Use of Piano Forte, per Quarter ........................................... 0 5 0
Washing, per Quarter .............................................................. 0 15 0

Each Young Lady to be provided with One Pair of Sheets, Pillow Cases, Four Towels, a Dessert and Tea-spoon.

A Quarter's Notice, or a Quarter's Board, is required previous to the Removal of a Pupil.

NOTE

The scheme for opening a school for young ladies was first proposed in July 1841, by the Reverend Patrick Brontë and Aunt Branwell; the latter spoke of lending the three daughters £150 to get started. Charlotte and Emily proposed soon thereafter to go to Brussels to improve their knowledge of French, Italian, and German in order to meet the demands that running such a school would entail. The stay in Brussels, cut short by the death of Aunt Branwell, lasted from February to November 1842, and turned out to be a disappointing experience, largely because of Charlotte's realisation that M. Heger had done all he could to discourage her romantic idealisation of him. Determined to make a fresh start, she wrote to various friends and acquaintances, asking for pupils. (Emily, she wrote to M. Heger, 'would look after the housekeeping', and could be depended on to interest herself in 'the well-being of the children'.) The circular reprinted here was circulated in July 1844. Though the cost of £35 for 'Board and Education' was moderate enough, the isolated position of Haworth was a disadvantage in recruiting, and in fact no pupils materialised. By October Charlotte realised that the scheme for a school was hopeless; Branwell's drinking bouts were also a discouraging element in any plan for trying to run a school at the Parsonage.


July 24th, 1844.

Monsieur, – I am well aware that it is not my turn to write to you, but as Mrs Wheelwright is going to Brussels¹ and is kind enough to
take charge of a letter – it seems to me that I ought not to neglect so favourable an opportunity of writing to you.

I am very pleased that the school-year is nearly over and that the holidays are approaching. – I am pleased on your account, Monsieur – for I am told that you are working too hard and that your health has suffered somewhat in consequence. For that reason I refrain from uttering a single complaint for your long silence – I would rather remain six months without receiving news from you than add one grain to the weight, already too heavy, which overwhelms you. I know well that it is now the period of compositions, that it will soon be that of examinations, and later on of prizes – and during all that time you are condemned to breathe the stifling atmosphere of the class-rooms – to wear yourself out – to explain, to question, to talk all day, and then in the evening you have all those wretched compositions to read, to correct, almost to re-write – Ah, Monsieur! I once wrote you a letter that was less than reasonable, because sorrow was at my heart; but I shall do so no more. – I shall try to be selfish no longer; and even while I look upon your letters as one of the greatest felicities known to me, I shall await the receipt of them in patience until it pleases you and suits you to send me any. Meanwhile, I may well send you a little letter from time to time: – you have authorised me to do so.

I greatly fear that I shall forget French, for I am firmly convinced that I shall see you again some day – I know not how or when – but it must be, for I wish it so much, and then I should not wish to remain dumb before you – it would be too sad to see you and not be able to speak to you. To avoid such a misfortune I learn every day by heart half a page of French from a book written in familiar style: and I take pleasure in learning this lesson, Monsieur; as I pronounce the French words it seems to me as if I were chatting with you.

I have just been offered a situation as first governess in a large school in Manchester, with a salary of £100 (i.e. 2,500 francs) per annum. I cannot accept it, for in accepting it I should have to leave my father, and that I cannot do. Nevertheless I have a plan – (when one lives retired the brain goes on working; there is the desire of occupation, the wish to embark on an active career). Our parsonage is rather a large house – with a few alterations there will be room for five or six boarders. If I could find this number of children of good family, I should devote myself to their education. Emily does not care much for teaching, but she would look after the housekeeping, and, although something of a recluse, she is too good-hearted