

AL/2899
(unfinished)




Aldborough

July 13th (1860)

My dear Aunt,

For some time past I have been gradually maturing up my mind to an important step, and now that the time for action has come, I do not like to take it without telling my friends what I am about to do.

During the last two or three years, I have felt an increasing longing for some definite occupation, which should also bring me, in time, a position + a moderate income. I think you will not be surprised that I should feel this longing.



for it is indeed far more wonderful that a healthy woman should spend a long life in comparative idleness, than that she should wish for some suitable work, upon which she could spend the energy that now only causes painful restlessness & weariness.

I have decided that the study of medicine offers more attractions to me, than any other kind of work, and I have resolved to enter upon it. It is generally admitted that there would be no impropriety in women & children being attended by physicians of their own sex, and it is these ~~branches~~ branches of the profession which we ^{wish} to see opened to women. There will naturally be some

some difficulty in doing this, while the idea is strange to most people, but I do feel very confident that everyone who will carefully consider these two questions - viz - the growing necessity for opening new employments to women - and their fitness ~~for~~ for this branch of the profession - will see that much of the opposition offered to the movement proceeds from prejudice rather than from sound reasons. I feel that there may be many difficulties in obtaining the education, of which I am too ignorant to speak, & that consequently some test of individual fitness should be gone through before any more direct studies are attempted.

For this reason, I have arranged to spend six months in the Middlesex Hospital as a

worse, as I have been assured by those who are qualified to judge, that this will be a sufficiently searching test.

I need scarcely say that I should not make this attempt without my dear parents sanction. They have known of my wish for more than a year, and we have all been considering the whole question during this time. Whatever the issue of the attempt may be, I shall always remember their sympathy & consideration with gratitude.

~~W. Garrison~~
And now, my dear Aunt, after telling you so much of my own plans & future life, will you pardon my saying a few words on a subject that concerns us all very much. I have felt so much for you