

**JOEL TANNER HART.**

**BY**

**CARRIE WILLIAMS BERRY.**

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"The love of beauty and the desire for it must be born in a man; the skill to reproduce it he must make."—Schreiner.

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## PREFACE

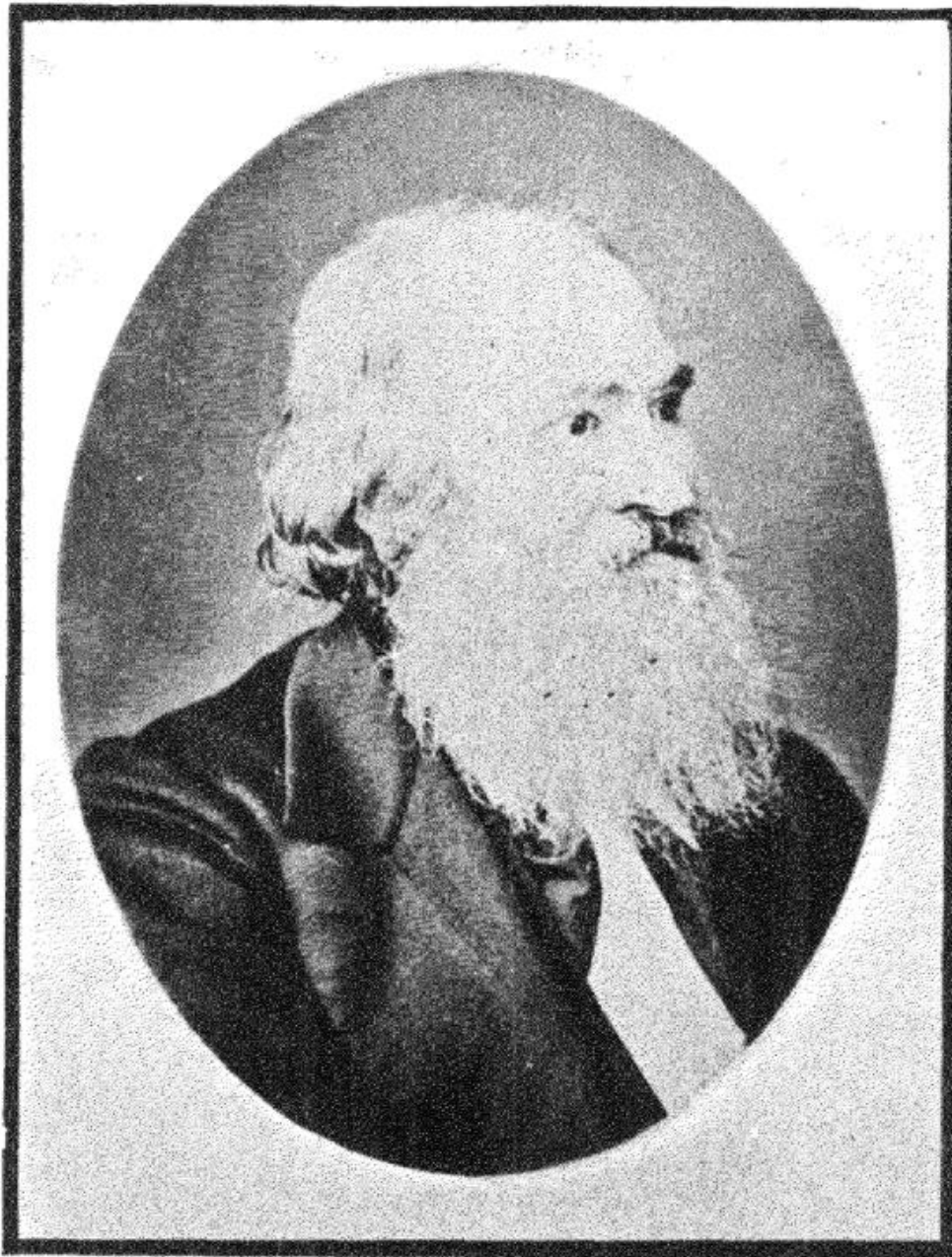
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**I**N giving an estimate of Hart as an artist, I have in general accepted the opinions of English and of Italian journals, from which I found clippings and translations among the papers of the artist. After his death, these papers, together with his personal effects, were sent to his niece, Miss Weaver, to whom I am indebted for their use.

Gen. C. M. Clay and Mr. F. W. Houston, both personal friends of Hart, have given me facts concerning the struggles and success of his life, which struggles and success have made the name of Joel T. Hart known to the world.

C. W. B.

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*Jesse T. Hart.*

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## JOEL T. HART.

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“Oh, you Americans do not know your own prophets!”

**T**HESE words of an Italian artist cannot be more fittingly applied than to our knowledge of Joel T. Hart, our American sculptor. He was a noble man, a sweet poet, the greatest portrait-sculptor.

Joel Tanner Hart was born in Clark county, Kentucky, February 11th, 1810. He was the son of Josiah and Judith Tanner Hart. His parents at the time of his birth were very poor, but possessed true worth, and the spirit that scorned poverty and heeded not its obstacles. His mother was a Virginian. She was pious, gentle, refined, and intelligent beyond her time and surroundings.

His father was a man of industry and integrity. He was one of the early settlers of Clark county and the first to build a flat boat for trading in New Orleans.

Josiah Hart was given eight hundred acres of land, upon a part of which Winchester now stands. This was a part of a military grant received by the father of the elder Hart for services rendered in the Revolutionary war. Through the rascality of an agent, Josiah was so involved that it became necessary to sell this land to meet his obligations.

This brought the Hart family to penury.

Like many another great man, Joel Hart gave to his mother the credit of his success in life.

The origin of his firmness of purpose and strength of character may be guessed from an incident told of his mother. She inherited from her mother's estate several slaves. Realizing as few of those about her did that slavery was an injury to both races, she refused to own them; and notwithstanding her family's need of money, gave her negroes their freedom.

About the humble home of Hart, Dame Nature did her best to inspire the young

genius with love and adoration. The beautiful undulating fields of blue-grass, stretching away to the very foot of the Cumberlandlands, whose blue-capped peaks might be seen in the dim distance; a crystal stream softly murmuring as it meandered through primeval forests of majestic trees; the indigenous cane with its beautiful foliage and graceful outline, quietly and surely awakened in the soul of young Hart the love of the beautiful.

