Box 2 Folder 15

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Newburyport [*Massachusetts*], Oct. 18, 1865.

My dear niece, Elizabeth,

I have come to the conclusion, that I am not in your tho'ts [*thoughts*] as much as you are in mine. Otherwise you would have written me from <*your*> the house of your parents before this time or in case you c'd [*could*] not h [*hold*] & guide a pen, you would have employed the hand of another. I long to know how you are, & how your aged father & mother are sustained under their increasing infirmities. How is Marcus? how Caroline? And where is Daniel?

I am glad Eddie is at school, & that Abbie has the prospect of improving, useful & remunerating employment "Teaching we learn," & even more than simply by studying. The way to be blessed, is to be in the way of being made a blessing. Our Great Examplar came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. I rejoice that you are permitted in love to minister to your father & mother. The foundation is now perhaps being laid for it to be well with you in your own advancing years.

How are each of your own children? Where is your daughter Mary? Where your youngest child? Give my love to your father & mother, & to each of the family. Ask each for a message to me. It is a very long time since a letter has been written to me from that home. Caroline, surely, cannot have considered how earnestly I must have desired to hear, or she would have written me. Please let me look in upon you all & see which of you can, & w[*ho*] cannot, walk about, sit up or go out of the house. How many are in the family?

For about four months little rain has fallen here till the first of this week. Then it fell copiously, giving a supply of water, in cisterns, &c. Whether it was sufficient to soak the earth to the depth the draught had dried it, I have not heard.

Two months ago I was far from well & suffered with neuralgia for a few weeks. I have been relieved lately, & have been gaining strength, so that I am almost pretty well now.

Several of the families that I saw most of in Newburyport [*Massachusetts*] for several years of my earlier residence <*have*> have been broken up by bereavement, or have removed to other places.

Whom do you hear preach on the sabbath?

In continued love, your aunt,

Z.P. Banister. [*Zilpah Polly Grant Banister*]

[*written across side*] Fields of corn here in several places were long ago out for fodder. In some there was no [...]. Apples are scarce.

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Newburyport [*Massachusetts*], Nov. 1, 1865.

My dear Elizabeth,

My own arrangements for your loved ones at Millbrook [*Connecticut*], have been years in advance of your request. We should trust our friends, & trust for our friends. Our heavenly Father loves them infinitely more than we do. How benevolent are his precepts, "Take no thought for the morrow," "Be careful for nothing." That which they mean, may we receive, & obey.

You & I have our lives lengthened from day to day, that we may be humbled & proved, feel our need of Christ, accept of him as <*our*> Savior, lay up our treasure in heaven, & become better prepared for its employments & enjoyments We have here no abiding place. For comfortable shelter, lodgings, food & clothing, for opportunity to show kindness, what occasion we have for gratitude! Of the multitudes that are now before the throne, who came out of great tribulation, & washed their robes & made them white in the blood of the Lamb, which of them looks back with sorrow at the trials appointed on earth for their discipline? -- It is the power of the Holy Spirit, & his indwelling, that we need. Our Savior says, "Ask & ye shall receive." Please look at this & the context.

As I was for some weeks, I could not think of taking a trip to Conn. [*Connecticut*] Now I am so much improved, that I may make you a call about or after the middle of November. I shall

be glad to commune with you personally, & with you all at Millbrook [*Connecticut*] face to face. My stay cannot be long.

Give a great deal of love to your father & mother & to Marcus. Our Great Teacher seems to be educating Marcus by special means for what he has in store for him, both in future life here, & for what he will give him to do in heaven. I hope he lays hold of the promise, "My grace is sufficient for you."

Our Heavenly Father can overrule our mistakes for the highest good. Miss Fidelia Fisk, after severe bodily suffering & mental trial on her death bed, was comforted by the thot [*thought*] that God could glorify himself by forgiving her sins, as well as by keeping her from sin.

What a favor that he does not upbraid those who come to him in their deficiency, feeling their need & having their expectation from him. See James 1:5 & the context. Receive these teaching as fr. [*from*] our heavenly Father speaking audibly to you personally. -- The Lord bless thee & keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, & be gracious to thee. The Lord life up his countenance upon thee, & give thee peace.

In long continued love your aunt,
Z.P. Banister. [*Zilpah Polly Grant Banister*]

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Newark, N.J. [*New Jersey*] April 7, 1866.

