

Margaret P Harmon to daughter Virginia in Binghamton, N Y

Alex.^a March 22nd 1888

My dear Daughter

I cannot say the contents of your letter afforded us much pleasure, we are sorry to hear you are going so far away from us. We should feel differently were you coming this way, as it is, we feel as though some sad calamity had befallen us, almost equal to the one through which we have passed so recently. On reading it, your Father said "It makes my head ache, If they go away off there, we shall never see her again." So we think you had better come home before moving. Dr can go and get things in order, and you and the children can go to C. from here. We want to hear very soon that you are coming, don't disappoint us. Dr said nothing to me of his visit to Chicago when he was here, you say "He refrained from mentioning anything about your moving, lest he should add to my anxiety." He need not have been so considerate. I think it would have been kinder, to have told me. As your arrangements are all made, and you are satisfied you are doing the right thing, any suggestions from us would be useless. May your fondest hopes be realised. But I must say, I think Dr could have found a field large enough in B. surely there are enough persons there needing all the care and skill he could bestow why concentrate so much talent in Chicago. As to my not mentioning your removal to your Cousin Emaline, I think it absurd so you must remove that restriction, for you to be in the same City with her, and not let her know it, would never do, as much as she thinks of you girls. I think it would do you both good to be better acquainted. If on further acquaintance you are not pleased, there need be no intimacy. Show your Christian charity by meeting her at least half way, here may be a chance for you to do Home Missionary work, which is needed, as well as Foreign. I can find no plausible reason for secrecy in regard to your being there. Why should she not know it.

Your Father improves slowly the unsettled weather keeps him at home most of the time, he goes out for an hour or two when the sun shines. He tried to go to the barbers last saturday, but on the way had an attack of heart trouble and was brought home in a carriage he took the medicine and rested awhile and was soon relieved, but we were very much alarmed for awhile. One of his eyes has been quite inflamed but is improving under Dr Gibsons care. He begins to realize he is not as young or strong as he used to be. neither am I. Mr Brown Maggie and Leonard came down to see us last Sabbath. Lex and Mary and Linton came after the others had left. Albert has been quite sick for some days. Mary said he was broken out with measles and felt better. I expect the other child-

ren will have them. Jean and the boys came up yesterday will spend a few days with us. I wish you were here too, hope you will be soon Susie probably knows by this time where they are going, as Conference closed yesterday. she has been very busy sewing and preparing to move, but takes things easy. like our dear Annie she has the faculty of knowing what ought to be done and how to do it. I think sometimes she may have gone beyond her strength but she rests now beyond all toil and care. Write to me on receiving this, write freely I am sorry you refrained from writing in regard to your removing. I am not very dangerous. Give love to all, retaining a large share for yourself your
 Loving Mother M A Harmon

quite sick for some days, (Mum said) he was broken out with shingles and felt better. I expect the other children will have them. I can and her boys came up yesterday will spend a few days with us, I wish you were here too, hope you will be soon Susie probably knows by this time where they are going, as Conference closed yesterday. she has been very busy sewing and preparing to move, but takes things easy. like our dear Annie she has the faculty of knowing what ought to be done and how to do it. I think sometimes she may have gone beyond her strength but she rests now beyond all toil and care. Write to me on receiving this, write freely I am sorry you refrained from writing in regard to your removing. I am not very dangerous. Give love to all, retaining a large share for yourself your
 Mother M A Harmon

From Jennie's husband - AWK Andrews
apparently Virginia's nickname

313 Chenango St Binghamton NY Mch 23 '88

My dear Mother

Your unkind letter was received today by Jennie and it greatly hurt her as well as myself that you should write such words with such a feeling towards us. You seem to regard my purpose as almost a criminal one. If you regarded it as simply imprudent and unwise in a business point of view, judging from your own feelings and knowledge, I could not complain, for from that point of view only, it might be fairly subject to criticism but I was long ago taught that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, and also that he cannot live by bread alone. It pained me more than you can know to take this step against your wish, but but I have not done it without consideration. It has been in my mind for nearly a year to do this, but I did not know when or how it would occur, nor that it would ever occur. I did not settle the question of going to Chicago till last week, and as soon as it was known that I would go Jennie wrote you. I had the matter under consideration when I was last in Alex, and had thought of it for months, but the whole matter rested in uncertainty. When I went to Alex Jennie desired me to speak of my purpose, and I should have done so with pleasure but for two or three reasons which seemed to me to forbid it at that time. One was the uncertainty of my going, and I did not wish to raise to unpleasant a question which I knew would be apposed, when it might never require a decision. Another reason was because of the strong dislike you have to hearing me mention Dr Teed's name in terms of commendation or approval; or to expressing any sympathy with his peculiar doctrines, so much so that I seldom speak of him to you without afterward regretting that I have done so. But the strongest reason of all was that neither you nor father were in a condition to discuss so important a matter as this, especially one which meets so great and bitter opposition as you offer to this. It would have wrought more injury than my presence could have worked good and you and the entire family would have censured me severely for my lack of common medical sense in broaching so distasteful a measure at so unseasonable a time, and for my imprudence and impropriety in periling father's life and your peace of mind when you were already burdened with trouble almost beyond endurance.

