

SEPTEMBER · 1884

Olivia A. Davidson to
Eleanor Jameson Williams Baker¹

Spruce Cottage Jackson, N.H. Sept. 6 [1884]²

Dear Mrs. Baker, I wish I could express to you my deep sense of all your kindness to me. I almost feel that it is an imposition, this having such long helpful letters from you in addition to all the arrangements and inquiries you are making for me.

Your letter came yesterday, and I did not reply in this morning's mail because I wished to take a night to think of it, and then it was too late to send to the mail. This is my reply to your proposition. I am willing to do anything that promises to restore me to health. If it were not for the uncertainty about what is the real state of my health, I should perhaps hesitate about going again to a hospital, but since the opportunity offers to assure myself whether or not there is internal trouble, I think it would not be wisdom to fail to benefit by it. My friends at Framingham are anxious to have me come there, and if it were not that I do not know what is the matter with me, and the fear that I might be losing time in trying to get well by resting only, I think I would prefer going there to going any place else as one, at least, of my best earthly friends is there (the one with whom I have been this summer, and who has made me strong so often when I have grown discouraged). I was not surprised to learn that Mrs. Hemenway offers me a home at Readville for the present, as this is only in keeping with her great kindness throughout. When I was at the hospital she came in person to tell me that I need have no hesitancy in applying to her for whatever I needed. If I were very, very rich in money, I could not repay Mrs. Hemenway all I owe her, for whatever my life has been worth to me and to others in the past few years is due to her. Through her the whole tenor of my life has been changed. Thinking of all her kindness to me and all I owe to her I have been unwilling to burden her so soon with my helplessness. Three years was not long for one to work in a new field before completely breaking down was it? But since before I was well grown I have had a life, *always* full of work, and often full to overflowing of trouble and suffering, so that when I went into the work at Tuskegee, though fresh from school I was not fresh in bodily and mental strength.