My dear Elizabeth,

Your favor of March 14, is before me. I deeply sympathize in your very heavy trials. It is obvious, that they are occasioned by disease of body, affecting the nervous system & the brain. No pecuniary aid, no arrangement of kindred & friends, not even the presence of filial affection, & unvaried attentions of your children can afford any permanent or essential relief. You need the best professional skill, of some physician, that understands what <*medical*> treatment has relieved others, similarly affected. This is probably your only chance for recovery, entire or partial. Without treatment you must undoubtedly find your difficulties of body & mind increasing.

I am glad your presence & aid have been so great a comfort to your father & mother, & to Caroline. There is perhaps no other condition in which you can be so useful, as the one you are now in at your father's house. Where you in good health, & spirits, it might be as well for your sons to struggle on alone, & by bearing the yoke in their youth, gain strength of character by trying discipline, as other young men have done,

Our heavenly Father who appoints our lot, knows the lessons we need for our highest & best education for our good in this world, & ever so many myriad of ages hence. It is wise for us to receive filially what he appoints for those we love, as well as what he appoints for ourselves, Instead of rebelliously seeking to get rid of trials, we should seek to have them sanctified to us. Our heavenly Father chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. (See Heb. [*Hebrews*] 12.)

It must cost money to you to put yourself on trial of a three month's medical & remedial treatment. If only one chance out of many for recovery or even relief, it is a call to you to appropriate your own funds in this way, How much more to be desired is your delivery from the burdens that press upon your tho'ts [*thoughts*]; & oppress your spirits, <*even*> to the cost of all your pecuniary means even to your last dollar, than any amount of cash in your hand, or in stocks, & your present wretchedness. Let your prayer in this matter be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I enclose a little tract, adapted to your wants & mine. Jesus Christ died, to save sinners from their sins. Will we allow him to save us? I came here yesterday. In the course of this month, I hope to be at Millbrook [*Connecticut*], & see you all. I love each one of you, & I thank Caroline for her letter. In tender sympathy, your aff'te [*affectionate*] aunt, Z.P. Banister, [*Zilpah Polly Grant Banister*]

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Chicago Ill. [*Illinois*] May 7, 1866.

Mrs. Elizabeth Burton
Mill Brook Ct. [*Connecticut*]

Dear Sister,

I take my pen to inform you that I am in this place having been released from military service by the muster out of my Regiment some three weeks since. I arrived here three days since, and stop at the Home of the Friendless, an Institution of which Abby has been Matron for about five weeks. The character of the Institution you can infer from its name.*

[*written along side*] * I send you last year's Report, from which if you choose you can learn more (Abby tells me she has sent one--therefore I will not)

She has found the care of it very laborious indeed -- I fear she cannot endure it long.

As my position in the army has <*too*> but recently <*been*> ceased I am not able to state definitely what I shall do. For the present you may address me here.

I <*judge*> fear from what I hear from home that you, dear Sister, do not enjoy so fully as we all ought the comfort of your situation. I do not doubt that there is much, very much, in it that is undesirable, but so there is in everybody's case. "We who have believed" (says the Apostle, Heb. [*Hebrews*] <*3*> 4:3) "do enter into rest" -- not "shall enter," but "do enter." And when I think of the good it was your privilege to do in the last days of our dear Mother's life, and that you still are doing while Father continues -- I cannot feel that you or any one else is warranted to call that a "mistake" that led you into a path where such action is possible. We sometimes it is true are compelled to bear a crop that is really for our good, but which we would no more take up ourselves than a child would choose a whipping. I sometimes both amuse and instruct myself by considering what the world would come to if every man and woman could carry out the programme each lays out. I think the result of Phaeton's experiment in driving his fathers chariot were nothing in comparison.

I should be glad to see you, and impart comfort if I have any you could receive. But it is too doubtful whether I shall be able to visit you, and perhaps even more doubtful whether I could benefit you if I should. I could do little more than tell you to take a trustful view of the present and the future -- as to the past with all its errors and mistakes, and sins "let the dead bury its dead." I know no one can be happy whose happiness is dependent on such a condition as that he shall avoid all mistakes -- The promise respecting the good man "Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down" is worth more than any expectation <*any*> we can indulge that you or I or any body else will do exactly the right thing

Abby joins me in sending love to you and Father, Caroline & Marcus and all the rest -- Direct as below

Your aff. [*affectionate*] brother
Joel Grant
911 Wabash Avenue Chicago Ill

[*written in pencil in another hand*] I meant to write to Sister C. [*Caroline*] to send with this but cannot get time to day. Love to all. aff. [*affectionately*] yr [*your*] sister Abby,

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