You have known for years how I regard Dr Teed and I have known for years how you regard him. I do not see how this matter can be compromised.

I must surrender my judgement, my conscience, and my convictions of duty, or do what I am about to do. I do not claim to be free from human weaknesses and human defects, or that I am better than other men, but I see things differently to most men, and I do claim to be measureably honest and conscientious. I claim to be acting as much from a religious conviction and a sense of duty in this matter as William was in entering the ministry, but I join myself with a man who is evil spoken of, whose name is a by word and reproach, who has few friends and many enemies.

I take upon myself the reproach and censure of dear friends and the opposition of many Christian people in join Dr Teed. I am not satisfied with the religious instructions of the Church. I see neither the wisdom or the power of God in it. Time will prove whether he be with Cyrus in knowledge and power.

The Lord taught his people to pray that his Kingdom might come here and that His will might be done here, but those who profess to believe in and serve him pour contempt and ridicule upon the idea that anyone can live the divine life here. They prefer to wait til they get "over yonder" but the Lord himself taught them to pray that His Kingdom might be established here and not that they might go to some distant point to find it. He taught them to pray for His reign, His will, His Kingdom which is to overturn and supplant the present Kingdom of the devil. I know I count but one, but if I am strong enough and brave enough and wise enough God will honor me for trying to honor him. Dollars and cents do not count for much in this conflict - which is coming, though they add immensely to ones physical comfort. I may fail in getting much of that substance but I trust I may not fail in getting the desire of my heart - The Truth.

I regard Dr Teed as a Man - the man, - sent of God, as much so as John the Baptist or Elijah or Moses was. They each and all had a hard time of it. That was the matter with these God sent men that none believed in them, but all sought to kill them, and their life was a long hard struggle with man's unbelief and casuality. What did they do that man should hate them so bitterly. Our fathers stoned the prophets and we garnish their sepulchers. What almost no one believed at the time of occurance thousands accept years later.

Davis was a man of God but I know of nothing in Dr Teed's career worse than David's. Elijah slew the two captains & their fifties who had never harmed his that we know of, and also hundreds of false prophets. I know of

no such slaughter by Dr Teed, yet no Christain censures Elijah.

Mother my life is in a great degree, more perhaps than I am now conscious of, bound up in what I believe to be Dr Teed's mission on earth, and I am straitened to its accomplishment, or at least to try for it whether I succeed or fail. I can only say with Leuther "I can not otherwise, God help me."

I meant no disrespect to you or father in not speaking of this matter when there, neither was nor am I ashamed of my faith, nor was I secret or crafty in avoiding mention of my desire. I simply did what I then thought and still think was best under the circumstances of father's dangerous illness and your own ill health and grievous affliction. (Annie died 19 Jan). You may or may not sometime understand and appreciate my motives in doing what I purpose doing. I can only say I deeply regret that you should feel as you do about this matter. Jennie is at liberty to go home when she and you desire, but if the spirit that comes with your letter is an index of that which will meet her when she comes, I do not believe her visit could give her pleasure. I greatly desire that she should visit you, for her father's home is very dear to her, but I do not want her to be oppressed and burdened in spirit by reason of difference in conviction of what is right - for her and me. I would much rather she should go home before moving because of the difference in the expense of travel and the fatigues of the journey, but it seems almost necessary that she go with me till our home is in order. We have invitation of friends to stay with them till our own home is in order. Then at a later period I shall be glad to have her visit you if it be your pleasure.

Now as to that check for \$25.00. It was a surprise to me, but no more than I might expect from either of you. It was very kind of father to send it but I do not feel willing to accept it, and hope neither he nor you will feel hurt at my returning it. It gave me great pleasure to be of service to you, and it would greatly mar it to take remuneration for that which was so gladly rendered. Please allow me to return it. The favors have always been on your side heretofore. We hope to see you all before winter comes again. Jennie sends much love and will write you soon. I hope Father will soon get strong as before

With kindest regards to you all I remain

Affectionately

A.W.K. Andrews

To Margaret Harmon from daughter Virginia H Andrews

June 1st 1889 4 College Pl
Chicago Ill.

