

I a

Exp

Om

I a

Swain
Smiles

William Van Nostrand Jr
Short Tract
Slegans Co
New York

Worce Sunday morn June 24 / 1863

My Dear Friend.

There is an old saying that a clear conscience is the result of a promise fulfilled, a guilty one of a promise broken, so as I haven't any particular desire to be troubled with a guilty conscience. I have arisen early this morning, while all is quiet around, & every one else in the house are taking their morning naps; in order to fulfill my promise & write to my most worthy friend. The God of day has not yet arisen in the east sending forth his enlivening rays to gladden all nature after the recent shower, and the little birds are singing their merry morning roundelay. How happy they seem & how happy seems every thing in nature; and what a beautiful world we live in. Oh! why can not all mankind be happy, & live in peace & harmony with each other? Why can not all live to do good, live for the sake of

their friends, & to strew life's pathway
with roses! It is true. life has many
ills; perfect happiness is not the lot of mortals
on earth; but if we live as it is our privilege
to live, & as Heaven designed, we should live
we can in a measure conceal the thorns
& smooth life's pathway to the grave.

If we glorify God & honor ourselves, we
live not for the sake of self alone, but to
make the lives of others noble and happy.

I suppose every one can do some good
in the great busy life of humanity.

We do not realize what an influence we
exert over each other either for good or evil
in this world. For instance, suppose you
speak kindly to another who has been
guilty of some great fault! "A word fitly
spoken" may change his whole course of
life; then the influence of that little
word will be imprinted on the minds
of future generations; or, or through time
yes! the influence of that little word will
sound through eternity. Is it a little thing

But you know this better than I do.

How many times I have thought, that no one is so unworthy, no one is so little deserving as myself, but still I have a hope & a will strong as a line for life, to do good to my race.

The same God who made the hills & the forests, & clothed them with beauty, has also planted in every human bosom, a fountain of friendship: "an oasis in the soul." He is indeed to be pitied who has no friends. Did you ever hear the beautiful song

"I live for those who love me,
And those who believe me true;
For the Heaven that smiles above me
And the good that I may do";

That is my favorite. don't you like it?
But now my friend I must beg your pardon for writing in such a strain. I have forgotten myself, & nearly filled this sheet with nothing at all. I have often wondered how you can have so much patience with such a wild, crazy headed girl as I am

our friends are possessed of a
large share of kindness & good
nature & I rely on this for pardon for
all my wild pranks & misdoings
I don't mean to do any thing very bad
but I am naturally so full of fun &
mischief that I often do & say things
that I very much regret afterwards.
I did not leave Short Trust Tuesday as I
expected. Annie was obliged to teach for
Emma & could not come till Thursday.
I shall go to my sisters today with my
father, & where I write again I will
tell you how long I shall like to stay.
probably about three weeks if sister Hattie
don't send for me before. You must
take good care of the girls at Short Trust.
(Mary Clark in particular) while I am
gone. & see that Simp Bennett don't
elope with any body. because that would
break my heart - & would 'nt - that be
awful, what an explosion there would
be you would probably hear the report
at Short Trust. I believe I should like
to see you just a little while for the
sake of teasing you but as that can't
be I will not crucify you with any
more such nonsense as this, so for the
present I will stop writing which I know
with pleasure you better than any thing else
so an revoir & with this hasty scrawl adopt the

most sincere regards of your affectionate friend
Ethelbert Bennett