This love grew to be the absorbing passion of his life.

He went to school but three months. His brother Thomas, who had received a liberal education before the financial misfortunes of the family, was of great help to the young student.

Joel T. Hart went to Bourbon County before he was twenty years old, where he engaged in making stone fences, building chimneys, and in doing other work of a stone-mason.

Although he was poor and his occupation humble, he seems to have had access to the most urbane society of the Blue-grass, where he made much of the books and culture about him,

Although he did the work of an ordinary workman, he took pride in the fact that it was done in an extraordinary manner.

There are still standing in good condition in this county, stone fences, chimneys, tomb-stones, and stone steps made by Hart about this time.

There is one chimney of especial interest which has his name chiseled on many stones. In most cases, the name was carefully placed on the inside, out of sight. When asked why the name was always hid, he said, "These engravings are not for the eye of the present generation."

How prophetic! Always modest, still he felt the power within him.

From Bourbon County he went to Lexington, where he worked for several years

in Pruden's marble yards, dressing and engraving tombstones.

A lady, who boarded at this time in the same house with Hart, describes him as a handsome brunette, six feet tall, with black hair, very fine dark eyes, a sharp nose, and a dignified and elegant bearing.

He was social, fond of children, a fine conversationalist, and an amateur musician. His music was plaintive and poetic. Indeed, his sentiments were poetic whether expressed carelessly in the social circle, in his soft rythmical verse, or in the cold colorless marble.

It was during these years in Lexington that Hon. Cassius M. Clay became acquainted with and interested in Hart. General Clay, with keen insight and characteristic independence, recognized the genius of the young man, and determined to help him into a position where his talents might be developed.

He encouraged Hart to go to Cincinnati,

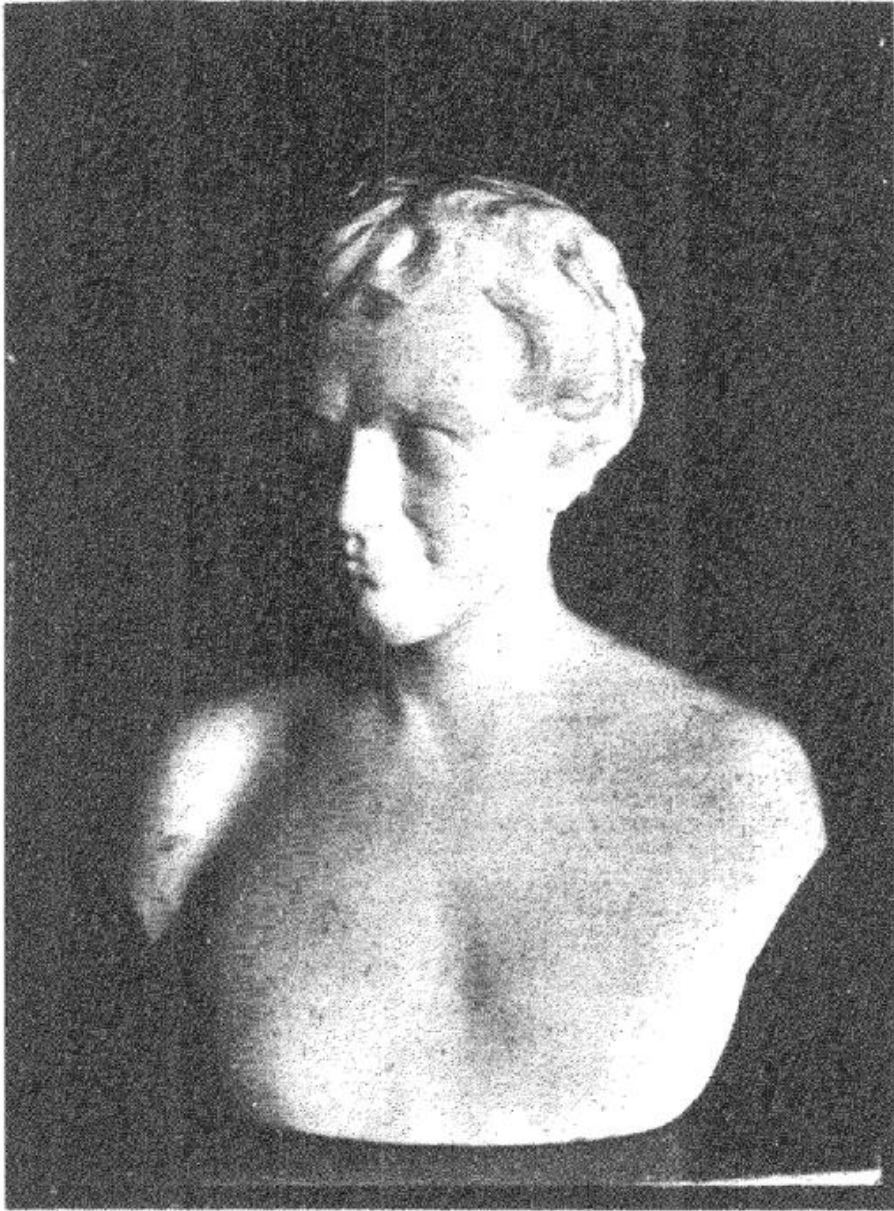
where he received some instruction in his chosen profession.

General Clay gave him his first order, which was a bust of the General, to be done when Hart considered himself able to undertake such a piece of art, but for which five hundred dollars was to be paid down.

This was the beginning of a friendship which ended only with the life of the great artist. They kept up a correspondence for years, some of which has been published.

When the bust was completed, it was exhibited in Philadelphia. It received much praise and admiration; which success, no doubt, led the way to other orders. He was soon given upon similar conditions, orders for a bust of Andrew Jackson and a life size statue of Henry Clay.

The careful, painstaking way in which he studied the expression and various moods of the Great Commoner, the careful measurement of limb and feature, and the length of time given to this work show his regard for detail.



**GEN. CASSIUS M. CLAY.**

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From this cast, several statues were made after he went abroad in 1849. One is now in the capital at Richmond, Va., one in the court house in Louisville, Ky., and a bronze statue in New Orleans, where it was unveiled in 1860 with imposing ceremonies.

