



Bloomington, Ind. Dec<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> 1860

Dear Lou,

I was much pleased yesterday in hearing from Dr H. of your improvement in health, & I think from his representations that, if you are prudent, that you will soon be yourself again.

Yesterday the children had their rejoicing over their Christmas gifts. The stockings were all day suspended on Monday Ev<sup>r</sup>, and their treasures examined the next morning; it seems to me that the happiness it gives the little ones compensates for the folly of the custom. The old S Presbyterians had a Xmas tree in Dunn's Hall, and the sabbath school appointed this, to receive its decorations. So you see how old Pippie customs are sanctioned

and observed by your Protestant Party.  
You remember the story told of John Bunyan,  
somebody knowing his hatred of every thing  
popish, in order to vex him when in jail  
sent him a present of a Christmas pie.  
John eat the pie & sent back word to the  
Dame that he had lived long enough in  
this world to know the difference between  
Christmas & Pie, so it is with these  
customs, they have a popish name, but  
there is a good deal of difference between  
them & Popery. -

Yesterday Dr & Mrs Dodge & Mr & Mrs McC  
& Redick dined with us, we had quite  
a pleasant time of it. Cousin Lizzie  
seems cheerful & much like her for-  
mer self. - I have been overhauling  
my papers & drawers, and hardly knew  
what is going on in this busy knotting up  
of Bloomington. I hear that Jake Young  
got a pretty severe rap over his head &  
from some quarreling drunkards in his  
bar room, if it had killed him, it would  
hardly be pay for the evil he has done.  
Prof Ballantine has gone to G. to

see his girls. Henry got home last  
Friday, I have seen him but once. He  
was living and well. -

Whether Dr H. thinks you have been long  
enough in C. we will try and find some  
way of getting you home. I hope it will  
be before long, but don't you get uneasy,  
or homesick, or fidgetty or blue or any  
thing of that sort. Take things coolly, and  
practically and not sentimentally, we live in  
a world of realities, and we must take  
things as they are not as we would wish  
them to be. You often regret the past, & so  
do I, but I regret that I did not mingle more  
in society, and take more fresh air & active  
exercise, as well as some other things, that I need  
not mention. You - that you were such a  
naughty girl & it is well you told us of it  
or we could not have found it out. If you  
are wise, while not neglecting the "great concern"  
of all, you will improve your opportunity by  
mixing with the different sorts of people, learn-  
ing their ways, noticing what is good, & worthy of  
imitation & what is bad & to be avoided. There  
is both pleasure and profit in this & we are

Pleased with the patients we find in books &  
the quiet & good, and amused with the comic  
ical, if we only knew how to observe, we would  
find characters equally interesting, though  
not perhaps so spicy as the novelist makes  
them, in every day life. You need as much  
as any one some of that training, that will  
enable you to mingle with diff' clades of peo-  
ple, with care, & without any feeling of restraint.  
Lizzie is going home to ~~Madison~~<sup>day</sup> to spend  
her holidays. So Ma & I will have to get  
up to make the fires. — May and Dick  
are as usual. Phandy has got a pair  
of skates, and he has been out the whole day  
with them. Borom thinks no one is able to  
teach him but you. & Dory still amuses us  
with his up roariousness. —

Present our kindest regards to Dr H. M<sup>rs</sup> H,  
Dr S, and all the rest. If you feel dull  
& the Dr says yes, take a walk, I have a no-  
tion to ask him to prescribe dancing, to  
cure you. We all send our love, & wishing  
you a happy New Year I remain

Your affectionate father,  
S. Alleyie.

Skip E.L.M. Wylie  
Chicago.