

Sunday 24 January 1813
Chawton Sunday Even^g Jan^y 24.

My dear Cassandra

This is exactly the weather we could wish for, if you are but well enough to enjoy it. I shall be glad to hear that you are not confined to the house by an increase of cold. Mr Digweed has used us basely. Handsome is as handsome does; he is therefore a very ill-looking Man. I hope you have sent off a letter to me by this day's post, unless you are tempted to wait till tomorrow by one of Mr Chute's franks.—We have had no letter since you went away, & no visitor, except Miss Benn who dined with us on Friday; but we have received the half of an excellent Stilton cheese—we presume from Henry. —My Mother is very well & finds great amusement in the glove-knitting; when this pair is finished, she means to knit another, & at present wants no other work.—We quite run over with books. She has got Sir John Carr's Travels in Spain from Miss B. & I am reading a Society-Octavo, an Essay on the Military Police & Institutions of the British Empire, by Capt Pasley of the Engineers, a book which I protested against at first, but which upon trial I find delightfully written & highly entertaining. I am as much in love with the Author as ever I was with Clarkson or Buchanan, or even the two Mr Smiths of the city. The first soldier I ever sighed for; but he does write with extraordinary force & spirit. Yesterday moreover brought us Mrs Grant's Letters, with Mr White's Comp^{ts}.—But I have disposed of them, Comp^{ts} & all, for the first fortnight to Miss Papillon—& among so many readers or retainers of Books as we have in Chawton, I dare say there will be no difficulty in getting rid of them for another fortnight if necessary.—I learn from Sir J. Carr that there is no Government House at Gibraltar.—I must alter it to the Commissioner's.—Our party on Wednesday was not unagreeable, tho' as usual we wanted a better Master of the House, one less anxious & fidgety, & more conversible. In consequence of a civil note that morn^g from Mrs Clement, I went with her & her Husband in their Tax-cart;—civility on both sides; I would rather have walked, & no doubt they must have wished I had.—I ran home with my own dear Thomas at night in great Luxury. Thomas was very useful. We were Eleven altogether, as you will find on computation, adding Miss Benn & two strange Gentlemen, a Mr Twyford, curate of G^t Worldham who is living in Alton, & his friend Mr Wilkes.—I do not know that Mr T. is anything, except very dark-complexioned, but Mr W. was a useful addition, being an easy, talking, pleasantish young man—a very young man, hardly 20 perhaps. He is of S^t John's, Cambridge, & spoke very highly of H. Walter as a Schollar;—he said he was considered as the best Classick in the University.—How such a report would have interested my Father!—I could see nothing very promising between Mr P. & Miss P.T.—She placed herself on one side of him at first, but Miss Benn obliged

her to move up higher;—& she had an empty plate, & even asked him to give her some Mutton without being attended to for some time.—There might be Design in this, to be sure, on his side; he might think an empty Stomach the most favourable for Love.—Upon Mrs Digweed's mentioning that she had sent the Rejected Addresses to Mr Hinton, I began talking to her a little about them & expressed my hope of their having amused her. Her answer was, "Oh! dear, yes, very much;—very droll indeed;—the opening of the House!— & the striking up of the Fiddles!"—What she meant, poor Woman, who shall say?—I sought no farther.—The Papillons have now got the Book, & like it very much; their niece Eleanor has recommended it most warmly to them.—She looks like a rejected Addresser. As soon as a Whist party was formed & a round table threatened, I made my Mother an excuse, & came away; leaving just as many for their round Table, as there were at Mrs Grants.—I wish they might be as agreeable a set.—It was past 10 when I got home, so I was not ashamed of my dutiful Delicacy.—The Coulthards were talked of you may be sure; no end of them; Miss Terry had heard they were going to rent Mr Bramston's house at Oakley, & Mrs Clement that they were going to live at Streatham.—Mrs Digweed & I agreed that the House at Oakley could not possibly be large enough for them, & now we find they have really taken it.—Mr Gauntlett is thought very agreeable, & there are no Children at all.—The Miss Sibleys want to establish a Book Society in their side of the Country, like ours. What can be a stronger proof of that superiority in ours over the Steventon & Manydown Society, which I have always foreseen & felt?—No emulation of the kind was ever inspired by their proceedings; no such wish of the Miss Sibleys was ever heard in the course of the many years of that Society's existence;—And what are their Biglands & their Barrows, their Macartneys & Mackenzies, to Capt. Pasley's Essay on the Military police of the British Empire, & the rejected Addresses? I have walked once to Alton, & yesterday Miss Papillon & I walked together to call on the Garnets. She invited herself very pleasantly to be my companion, when I went to propose to her the indulgence of accommodating us about the Letters from the Mountains. I had a very agreeable walk, & if she had not, more Shame for her, for I was quite as entertaining as she was. Dame G. is pretty well, & we found her surrounded by her well-behaved, healthy, large-eyed Children.—I took her an old Shift & promised her a set of our Linen; & my Companion left some of her Bank Stock with her. Tuesday has done its duty, & I have had the pleasure of reading a very comfortable Letter. It contains so much, that I feel obliged to write down the whole of this page, & perhaps something in a Cover.—When my parcel is finished I shall walk with it to Alton. I believe Miss Benn will go with me. She spent yesterday evening with us.—As I know Mary is interested in her not being neglected by her neighbours, pray tell her that Miss B. dined last wednesday at Mr Papillon's—on Thursday with Capt. & Mrs Clement—friday here—saturday with Mrs Digweed—& Sunday with the Papillons again.—I had fancied that

Martha w^d be at Barton from last Saturday, but am best pleased to be mistaken. I hope she is now quite well. – Tell her that I hunt away the rogues every night from under her bed; they feel the difference of her being gone. – Miss Benn wore her new shawl last night, sat in it the whole even^g & seemed to enjoy it very much. – “A very sloppy lane” last Friday! – What an odd sort of country you must be in! I cannot at all understand it! It was just greasy here on Friday, in consequence of the little snow that had fallen in the night. – Perhaps it was cold on Wednesday, yes, I believe it certainly was – but nothing terrible. – Upon the whole, the Weather for Winter-weather is delightful, the walking excellent. – I cannot imagine what sort of a place Steventon can be! My mother sends her Love to Mary, with Thanks for her kind intentions & enquiries as to the Pork, & will prefer receiving her Share from the two last Pigs. – She has great pleasure in sending her a pair of Garters, & is very glad that she had them ready knit. – Her letter to Anna is to be forwarded, if any opportunity offers; otherwise it may wait for her return. – M^{rs} Leigh’s Letter came this morn^g – We are glad to hear anything so tolerable of Scarlets. – Poor Charles & his frigate. But there could be no chance of his having one, while it was thought such a certainty. – I can hardly believe Brother Michael’s news; We have no such idea in Chawton at least. – M^{rs} Bramston is the sort of Woman I detest. – M^r Cottrell is worth ten of her. It is better to be given the Lie direct than to excite no interest ... [*last leaf of letter missing*]