My dear Mother

I received your letter yesterday, but am surprised to hear of your having written three times before I answered you for I only rec'd two letters from you, of that I am sure. The box also came yesterday - It made me very very sad to handle the garments that she had worn and the things she had handled. You did not say what Henry had written - Was there much of importance & is he boarding or keeping house? You ask about our manner of living, & what I do. We are all as one large family or boarding house. At least I have nothing to do outside of my own rooms and looking after the children & their sewing and mending of course. I have one floor, two very large rooms and two smaller ones. Dr has one of the smaller ones as his private office. I could hardly have more pleasant rooms or more pleasantly located. The Drs sister Mrs Norton is at the head of the domestic department with two ladys for assistants & an excellent girl, a man attends to furnaces etc etc - one lady has charge of the parlors, another the halls, another the bathrooms - so divided up it does not come hard on any one. Maggie's business is to set the tables and keep the dining room in order. This has done wonders for Maggie - I hardly know her sometimes when she gets an ambitious fit on her. she acknowledges that it has been a good discipline for her. She came here very much prejudiced but it is all gone - We live on a common interest basis, of course we have our own personal affects and possessions they belong to no one else, but we all fare alike. We are not vegetarians but eat meat frequently and meat soups, fish, etc - I do not think we are at all different from other people on this line - we do not eat so much meat & I think are full as well off for that change - Tell Father I thank him for his package of tea - it was very kind of him to send it. I wish Mother that I could convince you that you do Dr Teed injustice when you speak of him as you do. Perhaps I can not change you and possibly it would be useless to try, but I do think sometime you will think differently of him. I cannot doubt his correct life, nor his charity, or unselfishness. We have lived with him and have seen it. Speaking of Maggie's former prejudice - she made the remark one day "I wish he was not so good & then I could hate him." that, of itself was endorsement - We have service here Sunday after at 3:30 & two or three parlor lectures in the evenings during the week. I never heard such prayers from mortal lips and I have hear others say the same. Mother if you could hear him sometimes I do not believe you could doubt his inspiration - no matter what lies

Anne H.
Ray(?)

others tell of him - he is transformed from what you thought of him then -

You believe in a change of life with others much more astray than he ever seemed to be - you have confidence in their professions & welcome them into the church - yet you will have no faith in this man - no matter how pure we tell you we know his life to be, but cry as they did of old "Away with him- Away with him", and some would even add "Crucify him." Do you not believe what your own children tell you - You sent that paper concerning Schwimputh (?) It is one Dr A sent you to prove to you that according to Scripture the last days are at hand & the false Christs are multiplying. Only today we had a letter from another who claims to be the Messiah, but none of them have the wisdom, the understanding of scripture the Bible proof of his mission as seen in Isaiah as this Cyrus has - his name even being foretold & his fathers - Jesse & he said to be the Shepherd that should gather Israel as a shepherd gathers his sheep. I do not write these to weary or exasperate you my dear Mother - but I feel so sure that we are not mistaken - and I wish you would listen without prejudice. However it will see to right - of that I am sure! I know one thing I am willing to make many sacrifices & endure hardship and trial for this cause - as for no other I ever knew-

Sunday I think the Confederate monument has certainly a very conspicuous place - is it an improvement to the looks of the street? Decoration day was quite a dreary one here, though I understand they had a fine parade. It has poured steadily for almost a week - and today we have a little sunshine.

Monday. Annie has gone out in the country for a little visit & was quite happy over the prospect, and for her sake I am glad the rain is all over- What a fearful time they have had in Pennsylvania over the floods - I imagine we have not yet heard of all the disasters on account of it, So Mollie is going to the Golden Wedding! I expect it will be quite a notable event - and I wish you & Father were going too. Dr is writing to Father so I will close this and leave all the rest of the say to him. What is Jean's baby named? Give a world of love to her & to Mollie & Maggie - the other girls too if not beyond your reach. I suppose Father is revelling in strawberries - give him our best love

