

Washington Feb 28
1867.

My dear Virginia

I have only time to write to one of you, and as you were the first from whom I received a letter, you must also be the first to get an answer. Washington is very gay and I go so much into company that I have scarcely a moment to devote to writing or reading. I have had severally books lent me since my arrival and I have not been able to read more than one or two. I have seen a little volume of poems by Thomas Moore called *Irish Melodies*, it is a collection of all those songs which he wrote and adapted to the old Irish airs. some of them are very beautiful; as I know you are fond of both music and poetry I have copied ^{the words of} some of these songs for you. It is sung to the old tune of "On the hour I have part in the arms of my dear" and although not originally intended to go together, the music and words agree very well. I paid a visit to the capital a few days ago & had an opportunity of judging of the amazing splendor of this building before it was destroyed by the British. there are many vestiges of its former beauty and grandeur, broken columns & statues, immense staircases of stone, with iron railings. &c. under the building, there are vaults so dark and gloomy that you may almost fancy yourself in the castle of Udolpho or some other place of the kind. I remained some time in these vaults, and as they were excessively damp, I was very near paying dear for my curiosity, for my cold was so much increased that I expected I should be obliged to stay at home the ^{evening} ~~night~~ of the birth night ball. Fortunately

However I get well in time to go to it. I have not time
to describe this ball to you, which was very different from
any that you have ever been to.

Adieu Dear Virginia, write to me soon, and in
your letters tell me every thing that takes place in the
family, how yourself and sisters come on with your studies -
whether the boys improve as rapidly as you wish, & remem-
ber particularly that you can never say too much of Sep.
her looks, her actions, her little sayings, every thing relating to
her, is matter of the greatest interest to me. in return
I will write to you whenever I have time, and tell you
of all the strange things I see and hear. give my love to
Cornelia and Mary, I shall write to them the first leisure
moment I have. remember me to the Ashton family & believe
me to be your most affectionate sister. E. W. P.

Feb. 28th