This statue was worked into bronze in Munich under Mueller, who wrote Hart:

“Many of your countrymen who have seen the statue have expressed themselves as extremely satisfied. About eight days ago a person called who said that he had been a friend of Henry Clay’s, and he embraced the statue and kissed its hand with the greatest enthusiasm. It was a touching sight. I have taken the liberty of exhibiting that work of art for three days to the public. Many thousands have seen it, and great praise has been expressed as to the originality of the composition and life-like truth of the statue.”

Henry Clay obtained for the artist an appointment as bearer of important dispatches

to Europe in order to lessen the expense of this voyage.

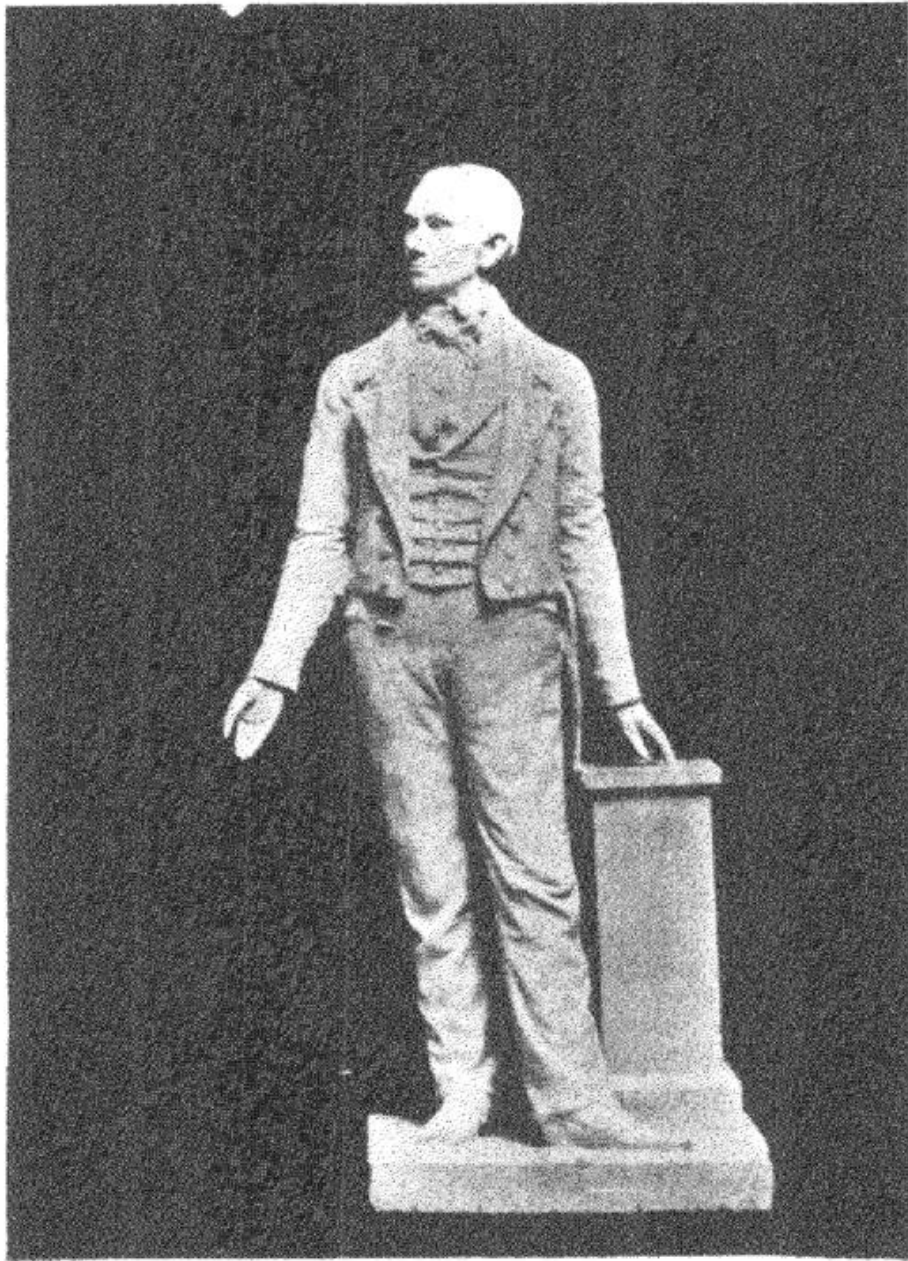
Clay once said of Hart: "He had more versatility of talent than any one I ever met."

Hart spent some time in London where he continued his study of anatomy; but went later to Florence, Italy, where he opened his studio on the Piazza del Indipendenza.

Here, he spent the remainder of his life studying, working, writing, conceiving and executing his masterpiece, *The Triumph of Chastity, or Woman Triumphant*.

This group of an exquisite female figure and that of a beautiful cupid was purchased by Tiffany and brought to this country after the artist's death. Hart valued this, his best and last work, at twenty thousand dollars. He refused sixteen thousand dollars for it before it was complete, and expressed a wish that his own country might buy it.

The energy of Kentucky women, coupled



**HART'S STATUE OF HENRY CLAY.**

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with the generosity of Mr. Tiffany, made the purchase of this rare piece of art possible. It was brought to Lexington as the property of Fayette county, and placed in the Court House, where it was unfortunately destroyed by fire in May of 1897.

While at work upon his masterpiece, he more than once allowed his zeal to lead him to absolute poverty.

Brought to face this stern reality, he would for a time suspend operation, look about him for some portrait-busts or other work, lay by a little sum, and once more return to his Galatea.

He worked at intervals the last eighteen years of his life upon this group.

While the group was still in clay, he told a friend he had spent eleven years, six months, and six weeks upon it. In reply to the surprise expressed, he said: "It takes God eighteen years to make a perfect woman, and surely I should be allowed as many to make a perfect type of a perfect woman."

How well he redeemed this promise !

Woman Triumphant has been pronounced by many critics to be the most wonderful piece of statuary of modern times.

The London Athenaeum of 1871 declared it to be the most extraordinary production of ancient or modern art.

