

Indeed my Dear Anna you flatter me so  
 agreeably that I fear my vanity will have to con-  
 tend with my affection, for a share in our correspon-  
 dence but I cannot admit the position you take  
 for I am sure your letters give me just as much  
 pleasure as mine can afford you, and I certainly  
 have as many objects of deep interest in Lexington  
 as would make a much less skillful narrator accepa-  
 ble - the only part of your letter, that "cut a shadow  
 on my brow" was the account of your own health - but  
 I hope having weaned your child you will regain  
 strength - and that the spring will find you much  
 better on many accounts - your brother I trust has  
 perhaps kept you too much & too seasonably confined  
 and I know you do not spare your self, as much as  
 you ought, when you consider any duties call for exer-  
 tion - how does the Sunday School & the Bazaar Society  
 still engage your attention - and little children's grow-  
 ing wants supply your evening meditations and Jo's collec-  
 tions plead for your aid - you see the routine of  
 your occupations are very familiar to me & I have  
 little left untold of your admirable housewifery  
 and your social engagements - by the bye, I heard  
 yesterday that Charles Brodley was in town, I have been  
 waiting unpromptly to see him, Horace has been to his  
 lodgings without success, I know he can tell me of your  
 recent state of health, and the general doings, of all I care  
 most for in Lexington, I hope soon to receive a visit from  
 him - I am very much obliged to you my dear Anna for  
 the beautiful book you sent me -

I have often admired "Annie" in the columns of the news paper, and by a singular circumstance attributed the most beautiful of her pieces, "The Rain bow to your Aunt Maria - it was found in her hand writing among her papers - probably copied because so excellent, and as I never met it in print thought it original - indeed it was given to Isaac Allen she was in Kentucky as her Aunt writes - Mrs Welbys book is well got up and I hope will bring a golden reward to her labours. Mr Paulding was here when I received it & he said it was from the best we must expect, Poetry - for ~~it~~ <sup>that</sup> was a land of beauty & genius. I should have liked you to hear how highly he praised your country.

I have lately read one of the most charming books imaginable, and so truly feminine that no womans head could withstand its influence. It is taken from the Diary of Lady Wiltoughby - its purport to be the date in Charles 1<sup>st</sup> time - but is not considered genuine - whether the lady lived then - or not at all the thoughts & conduct are true & womanly, and I only wish it would be put into the American press & circulated. What think you of Miss Martineau's "Lectures on Mercantism"? after reading her life in a new room the wonder of her case seems little less than a miracle.

I am very much pleased to hear of Dr. Beconwells arrangements, he will be much happier when he is employed for himself and feels as if he had taken a host into the world. he is a fine healthy fellow, with much good sense, high principles, and a nice sense of humor and with his taste for a country life will no doubt become a practical Farmer, as well as a gentleman.

we are all growing old here very comfortably,  
and have much pleasure in our young nieces  
& nephews, & their families increasing around us  
the winter has passed rapidly away, in a quiet do-  
mestic seclusion. My young ladies having no taste for  
crowded rooms, we have rarely seen the blaze of gas  
lights - and our pleasant evenings, never half dozen  
winter books multiply faster than we can read  
them, particularly as the bright skies invite us  
daily abroad. I have had one delightful drive  
along the Schuylkill & Wissahickon with Mrs Butler  
& Pauline & Julia Hoffman. The grass is green  
on the road side & the blue birds gathering to invite  
spring & hail its approach - but lest we should be  
too forward - there came a snow storm, and just as  
back again - however that did not last long, and  
all is fair again -

Tell Ben our Brother Elting is drooping under  
the weight of years - we have fearful forebodings  
that his term will not be long, yet his cheerful  
mind and strong affection, show no symptoms of  
decay. The want of rest enfeebles his body, and  
after a sleepless night we find him suffering great  
debility. Sisters both, send affectionate greetings  
to you, I have been ~~for some time~~ suffering with  
a cold, so that I have not been able to see Sister Elting  
for some days. our Brothers are well & desire their  
love - may give my best love to my Dear Ben  
and to all the boys for me, Kiss Sweet Miriam  
and ever believe me most truly your affectionate