

Wheatland 8 March 1866

My dear Niece,

I trust that ere this you have been comfortably settled in the Havanna [sic] & are enjoying yourself as much as a good Episcopalian ought to do in Lent. For our part, we are getting along in peace & content; but with rather less comfort than usual. Kitty is still sick, Ellen is worse & again [flighty]; and between the two Miss Hetty has her hands full.

Misses Annie & Harriet left here on the day you left New York. Annie writes me an apology for their leaving ~~because~~ that their duties at home required them to do so. I am grateful they have placed it on that footing. They are intelligent and agreeable & in many respects I should like to have Annie with me permanently; but I get along very well in their absence. I presume that they have given you all the gossip about Lancaster up till the time ~~you~~ they left for home. Since then I have neither seen any of the Nevins (except Wilberforce at the dinner table at Michael[']s) nor heard of or from them: so that one prolific source of information has been for the present cut off. The spring, I trust, but intermits. I have not seen any of the Lancaster ladies except at church. I had a visit the other day from the daughter & only child of the former Senator Allen of Ohio with her husband Dr. Scott. She is a fine looking & graceful woman. She saw us under great disadvantage as the fire in the parlor was nearly out & I had to act the part of servant myself. We have since got a boy; but how long he may last I do not know. Presto! pop & off they go. Lizzie is, I think, a good & useful girl; but is not great at waiting on the table. I shall be sorry to part from her.

Mrs. Norris cannot get a house to suit her in Lancaster & is therefore obliged to return to Philadelphia. I believe I could have sold her the Lancaster House for \$15000 & I think \$16000. I called to see Mrs. Jenkins the day before the girls left. There I found the President of the Patriot daughters who was even more than civil. She was neither dignified nor ~~condescending~~ patronizing is but was ~~to me~~ what she has been to me as the wife & widow of J. Hubley. Mrs. Jenkins said but little about Mrs. Lane. She made many apologies for not being at your wedding & believe was sincerely desirous of being present. Had I not believed this, I should in answer have said that her daughter Mrs. Lane has informed me she would have come had she known Harriet [Old?] & Jane Slaymaker would be present. The former, I, also met at Mrs. Jenkins'. She is evidently not well; but as agreeable as ever.

I am well pleased with the nomination of Hiester Clymer for Governor. He is a gentleman of very good manners & considerable ability & He speaks well & will be able to stump the state with effect.

I have recently received a greater number of visits than usual from friends "stopping off" to see me. My health is as usual though we have had four nights & days of incessant blowing of cold wind from ~~the~~ North West.

I enclose you a note received from Mrs. E. F. Elles which came to me open. I wrote to her that you & Mr. Johnston had gone to the Havanna [sic] & were not expected home until the middle or end of April. I am not acquainted with her. Perhaps you are. She describes herself as "a lady known to Mrs. Ann S. Stephens". I have given her your address at the Havanna [sic].

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Miss Hetty desires her kind love to you. Remember me very kindly to Mr. Johnston. And with my best wishes for your health & happiness & a safe return to your country, I remain,

Yours affectionately
James Buchanan

