

haps) of your own conduct; on the very last occasion of seeing you before writing that note<sup>1</sup> I heard even among your own friends (and there was no Mary Ann present), I heard even among them remarks on your own conduct and pity — pity, Good God! — for my situation, and I did think (you will pardon my saying it for I am describing my *then* feelings and not my *present*) that the same light butterfly feeling which prompted the one action could influence the other. Wretched, aye almost brokenhearted, I wrote to you — (I have the note for you returned it,<sup>2</sup> and even now I do think it was written “more in sorrow than in anger,” and to my mind — I had almost said to your better judgment — it must appear to breathe anything but an unkind or bitter feeling), — you replied to the note. I wrote another and that at least was expressive of the same sentiments as I ever had felt and ever should feel towards you to my dying day. *That note you sent me back by hand wrapped in a small loose piece of paper without even the formality of an envelope and that note I wrote after receiving yours.* It is poor sport to trifle on a subject like this: I knew what your feelings must have been and by them I regulated my conduct.

To return to the question of what is best to be done. I go to Kollé's at 10 o'clock tomorrow Evening and I will inclose to you and give to him then a copy of the note which if I send any I *will* send to Marianne Leigh. I do not ask your *advice*; all I ask is whether you see any

<sup>1</sup> The one of March 18 in which he broke off all relations with Maria Beadnell.

<sup>2</sup> This explains why the first letter is in Maria Beadnell's hand, not that of Dickens.