Oct. 12th 1847

My dear sister,

Your letter of the 18th day, certainly

deserves an earlier answer, but my engagements
have been such that I could not attend to it,

take time enough to make a proper return.

A proper return, indeed, I can never make

for letters so affectionate and interesting, but

as I have some degree of trust though it be, I give

full confidence that you will make the

best of it. I shall look for some account of the

state of things at Chelsea to whom you propose

making a visit. It is much to be regretted

that mother cannot spare the time to take you

all on the same trip from which Fanny has

just returned; I sincerely hope he may be able to

do it next summer, as I will probably remit

before then sufficient to enable you to travel

in comfort. If this war continues as I have

always believed it would, we will probably advance

farther into the interior. This will give me

the opportunity of reducing the probabilities

of extensive private practice to a certainty

without which to tell the truth, I am not only

willing to sacrifice my present position — the

only doubt which I have in my mind arises

from the circumstance of my being an

American, and also from the probability that

after the war this unfortunate country may be
In a very disturbed state. The people for the first time have learned that their military are not invincible, and will probably attempt to throw off their deceptive yoke. The city of Mexico may then be held by the Generals, but the chief towns will rebel against their authority. This will for many years ruin their prosperity, whatever party may triumph. If the civilians are victorious, it must be by severe sacrifices, and during the contest all the Northern provinces will be swarming with hostile Federalers, who can now penetrate almost to St. Louis & Zacatecas. If on the other hand the Generals triumph, dreadful will be their acts of chastisement against the revolting Citties. It is from considerations of this kind that I wish to thânse hell before taking any decisive step.

I trust sources say that, your domestic news is always very interesting, and your lectures on Orthography shall be strictly attended to. I "declare", in print, of which you may hereafter "catechise" me to any amount you please.

As to some other parts of your letter I cannot say as much—the idea of my little pet bekommen during any breakes to a packing, or taking, some packing, is shocking to my sensibilities. It is happened that I was reading this part of your letter, when raising my eyes, I saw her sweet face fixed in mine, before her windows, with the sweetest expression possible. It seemed to say, "if I thus give you..."
My whole heart, my dearest, I have no desire for you to answer this letter, for I cannot imagine that it is likely to do you any good. I have written so very much in love, but I cannot help it. I am only a child, and I can only write what comes into my head. I am sorry for it, for I know it will only add to your sorrow. I hope you will be happy, and that you will never forget me. I love you more than words can express, and I think of you every day. I wish you all the happiness in the world. Your loving husband,

[Signature]
I had moral education, together with others of a profound character, the best wife I could get, in the event, would be just the one we have been speaking of—Mexican women, though far inferior to the men, are educated to make most obedient wives, attentive to all the forms of respect, not at all exacting. Thus far all is very well, but the woman who marries me must have no other Confessor, no vile debauched hypocrite to whisper to her lips of infamy, vows that fromer at first they may provoke the blush of shame, like a slow but sure poison. The best is closest to corruption. The woman whom I would choose, must not have been accustomed to regard the duties of watchfulness as the sole guard to her virtue. Such a woman I may indeed love for her natural attractions of mind and heart x person, but the very pity which I feel for her unfortunate situation in these respects, would preclude the possibility of my making her my wife—indeed no such a moment of kindness as I trust God will not give me over to.

It is chiefly this which has so interested me in Composita; well indeed is it calculated to excite not unwarmed sympathies to see one so pure, so lovely, as she now is, coming day by day more hide the influence of God's example & education.
As I sometimes sit gazing at her, I am in doubt what I ought to do—whether to encourage her affection, with the very purpose of testing her experimentally, that she cannot always yield to our impulses, and so prepare here to resist future temptations, by making her proud of her virtue, and aware of her ability to preserve it; or whether to withdraw entirely from her society, and let her remain the mate of her country home, to my the escape the pain which the severer experience might occasion her. After a good deal of hesitation, I have at length resolved to speak boldly to her mother, who is a very sensible woman, and to explain to her the true state of the case and my reasons for desiring to discontinue my intimacy with them. The first convenient opportunity, I will probably do this, as love-sick as I am, since her to pursue her own destiny, be it good or bad. You see that I neither act nor talk much like a violent lover, which, he assures, I am not, a tender interest suggesting to all I feel for her. Were she of a different blood, and a Protestant, and no objection existed to my marriage, this sentiment would soon ripple into love, and you might have a chance of having Benedict in a bottle; as it is next easy, for though strange things certainly have happened, this is not, with my consent, to be added to the number.
October 16th

