

New York Oct 8th 1853

Again My dear Jeanie I begin a letter knowing that it will be by fits & starts that it will be filled. Since Thursday I have been as busy as a bee & at last papers are signed for the North Carolina affair. I can hardly believe my senses when thinking over the fact that your humble servant is the Director of a Company & the one who is to carry out the plans & projects of the rest – growing wilder I am without doubt but a boy I still remain perhaps made more so by the petting I receive or rather have received as year after year returns from cruises have made me the one upon whom luxuries were to be lavished & caresses bestowed. In truth I am not older in mind in feelings would perhaps be more correct & therefore the waking up to the fact that others are depending upon my exertions tells me suddenly that years have made their mark. In regard to the Company stock is to be at once issued & as parties have expressed a willingness to take, there will not be any longer delay.

Interruption No. 1 The girls went up yesterday to the Abbey to stay very much to my astonishment, whether they will find it as pleasant or not remains to be seen though, Father & my constant employment deprived them at times of an escort, but they were surrounded by persons they knew & another great thing were at liberty to go where (illegible) they pleased. Now Janey of course feels that some time should be spent in the house otherwise Aunt Margaret may take up the idea that we are making a convenience of the Abbey – the worst of all is that I am going to Washington tomorrow night & had they not moved, the girls would probably have gone home with me. Again on the move you will exclaim. I go on business for Father, which he forgot to attend to when there and as I can do it nearly as well as he, & his presence here at this time is more important than mine. Though by night time is to be the word, I may probably go at once to Charlotte but this will depend upon the news that may be sent me on Monday if such should be the case. I shall be away for two weeks, then spending some time in New York till I pack up bag & baggage for two months or longer time at Charlotte or rather the Mills as bachelor's hall will be my mode of living on this visit. This will be as I wish to arrange it bringing me to town about the time you arrive & now dear Jeanie I must ask about dear Mother, how anxious I am to hear from you about her. Day before yesterday or rather last night I went round with Dolph to read Agnes's letter which told me very plainly that Mother had been very sick as it was by no means the whole account as you had given me. She however made it certain that all pain had ceased & that time would be required alone to restore her strength. I looked for some news from Devasego today but was not very much disappointed at not recg. any as I know how occupied you must be with Mother to take care of & the home to attend to, how I wish that you were safely landed in Beach Street. The house in the country is pleasant enough for warm weather or well people but when those wintery winds begin to bluster creeping through every crack & cranny it cannot be very comfortable for the sick. Besides I have not the very greatest confidence in Dr. Benham. Kind he is & attentive too but he don't know, and when one gives such power to a person – the power to stick poisons & everything else down one's throat. He ought to be well up with the times. I feel this the more my dear Jeanie on account of my own dear Mother who always thought she had been treated incorrectly by a doctor in Washington, which has since been confirmed by those who attended upon her during her last illness, but this dearest is a digression & one that I had no intention of making.

Agnes I suppose will not leave you now till all are ready to move, or has Mother gained strength enough to be alone under your charge. I hope, however; she will not leave for watching & anxiety the latter particularly will were you out. I hear your merry laugh at such an idea so shall not continue it farther.

Sunday morning

Another week has rolled on my dear Jeanie & looking back upon it I think of many things that would have been better left and undone. No moralizing else you may reply to me as Em once did, "that searching for a profession he knew of none that would suit me better than a parson," in the greatest reverence I quote it, for when one has the feeling the calling I know of none more calculated to make a man happy in this world, tis for this reason that complaints from clergymen about a scarcity of money or other comforts always strikes harsh upon my ear when spoken at all times & places or to persons who have it not in their power to correct the evil – "thinking of Mr. Hammond you are Jack" I hear you say – yes I am. His case came up as I wrote though I had more in my mind's eye when I began & having become personal the chat on that subject had better stop. What the matter is this morning I cannot tell all my thoughts are in a jumble. Why is such a state so called, there is a query for you that will give you something to think of – Stop page. I don't know what number. James has at last written me – his letter is a very good one, but I regret to hear from it that he will have a good deal of idle time upon his hands or rather that which will not be employed in his business – had he been longer with John & his habits of study would have become confined & this time would have been well employed, but I fear the attractions of a city & the great willingness of Western young men – I cannot convey the idea I wish to - & perhaps should not have mentioned it as it may cause you anxiety. I had a talk with him about it in New York and know full well that he is a different man or boy from the time when he went to College. How stupid I am but I expect a letter from you every minute and cannot write – it will soon be here & then my thoughts can settle down quietly & this be finished.

The mail is so long coming that I must go on & close this else it will not be finished before church time & even for the pleasure of writing I will not give it up. Though at present my mind is so full of business that it is with difficulty my thoughts can be entirely freed of affairs upon which so much depends. In writing to me do not let my visit to Washington change the direction of my letters. Father is to remain here & if I am delayed longer than two days he will forward them. Leave off the U.S. Navy from the back it is now a title or designation that I do not like & before many years I hope that my name will know to a certain class at least by my deeds.

The boys were all quite well yesterday. Oscar looms large in a big black hat, while Renwick talks of mounting a coat tail. The girls are well & desire much love to all of you. Hoping that the next account from dear Mother will relieve my anxiety & with much love to her & all the family. I am always my own dear Jeanie your devoted Jack.

Father sends his warm love.

- The Reverend Eben S. Hammond (1815-1873) served as minister of the Reformed Church in Prattsville, New York from 1852 to 1855. *The History of the Old Church, with Shorter Histories of The Daughter Churches of Windham, Jewett and Ashland, And Other Historical Matter*, By Rev. Henry Martyn Dodd, A. M. Windham, N. Y. Windham Journal Print, 1903.

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