

LETTERS

E. M. Taber to Fanny Taber

1887 - 1891

E. M. Taber to Henry Taber

1892 - 1896

22 East 67 St.

(1887 - 1888)

Dear Fanny:

You know that Robert is here, and as it were, between the acts, I managed to find time to skip over to Brooklyn to the abode of John Arkhurst, where I purchased three specimens--Attacus-Luna male and female--and Attacus Pholypheus.

The female Luna moth is the one I wanted to paint. I regret the other two purchases on principle,- but I was carried away by my feelings at the moment, for they are certainly among the most beautiful things I ever set my eyes upon;- as beautiful as birds. Many thanks to Andrews.

This note ought to be addressed to Harry, but I suppose it's very much the same thing. My love to Fiddle-de-dee.

Yours,

E. M. T.

Sunday, May 27th, 1888 (?)

Dear Fanny:

For a week past I have been intending to write to you, but I have had a good deal to do in one way and another, (which is, by the way, altogether undone) and so, and so, because I am lazy and ungrateful, I have put off my letter until now. My principal object in writing is to thank you and Harry for the pleasant time I spent in Baltimore, but the real moving cause is my admiration of Miss Dolly's picture, which I feel as if I must give this expression to. She has been remarked by some of the household to wear, with you, something of her old baby look, but alone she is very impressive, quite self-contained and solemn, is she not? It is perhaps the sweetest baby photograph that I ever saw.

I am very much interested about Harry: I'm sure he will triumph over the Wizzards. My best wishes for his success.

Mumie's birthday was a great success,-the excitement was

mild but progressive, terminating in the brilliant festivity of a dinner with the Tools.

Well, farewell--

Come on soon,

My love to Dorothea.

Yours,

E. M. T.

I saw your brother the other night. We had a good talk about birds.

New Rochelle, N. Y.,
July 3rd, 1888.

Dear Fanny:

I was very glad to get your letter, because I was in some fear that you might skip off to the Adirondacks without my seeing or hearing anything of you.

I live here a life of seclusion, undisturbed in an upper apartment, with my pens and papers and a little microscope, the property of the absent Holts.

To tell the truth, I have been too lazy to undertake a trip to Rockaway, or even to write you: I can only bestir myself to go about, at certain hours of the day, with a spyglass like Captain Cuttle, and also, still like that distinguished mariner, with a pocket almanac, which, from time to time, I overhaul to register what sights I see.

By the way, tell Harry that Uhler sent me a civil note recommending three books, two of them, singularly enough, published by H. Holt & Co.

You and Harry and Miss Dolly must make us a little visit:- Our time is short and we should make the best of it.

Mummie would love to see you; she wants to know if, on the receipt of this, you can't come and spend a night or two here. And when you come, bring some news of Robert,- of whom I have some dim recollections--Is he still in the theatrical business?

About the blankets and H's bed-clothes, Mummie says you need

not worry yourself, because she has some old duds of her own, that she proposes to give away and these can go with them, but if you really want them, you will find them rolled up in one bundle in the bottom of her chest.

Florence sailed on the 1st from Southampton, in the North German boat, and we expect her to arrive about Monday night.

Bonrepos is spelled as one word, thereby increasing the sonniferous effect, which, if you come, you can test in several ways—

By sitting on the piazza with Toby and the pater,
or by going with me to seek herons and such like wild fowl,
or with Charlie to the Hodgekins's, where he repairs in quest of a more domestic species, for he and his friend Mr. Palmer,--in fact both Mr. Palmers,--or to be perfectly accurate, all the Mr. Palmers, are quite gone on the little Miss Hodgekins that used to live in 67th St.

You must really come and we'll talk over the Adirondacks--in as cheerful a vein as the subject permits of.

And so remember me to Robert, and to Witt, and to all the Rockway household.

Yours,
E. H. T.

P. S. If you can't come up, I shall even go down to Rockway someday before you go north. Murnie is going to be in town at 67th St. on Thursday at 2 o'clock. She hopes then to see or hear something of you.

