

Ex Mansion
Sunday. June 17, [1860]

My dear Lily

We have just come in from Church & while waiting for dinner I will begin my scribble to you – first to thank you most sincerely & kindly for the box of beautiful things which came yesterday – the bracelet was lovely & was duly christened at the reception where the two little girls did appear in their white muslin toilettes. We had a pleasant time many strangers & very nice ones – a terrific storm came up about 2.30 & we had to entertain them a long while. Mandeville walked from Church with me – so you may imagine I feel happy -- however he said so many nice things about you that part of my happiness is gone in the fear that he only joined to hear tidings of you. Schell is here – but I fear will go away disappointed. He called Friday eve twice – we were out – yesterday at the reception when of course I could not talk to him & last evening paid a silent visit while I was having a charming time on the opposite sofa with Charles Wister. The latter gent is delightful & has been here several days. Gus was slow this morning from Church & Mandeville got ahead. The little letter stamp case you sent is sweet & cute & the photograph admirable I am delighted with them all & will certainly send you one of me when I get a good one. The shawl too is beautiful. The basket of strawberries came beautifully last evening & were announced to the President at breakfast & he shall be more conscious of them at dinner. I agree with you – the end is dreadful of the “Mill of the Floss” – to seem to make herself happy Maggie ought to have married Stephen & yet I can understand her every reason & feeling – I never read of a character never met one in life I could more thoroughly understand & feel than that of Maggie – she is true to (what in some people is) nature, I cannot say I think Harriet quite true to Mizner, & yet it is hard to discover exactly what that expression means nowadays. – Waugh has not given much provocation for her to desert, but that tall loquacious Dayton is still hovering round & on Thursday took her & Miss Ellen Wilson a row in his boat [T]hey left at 5 & did not return until 9 & she was dinnerless – so the attraction must have been strong. We miss you very much dear Lily - & if my letters give you the blues, yours have a very different effect upon me – they delight me & you cannot write too often, even if it is every day. On Wednesday we did not have music in consequence of Gen Jesup’s funeral, but there were many people here walking & Berghmans & Pringle came up – the latter to say ‘goodbye’ which was most melancholy. Harriet & I were in the blue room – after talking awhile Berghmans said he had had a letter from you that morning – to which I asked what news? he said a charming letter I asked to see it – he put his hand in his pocket said he had it not with him but I might see it – said he “I wrote to Miss M first.” I replied “of course I understood that or you would not have received a letter from her.” He accused me of “telling you something (about him)” & seemed delighted & was very bright & agreeable – said his minister had returned & he hoped to get on to Phil very soon – sat a long time principally talking of you, & I have not seen him since. Mr [Bloodeel] came to see me on Thursday & spoke most kindly of Berghmans, so you see he stands well with his minister. I think his letter very tender – it is written frankly & sincerely & you are the best judge whether or not he possesses these qualities – he certainly seems to – I should like to have seen your letter -- & think you may marry him if you want to or I am mistaken in his (foreign) ways. Never fear me dear Lily – when you place confidence in me no one shall ever suspect it & Berghmans shall never suspect



I have seen his letter I would not be surprised if he was now in Phil. I think your advice to Isabel most admirable if it does not come too late; -- I think she must be very sweet & interesting. Imagine that sweet attractive Miss Stevens to be married in July – to Garnett. What possessed Kory with the idea I had “grown stout.” – to say something hateful I suppose. Who is he flirting with?

We are up from dinner & the strawberries proved delicious. – Harriet is in the rocking chair “receiving some rather sleepy ideas” from Bernard Barton. You must miss the [Taps] – we did here - & Capt Lee, I suppose he was with you all the time. I enclose a pair of gloves I found among mine. Old Mary is a useful maid for she lays violent hands upon everything that is left in my room & puts it away. I will not forget the butter Kettles. Harriet & all send love & with much from me always, dear Lily –

Yours most sincerely
& affectionately
H Lane.

