

McGILL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
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41 Wilmore Place
Edinburgh 12th Sept 1859

My dear Sister

It is long since I addressed a letter to you, and I sit down, without having much in my mind to communicate, but shall jot down any thoughts that occur to me or any circumstances that may be worth telling.

I suppose my best plan is to begin at home, and then take notice of those who are around. But, in the first place, we will be anxious to learn if you have all received benefit from your sojourn at the sea coast, and mine (particularly George), for whose special benefit we suppose you went there. We will be glad to learn that George's health is improved, or that there is prospect of improvement from the treatment employed by the medical man whom you have last consulted, as it appears he had much skill in cases such as George's seems to be. Tell us also particularly about all the rest of the family, as it is some time since we have heard about the children individually. How is Dr Darwin's health after the labours of last

session, and is he quite in vigour, and
trav to commence the session which is now
close at hand? How does Mr Dawson seem
do?— is he enjoying good health, and has he
entirely got over the effects of the accident
he had before leaving Sicily? Please tell
us, also, all about Jessie, and how you get
on together? She does not seem inclined to
return home yet. This important preamble
being finished, I proceed to tell you that my
dear wife is in very good health— there is one
drawback to her comfort tho' not affecting her
general health, namely, a sprained wrist, which
she got some months ago, and which not-
withstanding means have been used under
the prescription of Professor Sydenham, continues to
give her some trouble— there is almost nothing
to be seen, only a very slight swelling, but when
ever she uses her hand in some particular
way (the right hand too) she feels so much pain
that she is ready to scream out. It is next to
impossible to avoid using her hand in various
ways, and of course it gets now and again
another twitch, if not a twist. However, I
hope with some greater care, and the constant

use of bathing with hot water, or rather pouring hot water upon it that it will yield to the treatment and recover its wanted strength.

George has been in bondow for some months and has got employment there. He is quite well and happy. There are a few brethren and sisters in bondow (in connection with our church here) who meet on the Lords Day and get on very comfortably and happily among themselves. G. feels very happy indeed in their society. Mr Robert Blyth is the most gifted brother among them and leads the worship.

As I have mentioned his name I will break the thread of my story to inform you that Mr Blyth, and his wife, who is also a member of the church, have been in Edinburgh on a visit the last week - spent last Lords Day with the Church, and then set off on Monday (yesterday) morning for the highlands, and will return to spend next first day of the week with the Church in Largo, and after that proceed home. Mr B. cannot remain long absent as he has an extensive business which requires his constant supervision. His mother is taking charge of the children and house in Mr Blyth's absence. We enjoyed very kindly for you, and Mr Blyth did so too, although unknown by face. They enjoyed their visit to Edin very much indeed.

Landow is not altogether idle during the recess as he gives me some attainments.

We had a busy winter and summer session and look forward to being very closely engaged during the ensuing session.

Lane, Margaret Anne, Ellen, Louisa Maria and Anselia are in their usual health - all excepting Lane will resume school immediately - indeed the vacation is now finished; and last, Harrietta, is in perfect health and a strong, thriving child. She is now fully seven months old - has cut two teeth in the lower jaw and more will be coming immediately.

We had letters from Henry, Christian and Mathewson a few weeks ago and we expect to hear again on the 17th or so. They were well and comfortable at the date of last letters 29th June. Mathewson likes his situation and thinks he will get on very well but he was suffering from rheumatism in his arms and legs, which distressed him considerably and lost him some sleep.

We hope to hear that he has got rid of that ailment and that all is going well.

You will be much gratified to learn that
Marion (Mrs. Primmer) is to be baptized on the
evening of Thursday next and added to the
Church in Bristol Place (Mr. Dickie's &c) She
made up her mind to go forward in this duty
very recently - we heard of it only two days
ago. In speaking of this Church those among
them whom you know are generally well. Mr
Macandrew Ser is an exception - he is in very
poor health from some internal complaint
very difficult of treatment and impossible
eventually to cure. He has been in the
Country during Summers but there is no
great improvement. Mrs. M., and the branches
of the family are well.

I regret to have to inform you of the death
of Mr James Walker of Rowdown. He was in
all health for upwards of two years and died
in Edinburgh whether he had come to consult
some of the eminent men of the medical
profession. This was a complicated and hidden
case. He had consulted the first men in Paris,
London, and Edinburgh, all to no purpose.
His widow, with her Mother, Mr. Milne, are
in good health. We called on Mrs. Walker
a few days before her husband's death and found
him too ill to see any one. Mr W. informed

as his mind was perfectly at rest waiting
for his change. Mr & Mrs. Kercaimbe were
well when we heard of them. George was
calling on them lately.

I regret to say Miss Horthburgh is
very poorly at present. It is an affection
of the stomach, but something rather
peculiar, — it is feared that an organic
obstruction is forming at the orifice of the
stomach, but whether it will yield to treat-
ment remains to be seen. Prof Simpson
has been consulted and has been using means to
gain relief. Solids she cannot use, and
any liquids taken within the last few days
have remained on her stomach mostly.
Her illness is a source of deep anxiety to her
brother, as you know they are very affection-
ate with each other. I hope she may
be spared and restored to health again, but
these sort of cases are rather critical.

Mr & Mrs. Hordburgh are in their usual health.

The church here generally are in good
health — Mr Irvine is an exception. He
has been falling off for more than a year
past and does not seem to make any
improvement. General debility and cough
are the principal symptoms. Mr L and

the family are well, and they are all
engaged in doing something for their sup-
per. I had almost forgot to say some-
thing of Mr Hugh Ervack. He is greatly
better, indeed in very good health upon
the whole. He has been staying near Cali-
keith for a few weeks and has improved
in strength - the stump of the arm is now
quite whole.

Mr Cleghorn, with four of the children
have been spending today with us - they are
Sabella, Jane Maria, Louisa and George.

Leslie is on a visit to a friend in Danfrouline
John is constantly in the shop and Mr
Cleghorn has gone today to Manchester
and London on his usual business journey.

Mrs. never was in better health than
at present. She, in her own name, her
husband, and Leslie's, send their love to
you. We here, as a whole family, send
our kind love to you, your excellent husband,
Leslie, and ^{to} all the children. We would
include also in our kind remembrances, your
worthy father in law and I subscribe

myself again very affectionately
Peter Bell

Mr Dawson
Mc Gill College
Montreal