

Dear Little Mary

May 3rd 1864

I received a letter today from ^{Papa}~~Letter~~, dated 24th of April, enclosing a three cent piece of 1862. He says "Enclosed, I send a three cent piece, which I think you had better give to little Mary, as I have never given her any thing yet."

By the way, I want you to get her picture taken and send me one, my family collection being incomplete.

She is about as old as our other children were when they were first daguerrestyped."

Papa is now in Camp at Mechanicsville Virginia, but the Army is on the eve of a great battle, under General Grant's direction. Frequent letters come to me, and each one bears evidence of deep love for the wife and little ones ^{left-at-home}, ~~he~~ awaits the impending struggle with anxiety, doubtless, yet is ever cheerful.

God grant a great victory, and the safe

return of our dear Husband and Father!

Perchance in coming years, my little girl will wonder, at so small a present to be sent so far, but in these dark days, silver ^{a metal} coins are rare and we look at one as at a curiosity.

Then too her Father is in the battle field where nothing can be bought.

I trust she will learn to value this heart's intention above the ~~monetary~~ ^{monetary} worth of any gift. To show her how to estimate things by her dear Father's standard, I quote another passage from the same letter.

"When I came into the field last Fall I had three cents in my pockets,

I carried them until a short time before I went home, when I lost two of them.

While there, Robbie one day was playing with four, when I showed him mine telling him that was all I had. He immediately proposed to give me all he

had, but I suggested that he should give one to me and one to Frank who also had one, and we should all have two. — This he did immediately and seemed very much pleased with the arrangement. I intended to give him mine before I came away, but forgot to do it, and they are still in my pocket. — You may imagine then two cents are considerably above par in my estimation."

The generous spirit of his little boy sanctified the small gift of one cent!

Little Mary must ever remember to let her intention be pure in either giving or receiving, let the thing be great or small. — Remembering this the little "Three cent piece" may prove a treasure of incalculable value.

Little Mary, now ten months old plays on the floor as her Mother writes these words, hoping the little one may live long to

Also both Father and Mother. Let her keep
the letter and "The cent piece" as long
as she lives in memory of her loving
parents.

A. F. B.

Dear Father, I did not write this for your eye
but finding it needed copying, I did it, and
have put away the copy with the wine for
our youngest darling. Then I thought it might
be pleasant to you to see that your loving heart
was understood and lovingly appreciated, so I
enclosed this to you. — I saw Leobner
this afternoon, he was turned out of his rooms
but expects to reopen somewhere in three or four
weeks, when I shall try to get the picture for
you. — You think you can yet write to
me, for which I am grateful indeed; it will
be a weary anxious time when your letters must
cease, and you in the midst of danger. Your
name will ever be on my lips through never weary
allusion to the dear Father who knows our deepest
and most secret desires. May He keep them dear Mr.
Angela