Your own Virginia

From Margaret Ann Potter Harmon to Allen Cobb Harmon in Alexandria VA

Monday Morning

Chicago, Dec 1st 1890

Dear Allen

Sitting at Emalines writing desk I look out of the window and see the snow falling rapidly but it melts about as fast. I attended Church yesterday heard a sermon from a Scotch clergyman from the Text "He that winneth souls is wise" after service attended S School, went home with Em's friend, Miss Annie Poole to dinner she lives with her sister Mrs Beldon, they have a beautiful home in one of Chicagos suburbs (Henwood). James and Em were to have met me there I found James, but E was kept at home by a severe cold, so I returned with James, to see how she was. she is better this morning (Monday). I presume you had an enjoyable time at the family gathering Thursday, I should love to have been with you. It passed pleasantly with us at No 4. We did not have a sumptuous feast, but a little more than usual. They live very plainly, seldom have meat more than once a week, but seem to thrive on it. Mrs Robinson a friend of James, sent Doctor his dinner which he enjoyed very much. On Friday he was lifted into a large chair, and sat up for half or three quarters of an hour. soon got tired, and was put to bed. I thought he seemed unusually tired saturday, but these changes may be expected. His speech is decidedly improved. He manifests considerable anxiety in regard to my spiritual condition, tells me I am prejudiced (perhaps I am) advises me to think seriously, but I don't, that is, I don't think as he wants me to I guess he thinks I am a hardened sinner. I say but little, knowing I cannot change his mind, and do not intend he shall change mine. but enough of this. Trusting our Heavenly Father will overrule it all for good. He has declared "My glory will I not give to another" They surely are detracted from Christ's glory in regarding Teed as a manifestation, of Christ. As far as I can see he is very human.

Tuesday afternoon Returned to No 4 since dinner in a snow storm. Em wanted me to stay with her, but I thought I had been away long enough. found Dr. laying on the lounge by the window about the same as when I left him saturday. Received Effie's letter this morning, was glad to hear you had so pleasant a time at Maggie's I know she enjoyed having a visit from Jean Effie told me of the failure of your intended joke on Alf and his Uncle. your gunning expedition has afforded us all considerable amusement. Dr says tell them "I expect to spend Christmas in the 'College of Life' my Koreshan Home"

I do not feel that I am needed longer and want to see you all. I do not care to trespass longer on the hospitality of the "Institution" have been treated kindly, and with consideration., but do not wish to impose on good

nature. Allen went to the M E Church with me yesterday. A Mr. Caldwell preached. his subject was "Eternity" Text Isiah 57 verse 15th. The only place where the word occurs in the Bible. The Koreshans held service here last evening, but I did not attend, staid with Dr whilst the rest went. he held forth at considerable length I listen until I get tired then leave him. Jennie held forth this morning. But convince a man (or woman either) against their will, and they'll be of the same opinion still. I guess this had better be burned. With much love I remain your aff wife

10:30 AM Monday Morning Dec 8th 1890

Dear Allen

Your letter is here It seems we have both been waiting for the other to write. e'er this arrives you will have heard from me. I wrote to Effie too. I want to come home. have intimated it in several letters But do not think the R R is issuing free passes, if they are, I have not heard of it. A word to the wise is sufficient, you can draw your own inference. Sickness brings many and various expenses, some of which I would like to have borne, but - It may be you have not thought of this I will not attribute it to want of heart, it may be want of means. Henry writes that he cannot say when he can come here don't like to leave whilst a fight is pending, says they are liable to be called out any day, so I shall not wait to see him. He regrets not being able to see me before I leave, hopes to see us all this winter. I would like to see Mr Jameson and Frank, too should they call. wish you had given the College address to Mr J, as the two places are so far apart, he will not be likely to get to both. I have promised Em to come see her again, so may be there when he calls. May go over today or tomorrow. Dr seems quite bright this morning. He and Jennie remonstrate against my going home, but I am going when - - -

Jennie says "send lots of love"

From Virginia

Beth Ophrah Washington Heights Ill
Oct 10 1892

My very dear Mother

This lovely October morning finds us all well and happy. The birds about our dwelling are singing as though it was spring time, and as yet the frost has left us undisturbed and the weather keeps perfect. Annie has commenced her school duties again, and she is quite enthusiastic over them, and gets on nicely in spite of her long vacation. She has two young girls here in the house with her from California, they are about her own age and quite congenial so she seems quite happy.

Dudley is also in school and his teacher says he is the best boy in the class, so that is satisfactory - especially when there are quite a number in the class.

We are making a great preparation for celebrating Doctor's birthday. If the weather keeps good we are to have an out of doors festival - a stage erected and music by the orchestra through the afternoon and evening interspersed with other entertainments. Allen has advanced so well with his violin practice that he has commenced playing in the orchestra which was one of his dreams. He is enthusiastic over music, and his teacher says is very correct. He will practice away for hours at a time and needs no urging in that direction.

