

New York. February 14th 1838.

I took up your last letter a few minutes since, my dear Emma, and on looking at the date was so heartily ashamed of myself for not having written to you for so long a time, that I immediately opened my desk, took out my paper and now sit down determined at least to commence a letter to you.

Why I have not written before I cannot tell, and I must leave it to your good nature to invent some apology for my negligence — Adversity any cause you will; laziness; want of time; a habit of procrastination; in fact, any thing except only do not imagine that ^{the} cause has been any diminution of affection —

I may be accused, and perhaps, with justice too, of many faults, but I hope, nay, I am certain, that among the number is not that of forgetfulness of friends — and you, especially, with whom I passed my days of childhood, who were was the companion of my happy hours and with whom I wept over our childish misfortunes, I can never think of without feelings of love —

Apart too my dear Emma from these associations, which bind me to you so strongly, I am not so fortunate in this world with regard to friends that I can spare even one — I have many friends of prosperity, but I fear that in adversity that I should find myself forsaken except by yourself and Mary and perhaps one other, for you are the only persons who give me good advice, without fear of offending, and, anxious ^{alone} for my improvement —

Though it is no long a time since last I wrote, still I have no news to tell — one day is here as another,

the same dull round of duties and of pleasures - life passes away like sleep, leaving no impression save that of time wasted and precious moments unimproved, and worse than sleep, tired nature's sweet restorer "it wearies and not refreshes us -

Since you left us, great changes have taken place in our small circle, its members are all scattered and divided, you are in the Far West; Mary Stevens and Cornelia are married; and, poor Eliza is no more - naught is left of all our pleasures, and social enjoyments, save the remembrance.

I have told you before of Cornelia's marriage; Mary Stevens was married on the ~~10th~~ seventh of November, on which occasion I officiated as groomsman, conspicuous in white vest and coat of black, the wedding was a gay one, but we wiped accustomed faces, and the many changes of the past year were brought too vividly before us, to allow of real, unalloyed pleasure -

After Mary's return to the city from her wedding trip, a ball was given to her, on the twenty-second by Mr. Gallatin since when New York has been a continued scene of gaiety even to the present moment - As Mary (my sister) went in company (as it is called) this winter for the first time, of course, we have both been very dissipated, generally averaging three parties a week, but, as, Mary has been very prudent, and kept early hours, her health has not suffered in the least - We are however now at length tired even of pleasure, and intend leaving the city, on Monday to spend a few weeks in Washington, and as ~~it~~ Spring will have commenced before our return, we will ^{then} settle down again into quiet, household mortals -

On our way to Washington we intend spending a day in Philadelphia, in order that we may see Fulin whom I have seen but once this winter when she was spending a few days in town on a visit to the Sues -

As I imagine my dear Emma, that my thoughts and feelings and the manner in which I pass my time may interest you, I know no way in which I can better communicate them than by making a few extracts from my Journal, where I have noted the events and reflections of each day at the time of their occurrence -

November 10. The Election concluded in this city on the 10th when the Whigs elected their ticket by an overwhelming majority. 12. 'Tis an excellent rule laid down by some great man never to ridicule any person before we know them well, for by so doing we are often obliged, to avoid those whom we admire and esteem merely from a foolish pride which prompts us to pursue this course, to preserve an appearance of consistency in the eyes of the world.

15 - Mr. Gallatin (Mary Stevens) saw company to-day looking more beautiful than ever, there were many visitors, though the duty of waiting on the ladies is a pleasing one still I became fatigued.

21. Yesterday and to-day I have employed my mornings in trying to reduce the ^{amount of} debt of long standing against me on the books of Etiquette - I have called on several ladies whose claims were the most pressing - To-day and Yesterday have been two of the most lovely days, that have shone upon our city for many a week; a clear sky and a pure atmosphere are blessings of no small value - Samuel Ward is engaged to Miss Arton and Clarkson Crosby is engaged to Miss Angelica Schuyler from Albany.

22. This day which was set apart for the great Whig celebration was ushered in with a dense fog, which continued to hang over the city throughout the day; the Whigs appeared quite dispirited and bore but badly the rallies of the Low-Ton - the fireworks were no went and the illuminations were rather dim - In the evening Mr. Gallatin's party for the bride on which occasion six ladies made their debut among whom was my sister - This the first ball of the season was indeed delightful.

23- A sober conversation, the only subject in the wide field of converse that I fear to argue on is Religion; if my belief be wrong, still I am happy in it, may my eyes never be opened -
24. Party at Mr. Trimmells, (Julia Irving that was.)

I went to parties ^{on} every remaining evening of this month.

Having now Journalised through a page, and by a few extracts given you a general idea of the way in which I passed my time for the latter half of November, I shall now return to a style of writing more Epistolary.

You may perhaps remember, that for years I have been ^{beyond} talking of going abroad, and that this was the event ^{which} was I formed no plans for the future - The time has at length arrived when I shall leave my native land to wander in foreign climes - I have determined, if nothing unexpected prevents, to sail on the eighth of April for Liverpool, and to spend about eighteen months in Europe - My plans, as far as they can be formed for so distant a period are to travel through England, Scotland and Ireland, to spend a winter in Paris and Italy, to pass the part of the following summer in Switzerland and Germany and then to return to America, here to settle down into a sober, quiet man of business, never to wander more -

I had not intended to have sailed before the summer, but I am obliged to leave much earlier than I at first proposed, in order that I ^{may} ~~might~~ be in England at the time of the coronation of the youthful Queen, Victoria, and as there are many pleasant passengers who intend sailing in the Independence, I have now made up my mind to take passage in that good ship - she sails on the eighth of April, and I shall pass only seven more weeks in this country.

Although, when I am across the water, thousands of miles may separate us, I hope that you will still continue to send me now ^{and then} one of your ever welcome letters, and perhaps then I myself may become a better correspondent -