

then higher ones; & on paper too, which adds so much to the difficulty - for I think when people talk together, especially if friends, they may gather almost as much from what each other's countenances express as from the words that are spoken - Yes I should like to have a real talk with you on these subjects more than I've words to say - only I fear if ever the happiness of seeing you again does come - I shall be almost as silly & afraid of you as I was before - do you know what I mean? it's so different ~~my~~ ^{my} writing things to saying them - I mean for a moral coward like me - I'm scarcely afraid of being laughed at ~~them~~ - one feels the long distance & all that helps to make people judge more leniently of the faults & follies a letter may contain - & besides I so feel if you or any one I'm with too do laugh at me, that I shan't be sure to see it, & be thoroughly frozen & sent back into myself for ~~every~~ ^{every} long time to come; not only to them, but to everyone else - for I think with anyone who has a great dread of ridicule that will be its effect - I know it is with me - I know of course that I'm very foolish & ridiculous in ~~my~~ ^{many} many things - ways - but still that doesn't make me bear it better - Perhaps not being a moral coward you don't know all the agonies that it involves - You know I was not really afraid of you I mean not very much - only I always am of ~~any~~ ^{any} one I like & respect - I suppose it is that some unhappy chance has given me a keen appreciation of all the good nice things in other people in which I'm ^{yet} so wanting myself - & so the more I like them the more I can't bear that they should see what how unworthy I am of their friendship - & so I shrink from the least appearance of any ridicule on their parts as showing I suppose that they see I'm worthy of it - & yet at the same time I feel as if I can't bear any one's liking me on false pretences, as it were - I mean their liking a person who my consciousness tells me doesn't exist - & I feel I would give worlds if I had them that they were patient enough - and wise enough to hear & know all - & yet magnanimous enough to give me at least a crumb of their friendship notwithstanding all - & help me to leave off being what I am; & to be more than ever to be what I would - instead of it - Perhaps this seems all gibberish to you - I scarcely

know why I say it - except perhaps because I can't help it - it's often so much in my thoughts - one or two things in your letter have brought it more particularly into my mind this afternoon - Apropos of friends - I shall soon feel more lonely in my land than I've done yet - for the Sandersons sail for Natal on 10th Jan^y - It's true I scarcely seen them since they've been in Great Britain - & not ~~as~~ ^{as} changed letters much oftener than once a month - but still I felt, then they were - & that in any great straits we should be with each other - for their friendship for us has been tried in the fire of many painful troubles & difficulties - & stood the test nobly - Indeed I don't know what would have become of ~~dear~~ ^{dear} me many times if it had not been for their goodness - & especially his - Of course being a man he could do so much more; & besides, his own battling with the world & experience of it, enabled him to understand & enter into things, which ~~the~~ ^{the} dear thing, in her invalid life had never met with; having been of course from that very circumstance shut in from the outer world to a great degree; & always I hedged round with care & love - I fancy our very odd kind of lives have made us in many ways think & feel more like men - than is generally the lot of girls - I mean we've constantly had to take a man's part - of protection as well as providing for many helpless children; & their mother as well - & since that act of our lives ceased, (with our expulsion from home) we've had to protect ourselves & our elder & younger sister too - You can fancy how very different all this is to the general picture of drawing room, or housewifely, lives of most girls, who have their father or plenty of brothers to protect them; & care for all those things, for them which most naturally fall to men to do - why I speak to you about the Sandersons is both because they are very much in my thoughts just now - & because I can't help hoping you may come to Natal some day - I want you to know, & I hope like, my greatest friends there - I should much like to tell them of you too - but can't, because they are cursed by a sister of Mrs Sanderson's; who is a woman I can neither like or blame

