

Wheatland, near Lancaster 7 March '53

My dear Harriet,

I enclose you a letter from Miss Ward. I presume, which I opened in mistake, but never read beyond the first line which begins with a complaint & which I could not avoid seeing. I have no doubt this complaint is well founded from my own observations in Ellen's case as well as in others. I have heard a number of similar complaints. Independently of the kind feeling, which ought, spontaneously & from the heart, to dictate to us to answer the letter of our friends, it would be a great improvement for you to accustom yourself to careful composition. In this you are deficient. Although your ideas are good & generally expressed with strength & clearness, yet without accuracy. You seem not to know the use of the period; & hence your sentences are often long & involved. Ellen Ward's letters to me are highly creditable to her. Many ladies do not think that reading, writing & cyphering ought to precede the higher branches. They may believe with honest Dogberry that these come by nature.

In my life I think I have not been more worried then within the last fortnight & I am yet about fifty letters behind. Company everyday. I will wear the yoke this week & after that I shall go somewhere-probably to Pittsburg where I have business. Where have you written to Lydia Speer? Is it not time you were leaving Miss Tyler's. You could not be in better company there with Miss Tyler; but she may begin to think that too much of a good thing, even like yourself, is good for nothing.

In haste I remain yours affectionately,
James Buchanan

Miss Harriet Lane