Crystal Spring House
Bloomington, Essex County
Sept. 2nd, '88. New York

Dear Fanny:

How singularly things fall out in this world. It seems that Miss Cozens and her brother spent two winters in this very house. Harry has probably told you something about the place, and about our journey to Paul Smith's.

It has been raining and raining, but to-day it is clear and

cool,- cold, out of the sun.

I am beginning to feel the want of some exercise; there is a pleasant lack of lakes in our immediate vicinity, so a horse I really must have. I suppose H. Case's brother-in-law's horse is sold by this time. Enquire this out for me, will you? and if my buying it, supposing it is not rix in price or out of the market, would interfere with the intentions of Mr. Albert Burlingham. Would you let me know about this at once?

I came very near sending you a "It is proposed to raise money sufficient to endow a bed in St. Luke's Hospital for the benefit--Children's Aid--six cents--Miss Elliot--'Chestnuts' ", etc., but I had pity upon you at the last moment, and sent it to Miss Crosby instead. Would you be surprised (I hope you would be grieved) if I spent the winter up here? Perhaps I would, if I had a horse.

Is your brother Robert with you at Washington? Commend me to him, and tell him I have a poor shrunken list of summer birds, the most interesting names followed by an interrogation point.

Which of us two, do you think, was in the most melancholy mood at parting, you or I? I felt very sorry for you, and I hope you felt sorry for me. Yet Harriette's move was a wise one: if it had not been for her, we would still be sad and hungry ghosts, shivering on the piazza of the West Side.

The cold I caught there, sticks to me like a burr. If I don't get better soon, I shall drive over to Saranac to see Dr. Trude.

There is one pleasant person here, a civil-spoken man, who sits at our table, and is the builder of the dam and grist mill, now in the first stages of erection in the village.

Certain black, fat and stupid tabbys, occasional gents on fishing excursions, and villagers are the other guests--mostly transient.

I feel sad to-day; I think of regret of Miss Pussy, which I never summoned courage to say 'howdy' to her.

By chance, my brother Robert is with Joe and if so, tell him to be ruled by Joe in matters of costume: I shall not be in New York early enough, I fear, to be of any assistance to him. I wish, now I think of it, that he had run across from Stowe to see me. You see I write to you in the same rambling way in which I talk but I don't suppose you mind,--or mark particularly.

There is a total lack of any news--you know that, of course. Harry thinks of going to Stowe and thinks not, about seven

times a day.

I have been tempted by the dead and desolate sterility of this country to set up my easle, now rotting in my box, and paint a little picture. It is singular, is it not? but there is something interesting in the undisguised ugliness of the place. So far I have resisted.

There is a lovely puppy here,--a long eared, black and white animal, as yet uncertain on his legs, with a voice like a toy dog's.

He barks very much as Dolly sings "Ta-ta."

How is that sweet little baby? and the little Burlinghams? I wish you would remember me to Louie and Grace and Edith and Joe and C. C. B. and both Roberts, if they are with you. I wish I was.

Well, farewell.

Yours,
E. M. T.

Perhaps you will see Miss Page--if so, will you remember me to her, too?

Fanny

Bloomington, Crystal Spring House
September 11, 1888

Dear Fanny:

These two animals are the domestic cat, and Carlo, the puppy.

(sketch)

When we first came, we expected to take great pleasure in Carlo, but he is very much of a disappointment. He is a dog of one idea, an animal of no originality. He came in contact with his natural enemy at an early age, and the impression left upon him was so strong, that he has since been unable to think of anything else: He goes about continually to pursue and harry the harmless necessary cat.

Here's a singular dispensation of Nature: In all our walks about Bloomington, we have come upon no really pretty child: Saranac, it seems, got all the interesting children, and Bloomington all the saw-mills. There is one in operation, there is one being erected, one being repaired, and one in ruins.

And while I waited for Dr. Trudeau, on the piazza of the Berkeley, I saw at least half a dozen chubby little girls in pink calico gowns and round combs.

It is an unfortunate arrangement: And yet, to a superficial observer Bloomingdale would seem to be the happier valley.

By the way, Dr. Trudeau advised me to stay in the Adirondacks as long as I could,--all winter. I am going to see Dr. Loomis in a week, and my hope is for better terms.

