young gent with slouch hat & loose
 jacket. I was introduced to him, as only son of Mr.
 Sanderson the gentleman we were visiting. I did not
 then remark anything particular about him, being in
 a hurry to get back to the house & set off before dark.
 In honor of the stranger however, he had hastened
 after us, changed his dress, & just as I was about to
 mount he appeared to render his assistance. I was
 then struck by the remarkable resemblance he bore
 to you. I dare say the gent thought that I had a pair of
 most impudent eyes for I did not help staring at him.
 I afterwards asked Isabella about him, & was amused
 to hear he went by the name of 'the philosophical young
 farmer'. Miss Mathew, Isabella's elder sister, has been out
 a week to us for some weeks, so I hear very frequently of

her at present. She is well & little difference as her time
 you saw her I think.
 There are continual changes amongst the people
 you met with when here. Mr & Mrs Kirving are now
 residents in London. The former having formed a
 partnership with a German there. Mr Robert Bryson
 is married to a young lady from Cornwall. Today
 Mr Alex. Buis is to be married to his cousin Mrs Gilchrist
 Perhaps you may remember seeing her at Mr Bryson's on
 the first evening of the year. Her new interesting, rather melan-
 choly expression of face she has. It is reported that Mr
 Thomas Boyd is about to be married to a Mrs Ferguson.
 Miss Russell (you have not forgot her surely) is in
 London on a visit to her sister Mrs Geary. An often
 expressed a year & desires to be remembered to you. I cannot
 give you any information about Mr Rose farther than
 Mother met him at the street some time ago: he men-
 tioned having received a letter from you & promised to come
 up to tea some evening soon after, which he has failed
 to do. J. & Mrs Gordon called last week to invite me to
 a party at their house. Going out in the evening is one of
 my restrictions, so of course I did not accept. Mr D. asked
 very kindly for you & desired me to send his best respects
 first time I wrote. Mr Mitchell is now wholly confined to

his be drawn & from what I hear is not likely to leave it again.

I am very much interested in your account of the
 late Mrs. Kirving's death. I hope she will be
 at rest. I am glad to hear of your
 success in your business. I hope you
 will continue to prosper. I am
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