

Boston March 13. 29

I sometimes fear Dearest Virginia, that you will all imagine, that I have become perfectly stupid, such miserable trash do I send you see in two weeks, to let you see that I am alive, & well in bodily health at least. my letters are written under such disadvantages that nothing but a resolute will could accomplish them at all. ~~now~~ at this moment I have Ellen flitting around me & offering all sort of interruptions. Bess & the boy are roaring above stairs, and I am superintending the movements of a lubberly oaf just caught in the woods of New Hampshire, and whom I am thankful to have in place of an unprincipled impudent lying Irishman, whom we have ~~just~~ dismissed after enduring his knaveries a year and a half rather than undertake the breaking in of such a two legged steer as we have now got. I am obliged to follow the creature round & stand by while he clears the lamps, washes the windows, lays the cloth & goes through the routine of daily duty. Ellen says "I don't like the ^{new} man send Sam away" but better such an outrageous outing as this than the smooth tongued & smooth handed varlet that I have just dismissed on the same day that I sent away my chambermaid for taking in sewing work, whilst I paid her high wages & did my own mending. then Boston servants are to use one of their own expressions, an awful set, and I feel sometimes as if I had rather take a West India plantation with a thousand slaves, than attempt to govern four of these stiff-necked hard mouthed democrats. I do not wonder that there is no such thing as republicanism in New England, the southerners would be all aristocrats, if they had to bear half of the insubordination & insolence to which their eastern brethren are subject. but "gare" I forgot you have a Yankee among you who might write back all I say and get me burnt alive.

so burn my letter instead. I hope your boy has improved in manners since you last wrote. mine, who is still without a name (owing to Joseph's abhorrence of his own, and my disinclination for any other, founded in what I believe to be the proprieties of the case) my boy although not at all croft is very troublesome. he keeps me awake all night by his extreme restlessness, & without one crying contrivance to disturb me as much as yours can do you. or it is a wearisome thing ^{to be a woman} ~~at all~~, after all, and if it were not for our hopes and our affections there are few of us who could bear all that is laid upon our shoulders; but in the midst of our troubles we are always comforted by the thought that we are serving those we love, or by the fond belief that some time or other we are to see better days. — Tell mama that Mrs Swett after passing her time a full month has at last had the witch brot. untied and is "lighter" of her son; a fine boy weighing nearly ten pounds who came into the world without causing any trouble to his mother, and is, along with her, doing remarkably well. the family are greatly delighted & in the joy of this happy event seem to forget entirely that they have another lad bairn among them. my poor little boy is sadly thrown into the shade, and if he were to be snatched from me his father's heart and mine are I fear the only ones that would feel it. this is one of the sorrows arising from a separation from my own family, that my children have no one to care about them and I feel as if they were to grow up without friends. my good friend old grandmother who has always been so kind to me will not last much longer, and my excellent Aunt Hester is so removed from me by a residence out of town that I seldom or never have my heart lightened by her presence. — Mrs Thomas Coolidge has been ill a long time and is just able to leave her chamber — she is a very amiable and interesting woman but I fear will never have any health.

What a jeremiah kind of letter I have written to you
Dearest Virginia! I am ashamed of it, but it is now to send
this or none and this will at least tell you that I am well
and my babies also. as you may suppose I go out not at all
but I have some pleasant neighbours who come in now and then
to chat half an hour with me. I have lately made acquaint-
-ance with one of the most spirited and talented women I ever knew.
a Miss Hope, one of four old maiden sisters, many years ago emi-
-grants from Halifax, Englishwomen by birth - they kept a school
for their support a long time, but are now rendered independent by
the death of an old uncle; the two youngest are very ordinary
women, the eldest an excellent house-keeper, the second full of
talent animated, eloquent, witty & highly educated. rather satiri-
-cal & a thorough-paced Englishwoman who has since become
at all americanised. she amuses me exceedingly, her powers
of conversation are equal to any I ever knew, & remind me
of the dialogue of Sheridan's plays than of any thing else. she
as witty and as caustic as Lady Teazle, but without not ill-
-natured. Farewell my Dearest, Ellen is a whole legion of
little imps in one this morning, and has been tease, tease,
worse than a non-fly, & Larm has been ploughing about
"like a greasy headed drag horse" ever since I began to write.
I asked Nell if she did not want to go and see you all & her
ready answer ^{was} "tell gamma I should like to go but my dear
great Katy is too sick". great Katy continues her idol and
being an object of passionate admiration to Bess also, there
are frequent battles for her possession. she has neither head nor
arms and is like what I suppose the princeps in the Persian
Tales must have been, she whose mouth was in her huge breast,
and who deemed a head nothing more than a hideous ex-
-cess. Dear love to all, Jane, Jefferson, & their fastlings. Tell

Mama her friends ~~always~~ inquire after her health and well-
-being, & Coraelia's the same. I always forget to tell C - the
speech made to me by Mr Dorr an "amable soul" whom she
recollects. "Mrs Coolidge have you heard from your sister lately.
I wish she were five years older than you, and could fancy
an old bachelor like myself."

Mrs Nicholas P. Priest

Edgehill

Greeneville Post Office

Glennville

Virginia

Love, love, love to all my dear ones.