

Chawton Friday Jan^y 29.

I hope you received my little parcel by J. Bond on Wednesday even^g, my dear Cassandra, & that you will be ready to hear from me again on Sunday, for I feel that I must write to you to day. Your parcel is safely arrived & everything shall be delivered as it ought. Thank you for your note. As you had not heard from me at that time it was very good in you to write, but I shall not be so much your debtor soon. – I want to tell you that I have got my own darling Child from London; - on Wednesday I received one Copy, sent down by Falknor, with three lines from Henry to say that he had given another to Charles & sent a 3^d by the Coach to Godmersham; just the two Sets which I was least eager for the disposal of. I wrote to him immediately to beg for my two other Sets, unless he would take the trouble of forwarding them at once to Steventon & Portsmouth – not having an idea of his leaving Town before to day; - by your account however he was gone before my Letter was written. The only evil is the delay, nothing more can be done till his return. Tell James & Mary so, with my Love. – For your sake I am as well pleased that it sh^d be so, as it might be unpleasant to you to be in the Neighbourhood at the first burst of the business. – The Advertisement is in our paper to day for the first time; - 18^s – He shall ask £1-1- for my two next, & £1-8- for my stupidest of all. – I shall write to Frank, that he may not think himself neglected. Miss Benn dined with us on the very day of the Books coming, & in the even^g we set fairly at it & read half the 1st vol. to her – prefacing that having intelligence from Henry that such a work w^d soon appear we had desired him to send it whenever it came out - & I beleive it passed with her unsuspected. – She was amused, poor soul! that she c^d not help you know, with two such people to lead the way; but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, & how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like her at least, I do not know. – There are a few Typical errors - & a “said he” or a “said she” would sometimes make the Dialogue more immediately clear – but “I do not write for such dull Elves”

“As have not a great deal of Ingenuity themselves.” – The 2^d vol. is shorter than I c^d wish – but the difference is not so much in reality as in look, there being a larger proportion of Narrative in that part. I have lopt & cropt so successfully however that I imagine it must be rather shorter than S. & S. altogether. – Now I will try to write of something else; - it shall be a complete change of subject – Ordination. I am glad to find your enquiries have ended so well. - If you c^d discover whether Northamptonshire is a Country of Hedgerows, I sh^d be glad again. – We admire your Charades excessively, but as yet have guessed only the 1st. The others seem very difficult. There is so much beauty in the Versification however, that the finding them out is but a secondary pleasure. - I grant you that this is a cold day, & am sorry to think how cold you will be through the process of your visit at Manydown. I hope you will wear your China Crape. Poor wretch! I can see you shivering away, with your miserable feeling feet. – What a vile Character M^r Digweed turns out, quite beyond anything & everything; - instead of going to Steventon they are to have a Dinnerparty next tuesday! – I am sorry to say that I could not eat a Mincepie at M^r Papillon’s; I was rather head-achey that day, & c^d not venture on anything sweet except Jelly; but that was excellent. – There were no stewed pears, but Miss Benn had some almonds & raisins. – By the bye, she desired to be kindly remembered to you when I wrote last, & I forgot it. - Betsy sends her Duty to you & hopes you are well & her Love to Miss Caroline & hopes she has got rid of her Cough. It was such a pleasure to her to think her Oranges were so well timed, that I dare say she was rather glad to hear of Cough....

(Postscript written upside down at top of p.1)

Since I wrote this Letter we have been visited by M^{rs} Digweed, her Sister & Miss Benn. I gave M^{rs} D. her little parcel, which she opened here & seemed much pleased with - & she desired me to make her best Thanks &c. to Miss Lloyd for it. – Martha may guess how full of wonder & gratitude she was.