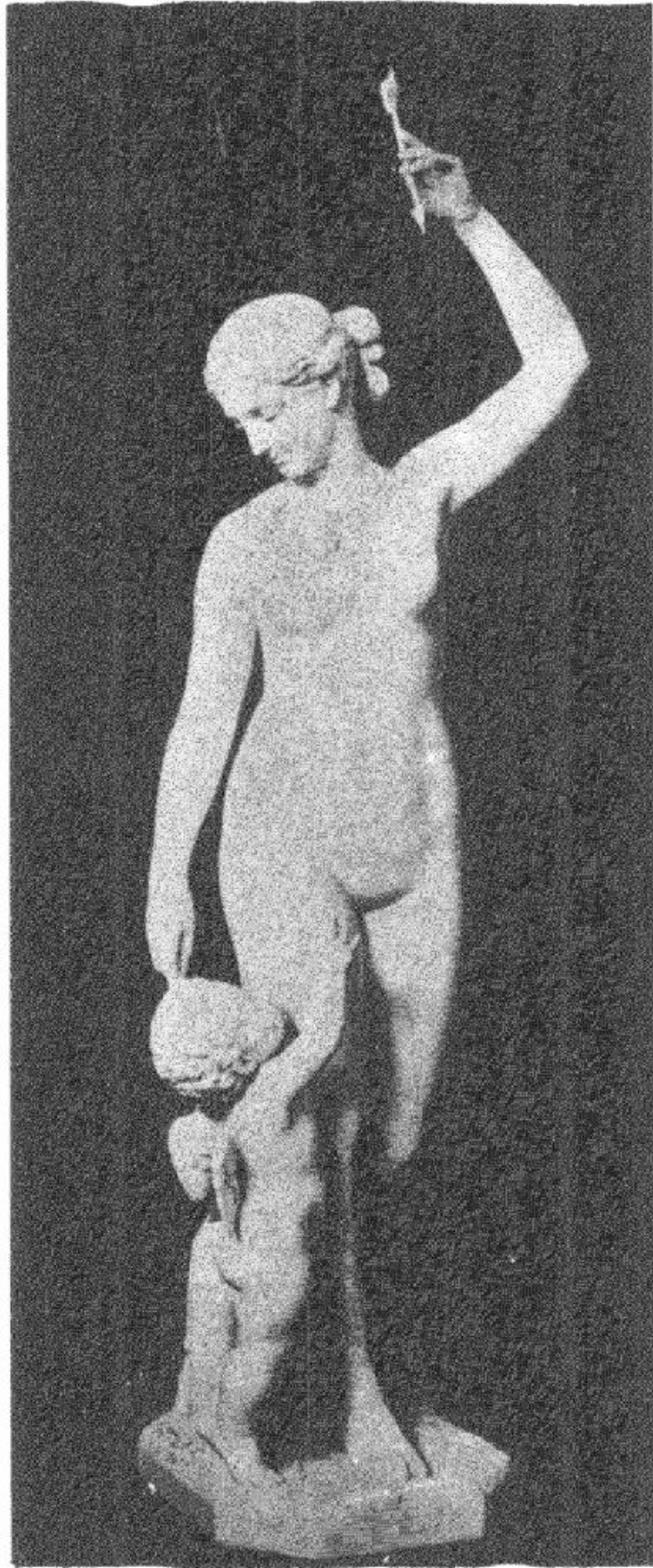
Hart held that the Venuses of the ancients represented only the physical woman, and in a private letter expressed the opinion that the old artists made the female head too small.

His aim was to reproduce the impress of the soul on the face of a noble, intelligent woman.

The much-told story that his early sweetheart was carried in his mind as his model all these years is without foundation.

He told a friend that he had used in part more than one hundred and fifty girls and women in modeling his ideal woman.

In the following stanzas, Hart expresses the thought embodied in the marble;



**WOMAN TRIUMPHANT.**

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## WOMAN TRIUMPHANT.

Hail holiest vision lent to earth,  
As warm as thrice of pulse abeat  
With youth's love of heavenly birth,  
As angel bright, as seraph sweet.

And beautiful from inward glow,  
In majesty she stood, and fair  
As morning light on virgin snow,  
With purity and truth—and bare.

It were a dream no longer now,  
A fabled goddess of the wood,  
But woman of the thoughtful brow,  
With light, and truth, and love imbued.

The winged boy with slackened bow  
On tiptoe reached—his arrow sped,  
Pleading to one who answered, "No"  
In kind rebuke high o'er his head.

His empty quiver fell beside  
The arrows broken, harmless round.  
And Beauty all his arts defied,  
With Virtue's spell securely bound.

A triumph—not to hurt the child—  
But teach him that the thrilling dart  
Sped but to wound, if Love defiled,  
Which, when exalted, wins the heart.  
And that henceforward Love's control  
O'er Beauty should be as his power  
To bless, appealing to the soul  
To sooth her in her trying hour.  
And I would give that vision form,  
And symbolize for Love a throne;  
Would strive to animate and warm,  
And dare to bid it live in stone.

His genius was soon discovered in Italy, the home of great artists, and he became acquainted, even intimate, with many celebrities.

He was a personal friend of Albano, Powers, Rheinhardt, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and others.

He admired Mrs. Browning very much, and once said in answer to the question if he knew her: "Yes; I knew her well, and all the greatness one sees written in

her books falls short of the reality of her heart. She was a woman of whom one would say through tears, "Thank God, she has entered her true life with the angels."

Hart invented an ingenious machine by means of which statuary may be made with wonderful exactness and rapidity. This was patented in England and was much praised by the London Illustrated News and other English journals of that time. It was, however, received with little favor in Italy, because it deprived of work a class of sculptors who did rough work in preparing the marble for the hand of the master.

The first bust upon which Hart used this machine was that of Colonel J. W. Grigsby, a faultless piece of work, now in the Corcoran Gallery at Washington.

Mrs. Grigsby, who was a granddaughter of Governor Shelby, met Hart in Florence in great financial distress. She advanced him a loan of three thousand dollars that he might resume work upon Woman Tri-

umphant. This loan was paid in part by the bust of Colonel Grigsby.

Love of his native soil, his early friends, and his family were prominent throughout his whole life.

