

V.C. Dec. 13, 1868.

Dear John,

It is almost bed-time but I must give you a few words before I shut my eyes. Since writing to you I have heard from Carlos, and, as he may probably have told you, he does not think it best that I should allow you to use my property, to cancel your debts. I am sure I am quite at a loss to know what to do. I want to do what is best and just and for your own and my own good. I must speak plainly, John. The fact of your having a plenty to supply your wants has been not a blessing, or at least, if a blessing, has been bent from its purpose, so as to have the influence of a curse upon you. With ability, with a good education, you have let many years of your life go by without improving, merely because you were not spurred on to it, by the pressing wants of present need. As the human soul from its constitution must go down or up, can not remain stationary, you, in not striving to advance, degenerated. Forgive me, dear brother, but I am not sure but it is the best thing for you now to have to struggle against mighty obstacles, to put forth all the energies of your being, and call to your aid the help of our Heavenly Father to enable you to rise supreme above the difficulties that beset your path. Let this determination come into the minutest affairs of your every day life. Even to the matter of paying your debts; I know not, indeed it is quite a question now with me, the more I think of it, whether I would do the right thing by you even, to thus sacrifice my property. I would not be selfish, would not withhold it could I be sure it was

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best. I can not tell what is in the future, what may befall me, and I do not think the property that was earned by the hard labor of my father should be let slip, unless I was perfectly convinced it were right. Furthermore, why, if I have \$ 50,000. more or less in the estate, need those lots be sold that are set apart? I really think, John, if you will forgive me for saying so, that what is most lacking in your character. Is a spirit of self-denial, and a determination which will lead you to carry out your good resolutions. I honestly believe that you will come forth from this trial* a stronger and better man, a more noble, self-reliant character, if you stem the surges, and gain the shore, unaided. Yet, Heaven forbid that I should deay the life-boat* if its aid is necessary to uphold your uncertain, failing limbs. Can you not see and comprehend my difficulty. You will not doubt my sincerity and my love for you, & my intention to aid you, will you?

The ffcct is, I do not think I ought to decide such a question one way or the other* without a more perfect understanding of the business of the estate* than I now have. In truth, my knowledge of the business is simply, none at all* and I can not intelligently decide aay question with regard to the property unless I do know and understand the situatioa of the money belonging to the estate, how it is invested, the value of the investments &c, fee. Carlos thinks it will be very foolish for me to come home, this winter, and were it not a very special occasioa, I should think so, too, for it is a long, tiresome Journey and* to tell the truth, I caa not bear fatigue as

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well as X could last summer, or at any time before my sickness. X hare thought the journey might be broken by stopping at Pittsburgh a few days, then, if you meet me there, go on home, come back to Pittsburg in time to

rest a few days on the way back so as to break the journey. College closes one week from next Tuesday. X may have reason to change my plans, but I now think X shall leave here the same day, I shall reach Pittsburgh the next morning. I shall have company. Then if you could come on, and meet me there, so we leave Pittsburgh so as to get home the last of the week, so then return to Pittsburgh the last of the next week, so be ready to come on here the following Tuesday- I will, of course, stop at Alice Hurd Riggs's house, No. 63, Montgomery Avenue, Allegheny City, and if you can not come on for me, shall probably spend my vacation there. I do not want to have anything happen to prevent my return. X believe it would almost break my heart to have to leave the College now, without completing this year, but I am anxious to see you, and will come home if you will meet me in Pittsburgh. I will write you again, before vacation. If X have said aught unjust or unkind, forgive it and believe me, I said it all, only because I felt it was right so for your own good. May God in Heaven bless so keep you, is the prayer of
Your own Sister,
Annie.
(Annie (Glidden) Houts, '69,