

St. Scott, Kans. Sept. 27. 1876.

C. C. Slaughter Esq.

Dear Sir -

Yours without date is before me. In reply I wd. say that I assume that your chaactor is all right morally & socially - And also that your motives are honorable - & that you will deal truly with beer making no propositions that you have not well considered & are willing to abide by.

With this understanding I have no objections provided ^{of course} that the wish is mutual, to your corresponding with her on the subject of wh. you speak.

You of course know something of the feelings of a father. I feel that your proposition comes home

to me tenderly. I will not allow my feelings to stand in the way of her future, or any honorable proposition wh. you & she may agree upon.

Shd. your correspondence result in my having to give her up I shall pray God that she may make your home happy & that neither of ^{you} will ever regret your choice. May the good God guide you both aright

I wish you to accept my condolence on the loss of your wife & my best wishes in behalf of your children. Also give my kindest regards to your respected father & mother & to your brothers. Tell the old gent. that I often speak of him & wd. be most glad to see.

I think that it is probable that I shall for the satisfaction of the family & especially that of my son inquire of some one of the names wh. you have given me in regard

to the matter of wh. you speak. If the reply be not such as I anticipate I will inform you.

Wishing you well & trusting that you & Carrie will be wisely directed in a matter of so much importance to both & to us all

I am very respectfully yours
A. M. Averill

only the benefit of your
loving heart, but of your

riper years & riper experience. The fact of her hav-
ing to assume at once the duties of a mother as
well as those of a wife is the only thing that has given
in either her mother or myself any solitude.

By the way they write me from home that mat-
ters are progressing with all possible speed. They write
that our absence greatly facilitates matters. Three women with mother at the head can turn off
a power of work. Well they have much to do. I
shall not go home till the first of Jan^{if then}. And the
second or third week will be as soon as we can give
the finishing stroke to this business & send you on your
way rejoicing.

So my young friend you & I had bet

Wd. be glad to receive a
line from son that is to be

Fort Scott, Kans, Dec. 18th 1876

My dear Son;

Last week I addressed a
few lines to your honored father Mr. I have no
doubt ^{he} has received ere this. I now address a
line or two to you, I learn thro. Carrie that you
arrived at home safe & up the last communica-
tion continued well & happy. I hope the future will
be of the same tenor & more so. With the blessing
of God, I have no doubt, it will. Without that
blessing the world can do but little for us. Hope
all your sweet anticipations for life will be
realized & more, & that you & all with whom
your fortunes are now linked & may be here

after linked will attain unto life eternal — not thoughtful in regard

It will soon be my privilege & duty it now seems to your Children. It is

to remember & think of you when I come before God sd. we have but one mother. There is much truth in this statement. While I hope & believe Carrie will

Mother writes me that Carrie is as happy as a bird. Dear good girl. may she always be so. But such is not the lot of mortals. Life as we well know is not all sunshine. Undisputed happiness is not ordained for man or woman in this world. There are ills to which flesh is heir to & neither you nor she can hope to escape them. But he who tempers the winds to the shorn lamb & who fits the burden to each one's shoulders has promised all needed strength. I commend you both to the kind Father of us all.

Now wd. I have you think that I am are about to summon her & give her not

be good & love your children both for your sake & their sake & shd. be unwilling to see this matter consummated did I believe to the contrary. Still I do not expect that she can fully make up the loss wh. they sustained when their own dear mother was taken away from them. Still I shall be greatly disappointed if she does not make them a kind mother & you a loving wife & your parents a delightful daughter. It wd. greatly grieve me ever to learn anything to the contrary. I trust you will consider the delicate point to wh. you are about to summon her & give her not

one of your favorite adjectives - "real" cold weather.
My room & bed are none the most comfortable
for winter weather, but I am good for most anything
proof against most anything excepting of course
Texas hurricanes - They blow like the de -

Glad you & mother have got over your
fright. Well for you & the poor Welch devil that I was
at home - Sunrise rd. - have shows a dead man ly
at your door. I doubt not we saved his life. Well
I thank God for the opportunity -

