

Bloomington 25th Nov. 1848

Dear Son

A letter lately recd. from Sam. states that you had wounded your fingers in dissecting a corpse & had thus received the infection of the disease of which the man had died. This has filled us with alarm and the principal object I have in writing you now is to know what the state of the case is. You will therefore write immediately or get some one else to write, in case you are not able.

My horse, as I suppose you have heard fell down a bank with me, being frightened to whirling at an ox-team which I was trying to pass. My left shoulder was sadly crushed, but, though not well yet, I hope to recover.

Abigail Ritchie is with us having come with Theophilus in his return from the east.

Red. + An. + Jane go to school. Jane takes 'Rene's' place at the Piano and learns fast. - Family affairs go on as usual. The University also. As to things in town there is nothing strange except the death of poor McKimney who hung himself a few days ago at Rockville. It is whispered that the marriage of Miss McDerson to Wilson was the occasion: and also that there is a streak of in-

running in the blood of his family. Of the marriage of Amanda Maxwell to the Rev^d Mr Hughs you have heard I suppose. The connexion it is said are much pleased.

During my confinement to my room in the vacation owing to the hurt I received I made out to use my right hand — that side being uninjured — in putting down my thoughts from day to day on paper upon sundry subjects which I used to touch upon in my introductory lecture to the Students. Thus I beguiled the sense of pain through the day. The time passed less heavily; and the result was 126 half-pages of foolscap written over. Had I the opportunity of a publishing establishment at hand I believe I would put it to press. In that way I might perhaps enlarge a little my sphere of usefulness which here is more cramped in some respects than I could desire. I have lately received from a very reputable quarter in the east an intimation that the Diocese ought to make me its Bishop. I once hinted to you that the thing might be, if I desired it, & that I did not think it proper for me to consent to be clothed with the office. I am fully convinced of this, & therefore whenever the matter comes up, say so emphatically.

You have been apprized, no doubt, of Andrews' removal to Washington City. I approve of this: as the air of Pittsburgh

is not healthful. To me, at least, it would be intolerable. My great fear for him is that the expensive & showy way of life to which Caroline has been accustomed and her taste for it will keep him in trouble all his days to provide the means of supporting so much extravagance - as I think it. The folly is great - and it is surely & sorely punished whenever it is cherished - of thinking to compete with the gay world in such things. It is so especially in such as are not born to a fortune. —

As to your going to New York &c I know not what to say. It might do well enough if you had the means. But these you have not nor can I furnish them, nor indeed any further pecuniary aid than what I have given you already unless I were to resort to measures which nothing but a case of the most urgent necessity would justify. It is true as you say that a country physician is no great thing in the west. His labor is great & compensation not great and he has no extended celebrity. Yet a country physician may be a very useful man - and I hold that a man's usefulness is the true measure of his respectability: and generally speaking it is also the measure of his happiness. Generally speaking: for there are cases where a man may and ought to sacrifice his happiness in this world for the cause of Truth & Right in other words for the benefit of the Race. This however requires the spirit of the martyr. The two Martins have compelled me to think of this matter. Had they and their intendeds the true spirit of martyrdom I dare not say a word against their project of going to China as missionaries. But this I doubt and yet I do not like to interpose my Veto, & know not whether it would avail if I should. Were I unmarried & thought it my duty to go a missionary to a heathen land I am sure I should never think of taking a wife with me as our missionaries do.

There are a couple of youngsters here from Commerce named
Claypool. According to their accounts that must be a very
flourishing town. I mention this, that you might if it should ever
be convenient pay it a visit. But you can yourself best judge
of this & such like things. - Give my respects to all about you
who may enquire of my welfare. Abigail joins with the family
in love to you. Excuse this mutilated sheet. I remain your an-
xious and affectionate father

A Wylie

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Dr John H. Wylie

Richmond

Indiana

through

