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L. Harris

Box 368, Bayamon, Pavia Rico, August 9, 1919.

Mr. and Mrs. Harris,

Dear Friends:

I feel very much touched by your kindness to my sister.

My Margaret and I have come to feel almost as if we were grandmothers to your children.

As it has been arranged that they are to inherit our property, I think it might interest you to know a little about our father and mother, and the principles that they followed while they were laying up this money.

I am telling you this because I think there is something interesting in it. It has seemed to me, all through my life, that a blessing has followed our humble efforts that was out of proportion to those efforts.

I have wondered if it was not the prayers of our father and mother that were being answered.

When I was quite young, I remember one Sunday morning seeing our minister before he commenced to preach his morning sermon, leave the pulpit and come to our pew and ask my mother where such a text was to be found. He had prepared to preach on a certain text but had forgotten to look it up. My mother instantly turned to the chapter and verse.

He knew that she was the only woman in the church who could quickly find any verse in the Bible.

One of the earliest incidents I remember about my father occurred during the Civil War. A neighboring family was quite poor. Three sons had gone into the army.

One day my father learned that the mortgage on their place had been foreclosed and that the family was likely to be turned out on the street. My father did not

lose a minute but went here and there and gathered up the money that was needed and paid off the mortgage.

About that time he heard of a widow in another neighborhood who had lost her only cow. He went out to my uncle and took one of our good milk cows and led it to that widow's home as a gift to her.

Later on a woman's husband died, and she could only earn her living by taking in sewing. He bought and gave her a Filcox & Gibbs sewing machine.

We could not afford to have a sewing machine ourselves at that time.

Because we were not ourselves particularly well-off these incidents and others like them impressed themselves on my mind.

When I was about 21 years of age I went from my home in Vermont to ~~Virginia~~ Virginia to teach the negroes,-- using for this purpose money which my father and mother had let me have as my personal allowance.

I wrote back from Virginia, after a few weeks, telling my mother about a negro who had learned to read so that he could read his bible. She remarked to my brother "Mary is doing a work that angels would be proud to do."

These were her last words about me. She died a few days later from heart failure.

Then my brother and sister and I were leaving our Vermont home to go as missionaries to Caylen my father--who had never said one word to dissuade us,-- stood on the front steps, while the tears ran down his face, and said: "My dear children, if you can do any good to anybody, go, and God be with you."

These were the last words I ever heard him utter.

The memory of my father and mother is a very precious memory.

I think you will pardon me for writing this letter about them.

Very cordially yours,
Mary Leitch