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8-28-1842

## Letter to Mary Sibley from Miranda Smith, August 28, 1842

Miranda Smith  
*Pine College*

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Pine Cottage Aug. 28. 1842

My dear friend,

Since I last wrote you we have been made to drink deeply of the cup of sorrow. An event has occurred which inscribes vanity on every earthly object. My sweet sister- my dear, dear Mary- oh! I did not think that she could die. I did not think that the light of this dwelling- the joy of our happy circle- she to whom all our sympathies tended- in whom all our affections were centered, could be taken from the midst of health & happiness, take from her pleasant home, from the objects in which she took so deep an interest, & in less than two short weeks, laid away in the silent grave! The infant to, whom she so dearly loved- whom she watched so tenderly- rejoicing in every newly developed faculty- oh! Who will guide its tender years!- Who will supply that Mother's place to her!

Few, very few, enjoyed life & social happiness more than my sister- & her husband, her pleasant home, the improvements they were making, the objects of attraction that were collecting around her, more than all, perhaps, her lovely infant, contributed to fill to overflowing her cup of earthly bliss! But she is gone—called to leave them all! Oh! Is not "vanity" written on all things here before. With might she \_\_\_ in view of death.

"The feast of life is sweet. I am no weary guest- Loving friends my presence greet.

And all that charms the eye or ear.

I'd love to linger here, guiding my infant dear, its pilgrim way, watching its mind unfold, thick with unrusting gold, of knowledge stored" But no- she might not stay. "The undraining sup still glow'd with sparkling jest. In the fresh summer of her years she died." Oh! I little knew how much I loved her. I little knew how hard it was to unclasp the tendrils of affection that had twirled around her. Still my prayer was, "lord forgive her for thy holy will". Such was the nature of her disease, after it assumed a dangerous aspect that she was unable to converse on any subject. In the early part of her illness; Wed. Aug. 10., when for a few moments we had left her alone, I heard her weeping. On enquiring for the cause she said "Ask George to pray with me. I am distressed for myself & my husband". My dear sister said I, "Have you not been trying to live as a Christian." She replied "I have not lived as I ought. I have been deprived of religious influence & religious privileges, & have become too worldly minded." Some one remarked that the doctor wished her to be quiet.

"Oh!" said she ["] don't check any religious feeling. It is not excitement. It is not because I fear I am going to die, but it has been a weight on mind ever since the birth of my infant."

I read the 53 chapter of Isiah & brother George engaged in prayer. These exercises seemed to soothe her. She became perfectly calm & composed & requested that she might not see company as she did not wish her mind diverted from the subject. At this time. So far as I know none of [page missing] considered her dangerous. After this she seemed [page missing] & was as I though, as we all [wax seal] [page missing] recovering/ There was very little \_\_\_ fever. She complained of very little \_\_\_. & believing every thing she was allowed to take in the way of \_\_\_-

Mr. Adams was with her all the time but so occupied was I with the of the farm \_\_\_, being without half, that I was scarcely in her room five minutes at a time (nights \_\_\_) till the following Monday when Mr. Adams called me to come in as she was fainting. I found her unable to speak or swallow,

perfectly unconscious. All our efforts to restore her were unavailing, & she remained in this state for more than an hour. The Dr. was sent for in great haste & the next morning another physician was called in. Both remained with her, till Thurs. morn. when she died. She continued to lapse into the fainting or sinking fits, & during the interval between was unable to converse, owing to extreme \_\_\_. I was unable to speak to her on religion til the night previous to her death, when seizing a lucid in at, I said "Mary you know we all love you –you?" She replied "yes!" But do you not think the savior loves you more? "I hope so" was her reply. At this time she was perfectly rational. She put her arms around my neck & kissed me. This is all I know of her feelings. My mind you are aware is of the doubting order, but the judgement of this community pronounces her a Christian.

First page Margin

My dear sister always acted from principle. She was extremely conscientious & followed not for her own inclinations but for her sense of duty. She was ever active in religious meetings & was among our constant attendants though we have no \_\_\_.

But her husband was an irreligious man & she was deprived of the family altar. Poor Elmer. He is indeed stricken. He seems to think very seriously of his condition & character & is apparently enquiring what he must do to be saved. This noon for the first time in my life I heard him ask a blessing at the table. He has also commenced family worship with the aid of the prayer book. He says it grieved him that he deprived Mary of these privileges.

In conclusion I say to you in [page missing] of another "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me of my frie[page missing] for the hand of the Lord hath touched me." Pray for me. The [page missing] this family & the \_\_\_ but the one, only about two months [page missing] is cast on me. Pray "That on my day is my strength shall be". That I may have "that wisdom which is profitable to direct". Oh II has! Soul- sad duties to perform. But I must close. The little one whom we now call Mary seems perfectly healthy & feeds from a bottle without any difficulty. It is one of the most quiet children I ever saw. I feed it just before going to bed & it only wakes once in the night. I shrink not from the labor, but the responsibility of taking care of my sweet sister I will do all for it in my power.

Your afflicted friend Miranda

The articles designed for you I send with this letter. It would be well for you to get them as soon as you can as the plants need attention. Dear Mary watched their growth with me, & took much interest in them. The ribbon on your cap was plaited by her fingers- those [wax seal] busy fingers, that were always so ready to contribute to [wax seal] happiness. 09

N.B. Your letter came two days. I send with this the plants & other articles, directed to Dr. Simpsons, as you mentioned. The plants are in fine order but the sooner you get them the better as they need transplanting.