& who is so much with them that she generally gets to know every thing Mrs. Sanderson does. & I don't choose to tell him any thing wh I wd not have his wife know. You can understand my feeling abt this. When people are really & rightly one; you feel it's a wrong to both to do any thg of that kind. Oh, you can guess how we detest this sister; this Mrs Ashton. How we call her the "fleur" & all sorts of complimentary names; for were it not for her; our friendship with the Sandersons wd be without alloy. for I can thoroughly trust dear Mrs Sanderson except when that big man is concerned. The fact is she & Mr Sanderson are both much too good & nice to either see or believe what a selfish unworthy woman Mrs Ashton is. How they can be sisters I cant make out. Well I must put some restraint upon my pen here, or I shall tire you sadly. For she has been a source of pain & discomfort to us in so many ways, that I can seldom think of her with any patience. at least not as regards her relations to us & the Sandersons. "Perse" I can feel very sorry for the poor woman if I think a selfish discontented person must be even a greater curse to themselves than they can be to any one else. & besides she has not very good health either. & perhaps that helps to make her more disagreeable than she wd otherwise be. But I must drop for dinner now for fear of being late. However, I don't so much mind as you do know Mr Sanderson already slightly. I think if I do meet him again, & see more of him, you will like him much. & you would like her too, did you get to know her. but that is rather a difficult thing to do. at least I found it so. But she is well worth it. I'm very glad to be so near London, so as to be within tolerably easy reach of them when they come there in the course of this week ready for embarkation. It will be very sad to say goodbye to them tho'. However, besides believing in their own good-happiness, I can feel too that they are going back to dear Louis. & she needs the help & comfort of such a friend as he is far more now than I. & I have the hope of getting back there too by & by you know. So I mustn't be foolish about it. only one feels there are such riches when

all this time I have been writing to you on Sundays. I say this afternoon wh will be my last Sunday before next mail goes to begin to answer your last dear letter. You know what a stupid & hurried one I had to send last time from not having been well just before the mail went. & I wd not for a good deal have to do the same this one, so begin now. especially as having been much troubled with neuralgia in head & face for the last fortnight. often too bad to allow of my doing anythg. I feel my powers of writing so very uncertain. however if it should come back. prevent my finishing this as I wish, you will understand why it is. I know will quite forgive it. I've been rereading your last letter & will try to answer it in order so that I may not forget anythg. for when the pain comes my head gets very stupid & I cant think properly. However I wont anticipate evils just now, but allow myself the full enjoyment of a chat with you. Yes I know that goodness & greatness are very poor expressions. if one just takes them calmly as mere words, sees what they are constantly applied to, & mean. but I think I used them as perhaps the nearest thing I could find at that minute to what I wanted. & so used them as expressing a lot of higher & deeper thoughts wh perhaps cant be put into adequate words at all. certainly not easily. Perhaps you know what I mean. Now, whether when thinking of those we most deeply love. highly respect & all we're known on earth, & still more if of the One who is above all. we just know what we ourselves feel & mean. but find no words to express it in. & so one just uses poor weak symbols to stand for great things: *faute de mieux* in short. Or perhaps it was that I chose only to state it at what seemed to me the lowest possible denomination at wh any one who studied the works and ways both of Creation & the moral world I arrive at, with regard to the being who had made & upholds all. whatever he wd choose to think or call it. But at best of times on earth. out of subjects you know what a poor stumbler I am at expressing myself. so I can scarcely hope to do it clearly or