In 1860, he visited America for the last time. He carved stone in Italy for the graves of his parents, brought them home, and saw them placed over the ashes so dear to him. It must have been during this visit that the artist received the order and took measurements for a bust of Alexander Campbell, which was unveiled in 1874, and is now the property of Bethany College.

While in America, he was given a banquet at Ashland which was attended by the greatest Kentuckians then living, and was only equaled in enthusiasm by similar occasions given in honor of the Sage of Ashland himself.

About this time he wrote:

“Kentucky, my proud native State,  
Home of the fair, the free, the great,

I love thee, old Kentucky.  
Whate'er thy fortune or thy fate,  
I honor thee, Kentucky."

William Cullen Bryant, when in Florence, met and became much interested in the poor artist whose poetic genius pleased him.

Hart was invited to be present at a banquet given to Bryant, upon which occasion he read the following little poem :

Thrice welcome to these shores, great bard  
    who sang  
The song of "God's First Temples."

Where winding Arno weaves a plaintive  
    tale

    Of silver sheen with mountain shadows  
    brown ;

Where Genius hollowed old Etrurias vale ;

    Where Machiavelli rose to dark renown,  
And Galileo won a starry crown ;

    Where, in the gorgeous temples, Raphael  
    hung

His inspirations ; where stern turrets frown,  
And Buonarotti wrought and Dante sung,  
Shall I be mute where every stone hath  
found a tongue.

Shall I be mute while here my country's  
pride,

Her youth, her beauty and her manhood  
throng

This treasure-home ; its portals open wide  
Where I and some proud names have  
toiled so long ;

And see my country's Sire of Song  
Crowned with his snowy splendors ?

The attention and honors paid to the poet-artist did not effect his simple modesty. An incident told by General Clay illustrates his dignity of character and his contempt for shams.

He was invited by the United States Minister to join him and a party of noblemen to visit the leaning tower of Pisa.

Various conjectures were made concerning it, when Hart expressed some opinion



**IL PENSEROSO.**

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saying, by way of preface, that he had observed such a principle when building chimneys in Kentucky.

The shocked look of the fastidious aristocrats was lost upon Hart, who placed manhood and honest work above all titles.

Some other products of his chisel are a copy of the Venus de Medici and the Morning-glory, a little girl whose scant frock is filled with the dainty flower from which the piece receives its name.

These, with his own bust by Saul, his pupil, are in the art room of the Louisville Polytechnic Library.

Il Penseroso, an ideal female head, is in Lexington, the property of Mrs. Henry Duncan, Sr.

The beautiful hand resting upon a glove was owned by his friend, the late John S. Wilson, of Peewee Valley, Kentucky.

Of this last piece there has been published a blood-curdling story concerning the hand used as a model, all of which seems due to some active imagination. The truth

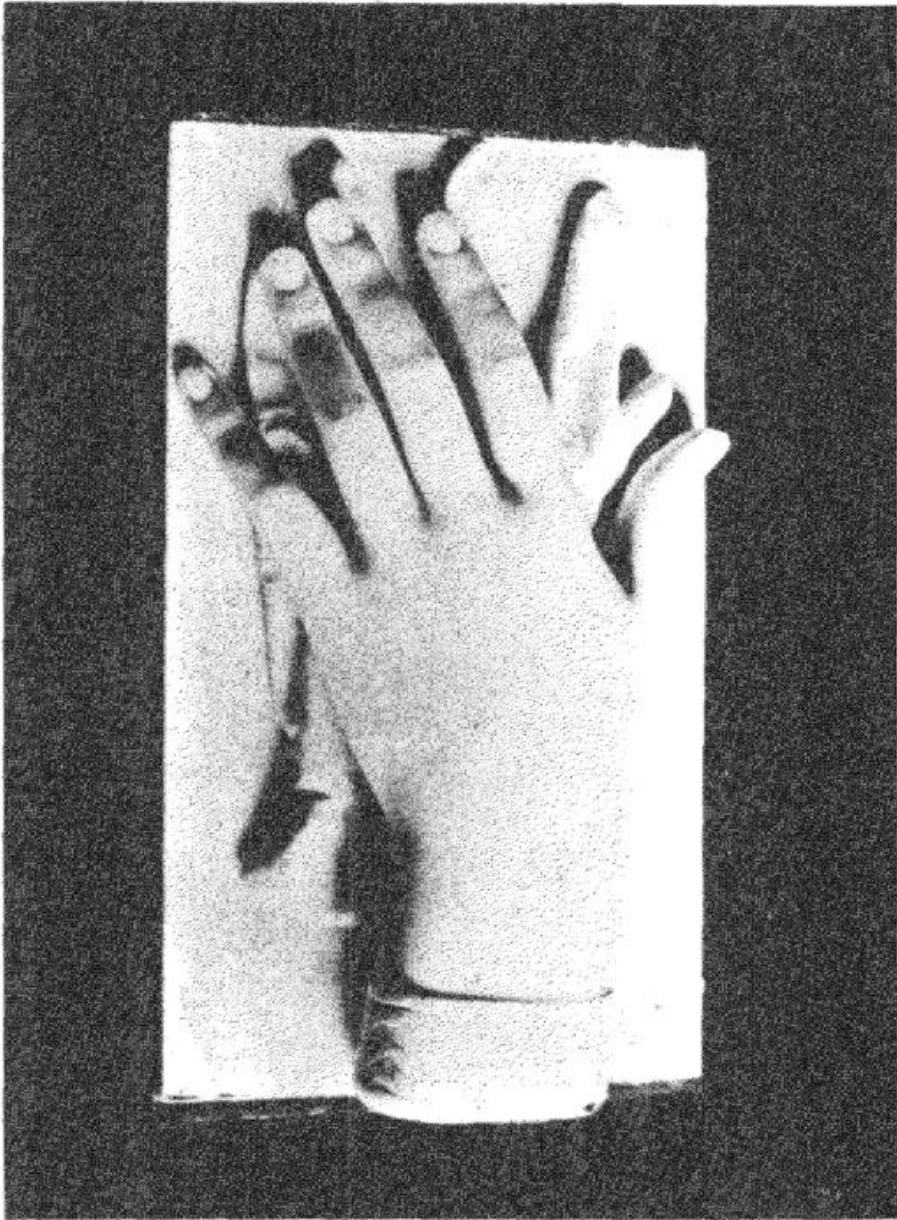
is, Hart enjoyed studying the human hand, and often asked the privilege of modeling a beautiful one in plaster. Some American women, whose heads have been whitened by the frosts of many winters, have smiled complacently as they recalled this compliment paid them by the great artist in his youth.

