

(Letter with no envelope is on one sheet of lined stationery folded in half and is written on four sides in ink.)

Stafford Court House, Va.
April 20th, 1863

Ida, Frank & Willie –
My Dear Children –

Last Monday morning, one week ago, I bid you good-bye – I hope you have been obedient to your mother & grandmother, & kind to each other – To them you must look for most of the care & comforts that make your lives happy – If you behave well & try to please them that also will add much to your other joys – For children always feel better when they have acted so as to receive the commendation of their parents & friends – Perhaps you have not thought in how many ways it is possible for young folks like you to win favor –

(Pg. 2) In the 1st place, children should learn to take care of their clothes – We do not expect to see them always the cleanest – Boys love to play in the dirt sometimes – But for all this they can avoid spoiling their cap or coat or trousers – Take notice, children, that those playmates whose outside appearance is neat have one advantage over those who quickly get dirty & ragged – Strangers will quickly distinguish those who exercise care –

In the 2nd place, children should look out that they do not acquire a fretful disposition – It is better to be cheerful than to be sad – Sometimes we are disappointed in our expectations – Sometimes we are refused things which are very desirable – Sometimes we have to suffer pain – Whenever this happens to us we shall generally take more comfort if we **(Pg. 3)** do not cry & complain – The sun does not shine every day in the year upon any one – Neither do clouds darken the prospect without any variation – Sooner or later good things come to all – But if they do not come to you just when you wish it is not best to pine & show displeasure – Parents love to see their children begin the day well - When they get up in the morning it is very unpleasant if they begin to cry & whine - When they sit down to breakfast it is very unpleasant if there is contention about the chairs or the plates or the food or anything else – And so all the while – Brothers & sisters ought not to quarrel & no one of them behaves well when such conduct is exhibited –

In the 3rd place, children should early learn to be useful – There are many ways in which you can individually help your mother – **(Pg. 4)** Ida can see that the sitting room is kept in order & thus learn to be a good housekeeper – Frank must keep the corn house door shut & not allow any sticks or stones any where about the house yard – Willie will not allow the hens to scratch in the garden & if the front gate is open he must not let the street cattle come through it – Other ways of rendering service will occur to you from time to time –

Your father & mother wish you to grow up dutiful, kind & useful – If you wish to be such children it is time for each of you to commence – Let not a day pass in which you do not try to be dutiful, kind & useful – You must read this over many times & if there is anything you cannot understand your mother will explain it provided you ask her –

From your affectionate father, A. Upson