

Mendota – Nov. 18th [1861]

My dear Rachel,

If I was not one of your forgiving, easy kind of persons, I would not write the scrape of a pen to you, until you answered the last letter I wrote while you were in Texas, you acknowledged having received one, in some of Mary's letters, so this will only gently remind you of the debt.

I was sick so long—and so long getting well, (and not sight-well yet) that I have become cross—selfish, and lazy. I don't know when Mary wrote you last, but W Sibley wrote to Gen[era]l Johnson some time ago, and I suppose it makes little difference what member of the family you hear from, so you hear. To day is Sunday, and oh: how lonely and dreary it is. It snows for the first time this fall. We have had most charming weather until now, as winter comes rather sudden

upon us, but as Mr. S__ says we have plenty to eat and wear, what more do we want. Mendota is so dull compared to Louisville, don't you think so? how do you like living there[?] I suppose had you gone there at any other time and under other circumstances it would have been more pleasant, however you are near Mr J—that is every thing [sic][.]

Our house is more loney [sic] and quiet this winter than usual. Gussie has gone to Detroit, to spend the winter with her Aunt Sarah Sibley, who was with us the greater part of the summer. She will pursue some of her studies, but not go to school. She has rather a fine voice, and is a little ambitious to become a fine singer[.]

I don't know how that will be, it does not run in the family to be musical. Well we can't tell what your voice or mind would have been, had they been brought out. I am very well pleased to have her with her Aunt this winter, for I must say I do not admire the young society in St. Paul at present. just coming out, their heads are filled with beaux and parties. to be sure, there are a few exceptions[.]

Anne is in her cottage home, as she calls it, once more, with her three grown up daughters, you

may say, for Kate & Rosa are as tall as you or I. As for Mary she will soon be on the old maid list. She is a queer one still, but I think improving, is a hot secessionist when she can get anyone to hear her, which is very seldom. Annie has another son, [I] don[']t know whither [sic] to call it Chaise or Bill.

I had a letter from Abb Fragin a few days ago. she said she was so sorry that she did not get to see you while in Harrisburg. Some of her children were sick and she had to hurry [sic] home. she wrote to you, but received no answer, then wrote to somebody else to know where you were, and got no answer, altogether a very lame excuse, I thought for not being a little more civil.

The Third Regiment left this [place] the other day for Louisville or some place near it. I presume you might recognize a good many faces among them, they were a fine set of men, but miserable officers[.] it was a great pity that Gov. Ramsey selected such inefficient men. there are still six or eight hundred men in the Fort, which gives the place quite a lively appearance, poor fellows, it is rather a sad sight to see them go off, perhaps

never to return[.] when will this horrid war come to a end[?] Mother['s health is about as usual, is still troubled now and then with palpitation of the heart, altho[ugh] she has not had a very bad attack lately. Expects to go to St. Paul to morrow to attend [a] Quarterly meeting. The last boat of the season which we expect to see paped [sic] up last night. The weather which has been delightful for the last few weeks, is becoming very cold and wintry. this will be a long dreary winter to us, for every one seems to wear a long face. Your friends in St. Paul I believe are all well. Mrs. Hewitt has a young son, Mrs. Van Etton has twins, Mrs. Daria has her beautiful sister Mrs. Lawrance with her this winter. she is a sweet-one, from all accounts[.] very few of the ladies have called upon her.

Your friend Mrs. Minnenger [sic][,] I understand, has been in St. Paul for the last time, her husband Johny has taken to the white apron and meat saw again, for which he is not-to-be despised. I have not seen Mrs. Ramsey for a year, she lost a sister a short time ago. The Stansburgs have gone to Washington. There are quite a

[written in left margin and across script on first page:]

number of strangers in St. Paul this winter, [they] have come for their health. If I had time I could write a great deal more but my mouse left this morning for a visit to some of her friends and Lallie is not very well. all send much love,

Your affectionate sister

Sarah