

Oberlin, Feb 18, '82

Dear little people,

I have just been reading some of your letters, three, just come from Fatty, Sarah, and Mary, and while my heart is warm with the glow I will pen a reply, penning up my thoughts on paper, so as to pay perhaps (ha, ha!) for the pleasure and happiness ^{which} your words put into me. The matter of the dried beef seems to have exercised you considerably. What thunder and tempestuous on your darkening, stormy ~~glades~~ of the

storm, many the dark one.
Now the lightning flashes from
the aerial depths of your
cloud-burning eyes, over
rebrakes like the red artillery
of Olympus, detonated over
my shuddering heart. Ah
sweet people your inferences
too much, you fell into
the error of seeking to draw
a generalization, a one I
said ~~was~~ what I did not
mean. I have not been
entirely dried leaf long, and
indeed more than six weeks
ago could the practice altogether.
During vacation, when
the boarding house was shut
up, I went into that sort
of thing some, but I
shall probably never starve
myself. You misunderstood
my theory totally. I claim

with all the rational, that
the amount and kind of
food we eat is to be de-
termined by the requirements
of the system, so as to keep
it in its highest efficiency.
The proper amount and kind
can be found out (a) by
studying the stuff our bodies
are made of, and studying
the value of things to supply the
units. But the supply where
there is a felt demand, i.e.
in the mouth. (b) by observing
what and how much food is
needed to make us feel the
best. If one feels stuffed
up and stupid and has the
head ache, he is probably eating
too much. The stomach in
endeavouring to to dispose of it
draws too much vital force to
itself, labors to get rid of it

of the inebriated, has the food
sour on its boards, or not
before perfectly saturated with the
antiseptic juices, and makes
a mess of it generally. (P)
by taste, generally speaking
taste is a fairly good guide.
But it is a well known prin-
ciple that ~~what~~ ^{that which} one is accus-
tomed to and agrees with brings
taste good. Taste fails utterly on
new kinds of food, or stimulants,
or things too fiery to make any
impression but that of heat.
Having found out in these
simple ways what will make
bring the most healthy and
energetic physically, one should
regulate himself accordingly. It
is the greatest folly as well
as high treason to his constitu-
tion for a man to eat what
he knows ~~what~~ does not do him

any good, just because it
pleases his taste, or to
drench himself with poison
such as coffee simply because
he feels a morbid craving
for it; turning his liver
black and making his brain
diseased. Truly such a simple
thing as eating may be, should
not greatly exercise our soul,
so that the dinner appears to
be the main happiness of life.
We should attend to it and
enjoy it just as ~~to~~^{we} ~~do~~^{do} to
keep ^{our} his hands clean, or
to ^{our} making his eyes out.
It is one of the minor pleasures
of life, to be enjoyed for what
it is worth, 1 or 2% of life's
sum of happiness, perhaps. The
business of eating gives occas-
ion to social intercourse that
is very valuable, — the tri-

unple of civilization, turning
the fight of hunting hearts
and howling savages into
the meeting of minds. If
people would only be more reason-
able in what they eat, diseases
suffer etc would be very
useful. My theory of eating
is first to make it reasonable,
to serve its purpose. Most
people eat like dogs, as much
as they can, to delight their
tongues only, without taking
into consideration the use of it.
Avoid fussing, don't be more
particular than you can
help, relegate the thing to its
proper place of comparative un-
importance. I don't see
how any one can disagree
with such an obvious system
of diet, and I think myself
happy in thinking you agree

Eat a thing because it is
wholesome; not simply be-
cause you like it, and the
way to determine its whole-
some-ness is not necessarily
by the taste of it.

I am taking good care of
my ribs, body, my sweets,
and you need not worry your
brains relative thereto. I
am well and hearty; my
face is rosy. Mr Davidson
told me only yesterday how
well I looked. I appreciate
your solicitude and shall always
count your care for me as
the brightest jewel of my crown.
I suppose even if I pursue the
plan I spoke of, to make a
study of the country and make
myself a writer, that I had
better preach ^{or} ~~that~~ ^{next} year, after
going home, until the sum-

of 1883. I should like to
preach at Whit Salmon,
if they would have me.
If you should suggest that
a "call" from ~~me~~ them to
me would be ^{acceptable}, I
would take it. It is not
very much of a place, but
I presume that I would leave
my hands full enough. I
do not know just how
the people would regard me.
I think I could get along
with them, however.

