

Alexandria Va.

January 5th. 1851

My beloved Parents

Almighty God has laid again upon us all, his afflicting hand. At least so it is felt to be; and though we know that He "doth all all things well", yet not comprehending the range of His providence, His strokes sometimes fall upon us poor mortals, with what we feel to be, an almost unparrying severity. Our consolation is a trust in the greatness of Gods mercy, and His infinite wisdom. Certainly He never deals with us in anger or resentment: that cannot belong to the greatness of the perfect Being, the Author and Maker of all things, self created, existing from eternity to eternity. What he does must be the best for us, and must have been so designed. But how will do I know, that you have drawn your consolations from the Book of life, and from those exalting rich and precious promises, which abound through all its pages. There and there alone is comfort to be found, when we find no relief from any comforter on earth, in the hour of distress. Sometimes I have thought that these afflictions were sent, for the object, that the living friends might be brought from their errors, and perhaps they something are. But why should the living be of more account

than he that is gone? why should we be so vain
as to imagine that those who were better than our-
selves, ~~should be~~ ^{were} laid low, that we might be saved?
That cannot be: the purpose of God must remain
undiscovered, till we ^{ourselves} have entered the great future,
when we shall know more than we can know
here. Let us however all so improve the afflictive
providence, as to shall make us fit for the great
change which we all must meet sooner or later.
Then, confiding in the goodness of God, the change
will be welcome to our spirits, anticipating a reunion
in the other world with all the loved friends, sons,
father & mother, sisters and brothers, who have
gone before us, with whom we shall enjoy
thenceforth a blissful & eternal existence, in one
society, without a pain, sorrow, anxiety, or any
such thing.

But why should I thus attempt,
as it were, to give a lesson to you on a subject
which your meditations, for years, have made
familiar to your hearts. I do not, but for my own
sake, and that of my dear Carry who unites with
me, ^{it shall} we wish to have the consciousness that whilst
your eyes peruse these lines, the same sentiments
thoughts & hopes, inspire us together.

Carry's health
is improving slowly, and we feel a strong confidence
that after a time she will ^{have} regained her former
excellent health. Little Andrew within a few

days has learned all his letters. On Christmas
his Aunt, as he calls Mrs Lathrop, gave him a
set of letters on blocks, each one with an appropriate
illustration. This made learning his alphabet an
amusement, ~~instead of~~, and he had learned
the whole before either his mother or I had
the ~~any~~ suspicion of his progress. He is very quiet
and inquisitive, and we intend to put no tasks
upon him, at any rate for a number of years
yet.

How is John, where is he, and what is he
doing? I have heard nothing, in detail,
with reference to him in a long time past.
I am anxious to learn whether he is yet settled
down, and if so, where, and what are his prospects.
How glad should Cary & I be to see you
you all again, taking our little Andrew along.
But we cannot go till his health is restored.
May we not hope to see you here next spring
or summer? That would not be to see you all,
but it would be the next greatest pleasure
to that. Our love to all the family & Mary & Mr. Dods.

Your affectionate Son

Andrew



Rev. Dr. Wylie

Birmingham

Alabama

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