

19 July 1846

Dear Children,

In anticipation of finding ye box, about wh. you had previously written, I called at Saco depot yesterday, but came near a disappointment, as there is no expressman, nor ex. office at Saco and ye captain of affairs had nothing to do with articles entrusted to an express. While talking quite loudly a young man arrived in waggon, and said ye box had come and was down town at Bank's tavern. I dont understand how ye express is connected with boat and cars, and yet distinct and separate, must inquire and inform myself. I returned to Banks and recd. ye box safe and sound and paid for. Rather better luck than with umbrella of old. Of um. it may be wise to speak no more, as it and ye inquiries are worn equally threadbare ere ys. You understand well now to make ye hearts bound with joy and gratitude. May ye best of blessings fall to your lot in return for your generous and affectionate contribution to remember and make happy your mother's approaching 80th natal anniversary. On ye coming Wednesday you will have ys. before you, together with a specimen, we hope, of similar articles as yse. forwarded to us for ye day, while our thots are mutually fixed on her, who, under Providence, has been ye head and arm, stay and life of us all nearly half a century, and who, tho often suffering from pain and debility, seems to lose nothing of mental brightness, animation and activity.

Mrs. Storer enquired about you last week, of ye senior's health in particular, I replied, sick and well alternately, and wishing us "to live out a green old age". She thot your wish wonderfully gratified in your mother's deep green. Reflecting on ye scenes thro which she has past and on what she now sustains, we have no little reason to be thankful to a heavenly Father who has watched over her and all of us and permits us still to rejoice together in ye enjoyment of his manifold mercies on earth. And yet it behooves us often to advert to such reflections as in your 400 psalm by Hawkesworth "Yet a few years or days perhaps-or moments pap in silent lapse and time with me shall be no more" etc.

On Friday last Mrs. Hatch, of whom we had both dreamt ye day and night previous called and passed ye day, said she came on purpose to wash for us, but Mrs. Finney had washed on Monday previous and your mother was underway for a no small ironing but was overtaken by a severe attack of colic, nothing like it ys summer. Mrs. Hatch's coming was very opportune, her attention to your mother was like a mother's to her child, did all ironing and everything else necessary, was remarkably kind and offered to come and take care of mother any time if sick, or come and wash. The circumstance fairly excited mother's gratitude and rendered old impressions quite oblivious. The w man has faults, who has not? But she has judgment, capacity, industry and ability for business found only in a precious few, yt go out to service. I carried her nearly home in chaise not only thanked her for ner kindness, but lamented her faults wh. deprived your mother of ye very assistance she most needed. She said she was sensible of ym. and were she to return next season, believed she should yield less to feelings of ye moment. She desired me to say she thot much of you "tho she had run away".

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Hitherto we have continued to milk our two cows and take care of ye milk but finding it of little or no use to enslave ourselves thus, we gave ye whole concern to Eunice for $\frac{1}{2}$ ye butter. So you perceive I am ridding myself of a task not ye less irksome by confing me to ye pail and your mother to ye routine of pans. Notwithstanding I cleared ye fields at hoeing. I cannot willingly abandon ym in haying especially as Henry is disappointed in a man to whom he had paid \$8 in advance to assist in mowing. We are letting a part in shares. Mr. McL. was thro before we commenced. Had we as heavy a crop in proportn. we should despair of ye end till a snowfall. But as our fields were much winter killed we hope to get thro in summer and in season to pass a little time at Pitts. You point us to ye cars for conveyance. Of course, if mother goes, altho we have exchanged our old chaise for another and remarkably easy one and own yes, own and possess a very good family horse. The full strength of all your old invites to Bangor I perceive, is presented anew, and with fresh and additional vigor in your last. We thank you most cordially for so kind and urgent invitations and sincerely regret it is not compatible with our circumstances to gratify our own and your wishes ye present season. Say, with our compliments to Mrs. Perham, Mrs. Strickland and Anna yt they must compensate you for our unavoidable absence. How unfortunate your neighbor Mrs. Smith! And how wonderful yt similar casualties are not more frequent. What do we not owe to ye author and preserver of life!

Our neighborhood has been not a little alarmed and agitated till within 10 or 12 days past. Sidney Burnham in ye wigwam opposite us commenced a high handed career, first killing his father's swine and next at attempt at our hens, which led to a skirmish with myself, it being in ye dooryard, next his father's hens and ended in taking away bars and fences to let creatures into corn etc. etc. Complaint was at length made to H. and Esq. Donnell, and they directed ye officer to arrest him. They had to break in ye windows and with long poles make him drop his ax, wh. they seized and then grabbed and dragged him out ye window and carried him to ye house of correction at Portland where he now is to ye great relief of ye neighborhood.

We have had a good supply of strawberries wh lasted till yesterday, quite a supply of currants, and gooseberries for 2 pies. Yes, Henry, all ye Bangor trees are doing well and we hope you will yet eat from ym. as good plums in Scar. as grandpapa has at Bangor. The little folks here are all well, ye measles have been at Mrs. Chases but not yet reached here.

Curiosity could not be suppressed till ye box was opened. Henry had seen ye letter but could not imagine its contents. While I was dining I directed him remove ye cover and open ye box and it did me as much good to see all both great and small gratified with a look and a taste as it does Mr. McL. to see his friends eat ye fruit of his garden. You are thot to be dreadful good folks down at Bangor, wish you lived nearer. Weather is variable here as with you, rather dry of late.

Mother's ill turn Friday shrunk her considerably, but today she is quite revived. I can't ride so often as she needs, and dare not trust her alone. Hope to be more at leisure soon. Peter Wiggin's salt river letters were nuts H. liked to crack. You see some funny stories yt

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don't reach us and vice versa probably. When you take up ye pen you hold on to it like stags. Write on then, we will read, but expect not an idea in return till Sep. United love and friendly affection to all ye household and friends of ye same.

Your affectionate parents

N. and M. Tilton

P. S. Louise wishes me to say how thankful she is Aunt Mary for ye basket and books. I think myself they will awaken attention to her grandma wh. had begun to flag.