

August 21st 1836

I found your letter here My Dear Anne when I returned from Long-branch a week ago and should have answered it immediately to express the pleasure your affectionate expressions afforded - and the deep interest your communication excited. I do most sincerely hope Matilda may more than realize her expectations in her western home - such a loyal spirit deserves to be rewarded - with such feelings as wife & daughter she must be happy and will rear her children into good citizens - I am obliged to you dear Anne for copying her own words which give me a finer view of her character than anything you could say in her favor. I wish her path was level. Through Phil^a too I should like to see her again and remember her in her mature character. She was only a beautiful child when I saw her last. but you will bring Emma; your little pious pilgrim, and I shall make up the family group after my own imagination, and put a poetical construction on your "life in the world" as I can. Knowing the materials of which it is composed - there is so much of adventure in this popular plan of planting villages and in a little while cities in a wilderness, that I could almost wish to raise a standard for the wayfarers of my own people - were it not decreed that these wanderings continue until their mission is completed - go forth then, and proclaim that we are the witnesses of Gods judgments & mercy; and in this time we shall all be gathered into one fold. I often think, my dear Anne, how earnestly we discussed the holy book together - started from different points - agreed to differ, and yet unite in the spiritual truth, faith in the Rock

of our

on my return home I found Sara Moulton just recovering from a most dangerous illness, of which she is still confined to bed in almost infant weakness - the joyous and interesting visit you so much admired, was brought low - indeed even to the shadow of the valley of death - but she has been spared to our prayers, & I hope to a good and happy life - her mother & her band have been devoted to her bed side and are beginning to feel that they may safely leave their watch. I too have brought my invalid home much improved in health, and have been enjoying all my former enthusiasm at the ocean scenery - do not Miss Anne put up your pretty mouth in a quivering expression, and ask what scenery a sandy beach presents - remember the heavens above & the waters beneath surround the little speck of barrenness on which we stand, and even the sands are so perpetually washed and covered with the things of the great deep, that they are wonder to eyes unused to their habitable element. If I knew a human being unacquainted with the God of Nature, I should recommend him to go down to the sea, and consider of His unseen power, His Majesty & love, and should think it strange if he did not come away with religion in his heart - one friend Mrs Phillet was there, and we frequently talked of the pleasure you visit gave us. Dr Rush too, has been stipulating for a portion of your time when you come again - if Mrs R. stays three evenings, in Phil? will you not give me one? yes Dr I will be even more generous if she stays only one, you shall see her a part of that - because I shall feel inclined to make her as happy as possible - Anne Gollaspie has not yet returned - but her mother came here as soon as she heard of your letter, and the affection you express is most warmly reciprocated, indeed her heart is overflowing with kindness to you.

and we shall not be satisfied if you do not send a little something near Rock-rose, dedicated to the memory of your Phil - friends, and who knows in the changes of this changing world, how many of them may yet greet you on the banks of the Kishwaukee - Sam Boyce is going this fall to his old station - Pierre du Chene, and may perhaps take his wife to St Louis, so many officers have become companions who would rather go to remote stations than be left behind, that the most distant posts will command good society - and I can not help thinking any situation at home preferable to the foreign missions some young American ladies have undertaken - My niece Rosa has been spending the day with me she reports that she did not come soon enough to meet you here but I hope she will not be gone before your return, for she has heard so much about you that she wants to renew her acquaintance, and I think you would bestow a share of the favor with which you refused her Mother & Sisters on her - she is so gentle & affectionate - tell Julia she wishes very much to hear from her - and so do I - Minnie sympathizes with you in the fate of your caps but says she will repair your loss she would make six caps to have them so admired - and so lamented - no one but Mrs Nicholas, could so eloquently immortalize the perishable fabric - all my girls send you abundance of love - even Mary Devereux in her last letter expresses the confidence she feels that all your prayers will be answered & good will in your hearts towards each other - and I my dear Anne am quite penetrated by the assurances of affection which after such a long lapse of time, and under such a variety of struggles & changes, you have cherished, and so warmly renewed. I must now close most difficult before is part

and that the future years of life will be in paths of
pleasantness & peace - you have such good children
and are so essential to them, that I cannot but see your
husband a happy one here - and you have such a fervent
spiritual hold on that which is to work out the good
to come. Much in saying God Bless you. My dear Anne,
all that affection can suggest is compressed in the
wish - and so God Bless you - ever ^{truly} your friend R.G.
I have dated 21st - and it is now 6 days later - Anna is improving -

Miss Anne Nicholas

care of Judge Hoffman

New York

43030 F

Present my affectionate love to your Emma & my Felicia
also to your Father & Charles. I hope the latter will have
an excellent subscription list to make up his paper. The
August No has arrived and is worth waiting for. My dear
& I beg to be remembered - I am at Ballston - adieu