Harriette has been all over this place, enquiring for rooms. It is no great task, as the village is much smaller than Saranac. Would you believe it? there is only one open fireplace in the village; and that was built by request. Mr. Taylor, of Iveson, Blakeman and Taylor, publishers, spent a winter here, and made the building of that chimney a condition.

The rooms are over a grocer's shop.

We have had pretty fair weather this month. About half and half, rain and shine. It is pleasantly cold;-- we have twice had frost at night. The red maples are all turning, and on the hill opposite my window, I see some orange tints that look as if the sugar maples are touched also.

My dear Fanny, I wish you were here. Why won't you come and occupy the rooms over the grocer's shop, for the winter? Even if you should be snowed up, under such circumstances you could run no great risk of starvation.

Mumie, the Pater, Toby, are all expected this week; and I am comparatively cheerful in consequence.

Remember me to all at Washington. I suppose Joe has been industriously at work. Well, the Adirondacks is sufficient excuse for me, don't you think so?

I thank you very much for your letter. You must understand that I don't absolutely require an answer. Your time is probably fully occupied and in a much more amusing way than in letter writing,--
Still--

My love to Dorothea.

Yours,

E. M. T.

Fanny

7

Mt. Mansfield Hotel, Stowe, Vt.,
Tuesday Oct. 9th 1888

Dear Fanny:

I want to thank you for the dictionary, which has a very agreeable cover, and also for the gloves, which are exactly what I wanted, and which I have already made use of to do, - what do you suppose? No less a deed, than to drive, in this merry snowstorm, to Moss Glen Falls.

This is a real snow-storm. The roofs in the village are all white; the fields, so much as we can see of them, through the falling snow, are quite grey; as are the woods.

Can you imagine anything more delightful than a drive under such circumstances, in such a country, to such a spot. And wrapped up in the things you sent us, against the possibility of cold, with an opera-glass in one pocket, for to identify birds, and a stick of Ridley's peppermint in the other, and a footwarmer at our feet.

Owing to the late rains the falls are very full. You can well imagine how wild it looked; the snow was blown about by the wind, and fell so thick that the mountains were entirely hidden: The surface of the ground in the hemlock wood (you remember?) was thickly coated with it.

I wanted to come home by way of the hills, as we did that night, but Muriel was afraid of catching cold, so we had even to take to the beaten road, on which we drove, as solitary as we could wish; and where we started up a little company of blue-birds.

The thermometer is down to 34, but still we were not cold; the air was dry and pleasant.

By the way, I bought a soft hat for this expedition this morning, so Charley need not buy or send me one. Will you tell him so, if he has not already dispatched this business?

I have been meaning to write to the Pater, to thank him for the several concessions to my taste, that he has made in the purchase of our winter supplies, but I want to devote as much time as possible to open-air exercise, and beside this, I have a certain amount of writing, as you know, to do, and so I shall ask you to convey the sense of the foregoing statement to him, and also to tell Charley that I thank him very much for his letter, and give my love to them both, and to Harry and yourself and Dorothea. I forgot to mention Robert, to whom I also owe thanks, for so neatly tying up the package of notes I asked him to send, and for ordering my coat at Merkel's.

My dear Fanny, I wish you were here:- I know you would enjoy it so much.

The winter birds are making their appearance; juncos, white-throated sparrow, blue jays, etc., and the country has lately been overrun, or rather overflowed, by flocks of little Myrtle-warblers.

The mention of birds reminds me of your brother Robert, to whom I wish you would remember me, as also to Joe; and tell him not to be so rash as to start off for Europe, at least until he has cast his vote for Cleveland, when I hope to see him in Town.

Well, farewell.

Yours,

E. M. T.

By the way, the slippers are all right. I thank you so much for taking such trouble for me.

(The first part of the following letter seems to be missing.)

Were sorry we were not in Asheville, N. C., but to-day we are glad: In that interval the thermometer has dropped from 84 to 47.

