

THE SERGEANT JEROME PEIRCE COLLECTION

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ENVELOPE



LETTER TRANSCRIPTION

Billerica, Friday May 18, 1855.

My darling Sister:

I cannot longer forbear to address you upon a subject in which you have expressed much interest, and one which has lately engaged an unusual share of my thoughts. I told you sometime since that I commenced a letter to Lizzie B., but of its prospect, I believe I left you uninformed. I stated plainly to her my feelings upon several religious points, which she answered with that ready sympathy, and love so material to her. Her reply was written with a pencil, or you should have seen it before this, but when you return home you can peruse it at your leisure, and I trust you will, like myself, find comfort in doing so.

My dear sister, let us speak more freely upon this subject. Will not our hearts become strengthened by the act for purer thoughts, and nobler deeds? Will it not subdue, and chasten our dispositions, and make our spirits more congenial with God, and our Saviour?

You speak, with something of regret, of your position among those with whom your religious sentiments are disregarded, and treated perhaps with not an equal share of deference. Do not despair,

my dear Sister, your situation may, indeed, be trying to your feelings, and unpleasant to endure, but remember that the circumstances which now appear to disturb you may hereafter be found to have exerted a most wholesome influence in your behalf. By no means, let the persuasions of others dwarf your freedom of thought and action. Remember that we are free to act and think for ourselves, with Christ for a willing Teacher, such for a loving Father. Shall we not rather go to them for guidance, seeking for counsel which can never err from so pure a source?

There is a beauty in that religion, I think, which moves along silently, but surely, controlling our inmost nature, leading our footsteps noiselessly through the path of virtue, restraining evil desires, and passions, and instinctively lifting the human soul aloft from the taints, and grossness of earth, to that sphere of bliss where dwells the "pure in heart." Cherish this principle, dear one, and reap its reward.

Look at the life of our Saviour, fraught with no acts of vehemence, calm, trusting, humble. Deeds of goodness meekly performed, acts of kindness and charity silently bestowed, forgiveness never withheld. He loved mankind; his life was devoted to them. For them he lived and for them he died. Praise to God, whose Son has visited us that we might know "the Way of Life, and the Truth." In his bearing may we not trace the spirit of our Heavenly Father, and is it not a happy belief to entertain so forgiving and loving a nature?

Shall we regard a life devoted to God as too great a sacrifice for His goodness? Shall the germ of holiness implanted within our hearts not be brought out, and fashioned for present, and future happiness? There is, indeed, a noble end to be sought by noble means, means, which have been set forth for our acceptance. Let us study, and embrace them. Let us especially remember the institution of the Lord's Supper, and strive to bring our hearts in unison with its sacred rites. Let us hasten, with true preparation, to become a numbered one with the band of followers who eat of the body, and drink of the blood of Christ. But my Sister, let not passion usurp the place of reason, in its contemplation, lest we mistake a passing emotion, for a steady belief. Calmly viewed, with doubts removed by the light of truth, will it not be more surely possessed with spirits of unchanging devotion?

"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," and if our sentiments are cherished with sincerity, our deeds will not belie our faith. Can you not speak to Mr. E. upon the subject? He would give you sympathy I do not doubt, and strengthen any holy purpose you would suggest. How I would like to speak to him, or but alas! we have no minister. God deserts me not, and He will be my infallible guide and protector.

I have written but poorly upon this subject, but I was not willing to remain silent any longer, and could not wait for time to express myself more fully. Write, darling, with confidence when you have leisure, to your loving,

Abby.