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Santiago de Cuba May 6 1841.

My very dear Aunt Martha.

I received in due course of Packet
your two very acceptable letters bearing dates September 8th and
December 29th of the past year, and really they would both have
been replied to long since, had business alone occupied me, but one
of my Partners whose wife was sick brought her from the United
States to pass the winter here, on account of the supposed advan-
tages of a warm climate for her disease, which was inflammation
and swelling of the knee joint, with emaciation of the limb above
and below the articulation, and variable general health, she is
24 years of age, very handsome, well educated, of a good mind, accus-
tomed to the most fashionable society at home, and notwithstanding
during her illness of high buoyant spirits, not able to walk a step
but had to be carried or rolled whenever she was moved about
the house, imagine such a woman with a strong desire of admiration
and attention, in a land of strangers, and flowing with her young
son of 3 years old called Henry Wright Shelton in my house, and
determined that I should occupy myself about her, and you will
yourself admit that I had not much chance of being able to match
an hour or two when not attending to business, for private letter
writing, but she had sailed for home, improved in health, and
I hope acknowledging that old bachelors are a case, not altogether to

unwillingly, one day as I was reading a novel to her, she said to me "do you know Mr Wright any person would
"take it for granted that you were born of and educated by a very good"
"well or distinguished family or you would never have the feelings and manner"
"towards women that you possess, being as you have done a quarter"
"of a century with so little intercourse with them", then I say to you
in order to satisfy you that I am not devoid of all the "humanities",
and now to make you smile at another view of my servitude, observing
that I had acquired considerable skill in bandaging from my former
practice of the Quaker, there were, two physicians and myself
in her bed room with a negro nurse who was employed apply-
ing ointment to the limb of friction, there sat one of the Doctors,
"I think it is rubbed enough let us put on the bandage" she raised
her head, looked round, blushed the slightest pink, and remarked to
me, "Mr Wright put on the bandage for me", I decline, modestly obser-
ving, "dear madam, Doctor Egenbrodt will do it much better" she replied
firmly "I said I wished you to put it on and not Doctor Egenbrodt", "Oh
yes I know you did say so, but then if the Doctor put it on I shall
"gain a wrinkle in observing him", to "gain a wrinkle" is a com-
mon equivalent to acquiring a knowledge of something new, she coloured
with vexation and said angrily, "you needn't wish to acquire any more
"wrinkles for certainly you have more than enough of them already" at
which Howard, seated myself on a low stool at her feet, took her
foot in my hand, and commenced applying to the bare limb of course
the tight spiral bandage from the foot to half way up the thigh

The Doctor & having retired a little apart to consult together for a moment she touched me with the toes of the sound leg, calling my attention by "hist!" and then catching my eye says, "forgive me, I'm sorry that I said any thing about your letter to you, but how could you be so very obstinate, when you must have seen that it required a determination not readily come to, to put my courage to the point of calling for your services in preference to the Doctor's." "say no more about it Helen" I reply, "but really you shew'd less tact in that observation than I have ever known you to do before, why a great many men of my age would never forgive you for it" the Doctor now & open'd ^{the} ~~his~~ ^{same} ~~case~~ ^{case} by my applying my undivided attention to the just application of the bandage. I really smile to myself when I consider how serious you will think this little page of incident, about a woman of whom you know nothing, and who you will probably consider a mere flirt, but such relations may give you a more particular view of some phases of my mind and character. I make your trip to Belfast, what a great advantage and comfort Steamers are to travellers. I regret that I shall not be able to realize my anticipations of a visit to my dear native land this year, for although I have got clear of the duties of the British Consulate, though even this I shall do again on the 10th Inst. for a month or so during the absence of ^{the} Consul on a trip to Havana, as well as the direction of the Commercial Establishment, nevertheless there are many matters of business that imperatively demand my attention, and my desire also is, in accordance with your opinion to leave all matters behind

me so regulated as not to make my return to the Island necessary, in
case I desire not to do so, and this much to be wished for position
I think I shall be able to attain, so as to have the happiness of seeing
you next year, and I have the pleasure of informing you that the
Royal West India Mail Steam Packets of which we have been appointed
Agents for this Port, will ~~be~~ commence running to & from England
and ~~to~~ and from New York, this place being included in their route,
the passage to and from the former to the 19 days, and to & from
the latter 8 days to the place also, and they are to run twice each
month to & from each of the named quarters, on the 1st of October
of the present year, thus presenting from that date great facility
for those who wish to visit the Fatherland, even via the United
States the passage both to & from for the run home would not
away more than 29 days, how wonderful! — I have not
heard from Chi. for some months, but I presume all is going
on with ^{good} any mishap, or I presume news would have reached me,
for you recollect the old adage "bad news travels fast," I write
them this morning, although I have not a line of his un-
plied to, and I suppose I am at least a busy man as he
is, and you say because you know I am busy, that you are grate-
ful for my writing you, that is the only word My Dear Aunt that
I have observed in any of your letters, that would have been
better left unsaid, it should not be used by either of us, but if
shall, it would be more appropriate, and in order coming from
me than you, because I am the obliged in the correspondence

I enclose you a letter for Cousin Jonathan because I am not exactly
certain of his address, which you will have the kindness to hand
to him, when I was writing him, I was full of some conservative
statements that I had just been reading, that enlarged much
upon the burthen and weight of debt, very different indeed
from the impression that you convey when you advise leaving your
house without moving, securing anything, and without any per-
son what so ever for charge, at the time of your visit to Belfast
this is as it should be and speaks volume in favor of the good
order of the City — I am very much pleased that the D^{rs} got
safe to land, and that you were pleased with them.

It would really be a consoling sorrow, to visit with you my
dear Aunt Rachel's grave, of a verity, she had a trying time
in this world, but I feel assured that her well spent life now has
its reward — I may say to you that the two years of 39
& 40, during which I had the active directorship of the House,
have resulted the best two years business that we have ever
done, so that my purse as well as self have both benefitted, I
say self too because I had been so long devoted to agriculture,
that my talents for the other branch might have been in
doubt — I am trying to break myself of the vice of chewing
tobacco, which bad practice I have abandoned myself to for many
years, having unwittingly fallen into it, while endeavouring to break
myself of smoking, I had flattered myself that I shall now rid my-
self of it, although it is somewhat difficult to accomplish
being felt really a deprivation

I have been called away three times since I began this letter, so that
this is my second day at it, as I cannot write comfortably
in the afternoon on account of heat & perspiration. I say
to Anathan that we have no female about the House, and I
talk you over to you about the knee patient, to reconcile the
seeming inconsistency, let it be perfectly understood that
Prof. The Stone's sojourn with us was an exception to the rule
I shall not leave this Island with a view of doing business
elsewhere, when I go hence, I must be satisfied with what
I may have, you would think it perhaps more than enough,
and as for passing my time, I love to read and am
therefore quite a domestic man, when I say I love to
read, do not take it for granted that I am full of knowledge,
unfortunately for that, I have for a great many years read
boldly for amusement, and I shall be so, but I
boldly to speak truth at once that it lead you to imagine
that I know more than I do.

I hope that our correspondence
may not be permitted to drop. Believe me

Dear Aunt Always & ever
yo Affec to Nephew
James Wright