It is a beautiful afternoon,
the sun just set, the
Southern sky ribbed with
haze. 23 hours have
glided since I wrote the
above. The haze that
ribbed the south was now
now of storm, and in the
we little house of the night

I wake and heard the drip
of rain. The darkness was
velvety black, and the
warm wind puffed in at
the top of the window,
no cock crew afar,
no ox leved in the stall,
but the rain dripped, and
the warm wind puffed,
and I was comfortable,
and I said achadh, shama-
in, shiloshi, arbakh,
chamishah, sh—, lusk,
go de zleef. go-de-zleef.
Last evening I had the
pleasure of hearing Litta
sing. She is a star of
the 2nd magnitude. She is
honeyly, all but her eyes,
she has a great mouth,
but her form is little and
graceful; draped in white
silk or satin, with an even-

news twin; her arms were bare, unfortunately, since they were too scrawny for mention, but her hair was fair and her eyes blue. She is said to have been very poor. Once she had sent even a stamp to send a letter with. This incident of her life pleased Koto very much, my Jap. friend, who has been in a similar condition. Her voice is remarkable; not so sweet as some, even shrill when she sings very strong, but the purity of tone, and skill in execution is wonderful. She sang right along with the piano one while and it was almost impossible to tell which was piano and which her voice. She gave the quick

staccato touch, with that ringing vibrant sound, without a hint of raggedness. Once she rose up to about an octave above high A, in a voice as fine as the point of a needle, and smooth as a flute, making one think of a meteor that shoots across an arctic sky, seen when the morning isles of winter shuck by night with noises of the winter sea. She sang in Italian except on two evenings, when she rendered "The Swanee River" and "Bonnie through the Rye" in a highly commendable manner. There was a good cornetist and Nellie Borge, a pretty pianist, and a huge mountain of an alto, Miss McBlain, too large to get up on the stage comfortably

I had not planned to go,
but some unknown bene-
factor put a ticket in the
P.O. box for me, and I
gladly availed myself of the
opportunity. It seems
like spring today. I feel
the blood of young life surging
in my veins. I got on
especially good flow on my
writing an essay on Constantine.
I make up every few weeks or
so to the wonderful fact that
you are dear to me, and I to
you. I am going to wear
a plug hat and put on airs,
affect to know a vast amount,
be patronizing, disputatious,
and excentric, say "Yes, let me
register that thought," and
mention pres. Fair child, Beecher,
and Bronson Alcott as my
personal friends, write letters to

all the big boys in the
land, ask Mr MacDonald
or Dr Bowly, as I meet
them on the street to mail
"this letter, laying myself under=
heavy obligations to you; but
in the press of my duties I
forgot it as I passed the
office" producing a letter to
Phillips Brooks, or Sir John
Warrington M. P. Trust I
shall prosper, and make all
the small ~~boys~~^{boys} look upon
me with awe, saving in
their minds incidents and
anecdotes to be given to
my biographer.

We will make a regular
presence of our company when
we get home: organizing ourselves
into a society of idiots.
I shall jealously expect the
president's chair, which is next

me in juvenile virility and
indecency, a bald-headed
monstrous, stunted mentality,
upon the right hand of
my masculinity, I shall expect
W. to sit. Thus we shall
baldly high revel with the
stars. Just as Franklin
ran a kite up into the
sky and drew the lightning
down, so shall we run
a kite up among the neb-
ulae, and draw the spirits
of the rusty deep, from the
Abyss of Being, from the
archetypal spring of the eter-
nal Pleroma, from the
reals whence the wondering
Schwarzth drew her pierc-
ing but evanescent brightness.

Therefore do not be down
in the mouth, William.

It is equally to be idle. ~~It~~

is equally to accomplish
less than we can. All
true work is valuable. If
we do not arrive at our
plans, the work we do God
will use in another way. No
good act can ever be lost.
Our hope lies its real root
in our insufficiency, but in
God's providence. Therefore if
our academy is an academy
in the air only, let us only
tighten our muscles the harder
and wheel away at the nearest
duty. The work you are
doing is useful. God has
helped you in it. I have
said all I can to the
Duncans; you to Perkins. If
we can do more we can
try again. Making and launch-
ing an academy is a tiresome
job. But then the here is

is a few cry where. The use-
ful more is useful everywhere,
in the sum total of his
labors the accidents and mis-
deeds of life, whether here or
there or yonder, whether he
like turkey and ice cream
or old cow's bones and
cuckers — there will be
but the decisions: the inter-
gers will be the honest love
and work that his heart =
beats projected into the world.

Make a plan, stick to it if you can
But if the plan breaks, And your
idea shaker, Go ahead again,
God rules men. Be true, let true
Thoughts about all you can do.

Whatever God does ^{with us} is best for us
^{both} and for us and for all. There
has to be mortar as well as stones.
If we are to be mortared, crushed
in as filling, all right, All as God wills.
That is my religion and philosophy. W. S. L.