

V.C. -«ept Oct. 11, 1868.

My dear Brother,

Your very welcome letter was received last week, and I hasten to answer it. I have Just been out walking, the day is glorious. I am now occupying a large nice room, with windows looking North and West, and only have one parlor-mate or rather room-mate, and I enjoy it exceedingly. You must be very lonely. You speak of boarding at the Taylor House. I wish you could be some-where more pleasant. Could'nt you stay at Aunt Mary's ? To be sure it is some ways from town, but I think you need exercise of some kind, as your business would lead you to a sedative life, and the walk out and in, evening and morning would do you good. They may go to Scioto Furnace this winter, so you can not stay there. If they do not go, X think they would be glad to have you, for your own sake, and also would be glad of the protecting presence of a man. For they are often timid at night. I just offer It as a suggestion to you. You may not like to do its but don't let any feelings of pride keep you away. Aunt Mary is and always has been a kind friend to us all, and would willingly do what she could for any of us. I think it would be so much better for you, to be among friends, where you could have some-thing to interest you, than to be in a hotel, where you must, perforce, be much alone, and dwell on your-self) your trials more than for your good. For, the best of us will be miserable if we think too much of ourselves. We need some-thing, constantly to bring us out of ourselves, to call forth our latent powers for the benefit of

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those around us. Your letter did me a great deal of good, for It confirmed my previously formed opinion that you were determined to pursue a straight-forward course, in the right direction. May the Father help you and kepp you strong in your purpose] Your letter made me sad too, for I felt how lonely you must be. But, John, if from this fiery furnace of affliction you come for-oh doubly purified, and from this time hence-forward, lead an upright, honourable, useful Christian life, we ought to thank God for the affliction. I believe you will do it, for I believe that God will "work in you both to will and to do." I was much struck by a sentence in a prayer of one of my friends, here, a few evenings since, and It made me think of you directly. She asked that we "might be willing to have clouds now, that we might at last have eternal sunshine." We can not know what is best, for us and how blessed is the assurance that "He leadeth us". You say in speaking of your trials that you have "greatly sinned and whatever crosses God may bring upon you to endure as atonement fee." Hie expression set me thinking. Does God cause us to suffer, that our suffering may atone for our sins? Has not Christ atoned for us ? and If we look for our anguish to atone for our sin, unless that anguish leads us to Christ, the all-atoning Lamb, we shall discover a sadlfeilstake. "The wages of sin is death"} sin brings with it its inevitable weight of woe and misery. But, as in the body, pain is given us as a warner, some-thing which admonishes us there is some-thing wrong within the body, some disease preying upon our vitals, and aid must be sought to

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prevent fatal Injury; so, soul-suffering comes to warn us of soul-disease, preying upon the spirit and threatening it with destruction, fatal and final, unless we repair to the great Physician. The agony may be fearful,

almost unendurable, but we do not despair of our friends when they are conscious of pain, as we do when a deadly stupor is upon them either with or without the effect of some powerful drug. The act of suffering is an indication of vitality; and Life though it be torture is better than stagnation* X shall write to Mary soon, as soon as I can. I do not write many letters now, but take all the time I can get for out-door recreation, and then rest, if there is any left. I have to take good care of my-self, and that seems strange to me. You did not tell me how your cough is, and how your general health is* Was your house and furniture sold? Is any one living there? You spoke of not having the house left to you. If no one is taking care of your things, I wish you would take that portrait of mine over to Aunt Mary's. I should like that kept for me. Tell me when you next write, how you feel about going to Aunt Mary's. I want you to do what will be the best for you.

I hope to hear from you soon again. I shall write to you frequently.

With an earnest, heartfelt prayer that God will keep and protect you, and right.

prosper you in your efforts to do

Your loving sister,

Annie.

(Annie (Glldden) Houts, '69,