

The Filson Historical Society

Mss. Silliman, Susan (Forbes), d.1878.

A

.S584 Letters to sister-in-law, Hen-  
8 rietta (Silliman) Dana.

1851-1852

45x.6

2 items.

While I think of it. I must apologize  
for delaying so long to speak of that  
nice letter of Dana Titche Turnbull  
from Valparaiso. I should like much  
to hear from the same pen of their  
own housekeeping which promises  
to commence rather romantically  
"a lodge in a garden of roses" it  
is rather Biblical too? for I believe  
the song of Solomon speaks of dwelling  
in a garden with his love. or some  
such idea is given in that most  
strange book of the Bible.]

Mr & Mrs. A. D. S. must be pleased  
to have a little namesake at Milford  
but it is rather a harsh name to give  
to a baby though sounding well  
enough for a man. You have  
never spoken of the new Mrs.  
Mrs. Bristol is she liked as well  
as her sister & is it the taller of the  
two that used to visit them in the  
first Mrs. Bristol's life time.

Notwithstanding the rules of the Pres. Church  
I think if a man will marry a second  
time his wife's sister is the very best  
person for him to select especially if

Sunday June 12 1851  
Poussville N.Y.

My dear Netie

Last Saturday I had  
intended writing you but some  
pressing duty prevented & Sunday  
evening was spent in writing  
to Mrs. Agassiz & Lotie & my  
California brothers. Alice has  
this week kept me a close  
attachee by her severe spells  
of coughing & the dread of  
their return. She has lost  
much flesh & has no appetite  
but next week the disease  
is at its height and if she  
does not take from Pennie the  
varioloid will I trust now get on  
you Netie here we have this  
loathsome disease & cannot  
escape the contagion if we would

95X6  
15X4



The little fellows seem  
to suffer at all with it. Dr.  
David says he will be no ~~sicker~~  
worse, though some of the rest  
may - I feel so thankful that  
Dr. Bell at last vaccinated  
Alice or she might have taken  
Small Pox. We presume that  
he took it from the student's  
clothes which were hanging  
drying in the yard next door  
& on the back porch was kissed  
92 The children as you may  
suppose fill my thoughts & wish  
and it is well that these  
diseases should come again  
through others as fatal may  
- (I don't feel at all in the  
humor for answering your nice  
long letter but feel as if there  
was nothing to be & sentiment  
was just now not apropos to  
my feelings.) Benjie is writing  
to <sup>the</sup> father & will tell how he's  
working & planning to leave here

the 20 or 23<sup>d</sup> of Feby. It seems  
to me but a short time to that  
period but it is like having  
two winters to pass to come on so  
early & for these little ones with  
whooping cough. If it is agreeable  
to mama I shall leave them  
in her care till the first of  
May will render the country  
desirable for them to go to Colchester  
to stay till we return with our  
kind friends there. Mama in-  
sisted & my brothers & sisters too  
that the children ought to be  
there the whole time that  
we were absent & tried to  
make me promise that if  
I did go that I would leave  
them <sup>there</sup> but this I said was  
impossible during the hot months  
of July & August & then I want  
Lucie to go on with her studies  
She has grown surprisingly tall  
& has recovered from her cough  
to be well again

with best love - all friends you in hearts

Thursday from Cumberland to  
Baltimore Friday from Balt. to  
Phil. Sat. to New York.

Thus you see we please God only  
knows how much we execute  
I intended writing a long letter  
to Carrie J. tonight but - my little  
boy put his finger into my eye  
and it gives me too much  
trouble for me to fill out  
this sheet - though by morning  
it will doubtless be well  
The dirt & the flickering fires  
of Louisville hurt my eyes  
very much & now I must - un-  
willingly say goodnight  
Bennie gets up by a chair & pushes  
it about - but is not strong on his  
feet - he advances rapidly now  
& I should love to have you know  
him as he has been the last two  
weeks his little face is thickly  
redded & he has some fever to night  
& is restless from the irritation of  
the disease

Swan Jan 12 1851

he has children. We read all  
the New Haven newspaper with the  
greatest avidity. from there last week  
~~learned~~  
that Mr. No-body (but all legs) (excuse  
the unlady like use of the word) was  
dead, nobody was Douglas the pump  
snake's nickname; who would  
never come till he had been sent  
for 4 times at least. The speeches  
at the Union meeting were quite  
interesting. Dr. Fayser spoke very well  
& from the report I should think that  
New Haven was wide awake upon  
that occasion. There is a wide  
difference between your weather &  
ours. We have had no cold, the  
whole of December, & thus far in  
January, is like an October cool  
day. Coats & shawls have been  
worn two successive Sabbaths without  
exposure. I dread the homeward  
journey much less this year than last  
we think to go to Cincinnati &  
spend Sunday & start Monday  
morning for Pittsburgh you go to Brown's  
ville ~~the~~ <sup>next</sup> night Wednesday