If it can be so hot this time of year in So. Carolina, what must it be in Mexico? and if the enervating effect of the climate incapacitates us for any exertion of mind and body, what must be the result upon travellers in those more tropical regions? Pray, however, Miss Minturn may not become a permanent Spanish Beauty, with a fan and a mantilla.

This is "Jim" our butler.

(Sketch)

Love to all at 67 St..

Yours,

E. M. T.

Fanny

Cobb's Farm, Stowe, Vt.

July 4, 1889

My dear Panny:

I have been thinking about writing you ever since I received the second or third of your very kind letters. I have begun in my head many replies, but I have not, so far, had energy enough, when it came to the point, to put them down on paper. So you must not suppose I do not fully appreciate your kindness in writing me, because I have not answered your letters, for it is otherwise. I did, in fact, write you a short note: I wrote as little as possible, in order not to tire myself, with the result that all I wished to say remained unsaid, and I seemed to have filled up my little space with silly and unnecessary remarks.

I enjoy getting your letters, and I think it very kind of you to write, but I should not wish it if you put yourself out or tire yourself in this charitable undertaking.

I am better, and not quite so dead as I was; I begin to regard things with something like interest around the corner of my coughin' lid, which is somewhat less oppressive.

I have seen a few birds, only the most common, excepting a red-headed woodpecker, who would not have been here if he had read Ridgeway and learned his proper habitat. Tell your brother Rob this; and ask him if he does not think June 2nd an early date for a bobolink this far north.

I suppose Harry is with you now. I hope you like Washington. Charlie B. very kindly sent me a letter of Joe's to C.B. on his birthday, the which I could not enough admire. I have also to thank Louise for writing me. Do you want a good book to read? "Rhoda Fleming": Geo. Meredith. This I have read, and several Chas. Reade's, "Griffith Gaunt", "Terrible Temptation" and "Woman Hater" (up to the point where "Rhoda Gale" appears). Also "John Nicholson"; but not Stevenson's new book, which Florence, speaking of it in her letter, calls "vile". Also Erckmann-Chatrian's "Waterloo", and Hans Andersen's "Story of my Life". We are now, having read everything decent within reach, staying our hunger on "A Mystery of a Hansom Cab". Have you any book (not Trollope) to suggest?

My love to Dorothea, Fanny, PANNY and Harry, and all friends in Litchfield Co.

Yours,
E. M. T.

Thanks for Joe's letters.

July 11, 1889

Dear Fanny:

We conclude that Harry will probably not come up; and for my own part, although I should very much like to see him, I think that would be best, as he would have very few days for a long journey, and as it would be more his pleasure, and yours, for him to return to Washington. I enjoyed Rob's letter, and was amused to compare his list of birds with mine. In all the time I have been here, I think I have seen but very few more than he saw in less than a week; but only about half of the names in his list, find duplicates in mine.

You cannot imagine anything more uneventful than the life we lead here. I spend nearly the whole day, if it does not rain, which happens pretty frequently, sitting out in the front yard in a perfectly vacant minded condition, doing nothing whatever, but nevertheless enjoying myself.

Do you remember our night drive over the hills from Moss Glen Falls? We went that way yesterday; and Mr. Cobb, who drove us, related some facts concerning the most remote of the farms along the bridge, that I thought very interesting.

This land was owned by a sleepless man. His father was one of the first settlers in that part of the country, and left him a tract of land but partially cleared. But one or two hours of sleep in the twenty-four, taken at odd times, sufficed for this extraordinary person. When other people were asleep, he busied himself in perfecting the clearing of his land; and was to be met at any dark hour, hauling logs to the Moss Glen saw-mill; and people who happened to pass his farm at midnight or early morning, could hear the strokes of his axe in the woods.

In this way, with six or seven extra hours on his hands, put to such profitable use, he possessed a distinct advantage over his neighbors: His unusual habits procured for him comparative wealth. Cobb pointed out to us a tract of land, where now grow wheat and barley, formerly forest land, cleared by the unassisted nocturnal labors of this wakeful one. This is an extraordinary and picturesque story, is it not?

We learn that the Tools are really coming: Robert is to convey the two young ladies, Miss Edith Holt, and a maid appertaining to the young Tools--also Tim. How they will fare with him, who never bought a ticket or checked a trunk in all his extensive travels, is an interesting question.

