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Letter, Jane Grey Swisshelm to unknown [March 1867]

Jane Grey Swisshelm

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Wilkesburg, 7 March 32, 67

You Dear Old, Queer Old Yellow, go; I take my pen to let you know that my 'Old Pidge' here, Critie Jo is at the table writing go. She wrote last week; but scratched on O; And so that letter did not go. Well, that young lady'ho got a beau - was mine, some thirty years ago - The Swiss, of Swissvale, down below. He'he had a miff, two months or so, because to law poor I did go about a bit of land, you know. He ceased to visit little Jo. He did propose, to send, ho, ho! the sheriff here, to give her notice she must come right down below to her own home, or I'd forego my wicked purpose; & keep Jo. I said, in answer, don't be slow; and the young girl shall go home to the valley, down below. - To day we're having quite a snow.

He stopped coming here; & nobody cried. She went down there weekly - no fat was fried; And when the "big scare" was thoroughly tried, back here to see her, the gentleman hid, when, finding that quinary had wholly denied me part in the combat, he quickly espied, that something was wanting. Down went his pride. Up posted he, in his pocket, at side a great quart of ale, which, he said, must be tried, to make her grow stronger; & also, beside to cure my bad habit of being so wide. The mark of good health! What must shall bide? He smiled on her gently, with such loving pride! She kissed him! He stood & for a while sighed, until, even I, could have "sat down and cried."

For months now just two we've all opened wide our eyes, every day, & have carefully pried into the paper to see on which side the Court had concluded that case to decide last Autumn so hastily started & tried between King & Jerg'son, who, side by side agreed to refer, nor argue a word,

to the Court that's Supreme! Both parties were stirred with such a hot haste, they frankly avowed, to have a decision & no one demurred.

The Court must adjourn, & could not here stay, to hear what the lawyer had got to say. In Philadelphia 'twould gather & lay the Law down plain, which no one might gainway. Tho' mid, of this New year the second day; and now in all appear as far away from that decision as when first the hay was cut last Summer. Oh then, well-a-day! Who'd bear the doom of fortune - "Law's delay"; ~~with~~ ~~with~~

~~With coming old age & going old friends~~ ~~With~~ the quinsy, dyspepsia, diphtheria - eye - and coming old age & going old friends - those gone who leave no one to make amends - with selfishness seeking its own small ends in the eye which withholds, the hand which extends - a welcome to scenes which memory lends. The rain-bow of hope which so lovingly lends o'er childhood & youth, from which there depends the life's promise & well, I would & do! just hark! There's not a spot on Earth that's dark! Who makes one, buries in the clay; & scoops a care to that out day. My light's so clear that I'm afraid some other worm is in the shade unless the new new supply is measured by eternity. My happiness; & I have much, surpassed all I fancied such, when Hope built ladders to the sky to reach my rainbow, by & by. Through life I've labored, not for self, for duty, not for worldly puff. Each day brought work, & gave reward. My treasures, now, are with the Lord! Theirs cannot steal - theirs cannot mar! They fear no change of peace or war. Worlds could not buy of me the deed. I, nothing having, nothing need. So, you might add the whole array - of in Hamlet's sentimental lay - of ills that this poor life down weigh. Then take his cowardice part of death away; and in this world I'd choose to stay, as happy as the bird in May. Until I hear the Martin say, "thy work is finished! Come away!"
June 6. Switzerland

The Creator has decorated the rooms, in which he entertains company, with the most gorgeous draperies of clouds, with myriads of lights, hung on high, millions of mirrors, of Ocean, Lake, River & Streamlet to multiply them indefinitely, and with vistas of building loneliness. No portion of His walls are blank; and the meanest picture there mocks, by its inapproachable perfection, the proudest product of the painter's skill. His Carpets far no rivalry, from the looms of Turkey; & His Cabinets supply, ^{all things} from their pagements, without detriment to the variety or abundance of His collections.

In these superb apartments, guests, whom no man can number, run over with exultance of life & joy. This is our Father's house; & Hee has made it our pleasant duty to aid Him in dispensing his munificent hospitality. When we turn from the contemplation of the wealth & glory of which, even here, we are made partakers, to aspire for the try imitations which Hee has seen best to withhold we are going back "to the higglerly elements of this world."

Margaret Angelen - by
Sam G. Swisshelm