

Washington 17th Dec 1858

My dearest Mary,

What a glorious & beautiful day it is- The sun is shining bright & warm & the air is almost spring like- how much better we appreciate all these things after having been deprived of them for a long time which we assuredly have- this whole season is a most singular contrast to that of last year -- when I gathered violets in January in the open air.

I do not think I have anything new to tell you- I suppose you know long ere this that the Napiers are recalled- I dined in their company the other evening-they will go in about 6 weeks to The Hague- They regret leaving Washington very much for they were jut getting nicely fixed – in a note to me, Lord Napier says “This is a change which I regret more than anyone, but I submit there is no use in contending against fate & the Foreign Office”- We shall miss them this winter at their house – was very gay – Lord Lyons tho’ is a bachelor & were it not that British Ministers never marry abroad, all our young ladies would be setting their caps to capture a live lord.

The gaiety has partly commenced- I am engaged to large dinners from now till Wednesday excepting Sunday. The ladies of the Cabinet commenced their receptions on Thursday a week & were well attended yesterday. I believe -I could not get off to attend them tho’ I do want very much to get over my load of unpaid visits.

Mr. Scharff’s brother & bride, I think I told you will arrive here this evening to spend a few days sight seeing in Washington – it is a younger brother & the wife I have never seen. They have been engaged three years! Just think of that – but then they lived in the same place & it was not so tantalizing as they saw each other every day.

Mrs. Craig asked for you very kindly yesterday & told me to be sure to send her love when I write, so now I have done it -she is a great friend of mine & is a lovely character.

How comes on your little hospital darling are your patients recovering, I would almost like to be sick to have you nurse me -- it is so romantic, n’est-ce pas?

I am looking forward with so much pleasure to hearing from my Darling Pet on Saturday again so do write if you feel cheery & so like writing to any one.

I forgot to thank Miss Emily for her little postscript in your letter of Wednesday- Will her to try it again-

God bless you darling – Goodbye-

Your affectionate

“Jeems”

