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6-27-1882

## Letter, Jane Grey Swisshelm to Elizabeth Mitchell [June 27, 1882]

Jane Grey Swisshelm

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Jane Grey Swisshelm to Mrs. Henry Z. Mitchell, June 27, 1882.

[Mitchell MSS. -- A.L.S.]

Swissvale June 27, 82

My Dear Sister

You talk of my going to stay with you & that I shall not do. I must be about my Father's business. If I staid with you I should simply listen to your talk or talk to you & this would not pay in its effect upon the long ages which are crowding up in the march of time & on which I must make my impress or go to the Last Judgment with my talent in a napkin. I have lost too much time. Two years I have been in bonds to Zo's tastes. Submitting as best I could to that training which was to make me a respectable member of society; but last winter finished up that business & showed me myself as others see me; & now I shall order my life accordingly. Just before she was married we had a cow girl who came up one morning from the basement with her arms full of wet sheets part of which were hugged up against her filthy dark woolen dress & part of which trailed the floor. The sight started me & I spoke to her so sharply that Zo & Jean rushed out & began immediately to apologize to her, to administer soothing syrup to her wounded feelings & said it reminded them of the way in which I used to speak to Susan. I am sure they two would judge me as leniently as any one could. This was the first I knew that I had abused Susan; but I did what I could to make atonement to the cow girl, & that Zo might still further atone I kept her in the house all the time they were on their wedding tour & so spoiled a Lecture & very important one which I was to have delivered & is

not fit for delivery. When they returned I found that Mrs Foster [?] had showed them my letter about the wedding & expressed surprise that I could have been guilty of so gross a violation of the rules of good taste as to write it. Earnest was so overwhelmed with mortification that only necessity enabled him to return to Chicago & face the ignominy. Both he & Zo had neuralgia of the stomach in consequence of that horrible letter. All winter she was on the ragged edge lest I should speak to Sophy in my dreadful voice & manner, or hurt Earnest's feelings or say something impolite to visitors or tell some family secret & everything about the family is a secret. Poor child! What a time she did have with me! It reminded me of Moses penning in the Lord "lest he should break forth upon the people & many should perish" I wonder the Lord does not get out of that pen & have things his own way just a little while. I am out of my pen & my Moses must be having a rest.

"This is my rest, here still Ill stay

For I do like it well."

Those who fear my voice can keep out of reach; & those who want to use it can at \$50 an hour. I left Chicago feeling I should never return but when I found that Miss Firnir [?] had not gone to stay with Zo & that she was likely to be alone I grew desperate, felt I could not bear that & must go at once, before I had time to think or I could never go. I have had time to think. work crowds upon me, my brain clears & I shall be apt to remain just where I am. I lecture next Sunday afternoon in the Opera House on the Labor Question & am writing for the Dispatch a series of letters on the tax thieves of the city which is almost bankrupt from their thefts.

[Jane Grey Swisshelm]