

Ada, O. April 5, 1876.

Miss Bertha E. Lambert
Westerville, Ohio.

My Darling Bertha: your letter came to hand yesterday morning and found me well. I thought perhaps you might write rather early so I could send a letter in time for you to write today, but when it did not come Thursday I decided you would wait until today. I tell you I smiled a smile ever so great as I read your sweet message. It seems like a long while since last Monday morning.

I did not go to S.S. this morning, but am writing and my mind runs back to the pleasant hrs we spent at this time last Sab. in Bible reading.

I have been so lost without you that I am almost tempted to take train again for W. however this has been a very pleasant wk because I feel that I have a noble and definite aim in view and have the assurance under the will of God of one of the (yes) ^{the} sweetest little girls in the land as a helpmate.

I would now feel that to go at life's work alone would be a singlehanded process indeed, but to think of having such a loving and able counterpart as you makes me feel anxious to undertake much for the Master. I have felt such a calm peace all wk and

feel that God surely is leading so graciously.

If I could only arrange to be with you during the rest of our preparation it would be a great pleasure. I feel almost tempted to say that I will take your work there ~~over~~ at Otterburi. You spoke of that Literary course. I have been looking over it and it seems to me that you would do well to take it, taking all the election work in Latin and then if you have time for another yr. put it in at something more practical [e.g.] at a ^{mission} training school.

I hope you will not allow what I say concerning this to have too much weight for you know better what is best than I, but that course, ^{Literary} certainly gives excellent training and there are so many things that a volunteer should get in a practical way that it seems to me that extra yr. would benefit you much more in some other line, but perhaps you could take the extra yr. and the training also, if so, so much the better.

Were I to take the full work at W. I see we would be in class together the entire three yrs with no term perhaps less than two classes ^{per term} (live) if you should take the Literary course and I the Classical) both graduating at the same time. If I thought that would be the wise plan to pursue I am sure nothing would be more pleasurable to me and I have kind of a sneaking idea that you would enjoy that too.

But the question arises in my mind whether that would be so practical as to spend the same time in a good seminary. Now I feel this way about that. If we can be together in our preparation I would say that we are not losing anything to spend seven or eight years in thorough preparation. That is I mean if finance would justify our marrying at the close of collegiate course and we could continue in preparation without pinching pennny, then I could be satisfied with you at my side to work on for five years longer when I would be in my 34th yr. And when I look about and see the number of people of that age, who had they just spent all their time up to this in preparation might be poorer whereas now they are of little force it makes me feel like toiling on for some time yet. I don't know just what you think of that idea.

We are both anxious to do the will of God and to place ourselves where we can do the most for Him.

Speaking of the requirements of ordination I am not quite able to determine from the discipline, but think it requires the three yrs reading only of those who do not take seminary work, perhaps that is wrong though.

I would like to talk with some one on those lines.

We are studying S. America now. That certainly is a wonderful field and so open to the gospel. I believe our church is doing nothing in this field.

I am glad to see you so determined for thorough preparation; but let me repeat again, "Dear", do not get that preparation at the expense of those loving eyes. God does not want you to be over zealous in that respect, and while of course whatever may come it cannot lessen my love and devotion to my sweetheart yet I hope you will not feel that you must use those dear papers on the text page simply because your devotion to secure an education requires it. I still think strongly of the medical work.

I would say it to no other since I feel free to say anything to you, but somehow in the last few days something has impressed me (it may be all from Satan) that God was leading me out into wider fields in His work than I had ever dreamed of before, and I want to be very careful and attentive to listen to His voice and make no rash step in our preparation. Realizing that much depends on the results of this summer I am asking that we may be very carefully led and that we may be prospered in a way that will honor God. I know you will be modest in having anything to say in this question, but you are at liberty to answer or not so I present the proposition or rather question as to what your idea or preference would be as to our taking the collegiate work as stated above with this proviso that if at all practicable at the end of collegiate course ~~we~~ finish we unite in marriage and then continue our

preparation as we may see proper. Under present circumstances and ideas prevalent in your school I would not urge you to enter that relation while in school.

As I view it now I hardly want to think of leaving your name as it is longer than to let you get through school so if you prefer not to marry until we are through with our preparation entire, I think perhaps it would be best ^{for me} to take up whatever training I shall take without any collegiate work. Perhaps you will see some points wherein you think I am wrong and if so will you please point them out and state your reasons for & feel that whatever you have to say will be most carefully considered since it concerns your own sweet self as much as it does me.

I was sorry to learn of your mother's illness and hope she is well again. One o'clock is rather late bedtime, but I know the time would pass quickly in waiting on one so dear as a parent and it seems to me that if any girl has reason to be proud of her mother, you certainly are one of the number.

I am not worrying about any W. "points" now have I done so in the last fourteen months although perhaps

& do not realize what danger(?) I may have risked in not
 being more concerned about it. Mother was the only one ^{except father} here who
 knew of my going away. So when I returned the club seemed
 almost wild at supper. The questions "How's Miss Lambert?" "How's the
 Democratic rally?" going to ^{take} music lessons? "How happy you look!"
 etc. etc." were put at me for two or three days. Even Prof.
 Schorron had his fun, but you see from the Philo
 items they seemed to be in doubt about my journey.

Your program was certainly very nice and doubtless
 was as well rendered. If you can write pretty soon
 after getting this I will answer so you can have your reg-
 ular time for writing. I got Mr. Sager to take my place
 this evening as I had so much back work to get out.

To be with you once a wk. certainly would be fine, but
 how much nicer when we can be together all the time.

Mr. Fisher is busy at his Bible. If he knew what I have
 been penning doubtless he would think "Pap" is a
 strange man. I trust this may find my Sweetheart
 as loving as she was one wk. ago at this time and that
 God may continue to lead her as He has in the past.

And as we are one now in purpose let us make a
 thorough study of this mission work and ask God to
 bless our efforts while in school. Sending our usual
 greeting & I remain more devotedly than ever yours
 True Lover, J. H. Harris.

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Westerville,

"Franklin Co."

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