

Saturday afternoon

March 24th

Much loved friend,

A month ago I received your precious message – and Rill, I did intend to answer it before, but, as you yourself have been at school, and know just how busy any one always is at school I can only make the excuse that I am and have been at school all the winter,

I have been so very busy that writing a letter seemed quite foreign to me, but I have often thought of you and wished, as I wish now, that I might see you. Oh! I love to write to you but I long to see you face to face, and talk so to receive an answer immediately and not wait until they are written. O, the pen moves so slowly when our heart is full, full of love for friends. Rill, shall I say I long to see you to pour out my heart, to talk the thoughts that are now struggling to escape. My dear friend, my more than friend, I cannot keep from telling you that I am happy – do you wish to know the cause? Well it is because I feel approved of God, because I feel the clear approval of my beloved sister Emeline [sp?], to whom I made a sacred promise that I would “seek the Lord” And Oh! How long I’ve neglected that promise – Oh! How long I have felt her clear eyes bent searchingly upon me and I felt as if I would shrink from that earnest gaze, but I could not.

Oh! How long I have felt the need of religion Rill, when the cloud of sorrow and affliction rested on our dwelling when the cup of grief, you know how bitter it was, was pressed to my unwilling lips, then how I felt the need of that Friend that “sticketh closer than a brother,” how I long to cast my poor, bleeding, sinful heart at the feet of Jesus and plead that He might accept it, but I feared what the world might say, what my young friends might say and I rejected the cup of salvation proffered to my very lips, heeded not

[NOTE: the rest of this letter is very hard to read}

the “still small voice” calling unto me “This is the way, walk ye in it.” Still I would have taken [??] steps in the ways of sin but now with the grace of god assisting ...

[NOTE: becomes more legible again when she writes on a clear space around other previously written sections]

Aurelia, you and Dr. Marsh are surely coming to Ellington are you not? You must, yes, you must, I’ve “lotted” [?] on seeing you here. Do come. Have you had any news of “sugar”? I have not had any worth mentioning and probably shall not if the weather we are having now continues. We are now having a good snow storm, but have had some very pleasant weather

Now RSill write, and do come and make a good long visit, why can’ you?

How is your bird and cat your other idols? I hope they will return your love which you shower upon them, now write and don’t forget me, for I am just the same only a great deal happier Rill.

Mary Baldwin