I expect you wonder I do not send for Maggie's clothing. She has only begun to need her thick things & I will send for them very soon. if you will see that they are boxed I will notify you further - they will probably be sent for, this week or next. I enjoyed the letter you wrote me very much. The details of news were very interesting, I should have liked much to have been at the family gathering. I think Susie and the children must have enjoyed their summer outing. I was so sorry to hear of Cousin Harriet's recent affliction, she had been sent for so many times for such sad scenes. I wondered if you had any army visitors after you wrote your letter. You said then that none had called. I do not doubt that if you still lived on Queen St. you would have seen some of them. I am sorry you do not get stronger. I expect you do too much as soon as you have a little strength. I know your ambition always used to go beyond your strength.

I hope by this time that Mollie has recovered I am glad Lex has a position in Gtown - I should think it would be much pleasanter for him to have a change,

if he can get someone else to work the farm.

My dear Mother have carefully read the texts you refer to. I cannot see them as you do, and this question has been discussed so often between us without any change on either side that argument seems useless. Be assured that I am still of sound mind I still have my reason intact and I must follow the dictates of my conscience whatever the result. I know that this religion is a pure religion. It is the religion of Jesus Christ. We teach nothing that he did not teach and exemplify in his life. You take him for example. Did he marry? People are horrified at the idea of Jesus conforming to the marriage customs - but if it is such a holy state & condition, why not? I prefer to follow him rather than Paul for he tells us himself that "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means, serve some." To the Jew he became a Jew - to the weak, he acknowledges he became weak - he certainly had different standards for different people, and came down to their plane, hoping thereby to win them to at least a measure of truth.

He made it possible for the primitive church to decline and fall from their high estate of purity and chastity. If you will read his letters carefully I think you will see I am right in this. I do not feel that in adopting this religion I have one whit fallen below any of my former standards of what a Christian life shall be - far from that, but I see the necessity of overcoming our faults and living what we propose, as I never did before. To me, it has become a reality. I do not find fault with those who do not see as we do, or who do not choose our life, but surely we have a right to follow out our highest ideals if in so doing, no one is harmed. When I see it otherwise, it will then be time to acknowledge it- Until then I am steadfast in this faith from principle.

Yours very lovingly

Virginia H. Andrews

My best love to all the dear girls.

From Virginia

Beth Ophrah Washington Heights Ill Nov 27 '92

My very dear Mother

It gave me great pleasure to hear from you yesterday. I found it on my return from Normal Park where I had been to see Maggie. I regretted that I had not rec'd it in time to take it down and tell her the news it contained, however I will send it to her - Allen comes up almost every day to the printing office so we have frequent communication.

Dudley is also there now, for all the little children could be made so much more comfortable there for the winter, and they will come back when the spring opens again. We have very good schools connected with our work - one is a kindergarten for the little ones, and another for those farther advanced. Dudley told me yesterday he was almost through the third reader - so I think he is getting on rapidly.

Maggie's box came a few days since and she was glad to get her cloak. Maggie told me of the ten dollars you gave her for me, but she was obliged to use it while staying in Phila. - but my dear Mother I thank you for it just the same. I intended to speak of it to you before this and thought I had - Allen was very much pleased to get those nice handkerchiefs. If I did not mention them in writing to you, I certainly intended to I know it is always satisfactory to learn if anything reaches its destination.

I am glad you have had such a pleasant visit with Clara - I remember her as a very sweet lovely girl, and you say she has changed but little. I was surprised to hear of the electric R.R. being completed to Mt Vernon. That does indeed simplify matters a great deal, and through the cold weather must be a great improvement on the long cold carriage ride. I am glad you are enjoying your visit with Sue. I would like to peep in on you sometimes, and join you in your daily talks. Maggie is enthusiastic in her praise of her Aunt Susie - Her sweet disposition, and her wonderful adaptability.

Maggie is not very happy, I fear, and I find myself feeling very sorry for her. Will is still in Minn. and she does not know when he will return, though he speaks of it sometimes. It is surprising that Sue should meet Mrs Hill in Phila.

I would love to see the sweet babies you tell of. I had to stop a minute to remember who "Annie" could be. Do you ever hear from Henry? and if so what? I heard from Edna Pusey (?) yesterday - or Hurd it is now - her health is exceedingly delicate and has been for a year past, so she rarely goes out doors.

John is building up a fine business for a firm there in the upholstering line. She sent me a clipping from the B paper speaking of his taste in draping

and decorating as very unique. He is head of the department in that firm.

I hope you will give my love to Susie for I feel a great love for her, even tho my letters are few - I would write oftener but I know you are not interested in the work that engrosses us here, and I do not want to force anyone to listen to what is unpleasant or obnoxious to them, besides my duties as sec etc keep me quite busy. As yet I see no reason to doubt that the Lord has a hand in this work. Everything seems to point that way. He certainly is going before him and "Making his paths straight" as he has promised to "Cyrus " in Isa. If this proves a fallacy I can but feel as Dr Andrews once expressed it- If prophecy is true & this is not the man, then one must come yet whose name is Cyrus, to do this work, or else the Lord's words are without meaning.

