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Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4): Correspondence

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3-24-1895

# Letter from Isabella B. Hooker, Hartford, to Anne Whitney, 1895 March 24

Isabella B. Hooker

Wellesley College Archives

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# Commissioned

"Go their errands: enter into the sacrifice with them; be a link yourself in the divine chain, & feel the joy & life of it."

What can I do for thee, beloved  
Whose feet so little while ago  
Trod the same wayside dust with mine,  
And now up paths I do not know  
Speed without sound or sign.

What can I do? That higher life  
All fresh & fair and beautiful  
Has opened its wide arms to thee;  
Thy cup is over-browned and full —  
Nothing remains to me.

I used to do so many things —  
Love thee — and chide thee — and caress;  
Brush little straws from off thy way,  
Tempering with my poor tenderness  
The heat of thy short day.



Not much, but very sweet to give;  
And it is grief of griefs to bear  
That all these ministries are over,  
And thou so happy love, elsewhere  
Dost need me never more.

And I can do for thee but this;  
(Working on blindly, knowing not  
If I may give thee pleasure so,  
Out of my own dull shadowed lot  
I can arise and go —

To sadder lives & darker homes,  
A messenger, dear dear, from thee  
Who was on earth a comforter,  
And say to those who welcome me  
I am sent forth by her.

Feeling the while, how good it is  
To do thy errands thus, and think  
It may be in the far blue space,  
Thou watched from the heaven's brink —  
A smile upon thy face.

And when the days mark ends with day,  
And star-eyed evening, stealing in  
Waves her cool hand to flying noon,  
And restless, surging thoughts begin,  
Like sad bells out of tune - -

I'll pray - Dear Lord, to whose great love  
No bound, nor limit line is set,  
Give to my darling, I implore  
Some new, sweet joy, not granted yet -  
For I can give no more.

And with the words my thoughts shall climb  
With following feet the heavenly stair  
Up where thy feet do safely tread  
And seeing thee so happy there  
Come back half comforted.

Hartford March 24, 1895

Copied by J. B. H.

[Isabella B. Hooker]