How I should like to see Dorothea. My love to her, to the baby, to Harry, to yourself, to Louise and her household.

Yours,

R.M.T.

Fanny

July 27, '89

Dear Fanny:

The parts of your letters that have reference to Dorothea are particularly appreciated. I know the reason why your letters have fallen off in frequency of late; it is owing to your pen's being employed in Harry's service; at least, I hope it is this, and not because you don't feel well. I don't say this to incite you to write to me; for if I thought you would do so when you didn't feel like it, I should not wish to receive the letter.

Mummie, I am happy to say, returns on Monday; and Robert will presently depart for New York, Boston, and finally to Medford, Mass., where D. Sunker invites him for August.

Toels are at the hotel, and Roland Holt is also staying there. This is a young man of enterprise. Shortly will the party be increased by the arrival of Mr. Chas. Holt and son, and there is a fearful rumor suggesting the possible coming of the Everhard Toels!..... I thank Almighty God for this 3 hundred feet elevation, and the difficult three-quarters of a mile that stretches between Cobb's and the valley.

I think the Tabers, in their connections, have done well for the hotel this year: Ned Schelle and his wife, and within a day Mammie Schell (his sister), are guests there. These are quiet, kindly people, admirable as relatives.

I have a tent: it is 15 feet long and 12 feet wide: it is now on the back porch; and when the rain ceases (it has been too continuous all day for any undertaking), we propose to set it up, about a quarter of a mile away, on the ridge of the hill, close against a delightful wood.

I have heard that Harry has accepted a teachership at Clark's University--Is it true? Your news about Joe, is good news; but how far I shall profit by his return, I don't know.

Please fill your next letter with interesting items of news about everybody that you know and I know; and, by the way, this reminds me that I heard the Minturn family is not popular at Rockaway. This is greatly to their credit.

You must write me a letter, when you feel like it, on this plan:*

1st subject. Say H. Taber.

Does he ride? Describe his horse. Tell how many times he changed his stirrup, put on or took off his coat or vest, while riding.

2nd subject. Say yourself and family.

Are you well? Tell the latest funny remark of the eldest Miss T.

3rd subject. Say the Minturns.

Relate all you know concerning that interesting family.

* (I shall give you headings, like an examination paper, or something of that sort.)

This would be an excellent model for the gossiping letter you promised to write me.

I am getting in a terrible way: I no longer love my fellow men; I find I dislike to see people more and more, and my interest narrows to a very few friends. I speak of the Minturns in this letter, but it is nearly as a matter of habit: Can it be true that I have lost interest in them also? This is a form of selfishness, that I feel is going to end in a solitary existence on the summit of Stirling or the Camel's Hump. I shall be the second Hermit of Stowe.

Well, write when you feel like it. Give my love to the family. I should like to see the baby very much, but better Dorothea.

I want to know about Harry's article, which it was an amplification of his thesis. In what is it to be published? when is it to be printed? Is there hereditary insanity in the typesetter's family? Has the editor promised to pension his widow and orphans?

Forgive this rambling letter, which I am rather inclined to destroy than send. However, I know you are one of the wise, who keep no letters.

Yours,
E. M. T.

Fanny

July 31, 1889

Dear Fanny:

Do you already know of the exciting incident of the summer? Behold it!

(Sketch)

When first at the hotel, we had front rooms, with windows opening on the piazza roof, but when I went to Cobb's, the pater changed his appartement for one on the south side of the hotel. It had been Mr. Toby's habit to spring on the window-sill, from thence to the roof, where he did delight to walk venturesomely; and one of the first evenings after our departure, the Pater having gone up to his room with Toby, that silly little dog, forgetting all about the recent change of rooms, and confidently expecting to land on the piazza shed, jumped gaily out of the window. His surprise must have been extreme: Anyone witnessing the incident must have concluded him to be a hairy denizen of the moon, or a large variety of flying squirrel, at the very least. I think of all dogs, he is best adapted to ariel flight; his long hair must have buoyed him up, or he would certainly have been dashed to pieces.