I think your brothers & their wives have
done grown. You now see who your true friends
are. They are glad of your goodly prospects & do
smile to cover their want of satisfaction - & almost
envious feeling at you good for. Blast such
friends at that. When the business is done

by retirement wd. not do. I wd. have to get a good cow
hide & cut leg h's & left. The midowers beat John in
the speed with wh. they drive business. Indeed they wont
give time put on the harness - but want the young
fillie to start of quite undressed. Put down your
pretty little foot & this Texas tramster will come to
a halt - Assert your rights & be sure & give him
his & so go on with him till the end of life -

Since I wrote you last I have had quite
a sick turn. Last Friday night I woke up feeling
sick to my stomack. In the morning my bowels
commenced running off & thro. the day sat. I
had a sick time of it - I eat nothing & Sunday a.m.
was better but rather weak. I did faint duty how
ever thro. the day. & am now quite myself again -

We have been having m'nter. or to use

any more of that dumbled pale ink if I see
you. If ink is significant I wd. have
some of a lighter color. A mighty poor article
that of yours. Never send a letter south with-
in with such vicious stuff. Then I wd. not
slant my letter. Yours so much. Your correspond-
ence wd. gain in appearance if your letters were
more perpendicular. Again your long letters are
by far too long. & your short letters not sufficient-
ly round. A rounder hand - live on the slant -
& bring into your manuscript wd. be quite
graceful. Your Capital A's are queer luggers.
The dictionary again - Wain't & Wont are
not the same words though sounding alike. The
first is doubtful English any how. Well I am
now done - good girl. Love to mother
& much for you. Your father Merrill — [6]

Fort Scott. Dec. 19th 1876.

My dear Carrie;

I have cooked & eaten my frugal meal,
called in common parlance, breakfast, have cleared a-
way - now with my pipe in my mouth seat myself
reply to yours of the 17th. On its reception last eve I
note my Son Lum. or rather Christopher Colum-
bio. as you desired. I did not let him know
that you suggested it, but in a fatherly sort of a
way - giving him my good advice, congratulations,
tender sympathy - made him understand that since
^{we} had come away the morning our absence, the wo-
men were doing up a power of work. I told him
that I did not dare to put in my presence &
& that we both wd. be the gainers to let them have [1]

their own way in this affair with argument. that he propose to know some parties over the life & they will
10th or at farthest 17th of Jan. was near & that then we know it too. Well enough of this.

cut short the work of righteous ness & let take his virgin
bride & go on his way rejoicing to his home in the sun Jan. Then farewell to my dungeon. If I come back on
my south. I think he will refer to the letter when he
writes you. Now take your time. & I will see that
you are not rushed to death. Jan. 16th 17th is as
as I will be ready to tie the knot. Just till then
old widower to keep cool. & wait your time. He
has nothing to lose. I told him had your heart &
& all there was in it. Let him stand off for awhile.

You will have him near enough by & by. & enough of
him. If I mistake not he will be a friend that
sticketh closer than a brother. Well for you that his
home is miles away on the courtship rd. become
an intolerable nuisance. Playing dominoes for so.

I am arranging to come home the 1st week in
Jan. Then farewell to my dungeon. If I come back on
gain it will be with mother with me. & under dif-
ferent arrangements. There are very fine people here
but they are poor. They do the most of them & will
do all they can. I love them & sympathize with
them in their transactions & endeavor to maintain
the baptist cause.

Well. I guess it is about time for
me to draw this letter to a close & go with it
to the P.O. By the way I have a suggestion or
two as to your letter. not criticism for that.
I do that you may report me down to Dyar &
then the deuce will be to pay. I do not care

to make use of philosophy - & bear the ills we
have, rather than fly to those we know not of
& let the women, since they have so gladly gone
to work to make ready for our coming, have their
own way & wait till we are sent for or have per-
mission to come. I know that we shall gain in
their estimation by waiting. If we cd. hurry up
affairs I might be willing to run home to mor-
row - but it wd. only delay them. How glad
they might to see us, I somewhat doubt if they
woud. or woud fast yet. or for a couple
miles or so. What say you to that?

