

[Written at top in different handwriting]
Answered

Key West, Fla. April 21st 1851

Dear Lottie

Your kind and truly welcome letter greeted me upon opening the box which reached me after a passage of only six days. This was fresh news from home and was very grateful [*sic*] to me, while reading your letter I almost imagined I was with you once more.

I must say dear Lottie without intending to flatter you your letters give me more real pleasure than any other one of my numerous correspondants [*sic*], you always tell me something of the everyday affairs of home, and mention many things which such an exalted mind as Em's would not think worth noticing, but when so far away from you all the trifles are as interesting to me as matters of more moments. In Em's letters I always [*sic*] see much to admire and am always equally pleased to receive them, but yours creates a pleasure of a different kind.

I was not aware so long a time had elapsed wince I wrote you, and I had forgotten that I was indebted to you a letter, but you must excuse this forgetfulness in me and attribute it to some other cause than the want of affection. You know I have been in very bad health much of the time for the past year, some time confined to my bed, and was obliged to leave the island for a short time, and try traveling in the woods. I returned some what better, but was soon down again, and then you know we have been liveing [*sic*] in an unsettled way but at last we are in a house of our own and a sun[n]y little place it is. I wish very much you could all see it. I have had one attack of dyspepsia since living here in our new residence, and it was a pretty severe one but I commenced taking the receipt given me by Doc. [Doctor] Eddy, and I think it has done me some good, but it is a very nausious [*sic*] dose. I was much interested in the account you gave me of your course of studies, and the way in which you spend your time, and I perceive it is so well divided that you have time for everything, and I think you might spend two hours at the Piano and then have a plenty of time to write a letter to an absent sister, and take some for recreation, you must study a little the improvement of what spare time you have, how do you think I find time to write as often as I do, and not neglect any of my domestic affair[s] or my husband? I have my house to attend to, true I have a woman and a boy now but I have been doing my own work for a month past. I have all my sweeping and dusting to do and all the sewing for myself and husband, last week I made three pair of drawers besides my usual amount of mending, and a great part of my time is taken up with visiting and receiving visits. It is done much more here at the south than you have any idea of, many ladies here have nothing else to do, and unless they are running about from house to house there [*sic*] time hangs heavy on their hands. Poor creatures, I do not envy them, but with all my various ways of employment I can always find time to answer my letters and not neglect any of my duties, besides this I find time each day to practice on the Guitar and am becoming very fond of it. I am learning a song which I think very

pretty, suppose you get the music for the piano and learn it and write me what you think of it. It's called, "Oh come to me,["] a great favorite with Ossian, it is one of Bayley's [Thomas Haynes Bayly's] select peices [*sic*].

Tell Charley I want to know how he likes my orange preserves. I sent them for him, if he likes them, next fall I will send him some more. I cannot imagine how you all could be so forgetful in preparing Christmas presents to forget Charley, it seems to me had I been there he would not have been forgotten, now I suppose I must tell you what I received, from Mrs. Porter an intimate friend of mine, a handsome neck ribbon, and from my Ossian a very handsom[e] ring and an elegant breast pin, and Ossian received from me a blue silk neck tie. These tokens of affection however small are pleasant remembrances and it is a beautiful way of exchangeing [*sic*] sentiments.

I am glad to hear Mary's youngest child is still living. I hope she may raise it. I do sincerely hope you may succeed in getting a more pleasant and convenient place of residence. Pa writes me he wants to build but Ma is not willing. I should think that Ma would be willing to leave the old house for the sake of haveing [*sic*] a larger garden spot. When I think how she is crow[d]ed up and scarcely room for the light of the sun to reach her flowers, and the manner in which you are situated in the house I wonder she will make any objection, but if Pa does not build immediately he ought to alter the rooms, and make you more comfortable and decent at once, it is only adding to the value of the house, and for this improvement I should think it would bring a higher rent. You say Pa laughed at that part of my letter, speaking of his standing in society, does he think it is of no consequence, he does not know how much it may effect [*sic*] the happiness or misery of the future years of his children, all I wish for is to see you liveing in such a residence as I shall not feel ashamed to acknowledge as my Father's. Ossian may visit you in a couple of years, he is perfectly well and sends love to you all, he weights 197 lbs. Tell Em I shall write to her next mail, give my love [to] all. Now Lottie do not fail to answer this soon. I shall be impatient to hear from you again and you may rest assured it shall receive immediate attention from me. I intend to write to Kate Emmell by this mail, which leaves tomorrow night. I have been making some mince pies today and I smell them just out of the oven, how much I wish you could all of you step in tonight and help us eat them. Good bye dear Charlotte and write soon to

Your affectionate Sister
Kate

Transcribed by Nicole J. Milano, University of Florida, 2009