

Villa Novello
Genoa
Italy
26th Nov. 1878.

My dear "Girl friend",

I willingly accept the "kindly
greeting," and the "written how do you do",
and the "friendship" which you sent me in
your sweet welcome letter of the 4th Inst.;
and I not only willingly comply with
your obliging request for my autograph,
but I enclose for your acceptance
the likeness of her who, you amiably tell
me, is one of your "favorite Authors";
that you may see what kind of looking
woman she is.

I should very much like to know
which of my books you have read;
since you assure me you have "learned
to love" me "from" my "writings"; and I am
also extremely curious to know the exact
age of her who styles herself my "Girl friend".

and who says she shall "count the moments till" this letter comes to make her "the very happiest girl in Christendom".

I assure you I also shall "count the moments till" I receive the reply to my above-made enquiries; as I feel no small interest already in the fascinating young lady who has so much charmed me by her pleasantly effusive letter.

In meantime, I gratefully subscribe myself my "girl friend's

cordially = touched

Woman friend

Mary Cowden Clarke

Miss Harriet Jacobson.

The black-bordered paper upon which I write will serve to lead you to surmise the

unhappy truth of my having lost the beloved Husband whose likeness is with my own in the little photographed group I send you.