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Letter to Louise Guiney, 1876 November 16

Patrick Guiney

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November 16. 1876.

My dear Pet:

Your favor of last Sunday was received in due time, and, as usual with your letters, was the sensation of the week in our little circle. Speaking of "circle" reminds me that once in my lifetime, and not long ago either, my "social position" as it was designated, became a matter of inquiry on the part of those who proposed to do me some little honor. Hearing of the inquiry accidentally, I at once disembarressed them by defining my own position as I understood it, in this way: "My social 'circle' is very select, and rigidly limited to myself and wife and my daughter when she is at home. As to our position in society, we ~~there~~ had our opinion, and did not allow the judgments of others to affect that opinion." Wasn't that stiff? Well, there was ^{no} further inquiry. Of course I did not ^{mean} to say by this that we were not on terms of cordial friendship with hundreds of respectable people in nearly every walk of life; but what I meant to do was, to assert our individuality, and to rebuke any human classification not wholly based on honor and dishonor. What do you think? Was

I right?

Father Hulston delivered a very racy lecture last evening at the college hall on his "Trip to Europe". The air was a little raw for my comfort, so I kept house, though I had my ticket all bought. Sunnyface and Cloudyface went and enjoyed the lecture very much, and rehashed it for me when they got home about half past nine. It was very entertaining, and laughable in the highest degree in that part of it in which he described his ~~unsuccessful~~ efforts to kiss the Blarney Stone in Ireland. It seems he couldn't get up in the castle where the stone is, and an old woman standing near by and sympathizing with him, told him to kiss a lot of other stones around there and he would be all right. He did as she told him; but I think she was "making game" of him, for the whole world renounces the superior virtue of the genuine stone.

There is nothing new in political matters. Tilden is certainly elected, yet he may never take his seat in the chair of State. Fraud and force make short work nowadays with truth and justice, and we all must wait for results to decide the issue. We are all, birds included, quite well at home. How are all the folks at Elmhurst?
Papa.