He Cyrus, foretold the present state of the social world, the fight of labor and capital, eighteen or 20 years ago when we first knew him. And when there were no signs of the present condition of things. I cannot help but feel that He is the Cyrus that shall deliver the children of Isreal - the reincarnated Isralites, who are spoken of as not Jews outwardly - but the spirit within is the same that was in the ancient Jews, but I did not mean to preach to you Excuse me. and love me as I do you - Your affectionate daughter

Virginia

Love to Sue

From Virginia H Andrews to Margaret P Harmon

Washington Heights Ill

Jan 13 '95

My very dear Mother

As usual we seemed to be thinking of each other about the same time and so our letters crossed again about the first of Jan. I thank you very very much for your kind gift, my share of it, and will use it for my own personal benefit as you request. Annie & Dudley also thank you for your great kindness. I think Annie is writing to you this afternoon. You quite took us by surprise in your announcement of the arrival of another little stranger. I am sorry that the little thing has to suffer with whooping cough and all the other babies too - what a time Jean must have, if they all are suffering from it. It is well little Ruth has a grandmother to mother her just now. I should like to have seen the meeting with her mother, after her long separation. The quiet Christmas you speak of must have been quite a contrast to other gatherings in days gone by.

But it does not do to dwell upon the past - "It comes not back again", so I put the thought of it from me as much as possible - it only saddens me and unfits for present usefulness. How strange it seems to think of a Rail Road passing our door on Royal st.! shades of Rip Van Winkle - surely it is a dream. How near you can you take the train to Jeans?

I thank you my dear Mother for all your good kind wishes for the present year- may they be realized. I believe some of them, at least, will. I know I am trying to live up to my highest ideal of truth and right - and I know I have not lowered my standards.

I, too would have enjoyed being at your merry party on New Years day - when Effie "rec'd" in her room. Should love to have seen Sister Maggie and Cousin Annie Campbell. Poor Mollie! so the headaches trouble her still. I think her time of life does have something to do with it. You ask if I know of a remedy. I have heard that a few drops of spts of ammonia in water was excellent - say five or six drops in a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water - still I would ask a druggist or physician I think.

I have not yet rec'd Sue's Christmas letter from Maggie - should like very much to see it. I think you fared well for Christmas gifts -, and your presents were so useful too.

I do not like to think you are 75 - I wish you were only 45. Just think where I am! When I remember it - I say Can I be I? getting on at this rate?

What does Mollie think of it? I think the girls are mistaken about my owing them letters. I have answered every letter I ever received from them, but if you will tell me which one thinks I owe them one, I will be glad to repair damages immediately. I have not written them because I felt they found it too much of an exertion to write, but should be more than glad to hear from them again.

You speak of the frost in Fla. Yes it did great damage. everything suffered in the way of fruits & vegetables.

Allen wrote that the morning after the freeze - He and one of the young men went fishing and caught over 500 lbs of fish. You may think this a large fish story, but, it was on account of the fish being so benumbed with the cold. They could spear them without any trouble. They caught 24 jew fish weight from 10 to 40 lbs - a very fine fish. the rest were of smaller variety. He says that thousands of fish were frozen to death in the Gulf of Mexico. Allen is very much pleased there, his health is good, and he is fully interested in the outcome of our work. He is keeping up his music and they have a fine orchestra. Annie has commenced taking violin lessons and she is very fond of it. she is full of business- her music, elocution, school studies, household duties (for the girls take turns in dining room work and washing dishes, and it is good for them.) Last week I took her to Mr Albert Millers - when Mr M came in he just looked at Annie in astonishment. He had not seen her since she came from Alex. she is taller than I am. He could hardly believe it possible this was the little Annie Ray that staid at their house when we first came. Dudley ofter goes down there for a visit with Lindsay, and Alice & Mrs Fox always keep up their affection for us, as well as almost a reverence they had for Dr Andrews.

I hear from Margaret that she is happy with Edna and is really, it happens, quite a Godsend to her, for John suddenly concluded to accept a situation in a large establishment in Syracuse, Mr Hurd travels, and as Edna cannot be left alone it would have necessitated her closing her house, as it is rented until May, and going to Syracuse to board. So Margaret's being there is very fortunate. They keep house together, and M says it is like playing keep house.