Susie

Louisville Dec. 1852

Dec. 1852

Of bringing them up piece meal prevents one looking over the clothes toward them. Poor Mrs. Morley's death I can hardly realize we have had a most shocking occurrence this past week which has filled our whole community with horror. I do not remember whether B. spoke of it - Mrs. Newcomb whom I knew when here before though she has not visited me this winter in our insane state of mind threw all her children out of the attic window it resulted in the death of 3 out of the 4. She seemed conscious that she had accomplished her object when a friend said to her how could you kill your own children she said it was very hard but my Saviour sent for them did not you hear the summons? I heard

it so plainly told you know he said  
"Suffer little children to come home  
&c" The poor husband & father  
was out at a literary club & when  
they found him & brought him  
home his distress was so great  
he could not see her. She slept  
towards morning & when she awoke  
was a raving maniac. They  
took her to the Asylum  
but if the poor creature should  
ever have an interval of con-  
sciousness - The oldest son 7 years  
old is the only one who was aware  
of his mother's state of mind  
she tried once before to kill  
them upon a hearth a few  
days before but that child dis-  
covered the intention & told  
the nurse. But I will not longer  
 dwell on this horrible theme  
My husband has just made

his arrangements - to go the Office  
& though I have not half said  
~~any~~ say - I feel that my letter  
is a very poor return for yours  
I must say goodbye with  
best love to all at the dear  
Avenue. you most affec-  
tionate  
sister friend  
Susan H. L.

Mr. Lane

if I can only like her as well  
as her Mother who is a choice  
piece of good fortune. I shall think  
I am fortunate Dr. Y. is too indel-  
-giant to his negroes & so his boys are  
spilt. They can earn more money  
working away from home & so he  
lets them go to the Park House or  
Tobacco Warehouse & he is to have  
another come up from Tennessee  
who will be hired by the day  
so that he shall have three to feed  
& now must search for another  
to wait on himself about the house  
though the Dr. belongs to the old  
school & works with his own hands  
requires very little done for him  
but there are 3 horses in the stable  
& they must be fed & cared for.  
I would desire any Yankee how-  
soever wanting in thrift to see the  
way work is done by these Col'd  
people. This girl I speak of would  
never give me the clothes from  
the wash to look over Hersey

the day has been more sad than  
any other time in the year. Your visit  
must have been peculiarly gratifying  
to James & to not one older one  
enjoy petting as much as the children?  
I confess to liking to be made much of  
by those I love & I don't believe in  
its spoiling anyone to develop the heart  
nor that you dear Nettie or all  
of your triangular household have  
not enough of that development but  
we are gaining or losing all the time  
Indeed you have been a staid body  
for 6 years - but perchance your turn  
will come when a pilgrim & a stranger  
& perhaps it is just as well for me who  
loved my home so well to learn to  
look upon it as a place that must  
be left as I took the long journey  
never more to return. <sup>your</sup> <sup>own</sup> <sup>account</sup> of  
Julie & little Carrie interested us  
all we have heard from them  
twice lately. Edward <sup>Senior</sup> wrote asking  
Ben to stop here <sup>John Post</sup> on his way home  
to lecture before the Young Men's



Institute. He has not answered  
his letter yet - for the time of our  
return is so uncertain that he  
cannot tell what it is best to do.  
Perhaps he may stop here & give  
a public course before he returns.  
I would rather avoid our march  
& April weather & there seems no  
important reason for coming on before  
then. I had a nice letter from  
Reginald written in Boston an  
hour before sailing in which he says  
he is "embarking with low spirits a bad  
cargo which he hopes to throw overboard  
in a day or so" I pity them going back  
with those many real associations & the  
difficulty of his own position using  
this word makes me think that  
you asked about mine. I am  
happy to inform you that it is im-  
proved in that I have changed  
a known evil for a new & untried  
one. My storm in the flesh since  
I have been in this hospitable  
house a blatterly lazy good for

nothing servant who when told  
6 times to do a thing had the  
impertinence to tell you that  
she had forgotten it. This torment  
who thought kind to the children  
did not win my complacency  
has gone & we are in possession  
of a new blacker & I am certain  
it is not possible to find another  
as bad, so I can safely say better  
woman. The Dr. has bought the daughter  
of the cook & she came to him  
from Lexington today - The Mother  
seemed more glad to see the child  
than the child was to see her.  
Poor thing would you believe that  
meeting which I was a accidental  
witness to, put tears in my eyes &  
actually choked my throat for  
some minutes. The girl would  
have better liked to have stayed  
in her country home - so she has  
had a gloomy face today - but  
I think she will like us soon