

Char. Town Oct. 15th 18[45]

Mr. Lane

Sir,

I wish to consult you with regard to yr Sister Harriett. She has just recovered from the unusual dissipation of thought caused by the last vacation, and after much serious admonition, is once more interested in her studies; but unfortunately Mrs. Hunter has offered to take H. to Lancaster, and having yr. permission, she is preparing for a visit which will again interrupt. for a while at least, all idea of books, etc. May I respectfully advise that H. Shall not be removed from her school at this time. No one, save a teacher, can form a just estimate of the trouble attending such frequent interruptions of a pupils duties, etc. If H. is called away, I shall have the same irksome task to perform when she returns, as I have only completed within the last 10 days. you are perfectly acquainted with Harriett's peculiarity of temper, and must know that indulgence is subversive of all discipline where she is concerned; one gratification excites a wish for a second until the [exactions] become wholly unreasonable; in proof of this assertion I may add that H. is at this moment looking forward to a visit which she expects to pay her Uncle James during Christmas week, at which time she expects to meet young ladies and gentlemen, one of the latter with whom she formed a casual acquaintance at Bedford Springs, begged the favor of her correspondence & before returning here this fall, she answered his first letter, the second I intercepted and destroyed. The young gentlemen's advice to H. was that she should write to him at all hazards, urging her to convey her replies clandestinely to the office. I am not quite sure that Harriet would follow such imprudent counsel as she promised me that she would not keep up a correspondence the impropriety of which I strongly represented to her. I must in justice to H. Say that her conduct to me is always affectionate & she seems easily influenced by my advice, but she needs a guiding hand, and watchful eye to preserve her from great indiscretion with your assistance. I feel sure of success in inducing Harriet to yield implicitly to the advice of those who are more capable of judging for her, and probably a word of affectionate admonition from you, would not at this moment, be amiss. She is devotedly attached to you, I would be grieved at the thought of offending you & I find that affectionate & kind treatment is the most effectual method of winning her to obedience. Should you conclude to write to her, be so good as not to mention my name, as I do not wish her to know that I have written to you. She seems perfectly happy & gives me much satisfaction in the school room. Her mind is greatly strengthened and improved, and she overcomes difficulties which daily office in some of her studies, with a degree of facility which at times surprises me. She seems particularly interest with the study of the French language which she is attending to under the direction of a native of France & a very excellent teacher. One more request, and I will leave this subject, May I beg that you will express yr disapprobation to the trip to Washington? I really am deeply interested for Harriett, and sincerely desire to see her an attractive & amiable woman. Such I think, she will be with proper training & wholesome restraint. I offer, in conclusion, my gratulations upon yr marriage and through not personally acquainted with yr. Bride hope she will accept my respects & kind wishes.



With love to Mary, I am with unfeigned respect yr. friend.

Mary E. Merritt.

PS I have written this letter at the study table, surrounded by the children subjected to many interruptions you will therefore make a charitable excuse for it.

MEM

Reverse:

Letter from Ms. Merritt
Oct. 15 1845
in regard to sister Harriett

Oct. 15

Mr. James B. Lane
Lancaster
Pa

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