While Hart was living in Lexington, he fell in love with Mary Smithers, a beautiful and accomplished young woman. She returned his affection, but after several years the engagement was broken on account of the young man's poverty.

She afterward married a Mr. Kilpatrick, and became the mother of a large family.

It is said that Hart advised this marriage, as he knew her life with him would necessarily be one of privation and hardship; and he knew that Mr. Kilpatrick could give her the position she was so well fitted to grace.

She was married a second time to Mr. J. R. Smith, of Alabama.



**THE HAND.**

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She received many letters and some beautiful poems from Hart, which she always treasured.

One is an acrostic, spelling the whole name, Mary Smithers; another Mary's Picture; and still another given below, which seems to be proof of this romantic love story.

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TO MARY ON PARTING.

Adieu, dear Mary, once adieu.

My destined hour to part has come,  
From those I love, my favorite few,  
My country and my home.

As Fortune's cold and stern decree  
Forbids me bow at Virtue's shrine,  
So were this bosom worthy thee,  
I dare not call thee mine,

Be then some gallant breast thy guide  
Which all the Virtues may approve,  
For thine are worth such hero's pride,  
And worthy of his love.

A nobler offering this will be  
Than one whose fate it is to roam,  
Whose dwelling lies beyond the sea,  
Perhaps the waves his home.

Yet Mary, will thou breathe a prayer,  
And often greet my tender lay,  
That we may see each other there,  
When I am far away.

I'll think of thee, tho' mountains rise,  
And oceans wild between us roll ;  
I'll steal thine image from the skies,  
And stamp it on my soul.

While hope shall light me o'er the main,  
Where'er I roam, whate'er pursue,  
And fondly whisper—meet again—  
Once more, sweet maid, adieu.

Always true to her, and considering his  
art first, he never married.

The late Mr. John S. Wilson, perhaps the  
most intimate friend of the great artist,  
received a letter from him bearing date of  
November 6, 1875. Among other matter,

more or less private, it contained this announcement :

“The group, my life work, is finished, and beautifully cast in plaster-of-paris. I put the Cupid at his place to-day, reaching up for the last stolen arrow that the Purity (shall I call her?) holds up out of his reach, for which he is tiptoeing. The same mail will take this news to our friends, H. C. Pindell and Jouett Menifee, to whom I have for the same reason delayed writing as I have to yourself. I shall duplicate it to provide against accidents to one alone, and as soon as it is dry enough, commence it in marble, for which I have a fine block roughed out. This, I trust, will set me square with the world and bury me decently. My instrument will copy it exactly and ad infinitum, and make money for others when I am gone.”

Unfortunately, *Woman Triumphant* was never copied by his instrument. After this work of art was burned with the Lexington

Court House, it was found to be impossible to reproduce it, since the cast also had been destroyed. A handsomer building has Phoenix-like sprung from the ashes of the old one, but this statue, representing the life work of a great artist was irretrievably lost.

How sad that he should put down the chisel for the last time March 2d., 1877, just as his great work was finished, and just as he might have experienced the quiet calm of competence to which he was a stranger.

His illness was short; and his friends in America knew nothing of it, until his spirit had gone back to his Maker, as surely as a just spirit ever returned to the God who gave it.

He was great in thought, noble in act, foresighted as a prophet, simple as a child.

He was buried in the English cemetery at Florence by the side of Mrs. Browning and Hiram Powers, where his much loved Arno sang a requiem for the great dead.





**ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.**

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The legislature of Kentucky appropriated twelve hundred dollars for the purpose of bringing his remains home to mingle with the soil of his native state.

Accordingly, Judge Charles E. Kincaid was commissioned to go abroad and to secure for the proud mother-state the remains of a son who had so honored her, a son whose last wishes were whispered into other ears—not into the indifferent ears of strangers, for the Italians had learned to love him as their own.

They were pleased and touched that Kentucky should, in death, claim him who had in life so loved her.

After unavoidable delays, Judge Kincaid returned to Frankfort with the body of the great man, where it was reinterred with appropriate ceremonies June 18, 1887.

Mr. Robert Burns Wilson, Kentucky's living poet-artist, and Hon. W. M. Beckner, a representative of Hart's native county; delivered memorial addresses.

The late poetess of Kentucky, Rosa Verner Jeffrey, wrote a beautiful poem for the occasion.

The Governor, the members of the Legislature, Judges of the Court of Appeals and other dignitaries attended.

Three of his old friends, Mr. John S. Wilson, Mr. F. W. Houston, and Hon. C. M. Clay were among the honorary pall-bearers.

Cards were sent to the relatives and intimate friends of the dead artist, and a general invitation to the people of Kentucky, in answer to which there was such a concourse of people as Frankfort has not often seen.

The legislature made an appropriation with which there was erected over his remains such a shaft as this modest man would approve.

## TWO LITTLE TREES.

(To my niece, Diana Weaver—only daughter  
of my sister.)

When Spring returned to mate the dove  
One morn, and wak'd the birds and bees,  
Sister and I, with children's love  
And play, set out two little trees.

Winter—abashed in tawny white  
And tattered, slid into the rills,  
While Flora scattered daisies bright,  
And violets, and daffodils.

The chirp, the tap, the pheasant's drum  
Awoke the sleeping woods, and sweet  
The breath of morn, the stir, the hum  
Of tiny wing, and busy feet.

The South's first herald, thistle down,  
Came gaily sailing on the breeze;  
The ants began their little town,  
And moles plough'd round our tiny trees.

We built our play-house when the thrush  
And jay made nests in tangled vine,  
Of bark, and moss, 'mid fern and brush,  
And named our nurslings, "Mine and  
thine."

Our joyous hearts, each little one  
Protected, while through glen and grove  
We ran, as laughing brooklets run,  
Thrice blessed with these and Mother's  
love.

