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Letter to Sophia Chase

M I. Kip

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Albany Jan 9th 13th

My dear Sophia

Your most welcome letter should have been answered immediately, but I have been under the hands of a Physician, with a Kniesbocker cold that would not yield to home remedies - my cough is better tho' at night troublesome - it has been an open unhealthy winter, the navigation on the Hudson clear, the 10th of Jan^y; without snow; now the ground is covered, and severely cold - I must now carry you back to Hartford; as M^r Burgess had promised to preach at his union the Sunday following his Consecration, we had no time to lose, all the arrangements were made to begin the breaking up, on Monday morning box makers, china packers, everything was at once begun, and it was a scene of business - parish duties required M^r to return to Albany, but M^r Storey & Leonard remained - the furniture, silver, & library, were mine; in Sept William was on a visit, I took the opportunity to select what few books I wanted to keep; and make a division of the rest; I choosing for Elizabeth the only absent one. (I am trying to imagine you are at my side, and I am talking to you.) Sophia took what furniture she wanted & house was furnish'd, so she wanted but a few pieces, neither did M^r for myself I reserved the parlour carpets, and chamber furniture for myself and Mary - the silver I divided equally between them - China, glass, of which I had a quantity, I left to themselves, it was a source of gratification to me, to observe them consult each others taste, in the distribution, without a shade of selfishness - some things were too stately for histories, the fine glasses, Chandeliers these I sold to the person we sold the house to, far below what they ought to have brought, but the risk was great in removing them; so I let them go. - Thursday night everything was shipped off, to Albany, Gardenia & Hookers, as we slept in different places, we agreed to meet at the depot Friday morning, M^r & M^r Storey were to leave for Hookers the same hour. - we parted at Springfield, Burgess and Sophia for Boston, Mary Leonard and I for Albany - I had not seen M^r Seymour for some weeks; she had been absent, the evening before we left - she sent me a beautiful farewell note, and a volume of her Dooms - which we left - I knew not how many kind friends we left behind. -

I will describe how we are situated, that you may see up in your mind's eye - the house is kept by three maiden ladies, it is a private boarding-house opposite St. Peter's church - it is a basement, even with the street, the dining rooms, are on this floor - on the second, W^m has a large parlour, bedroom & study, these they furnish themselves - my parlour & bedroom are next; Leonard has a chamber; they have a small parlour, with two little bedrooms, opening into it - we have each our separate fire, and can be quite retired - there are 35 boarders, 10 of them ladies, this is pleasant to me, as I don't visit - when I come here, I laid down a rule, to prevent my time from being jilted away, but I have not yet had that "abundance of leisure" - Leonard's absence from home for some months, gave me employment - for my needle; and the ladies of the congregation must all call upon the Mother and Sister of their Pastor - when the calls are returned, it will then stop with me. - my room is put in order before breakfast, from the table we come up, and have family worship. - I know not how we should get along, without dear little Willy; he is at an excellent school, but is always ready to do all our errands, so we are not dependant on the servants of the house. - his other son is with Mr. Stoves, there he is perfectly healthy, but he cannot live in Albany. - I am anxious to hear of your dear Mary, be particular in writing about her, her constitution will probably undergo a great change; God grant it may be so. - From Sophia we hear frequently, she writes in good spirits, the Bishop found a barren field to labor in; the want of education in the lower class, struck him forcibly, coming from Corsm - the first step was to divide Gardenia into districts, the ladies went by pairs to search out Sunday scholars, want of clothes, was the general excuse, a place of meeting was appointed, old clothes were to be sent in - at the time set, 50 ragged children were in attendance, the Bishop made himself useful, jitting jackets on the boys. - 20 were sent to be measured for shoes - they then adjourn'd to the Passage, to cut out cloaks for the girls, each lady taking one home to make - Sophia writes the house is small, but convenient, the Church has property to build, and they hope in another year they will do so. - the silver the ladies of Christ Church presented, we did not see, it was made in N. York, and sent to Maine, in a box lined with velvet. - the pieces were a coffee-pot, 2 tea-pots, cream & sugar bowl these lined with gilt - 1 doz table spoons, 1 doz table forks 1 doz tea spoons. - a sugar tongs & shovel, and two dessert spoons - I had given her forks, and 3 doz spoons - so few Bishop's ladies have more silver. - A week after we came here, the weather continuing mild, Mary and I went to Kingston, we spent three days very pleasantly with Eliza, she has recover'd her health, and looks better than she did four years ago; she has promised, if our lives are spared, to write us to Alexandria in the spring - from there we went to York for a fortnight; one day was spent in N. York. I can hardly believe I was a resident there so many years to me it is a strange city, and I feel as a stranger - the appearance of the stores show a great increase of luxury, - I can now believe what a gentleman

told me of a set of chairs made to order, each chair a hundred & fifty dollars a piece, the arms chairs
\$ 2-25 - perhaps they were made for a family, from whom, M. Kip used to purchase oil for the city lamps
his daughter wears a thousand dollar shawl, and his son goes by the name of the Prince of Whales. -
but these same chairs - they were made of rose wood, each flower & leaf, as if carved separate, form'd
the frame; the back and seat of rich velvet. - I was lately in company with Robert G.
- Rankin, the time I remember him, as a boy with a cheek, asson; he is a handsome agreeable
man - he has built a beautiful place on the North river; his family have all left the City - his
mother is still living, but a paralytic. - he told me the Kettle family lived at Natch. -
Mary has gone to Troy, to spend a week at Judge Buels, so I am alone in my little parlour, as
we only came here for the winter, I would not unpack my furniture, except it Marys things, my
work-table & writing desk, but these give it a home look. - tell your dear husband I will not
ask for his precious time, except to add to your letters - dear Sister I send you my sleeping
with his autograph. - I have not heard from Charlotte lately, she was with Susan for
the winter - her grandchild will be a source of amusement to her - when I go on to Maine,
we hope to pass a few days with her, if she returns to the Island. - Leonard is
still at the law, but it is the general opinion, he will turn to the Ministry at last. - he seems
to think it is the fate of the family; he remark'd, I am sometimes afraid to go to Church,
lest I should hear something, that will throw me into the Seminary. - he is making a
little money, out of office hours, by drawing up law papers for a gentleman in the house. -
do write me as particularly as I have you, tell me of your children, and your grand
children - remember me affec^t to them all, Dudley I think of with more interest, since
he is engaged in his Masters work. - several summers ago we lost a valuable Cow, she
was worried with dogs, the day she had a calf - a letter was received from her, I will copy it,
it may amuse your grandchildern. - dont say what a muddle you have written me, remember
I have been talking to you - so with a great deal of love to all your loved ones, I am as
ever your affectionate Sister

M. J. Kip

Jan 7 17th



M^{rs} Sophia M. Chase

Alice Chase Collection

Mrs S. Chase

1848

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