

Washington Febr 7th 1824

12

My dearest friend,

I thank you for your letter of the 22^d which came to hand on tuesday last - and feel very thankful to learn by it that you and the family are so well. I assure you I never open a letter from home with trembling - lest I shall receive some unpleasant news. But, thus far, and I cannot express sufficient gratitude for the favor, the accounts from home have been of a much more cheering nature than I had reason to anticipate, considering the state of your health, and Samuels, when I left home. If my exertions, or my prayers, can avail any thing, something of happiness still remains for you. - You tell me that you ^{go} out but little, & have but little company &c. I am well acquainted with the inconvenience and tedious of a 'Vermont winter', and especially to a person of as feeble health as yours. But as bad as are these winters, I had infinitely rather, if I consulted only present happiness, spend them with you at home, than ~~barren~~. I have hitherto been well, and shall continue to take every precaution to preserve my health - I seldom leave my room unless to go to the House once a day where we tarry four or five hours. I suffer most for exercise - the travelling is generally so bad we cannot walk much, which is all the exercise we have. I have been to no party since the 8th of January, where I tarried but a