Edna has been very kind in paying her way there, and in other ways. I felt that M must go somewhere for a change- she was running down & I thought she ought to get out of the rut she was in. I believe it will be the best thing for her - I think she will learn many useful things from Edna, and M writes that the home is such a dainty, exquisite place that it is a pleasure to be in it. Christmas the table & sideboard were decorated with pink smilax, palms, and maiden hair

fern while pink ribbons were suspended from the chandelier to the candelabra filled with pink wax candles - etc etc- she quite enjoys dainty things, though she gets along nicely with out them-

It just occurs to me that I may have written you about M's Christmas decorations, or John's rather, for he did it. if so excuse it and I won't do so anymore.

It is getting late so I will finish this. Write whenever you feel in the mood my dear Mother - for your precious handwriting is very welcome to me. I shall want to know how all the little whoopers come on with the dreadful cough. Dear Sue - how sad she feels, she wrote me about her darling baby, and how she longed for Mollie - Mollie was always such a comfort in sickness, I do not wonder. My love to her, bless her! and all the rest of the girls -

Your very loving daughter

Virginia

I was so surprised to hear of Henry Ray being there.
What does this scrap mean that I enclose?

To Margaret P Harmon from daughter Virginia

Washington Heights Ill

Feb 5th '95

My very dear Mother

Though I wrote you last, yet I always feel indebted to you, so I will not hesitate when I am in the mood for writing you. One letter passed yours, as usual, then I wrote again in response to your Christmas letter, thanking you for your kind gift. I assure you I appreciated it & hope you did not rob yourself of something to give it to me.

I spent my share of it on my teeth, so I carry the evidence of your kindness with me always, as I see the fillings.

You wrote of Henry being there. Did he come to Chicago? and do you think he will come out here if he does? I would like very much to see him. We are easily reached if he wishes it - on the Rock Island Road. Has he changed much, or any?

I rec'd the sweetest picture of your little namesake Margaret Roberts yesterday - she is certainly a darling - "from her top all down to her toe", and how cute her little toes look curled up on the fur rug. She looks like Robert did when a baby does she not? so it seems to me.

I wonder if you remember Henry Silverfriend? He went to meet you when you came? Well he left for Florida today probable to engage in the work there. He was very eager to go. There is so much going on there in various lines of improvement & development. The papers say that the Co. where our land is located suffered less from the frost than almost any other in Florida, so we are fortunate. I hear great praise of Allen's faithfulness & efficiency. A petition has been sent to Washington for a P.O. and if it is granted - of which there seems little doubt - Allen is to be Post Master - the place to be named St. Andrews Port. Maybe I told you this in my last letter. If I did excuse the repetition. Allens letters are eagerly read here by the whole Society, or to the whole society - He is a general favorite and his descriptions of life there are always of interest.

I wonder if I shall be repeating myself if I tell of his catch of fish the day after the freeze when he & a young boy caught 500 lbs of different kinds of fish.

Thursday Feb 7th The two Gazettes you sent me recently have just been handed me. In looking them over I see the marked article about P.H.Ray - what does it mean - what is the trouble - is it in reference to some branded cattle belonging to someone out west? I think I sent you a clipping referring to something

of the kind. Was it true?

I see you have been having it very cold in Alex. - well we have a big snow storm on hand today Everything is covered with snow - & I never saw a more beautiful winter scene than we had this morning - every evergreen - spruce, fir, pine and arbor vitea were a mass of white lace work and tassels, to stand under them & look up into their branches made one think of a fairy grotto or an ice palace. It was surpassingly beautiful. Every pine needle was covered separately as though with white plush, forming the most beautiful tassels as they branched out from one common center. The cold of course was intense or it would not have remained so an hour.

The trains are delayed, and there must be great suffering resulting from this low temperature; this thought deprives us of much pleasure we would otherwise have in contemplating such beauty.

Now Mother I want to ask you a question - what prompted

To Margaret P Harmon from daughter Virginia (partial letter) Feb 1895 (9th)

2

you to enclose the clipping you sent "The Sanctified Band"? You surely must have had in your mind the thought that we as a community represented a parallel case, else why did you send it? If you do think this of us, if you do not know your own child better, if you do not have any more regard for Dr. Andrews, and the purity of his life than to believe this, I can but feel that it is both an insult to me and an insult to his memory. I do not expect the world outside to give us credit for living the lives of purity we claim, but I do expect, not to be misunderstood & misrepresented by those who should know me best, & who have had no need ever to blush for me or my acts. I feel so strongly stirred at this constant association in your mind of ourselves, with other communities that you happen to hear of (Schweinfurths for instance) communities so entirely different in all their teaching & living, that I can but speak strongly & plainly. If you hear of other communities that grovel in slime & filth & sensuality, please divest your mind of the thought that we belong to that order.