When I make up my mind to the propriety of anything, I endeavor to do it because perfect or disagreeable it may appear to be. In consequence of this, though after I had struggled not a little hesitation, I went that last night to carry out the intention expressed on the last page. You may judge that, I have had a bad interview indeed. In the first place, my speech is not very fluent. I wrote a letter explaining the circumstances from acquaintance which I desired as you will see. I told Maria Jones the matter that I invited a private interview with her to ask her advice. For Maria her brother were accordingly sent out. I then presented my letter & proposed that, as the customs of your country are such as to render it impossible to bend favours even the mildest endearments of love, without exciting the expectation of further steps, I would advance, it is better that, I should sacrifice my amiable friendship. This of some indescribable word or glance impairs understanding, I insist on your mind, morally, physically, and to brave your esteem before I have pleased to merit it? I explained to the old lady that a secret affection must necessarily prove injurious to Bonporta's character, and because concealment in itself led to habits of deceit, and because without opportunities of private explanation, it was all to be supposed that she could properly appreciate the nature of my attachment, is entirely different.
from that day country men. It was then a
painful struggle indeed how to decide - she told me
that it had long been evident to her how strong, how
very strongly her daughter's attachment to me, "with
a passion that, crusted in this way, oh, it were
better to die!" - the bitter tears of maternal
sympathy gushed from her eyes - they gave
me then a dreadful picture of Mexican morals; ev
the nearest relatives, uncles, cousins, brothers, have
to be watched, "but I am sure that you, you whom
we have reared as we reared not even our nearest friends,
are not capable of abusing my confidence - my poor
girl, her virtue in all the joy, to you I think it,
is would be the fairest glory to abuse it, I am sure
that you cannot do so." (My poor friends, she said,
her breast, I sobbed, for how little can you imagine
how dreadful an alternative was placed
before her - to end our acquaintance & inflict upon
her child, a misery she deemed worse than death, or
its last cast aside the prejudices of years, of education
I perhaps had experience, a place her honour in the
hands of a stranger. I felt for her deeply, for I knew
how impossible it was for her to accustom to the
full the confidence she expressed. I knew that,
her unenlightened conscience was perhaps tempting
her for a want of firmness, and that for her
imagination was teeming with pictures of future
misery & disgrace. As, however, she had begun
come to her determination, I urged her ever
consolation in my power, explained to her that,
an honorable, pure affection must lead to elevate Pomponia's character from the moment that all improper suspicions were removed from her mind, and that, she would thus be better prepared for issues of future trial. All this she at once admitted, and acceded readily to my request for a private interview with Pomponia, in which every thing should be put upon its proper footing; plain words should banish bad ideas. Proper opportunity has not yet occurred for this interview. 

Here ends for the present this chapter of a singular love tale. I have had no ideas until to-day of the near thought of — 's affection for such a dear chum as Jane, but cannot feel that, considering how almost unconsciously, unwittingly I have excited it, that I have much to reproach myself with. 

Far of the future, poor child, heaved my know not how it be a pure happy me - & in myself, apart from the strong sympathy she must feel in such a case, who has a heart, it has hitherto afforded me a gloomy, but proud I preferred satisfaction to crush all effects. Inconsistent with my long cherished plans — my mother's last letter has now deprived me of this, for without her consent, blessing, I cannot set out for the holiest purposes. — More than, I am once more rejecting, probable happiness, for the merciful chance that I may receive the objecting to start on my way — God, however, directs all things, I shall always seek His guidance, he enjoined to His will —
Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>. I have nothing further to add for tomorrow's mail except to ask you to acknowledge for me the last but one of a letter from Charles, which I mean to answer as soon as possible— one also from Rob. Harris, a letter from my father. In regard to the publication of the letter of Gen. Wool, although I had not the slightest expectation of such a thing, I believe that it was a very proper thing, and in fact to me, and perhaps the only means of diminishing suspicion from the minds of those who have considered me worth a thought.

My favorite neighbor has a little party to-night to which I am invited, but am not yet quite so Mexicanated as to forget that it is the Sabbath so have declined— the whole family feed their turkeys to you all, which I hope you will return a little more gracefully than before.

Three Mexican soldiers will probably be my tomorrow's camp— Rob. Newton has not written to me for many months, but I do not despair of hearing from him.

Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>. Interrupted last night by presenting your writing— Patted a man's shoulder into a joint for $1.50. My love to all— Promise Filly that I will shortly continue my unfinished letter— 'That God may help you'— guide you in the earnest prayers of

J. B. Burton Rankin.