

Bairland Station.
Jan. 25th 1900.

My dear Mrs. Belden -

I wonder what you think of me - and how you judge my long silence - not too harshly I hope for it does not seem as if I could bear much more. But it is wonderful what and how one can endure when one has a "burden bearer" to cast all care upon - I am sure that I could not, with out a break down - have endured what I have - had I not known on whom to lean - and so in the bitterest hour I have taken it all to Him and He has gently lifted it and carried it all the days and nights -

Blessed God - is work - how could I have lived here this past ^{year} ~~month~~ had not I been

Please read the enclosed letter before you send it on -

knife deep - as it were in work. Bitter disappointment
has been ~~hours~~. Nor can I get understand why our
child should so develop a spirit so contrary to
all of her early training - so adverse to all her
surroundings - It is a mystery which will not
be revealed perhaps - till that time when we
shall understand many things which are dark
to us now - God knows I have tried to do my duty
by her - I planned every thing with prayer - my
plans all miscarried - through her self will
and the evil spirit which seemed to possess her.
If I failed, I pray God to forgive me - I can only
believe now that I did too much for her -

And you dear friend - I want you to believe
that I thank you from the depths of my heart -
for all you did and tried to do for my poor
wayward girl. I believed in you - I believe in you
now - and I know there was no lack on your part.
But oh! I hoped so much for her from your
influence and that of your beautiful family -
And while I am still in the dark - still crying
to God - I can not give her up - I believe - I will
believe that He will yet touch her selfish heart -
and make use of her -

I have not written because I could not trust
myself to - I could only wait in dumb faith -
Indeed I have schooled myself to scarcely
think - We are kept in ignorance so long so
much time must pass between letters - and they
are so ^{un}satisfactory - we know so little the true
state of her mind and heart. Oh! it has been
a cruel year - but - God knows how deep the
knife needed to cut - May His healing grace

close up the wound.

I do so long to hear from you and the Oberlin friends - but I know every one is busy with his own affairs - If you could find time to write and let me know about your selves I would be grateful - and please give me all the particulars of Helen leaving Oberlin - I pray that you may never be called to suffer what I have - for one of your dear ones -

Mrs. Allen has her trials too - Mrs. Allen has her & I know - where is Ben and what is he doing? How much longer is Mrs. Allen going to be able to endure it in the home? she is getting old and worn - Please give my dear love to all of your family and keep a large share for your self - And believe me ever your faithful friend - Bertha Storer -