You have been here, you have heard our doctrines. We teach & practise nothing that Jesus Christ himself did not teach & practise.

He said that in the last days the time would come when "those that had wives should be as though they had none", and if these be the days - and I believe it, thank God that the time has come to separate themselves from the world - to be a "peculiar people" if necessary, to be despised, scorned, avoided, scoffed at - for the kingdom of Heaven's sake - "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you & say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake" said Jesus. And if these words were ever applicable to any body of people they are true of the Korishan Community, and some day the world, or a part of it at least will live to know & believe it.

I never in my life met with people who were as near living up to Christ's requirements as in this Unity, a more unselfish people does not exist on the face of the earth today I believe more helpful to each other, more forgiving, more anxious to help the world, the weary down trodden millions, perhaps not in their own way, but by sacrificing themselves, even their property, their all.

My dear Mother, I cannot bear to have you feel as you do about us, and yet if you too are one of them who can see in us naught but evil, I must submit. Having my conscience clear toward God and man, gives me a courage that helps me

2

to endure - I feel how useless it is to try to turn the tide of public prejudice, & yet I could cite instance after instance of my personal knowledge when in individuals it had completely melted away on our being met with, by those of strong prejudices - and they were amazed that people did not investigate for themselves, and thus see how completely we had been misunderstood & misrepresented, principally by the daily press, which molds public opinion - but I have written enough - I love you and I want you to see things differently. My love to all the dear ones & to your precious self

your Virginia

To Margaret P Harmon from daughter Virginia

Monday Feb 11 '95

My very dear Mother

I have had the enclosed letter written several days undecided whether to send it or not. I do not think however that you can misunderstand it or its purpose - This is my religion, and my church - and I conscientiously believe that I am doing right in the stand I have taken and it seems to me if I should send to you an account of some scandal about some minister, or member of a church - and the papers are filled with them - which would look like I intended a reflection on you and your religion - it would be on the same line, and as wide of the mark as this scandalous thing you sent me.

If this is a warning not to belong to a community - the others with as much reason would be a warning not to belong to a church.

If I had sent my letter it would have passed yours as is so often the fate of my letters. We seem to think of our indebtedness to each other about the same time and our letters pass on the road. I thank you for Fathers handkerchief. I guess I will send it to Allen. I heard from him Saturday. He is very busy - & seems happy. Is a general favorite, and I am proud of him. Margaret writes me that her health is much improved. Edna John & Mr Hurd went to New York for about a ten days visit & Margaret with Ednas 15 year old nephew kept house. Edna wrote me she kept everything in beautiful order. she did the cooking (with a gas stove) which she has learned pretty much since she has been there - E says she does beautifully & has things very nice & dainty, & yet was very economical. I was glad she took such an interest. she writes me of her culinary experiences & triumphs of which she is very proud. Everything is so nice there, & so convenient & so few of them, she says it seems like playing at keeping house. I think it has been good for her to have the responsibility too. It has given her an object to interest her.

You ask after Mr. Hill. he is in Balt. attending a medical college. I have not seen Mr or Mrs H. for over a year - she I think has left the city. they talked then of going to Europe with Mabel.

You speak of Henry returning to his regiment - where is his Reg.?

I am sorry Sue has to be tied to kitchen work, with all her other duties - Has Ray entirely recovered? It does not seem possible that Edith is 16. How the children do grow. Annie is taller than I am. I am sure you are right when you say Effie has her hands full. I do not see how she manages with three such little babies, but as you used to tell me if one takes up all your time,

others can do no more. So I suppose that holds good in this case.

I do not wonder mother that the anniversary of the 2nd brings to you a dreadful sense and memory of your bereavement, and our common sorrow. I think a better man never walked the earth I always think of him & Dr A together as models. I had an adoration for both of them, each in his line, and know the world was better for them having lived in it. I just can't go back & remember all there is to remember that was so good and true, and noble without being heart sick to think they are gone, & we must live without them.

My only comfort is to turn to my present work, and bury myself in that, do what I can for others, live as true & pure a life as I know how, - and as Whittier says "For He, who knows our need, is just, and somehow, somewhere, meet we must".

Dear Mother, I wish I could help you bear the loneliness. I know it is a great burden at times. I have an idea that the babies help to comfort you, so I love them for it, and their mothers also. Tell them so, I will write soon to Jean - but close this now as it is so long.

Lovingly yours

Virginia

I enclose a Japanese persimmon seed from Florida. The fruit is as large as an orange & very luscious.