

Washington 14 October 1845

My dear Harriett,

I have intended to write to you ere this; but the pressure of business upon me always prevented me from writing at such length as I desired. I regret to say that I was sorry I had given your permission to go to Bedford. You are now at that age when the seed of future respectability & usefulness must be sown by diligence & attention to study, & where at the same time, the allurements of pleasure are the most powerful. "Lead us not into temptation" is a prayer worthy of our blessed Saviour, & I felt from my observation at Bedford that your relish for the enjoyments there would for a season unsettle your mind & render it unfit for serious application. I am induced to make these remarks from having been told at Mr. Pleasanton's that you expected to make a visit here during the Christmas holidays & the pleasure they anticipated in your company. I do not recollect that I said any thing like this to you at Bedford and it is right that you should know that I have not the least intention of sanctioning such a visit. It would turn the head of almost any girl of your age to engage in the dissipation of this city, and particularly one of your ardor for pleasure. Your day will come & it would be very unwise to anticipate it. After your education shall have been completed & your conduct approved by me, should I live, I shall be most happy to aid in introducing you to the world in the best manner. In the meantime, be patient & industrious & endeavor to qualify yourself for becoming useful as well as agreeable in society. Without this, however much I may love you both for your own & your mother's sake, [several words blacked out]

P. S. I think that at the time I considered the summer too hot for you to spend a part of your vacation in the city. I suggested that you might pay me a visit at Christmas. Your trip to Bedford you ~~was~~ you must consider a substitute for this. Had you come here in the summer it would have been, as I then supposed as a school girl: should you now come, it would be as a young lady, a character whom no girl of your age could assume here without great injury to herself & a disqualification for afterwards attending to her studies.