We drank to them from goblet shells,  
Of crystal founts, and called it wine;  
Of acorn hulls made cups and cells,  
And deemed, with these, our feast divine.

The dolls she made, my mimic men  
In little boats along would row ;  
Our bare feet wading, printed then  
The drifted sand or melted snow.

She had no little shoes, nor I,  
But aided by our mother-wit,  
I made us sandals bye and bye,  
And she, our little stockings, knit.

Our snow-sieve hut, with fire would glow  
At night, like lantern on a hill,  
Where stars peeped in, and charmed us so,  
We felt their glory, not the chill.

The minstrel Brooks but ceased their songs  
To frame a thousand crystal lyres,

And cities, with mosaic throngs,  
Of marble made their domes and spires.  
Beyond the winter solstice now,  
Sun, Moon, and Stars, from zone to zone  
Rode on, and changed, we knew not how,  
But only that they glorious shone.  
So charm'd with varied Nature's smile,  
Her simple garb, and joyous tongue,  
We scarcely knew their names the while  
Her mighty poets wrought and sung.  
The stars were angel's eyes, we deemed  
The gold and purple clouds their wings ;  
The Moon their queen ; while Mountains  
seemed  
To bound the Earth, and were its Kings.  
We watched the tempest in its wrath,  
And wondering sighed, while thunder  
awed  
For trees and flowers torn in its path,  
And feared we had offended God.  
Our shadows to out run would try,  
And o'er the brimming rill to bound;

Through glittering hail, or shower would fly  
To catch the rainbow on the ground.

We longed to track the gorgeous sun  
Gilding the mountain spires at even;  
Deemed we would grow to climb the one  
Beyond, and that it reached to Heaven.

Now as the dark stole down the hill,  
I whistled to dispel the dread;  
Or startled by the whippoorwill,  
We feared it saw some ghost ahead.

While danger lured in wild cascade,  
And foot-prints wild along the shore,  
The owl, through his vast realms of shade,  
Set all the dreamy woods aroar.

The great dog, first to greet at morn  
Caressing, bounded with delight;  
Strayed, as the twilight dew was born,  
To guard us home, then watch all night.

Though wandering, truant, through the dells  
Gave Mother anxious pain the while;  
Our wildwood ventures, tales, and shells,  
Oft won her half approving smile.



The sunshine playing with the shade,  
The moss-grown rocks, the dimpled pools;  
Our pictures, seats, and mirrors made ;  
The wildwoods vast and free, our schools.

Where simple voices lone and deep,  
Awoke our childhood's first young dream,  
That lifelike cloud, or star, or steep,  
Was shadowed in the winding stream.

'Mid Nature's fair luxuriance round,  
We ne'er had dreamed that we were poor ;  
With touch, taste, scent, and sight, and  
sound  
Were happy, for we knew no more.

But when soft zephyrs ope'd the flowers,  
And far around their odors shed ;  
And birds for joy sang through the bowers,  
We wept our little trees as dead.

No where their parent boughs in bloom,  
Gave promise of a little pear,  
'Mid budding life, and sweet perfume,  
Our little trees alone were bare.

We stole to see them one soft morn,  
As oft before in silent grief,  
When two sweet buds on hers were born,  
And mine had ope'd one little leaf.

We now were happy like the doves  
Again, and busy as the bees,  
And promised fruit to all our Loves,  
And to our best, some little trees.

They grew up gently, side by side,  
Like us, their guardians, 'till withdrawn,  
When hers got wounded, and it died,  
While mine still lives and blossoms on.

And she hath fled to yonder sky  
And Tree of Life beside the Throne  
To pluck immortal fruit, while I  
Am left to journey on alone!

FLORENCE, ITALY, Aug. 7, 1859.

My Dear Dian :

I was very glad to receive a letter from you, some months ago, in which you inquire if the cast I took from your mother's head was lost at sea with my other things. I regret to tell you it went down with my original bust of General Jackson, statue of Henry Clay, and all my likenesses, except the daguerreotypes of Mr. Clay.

The cast was so unlike your animated mother in her health that it would convey a very bad and erroneous impression upon her children. I could not possibly have made a good likeness of her from it.

You speak of your father's intention of moving to Texas next fall, and of his moving the remains of his family to the Winchester cemetery. I had hoped that he would select the old burying ground, where her ancestors all sleep, for your mother's remains, and still hope he may.

I shall erect a suitable monument at my father's and mother's grave there. Ten

months ago I wrote to your uncle, Thomas Hart, to purchase for me of Ramsey the grave yard. He never answered my letter.

I now have the money lying in bank to buy it, or the whole twenty-seven acres that belonged to my mother, provided I cannot secure the burial ground alone.

Please ask your father to read this letter, and to see if he can buy one-fourth or one-half acre containing the grave-yard; or to get John B. Houston to try to purchase it. I will pay the lawyer's fee, and the money for the land, immediately through the Lexington Branch or Northern Bank.

The boys, Joel T. and Robert, never answered my letters to them. This disappointed me, as I suppose they can both write.

My age and being their uncle would merit some notice from them, to say nothing of the value of my time and the position I have gained among men.

You are a good Weaver, I am sure, and I trust you may continue to weave your

daily threads through the woof of life so that it may do honor alike to yourself and to your dear departed mother.

My love to all. Write to me.

Your affectionate uncle,

JOEL T. HART.

*Miss Dian Weaver.*

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FLORENCE, ITALY, Nov. 12, 1863.

Dear Dian:

Not knowing your address, I enclose through Uncle Thomas Hart a poem which I composed in memory of your mother.

It is as true a picture of our childhood life, as I could give in verse. You being her only daughter, I enclose it to you. It may otherwise be lost.

I expect to publish my poems, should I live—but all such things are uncertain.

I wrote a long letter in reply to one received from you long ago, but have had no response since.

I hope you and all that survive are well,

and pray that you may be protected through this terrible ordeal that is distressing our unhappy country.

Not knowing that this will reach you, I write no more.

With my love to all,

Your affectionate uncle,

JOEL T. HART.

P. S.—The little trees alluded to were planted, one by your mother and one by me, in the early spring of 1820, in the garden at my grandmother Tanner's old homestead, which fell by allotment to my mother.

