

Washington
Thursday 13 Jan / 59

My sweet Darling,

How very unhappy I was in receiving your letter last night to find that you were worrying yourself about a thing which has long since ceased to trouble me the least.

I will give you a short & concise account of matters in their chronological order & you will then see that there is not the least cause of trouble to either of us.

When I first informed my uncle of our engagement which was a day or two after it took place -- as I expected he was very angry & considered that I had not shown him proper respect in not first asking his consent -- you know darling how ridiculous it would have been for me to ask his consent before I had the least idea that the lady in question would give hers -- my uncle having lived a bachelor & an isolated life could not appreciate such reasons -- I must here therefore state that the above is the sole ground of his opposition, as God knows dearest he could have no objection to your dear self. But so it stood during the first week & I feel wretchedly as you can imagine -- the idea was a disagreeable apparition in my happiest moments -- but I soon made up my mind & as a free & independent man I informed him that at the end of the next session -- when my departure would no longer embarrass him, that I intended to return to the practice of the law at New York -- Have the whole affair ended & we have both been going on in an old & usual way. That was the best course, yielding would only have made me contemptible in his as well as my own eyes -- since then he has been gradually moderating & I have but little doubt but that in due time all will be right -- but time & judicious management & an independent course for what I know of him will arrange everything. I have therefore for the last 6 or 7 months almost dismissed the subject from my mind convinced in my cool way that all would if left alone work itself out properly -- indeed my only trouble was the fear that gossipers not being able to account for some things would in the usual benevolent way start disagreeable stories that would come to your ears -- Your dear mothers conversation on Sunday worried me by showing me that the things I feared -- not on my account but lest it would trouble you -- had come to pass. That momentarily spurred an old but healed sore but even that would not have troubled me but for your being sick & the fear that it might be injurious to you. Let God take care of the future -- I do not feel that I have been guilty of any disrespect under the circumstances therefore my conscience is easy & my Darling Mary as we are to be all in all to each other I would be a poor father indeed & unworthy of your love did I shrink from making my sacrifice if necessary for it -- I would be repaid a hundred fold by the affectionate confidence which it would increase in you towards me -- so my dearest you must not let it give you any more trouble -- I have counted the cost & am satisfied & so must you be my Darling & God only gives you a restoration to good health. We have many days of happiness in store for as by an affectionate reliance upon each other for your happiness in this world even should inconsiderateness in others give us cause of a passing regret.

I trust you will feel as calm & contented as I do after having written this letter.

I hope you are ever so much better to day.

But I must say Goodbye --

yours affectionate

JBH

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