

20 Mount St. Aberdeen
March 24th 1878.

My dear Uncle

We received your welcome and precious letter of 21st Jan'y. in due time, and were exceedingly happy to hear of all your health and welfare.

She whom you kindly addressed as sister is now no more;— our dear Mother has passed away to inherit that salvation in which she faithfully trusted.

As you heard from Bessy she was complaining of what she thought was Bronchitis last autumn. After the New Year she got gradually worse, and steadily and speedily declined, till the 15th of March, when her spirit returned "to God who gave it"—"and now she wears the crown". She died as she lived, you knew her well.

It was indeed a sad time for us all, especially so for father who was weak and unwell at the time; but we had the willing assistance of many kind friends, and we trust we will come

out of the furnace purified. We have
one less link now to bind us to
Earth, but we have another
strong cord to draw us to Heaven.

Father, as I said, was ill at the
time. He had a very severe
stroke of something like Asthma
accompanied with a complete
derangement of stomach and
bowels sometime before
Mother's death. Then the
anxiety and fatigue consequent on
her illness and the long night
watching (in which he bore
much more than his share
in order that the rest of us might
be able to work during the day)
completely (I may say) prostrated
him, and entirely retarded
for a long time his recovery.
Even now he is very feeble
sometimes breathless, and lacking
much in appetite. His stomach
and respiratory organs are wrong
but he is. I am glad to say,
sensible of a gradual improvement.

The winter has been exceedingly mild (as with you) but we are at present in the middle of a severe equinoctial blast. Father, of course, feels the cold more intently than any of us, but once this gale were over and the fine weather returned we are (and he is) sanguine of a more speedy recovery. The rest of us are well.

Upon Selanie will now devolve the management of the house and I have no fear she will be equal to the occasion. In fact she has had no assistance since Mother was laid up.

George is healthy and liking his work very well; it is fully a year now since he went home.

James in Glasgow has been doing well of late and has been a very great assistance to us indeed.

You will likely have heard from Banff lately. Aunt

intends visiting us in April.
Mrs Thomson is still lively
and active, though occasionally
feeling the 'burden of winters'
more heavy than before.

Mrs Bennie and George are
tolerably well.

On Wednesday first I go to a
new (and what promises to
be a good) situation in Mon-
=trose. I shall be writing
some of you from there.

I was thrown out in Aberdeen
owing to depression in trade
but I have secured a situation
without any loss of time.

Of course Aberdeen would have been
preferable as being at home but
better a good situation in Montrose
than a bad one, or no one at all,
in Aberdeen.

We hope sincerely you are all well.
Pray write soon to Father. I
hope he will be able to reply to
you himself next time.

With united kindest love
to each of you, I am, dear
Uncle, your affect. Nephew
Matthew.