They were pear scions. The one planted by your mother was killed many years ago by the burning of an out-house. The other, planted by me, still lives, or did live, three years ago, near the old family burying-ground, where my grandfather and grandmother, and my own father and mother sleep.

J. T. H.

*Miss Dian Weaver.*

FLORENCE, ITALY, Nov. 14, 1858.

Dear Amanda:

I should have answered your most welcome letter long ago, had circumstances furnished anything of interest which I might have written.

You, perhaps, have had no acquaintance in this city for years, hence I can scarcely interest you, except in what I say of myself; whereas I have many relations and acquaintances around you, of whom I should like to hear, and especially would I like to hear of you, your father, and all the children.

The death of your brother John, just as he was verging on manhood, was sad; but such is the order of Providence, and we should submit with becoming resignation.

I see a great many American and English people who visit my studio, frequently a half-dozen in a day.

We have very cultured society in Florence. It is a considerable city—one hundred thousand population.

I had an interesting sojourn in England, where I remained fifteen months.

About four months ago, I finished the model of a colossal statue of Henry Clay for New Orleans. It is twelve and one-half feet high. I have sent it to Munich to be cast in bronze.

In about four months, my marble statue of Mr. Clay will be finished for Virginia.

Perhaps, I will return to the United States next summer or fall. One year from next January, I am to put the colossal statue on its pedestal in New Orleans.

I have so much to do that I can hardly take time to write a social letter.

I have had a barrel of Cincinnati hams sent me as a present from England, which some of my neighbors are helping me to eat.

We still have plenty of peaches, pears, grapes, oranges and lemons; but no biscuit or buckwheat cakes as you have.

How are your father and all the family?



How are the boys getting along?

Give them all my love when you see them,  
and accept the same for yourself.

Truly,

JOEL T. HART.

*Mrs. Amanda Cook,*

Winchester, Ky., U. S. A.

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FLORENCE, ITALY, Sept. 9, 1852.

Dear Sir:

On the twentieth of this month three years ago, I started from Lexington for this old country, and I suppose you think that I am dead, as I have scarcely heard any thing from my relations about Winchester since I have been in Italy. I am not dead, however, even if it seems a wonder, when one reflects how many dangers there are—the whale in wide ocean, the long travel on this side among the thieves and robbers in London and Paris, among the Alps and Apennines, and at Genoa and Naples. There was also the terror of the great eruption of Vesuvius, which took place while I was there two and one-half years

ago. Notwithstanding all the evil prophecies, I have had nothing happen to me yet worse than a scratch of a pin or the bite of a mosquito. I have better health than for fifteen years.

I will, at last, tell you something about things here and what I have been doing. (I have never been ready till now to tell.) I really have been at work, in my own way, all the time, notwithstanding, some of my friends appear to think I have done nothing for these dozen years past.

Since modeling my first head in Cincinnati in 1837, my purpose has been fixed, notwithstanding the want of encouragement, my poverty, and many privations through which I have passed.

So, here I am now, right in the midst of the mighty works of sculpture and painting of ancient and modern times. Here, where Powers of world-wide fame is, whom I see nearly every day.

I did not open a studio or get to work in marble until a few months ago, although I

have been drawing and modelling all the time for improvement.

My busts, if I may speak frankly, are thought to be unsurpassed by any—ancient or modern.

Powers, himself, has said there are none to equal them in Rome.

I am now at work on my statue of Henry Clay. Since the great man is no more, I shall get it complete as soon as I can.

My models of him are very much praised for spirit and originality.

You probably remember an instrument which I invented, and used in 1844 in cutting a marble bust of C. M. Clay, at Lexington. Sister Mary saw me at work with it (Would she were with us still!), but she could have no dream of the result.

I have, within the last year, perfected this instrument with my own hands, and have had three busts cut with it.

I put men to work with it two months ago.

The old way of pointing statuary through-

out this continent is with large dividers, taking three or four pairs to establish each point, requiring three or four measurements with each pair to fix one point. It requires the best mechanics in the world to use the dividers.

A first-rate workman can average thirty points per day, for which he receives an equivalent of one dollar and fifty cents. This will buy more here than two dollars in the United States.

There are, perhaps, more than two thousand men engaged in this work on the Continent who receive two thousand dollars per day.

Now, the same man who has averaged thirty points per day, can, with my instrument, make sixty points.

My instrument makes work absolutely perfect; the old way does not.

The old process does not work into cavities, folds of drapery, etc.; mine does this exactly.

All this I have done, using one needle in my instrument.

This week I shall have completed two needles, then one man can do as much work in one day as three can in the old way.

I am demonstrating this every day to my own advantage, and to the astonishment of the workmen and everybody who sees it.

I am about to have it patented at Washington, U. S., so you see, whether I reap the reward for it or not, I have not been working for nothing.

My labor at all sorts of mechanics has enabled me to accomplish this result, which Powers and others have tried to accomplish in vain.

I lost all my beautiful casts, books, and clothes, the ship being totally lost.

Among them was the cast I took with so much care from sister Mary's head after death. This loss I regret far more than all the rest. A copy of her likeness I brought safe in my trunk.

I did not expect, on beginning this, to entertain you with so lengthy a detail of my work.

On the tenth of last May, I wrote a hasty letter to Brother Thomas, and sent it by Colonel J. Warren Grigsby, who married

Miss Susan Shelby, of Lexington, Ky.,  
eighteen months ago.

I have not received a reply to this letter.

It has been a long time since I saw you.

How are you getting on in the world?  
How are all the children? Sister's three  
little ones, how are they coming on? Are  
they growing healthy? The little boys re-  
member their mother. Does little Dian  
remember her?

I sent Dian and brother John's little Ju-  
dith Mosaics by Colonel Grigsby.

I bought them in Rome, when on a visit  
to Colonel Grigsby last winter,

Where are Amanda and Beauford? How  
are Uncle David and his family?

Through you, I send all of these my  
kindest regards.

I cannot now tell you of this old country  
and this renowned old city, but will try to  
write you something of them when you reply  
to this. Where is brother John?

I will enclose a short note to Brother  
Thomas, which I will request you to hand  
him.

Most truly yours,

JOEL T. HART.

*Captain I. D. Weaver,*

Winchester, Ky., U. S. A.