

I have sent the music by Mr. Collins & have this moment received yours of the 4th
January.

Legation of the United States

London 18 Jan: 1856

My dear Harriet,

I have received your favor of the 31st ultimo, with Mr. Bakers letter, & regret to observe that you write in such gloomy spirits. Your mourning for the dear who has departed would seem to be beyond the limits of reasonable grief & Christian resignation to the divine will. You seem to be in danger of violating your duties to yourself & to your friends by indulging in vain regrets for her who, I trust, is in a better world. She has escaped from many peculiar troubles which in her situation were inevitable & her heavenly father has called her to a brighter & a happier lot.

From my knowledge of your character, I do not believe you are subject more than others to moping melancholy grief. It is your association with Mrs. Plett which has produced this effect. I respect, nay I love her; but she was nearly as much attached to poor Mary as yourself & you condole together. A separation would be useful for both, & I would advise you to go to Lancaster, go to Virginia or go to Washington.

I need not repeat some of your extravagant expressions in regard to myself. You could do no more than you have done to promote my comfort & happiness; & any attempt on your part to do this would only be an excess beyond the proper mean which you know I do not like. If you desire to promote my comfort & happiness, arouse yourself & attend to the active duties of life & mope no longer.

I have hitherto anxiously desired to see you well married & settled in life. I shall no longer indulge such feelings. If it be the will of Heaven that you should marry, I shall be satisfied; - if not, I shall be equally content.

Invitations begin to come to me much offener [sic] than I desire. I declined the invitation of the Duke & Duchess of Wellington to the breakfast yesterday on the occasion of Sir Robert Peel's marriage on account of an important business engagement with which, however, I might have dispensed, had I felt a strong inclination. The invitation was to the "American Minister & Miss Lane," & this gave me the opportunity of informing them that you had left England early last autumn! I have not seen Mrs. Shapter since the receipt of your letter. The Duchess of Somerset has sent some music here for you; which I shall send by the first private opportunity. I am very sorry [several words blacked out] with which Mrs. Shapter was much pleased. I shall not tell her of it. I cannot conceive why your being in mourning should have produced this effect. I might nearly as well [sell, partially blacked out] my pillow. If you had to part from them, I should like to have given them to Mrs. Van Dyke or Clemmie Pleasanton.

Ever yours affectionately

Miss Lane

James Buchanan

My love to Mrs. Plett & kind regards to Mr. Plett.

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