

[Letter from Elmer Gould to Arno Knight who is in Lincolnville]

Oakwood Sem. March 1st 1878

Dear Friend Arno:

I was very glad to receive your favor of the 11th Feb. Your letters are always most welcome.

Only think of it! Monday I have a birth-day and I shall be 22 years old! Verily time is fast making an "old Bach" of me. Since my last, we have had a visit from 3 boarding school young ladies. They staid with us a week and made things lively "you bet!" "And that brings to remark" the principal difference between society here and in Me., is that there are greater extremes here than there. That is, a greater difference between those that consider themselves aristocracy and the poorer class. The "aristocracy" "carry a heap of style"; very much more than anybody in Lincolnville, while in the country and among the poorer classes the standard of refinement is far lower. Our young lady visitors belong to the "blueblooded" aristocracy.

Isn't it something new for Flora to take a literary start, and what can possibly be the cause of it? You say Linc is trying to roost at P's doesn't he succeed? You know I am very much interested in that quarter. As you must be aware, I went for Flo's heart pretty hard last winter and I believe I came very near succeeding. I think sometimes that about the time she went to Franklin she didn't whether she liked L. or myself best. You are at liberty to ascribe as much of this to vanity as you please. With your extensive experience, your opinion can't be far from correct. Please let us have it. This is merely a matter of curiosity on my part.

Really Arno you mustn't allow yourself to get the "blues". If you haven't all the opportunities for improvement you desire, you can at least make good use of what you have and trust Providence with the result.

If I were you, I would leave L. if possible. I believe if you should come to Mo. And make the right start, in a years time you would be entirely satisfied with your prospects and surroundings. I think I know whereof I speak, and with your education, sentiments, and more than all, good sense, you would get on swimmingly. You couldn't get me back to old Me. again anyhow. I think sometimes I was born to live in just such a place as this and I thank my lucky stars that led me here for I came here in a haphazard way without thinking what the results might be. As I have got to the end of my sheet and it is school time, I will close, Write soon.

Yours truly

Elmer