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Letter to Intrepid Morse

George Chase

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New Haven Yale College, Aug 25. 1815

My Dearest Friend,

I am heartily tired of making excuses - ^{for not answering your letters} but this once, and I hope I have done forever. Your welcome letter, was not directed to George Chase Student of Yale College. On this account, the Bost Post did not bring me the epistle, as he usually does all others, but it remained in the Post Office 10 or 12 days. I saw the Post pass day after day, with nothing for me - my heart sunk within me - and the dread that you had neglected me - or that you were on the bed of sickness, alternately predominated in my bosom. Well - you are now I suppose, in Fairfield diving into mystery lore, and roused at break of day by some vile bell. Remember the olden times! - Thou wore happy days, compared with the present. The then "Bosom as the lark, that each day hails the ^{morning} look'd forward with hope for Tomorrow." Reflection and experience, have taught us a different lesson. Reflection has but added to our knowledge of human failings; experience has but added to our tears, for the loss of that purity we once possessed. Poets (youthful poets) have painted perfect bliss here on earth. Beauty in a retired cottage - the purity of angels - and every thing that ups a man to regions of the skies. If these things are not so - if they are all, mere phantoms of the brain - is not cruel to delude mankind with expectations they can never realize. Let us hang these poets, these novelists all at once. Don't you think it would be for our benefit? - I beg of you not to think me actually crazy. No - no such thing. I rise betimes, and go to prayers. Recite my lessons - like the rest of my class. Study a little, read a little, and withal conduct myself pretty soberly, as I saw and thin some one is startled by some odd expression of mine - which I can not possibly help - but they soon forget it, and I share, thank fortune, thus far escaped the straight jacket. How long I shall remain in this enviable state of independence it is impossible for me to determine. - Aug 27th 1815. Sunday Evening. Immediately after Examination, which commences a week from tomorrow, I shall go home and as soon as possible, set out for Vermont. My stay there, expect will continue six weeks through the vacation. A journal of all proceedings & conversations shall be kept, and duly transmitted to you. My dear Aunt, is in a very low state of health, occasioned by her affliction for the death of little Dudley. My Uncle has written to me & from the style of his epistles, I should imagine, that ^{the} ~~minia~~ Politics, which seemed to have seized our relations in that quarter of the Country, has almost subsided. He speaks of past days and past pleasures, as if he fondly cherished their remembrance. When I reflect upon their condition - with none but political friends heartless as they are contemptible - with no children - the loss of little Dudley to add to their misfortunes - and every thing desolate around them, I feel what I can not express. My life - my every thing shall be at their disposal if ~~they~~ they can afford them comfort. They nourished me in infancy - watch ed over me and loved me as their own. - I anticipate much pleasure in the projected visit - every body, every thing, even the rocks hills and vallies are endeared to me by the recollections of youth. My daily and nightly dreams, are filled with them. But perhaps I am tiring you with reflections, with which I am enamoured, but which will not have the same weight with you. Porgive me and I will write about what I can hardly tell, my head is so full of this visit. - Are you serious, I trust, when you tell me that you never have trod dew the boards of Drury Lane? - Is it - can it be true? - I laugh'd at, though I pitied your situation. A cold, bachelor - taken for a lover & disappointed by some ruthless 'lady fair' - and an actor! - verily I must exclaim with you, "Ewas ever man so persecuted since the days of the little man in Bleak" - Didrick could not hold a candle to you". - The Fall of Beauty I had seen before and with you admired it very much. The same thought, applied to man, or rather seen was described in a piece of mine published in the Boston Spectator. I would give any thing, that I could clothe my thoughts in the same ~~language~~ dress that the authors of ^{the} ~~the~~ Mountains of Badlene has done with his.

I read your short account of a visit to Cornish, with interest. I believe I can conceive what must have been your feelings under the circumstances you describe. The duties of administering comforts to your parent in distress, must have been "pleasant yet mournful to the soul." Do not say, my dear Friend that we are doomed to see each other far no more below. I hope and trust we shall - if Death does not snatch one or both of us away within a few years. I am sure. If it were not for the duty I owe to Uncle and Aunt, I believe I should see you this fall. - There is a beautiful star which forms a part of the Great Bear, which (do not smile) seems in the same direction of your residence. I have a fair view of it from my window and I have always connected it with the remembrance of you. Perhaps you will think I am fanatical but I confess I enjoy more satisfaction in viewing that star than with all the frivolous amusements of the day - when the evenings are as unclouded as this.

The Family at home, are very well I believe at present, though they have been almost all of them sick, especially my mother. She is much taken up with the instruction of her wards - Sam. William & Mary, with Sheldon Clarke from New Orleans. My father busies himself in his Study, which he has lately replenished with a great quantity of books from England. His garden employs every leisure moment, and which he has rendered the best in town. Orrin Day has gone into a wholesale store owned by Sigourney Hayden & Co. - thus we are scrambling - he for money and your humble servant for fame. - Philander my dear brother whom I move more than ever is teaching a private school in East Windsor. That he has considerably altered from the ha-ha-ing boisterous fellow he used to be the following extract from a late letter of his, I think will sufficiently show. "I had climbed a neighbouring hill. I saw the last tints of the expiring rays of the sun, and sat down to contemplate the scene. The heat of the preceding day being now changed for the refreshing breeze of the evening, and the solemn stillness which surrounded me inviting repose, I imperceptibly fell into a sleep and was immediately entertained with a dream which I here present to you transformed into rhyme.

Song

Methought I saw the angel forms,
Of those I dearly love,
The troop angels gathered round,
And to Gods will then did move.
Methought I saw them all array'd
In robes of purest white,
That loosely floated about their arms,
And seemed like other light.
Twas then my Reverend Father came,
Around my mangled,
And with his outstretch'd arms he pray'd,
His blessings on my head.
"God bless, and keep thee, O my son,
Preserve thee safe from harm,
And ever lead thee here below,
By his Almighty arm."

Methought my mother then approach'd,
And knelt beside me there,
And thus unto the God she lov'd,
Pour'd out her pious prayer.
"Great God look down from heav'n above,
Behold and bless my child,
Grant him to walk in thy commands
And ne'er by sin beguiled."
Twas then I thought my brother came,
And standing near my head,
He stoop'd, and whispering in my ear,
In lowly accents said.
"My brother dear, be not cast down
But bid them to know,
There is a high and heavenly cure
For every mortal woe."
That maid whom still my heart holds dear,
Advancing next I see
The passing smile and smiling sigh,
And said, "Remember me"
* Clara

I was then I thought the rest came up,
And as they gathered round,
I heard them sing their chorus sweet
"In notes of heavenly sound."

"Sleep Friend Belov'd sleep in peace,
And only wake to joy,
May ever happiness be thine,
That heaven of the angels."

"I have long seen you of Philadelphia, though full of in-
conceivable talent."

Garold &
Kerlin

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