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kind of way - for all the old ideas & appreciation for me & bore all the pain of her doubts alone, ^{BC 151 C8.9} we keep coming back mechanically, attaching them sooner than by telling me, run the risk of unsettling ^{thing} selves to each passage; so that I did not get its first ideas too; wh. she felt was too painful an ^{thing} exposure - fresh effect at all, like I want - & this about St Paul ^{thing} to wish - & I never knew what she thought I mean the thinking of him as just a real earnest man, with mind too, gives me quite a fresh feeling - abt 4 years after - now that she differs from ^{thing} as at all - interest to read his epistles & to see what he did in point of creed tel a few months earlier - ^{thing} I exp. think - believe, & his reasons as far as may be for how it was being so knocked about by circumstances, - as doing - more like one reads a biography in ^{thing} a short ^{thing} aid by the want of many church helps & props, whom we do know what I mean? Perhaps you never knew the circumstances denied us - but I'm deeply thankful for ^{now} I should like to tell you all I may of that, our history, ^{as you would know it} but it's not a thing one can enter into easily with conversation go on in the room ^{which is the case} & now dear Sunday has gone I don't know when I shall get another real peaceful time for writing to you - I say "all I may" because dear Louie I have been made so very much more one, ^{with her own & her own} than even Sister who care a good deal for each other often are - that she has talked almost thought out loud to me, more like a second self; you know how sacred such confidence is - Don't go & think from this that we follow the young-ladism "voce" of telling each other every thing, whether we're the right to do so or not - for reticence is a virtue we highly esteem, in our little power, try hard for. Because tho' we know we tell each other nearly every thing which is merely personal to either, yet we shd feel it mean wrong to an of our friends who may be, know one of us much better than to think to tell ^{any} the respects ^{them} I mean or to privately, without ^{first} (come ask) - granted - This is how I came to know so little, nothing I may say about dear George's relations; & so to feel such absolute strangers to them when going amongst them by their kind wish since I've been in England - For dear Louie's engagement with him was broken off as soon - before even any of their letters to England tell of it, & be answered, that I naturally heard little or nothing of them ^{then} - since that, tho' he & dear Louie had been great & firm friends for several years, & of course she knew all abt them; yet for the afore said reasons I never heard heard of it - except what slight allusions to them in his letters, wh. by his leave were always open to me too - often answered by me, if dear Louie happened to be out, or ill, or busy, when they came - what I've said above abt

say you who know so much about their
subject and not care for them - but to my igno-
rance all was very interesting - Yes, I do mean
to read Newman's Phases of Faith - but must wait
till I am either in lodgings of my own or staying with
heterodox friends neither of which I see any chance
of at present - or till the warm weather re-
turns so that I can get up early - read in my
own room - before any one else is awake to
be shocked by my books - You know I can't have
books like that one, about in the sitting room,
where I am staying - because both of people being
horribly shocked themselves of the chance of
their finding their way into the hands of any
young people who may be there too - for until
I feel comfortably settled in some better or other
I don't want to run the risk of raising painful
doubts in the minds of others which I can't yet
solve for myself - I have two pamphlets of
Theodore Parker's in my box now, which I've not
had the chance of reading since they were sent
to me 6 weeks ago -

I think there is truth in what you say all along en-
gagements - at least some - Thursday Jan 12th 1862
I did not leave off here for want of time, but felt too
poorly - good for nothing to write as the I wished to say - I
hate these mechanical letters myself - I left off - glad
if you will feel the same - Yesterday was taken up by
a journey to London & back - today I feel I dare not
allow myself the pleasure of going on answering your
letters as I had meant to do read for this mail - as
I see only one page written as yet to dear Louisa - I feel
I must write her all I can before we see her letters to-
morrow - I see by "Times" that the Cape Mail came
yesterday morning - but my letters have not arrived
yet - I had a note from Dr. Russell yesterday
saying he does not think so well of my case as he
did - & that I ought to be careful to come & stay in Lon-
don to be under inspection - & I must do this
as soon as mail has gone & I can find a lady

for the ^{hands} of Aunt is now in London & will
doubtless ^{hands} with me to come to her - yet I am not ^{at} yet
so do so for fear of being in the way - But I must
say goodbye for the present -

Continued from other 4th sheet -
Jan 14th - night. That naming of our poor
mad stepmother has reminded me of a pain-
ful subject which I must in my right duty to
you, not shrink from entering upon - & so
say as quickly as I can, before closing this -
I can't help thinking that I said something of it
incidentally to you one day at Cape Town
that of course merely slightly & apropos of some-
thing else. We may have been talking of

It is, that I fear there is insanity in some
branches of our father's family - this, thank
God, nothing of the kind in dear Mamma -
One of his sisters (the one I told you of as being
so fond of - & such a noble woman, this almost
an invalid) went quite mad one poor thing -
but that was from a sudden most pain-
ful dreadful shock; coming when she was in
very weak health too - & I feel that must happen
to any one - She entirely recovered, within a
year I think, or a little more - & is now more
sane - sensible ^{too} than most women I've ever
seen - So perhaps that's not a fair instance
still I like you to be now it - we can't
help thinking too that much of our own poor
father's strange unnatural conduct to us &
my mother, is from honesty which this in him
has just stopped short of derangement -
commonly called - & I make him ^{be}
sadly different to what people ^{more morally} than mentally

