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Letter to Louise Guiney, 1876 November 23

Patrick Guiney

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Boston, Nov. 23. 1876.

My Dear Lalie:

We received your letter of last Sunday this morning. I feel thankful that I did not write to you yesterday because I felt that you had neglected to observe my recent ultimatum, and, of course, my talk to you would have been warlike under the circumstances. This morning furnished me another of those examples which illustrated the wisdom of silence when one is vexed or disappointed. Your letter appeased my fretfulness, and put me in a most complacent mood. "I love you still."

Our dear Sunnyface has been quite sick for several days; but she is now better, and I expect to see her well in a few days. She thinks of you all the time, and says she will have your hat already to bring to you at Christmas. Her illness arose from a severe cold taken at Father Fulton's lecture in College Hall. The drafts from the windows were abominable and nearly fatal to many. Cloudyface takes good care of her when I am gone, and Dr Blake is attending her. It is wonderful to notice how sad our girl Katie is, and how sober and silent all the birds are since mamma was taken sick. However, a few days more and all will be bright again, and happy and musical!

I shall have to trouble you once more for a diagram.

It is altogether beyond my comprehension to see how in the game of Cache-cache a lot of you can get into a hay-mow, and conceal yourselves, heels up in the air, without suffocating in the process. Perhaps the hay-mows are constructed differently now from the old style when I was young. Ah, me! everything has changed since my halcyon days. But send me a diagram at all events, ~~so~~ that I can ^{keep} the run of you somewhat even in your sports. Be sure and make your own feet conspicuous in the drawing; but there is no need that you should label them, "these are Lulie's heels," because I can tell them, on sight, by the shape of the boots.

Politics means the science of government, and when you asked me sometime ago, about politics, I told you that you frightened me. It was indeed true, for it seemed an unnatural stridge for a school girl to take from her quiet studies to the great laws which explain and hold in check the stormy passions of mankind. You afterwards said that such was not the sense in which you used the word. You meant political news or chit-chat. Well, my pet, it would seem easy for me to talk to you under this application of the word, but strange as it may seem to you I am unable to do so, that is, I have not the heart to do it. Our

beloved country is in danger, nay in actual peril of its life. The people have just lawfully elected a President of the United States, but the corrupt set of fellows who have the counting of the people's votes in Florida, South Carolina and ~~Louisiana~~ Louisiana, defy law, justice and truth, and declare that Hayes got the most votes. They know better, but they insist upon the falsehood. Grant seems to back them up, and there is the end of it. He commands the army and navy; and justice has no armed battalion. The country seems about to break up into sections, or go into a state of anarchy and civil war of the worst kind. My heart is nearly broken at the sight, the more so that I am not able to draw my sword again in its defence. For these reasons, pet, I cannot write to you in a way to explain politics as the science of government, or as political chit-chat. Fraud and force are now the factors of our political life. I know not what to say about the future!

As I write, the news has just come that Russia is marching her armies against Turkey. Thunder all round the sky! The war there will be awful in its scope and effects. May God prosper the right!

In the meantime, children must mind their studies, say their prayers regularly, eat and sleep well, and

"Let those who make their quarrels be the only ones to fight."

Papa.