I do not blame you for wanting the
matter over with - that soon, I ment thro. the
same process. But I have found so here you,
that there are some things in wh. it is best.

to let a woman have her own way, without
note or comment. I think this is one of them.
What say you? Well the 10th or 17th of Jan
will soon be here. And the Lord willing we
will start you off with a clear sky - a favoring
breeze & with our benedictions & prayers for
your peace & happiness in your home in
the sunny south. So my boy just abide your
time & wait till the good women say come
on. If you have a good thing in bearing -
it will keep, if a bad thing, then will it be
soon enough for you to find it out.

I can assure ^{you,} you have her heart &
all there is in it - & the confidence & esteem
of her parents, brothers & their wives.
Yours most kindly & paternally
A. M. Merrill -

attention you can to music - & when you get settled in
your new home review your studies - & qualify yourself
for good society. Money without good breeding is shoddy.
Well enough of this.

The young lady was delighted with her music
has learned to play two pieces & played them for me last
week & did it finely - She wished me to thank you & to tell you
that she wd. like very much to hear you play them -

The lady to whom you sent the dresses wish me to
give you her thanks. She made the Celico fit well - It be-
comes her & she wears it common all the time -

I have had good congregations all things con-
sidered. I am lecturing till morning on the Prodigal
Son. This wicked town is full of them. Drunken gamb-
ling - & Swearing are fearfully prevalent here. It is
a godless rough wicked place - a little Sodom. I wd.
not make it a home for anything.

Tell mother that when she wants another bible
from the old man she must write I send her the Golden
Rule - she must keep them & our affectionate Father & well

Kansas Fort Scott. Oct 31. 1876.

My dear Carrie,

It is with a sad heart that I seat myself
to answer yours of the 29th. On many accounts I feel grieved. It is a
wild, damp night & I feel lonely & thoughts both of the future & of the
past are not so bright as I wd. wish. Our drifting & scattered life ^{men} grieves
& then time is bearing us on to what issues God only knows. One of my
family in N. Y. one in St. Louis - myself down here. mother & you in
Emporia - & soon you to be parted from us. Well soon father & mother will
be gone - & then - what then. Wd. God we wd. all know that we were
good enough - all disciples of that good one - that when this drifting
about on the waves of life's dark ocean ^{is over} we shd. all meet at last on
that beautiful ^{land} dear darling Jennie - & little Horace have been there
many years. Oh. who will be left out! Not one, dear Saviour!

Carrie I do not know how to let you go away without
the love of God in your heart. I hope you will go away a Christian
woman - fitted to make a good loving wife, & a kind mother ^{or} help
to the ch. of God - & a useful member of society. I feel that you
are

having a splendid opportunity. I believe Sam to be a very fine gentleman one of whom I can be proud & who ^{will} love you & do all in his power to make you happy. I do pray God that you may be adequate to the occasion. Remember that however much matter you may have, this is not all. If you are not good, kind, affectionate, patient, forbearing & do not use good womanly tact there will bitterness in more than one heart. O may you prove adequate to the occasion - so that the thoughts of you will make my heart glad. God bless my daughter my last & only gift. For now we have nothing left.

It is true as you say I have not done much for you. I feel it & the suggesting of it to me only makes the matter more painful. Soon you will have some one who has both the disposition & the means to do all you can reasonably demand. But even then your good sense will suggest to you the wisdom of a modest, wise & economical use of the means in your husband's possession. The true glory of woman is her mind & manner: dress is not to be despised, but the ornaments of Christian meekness & mental & aesthetic accomplishments

are what we love to see in woman. Watts says it is the mind that makes the man - much ^{more} so the woman. I will send the dictionary any thing that will help you in that direction. It is

The invoice of your needs I think eminently proper. What you need & what you must have. I will send in this a check for your \$50. The piano cost me \$300. You had better dispose of it if you can get \$200. And that will help. I will see that you have whatever is needed give you a respectable outfit as to wardrobe. Of course as you will go to a home already ^{up-}filled & when then will ~~in~~ humanly speaking be ample means it will be needful that we do much more. Eliza & Walter I have no doubt will wish to take a part in the good work.

You can write me again about this matter what you wish of me & I will take the matter into consideration. I want to do right & what the circumstances in my judgment warrant. I hope to have some money for my first months or vice versa long - but if I don't will raise it elsewhere.

I hope you ~~do~~ will not fear any criticism on my part - so write me frankly. I hope you will give what