As it was, he put a foot out of joint; and the alarmed Pater, hurrying out in the dreadful expectation of collecting his scattered fragments, met him, the picture of a dilapidated dog, laboriously climbing the flight of steps that leads to the back piazza.

He fell virtually two stories; you remember how high story No. 1 stands from the ground, at the back of the house.

This may not be news to you; it occurred sometime ago, but as I had forgotten to speak of it when I wrote you the other day, and as it is still fresh in my mind as an amusing occurrence (for, with Mummie, I was until lately kept in the dark respecting it), I venture to write this brief account of Mr. Toby, his terrible tumble.

We were all in a state of delightful expectation on Monday morning. Robert went down to the village with umbrellas and wraps, etc. (for it was raining), expecting to convey Mummie up the hill, and she had not arrived. Her telegram had not been delivered, Tommy Varlan having gone off somewhere on a pic-nic, and left no one of telegraphic understanding behind him, and the news of her non-arrival came back from Wtbury with the empty carriage.

To-morrow morning we look for her; to-day she is on her way--even now at Springfield, if all has gone well.

A charming letter Joe wrote to me; and I wrote to Joe, saying that I had heard a hint of his possible home coming in the fall. Was this a breach of confidence?

I have read the Wrong Box: If you have not already, take particular pains to avoid it. It is painful that Stevenson should have lent his name to such a production.

I have seen Lloyd Osborn: he is Mrs. Stevenson's son, step-son to Robert Lewis. I saw him when I was at the Adirondacks; he came with his mother to Paul Smith's, on the way to Saranac.

He is fat; he wears glasses; he talks with a very strong English accent; he has a great deal of bushy hair in a thick bang, low over his forehead; he put their names in the hotel register thus:

"Mrs. R. L. Stevenson, Bournemouth, Hants, England

Lloyd Osborn

He went about with an air of criticism and contemptuous interest, like a real Englishman; the printed bill of fare of Paul Smith's larder, as an example of civilized methods, seemed to amuse him greatly. He is Stevenson's imitator even to a lesser trouble of the lungs, I believe: It seemed he had been recommended to take open air exercise: he made careful inquiries about horses and sleighs; and although a robust youth to look at, he confessed to some fears, never, it appeared, having before driven a sleigh. And yet he comes from Killamazoo, or some such remote Western place.

Love to all in Litchfield County.

Yours,
E. M. T.

I must say, although for Florence's sake, perhaps a girl would have been more desirable, that I am very glad there is a boy in the family. As you remark, he is not a Taber in name, but it seems he is in looks. So much the better.

Stowe, Vt., Sept. 16, 1889

Dear Fanny:

Thanks for your letter; I did not know whether I owed you one, or you me. The fact is, that of late, so continual have been the interruptions to the calm course of my existence that I have had no time to write. Mr. Billy, Mr. Georgy and Mr. Chilly have but just departed; and although they were a most pleasant diversion, they did, to some extent, weigh upon my mind. Each day was valuable to their short holiday; and our plans and amusements were subject to their approval or modification, so, the very first thing to be done every morning was to drive to the hotel, collect the three gentlemen (a matter of no small difficulty), and having, as it were, triumphantly shaken them into the covered central ring (for singly they were unable to give positive and coherent answers) propound the important question "What shall we do to-day?" This was only the proper course to take with one's visitors; but the aggravating part lay in their entire lack of enterprise and imagination; for beyond the morning diversion of Tim's bath in the Waterbury river, they seemed to have no ideas whatever, and when daily confronted with the daily question, they were plunged in the silence of stupifaction and interchanged solemn eyes, in the hope of discovering gleams of intelligence in each other's countenances: The day's sufficiency of good or evil, they treated as an unanswerable conundrum.

From first to last of their stay, we had dry and hazy weather, and no opportunity to make the trip up the mountain. They were much at the farm; and did good service on Mr. Cobb's second hay crop.

Harriette, you know, left Stowe after their coming; and Florence and Harry Holt (sr. and jr.) arrived some days before their departure, so that there has been no pause in round of excitement. And to enliven these latter days, have arrived certain vulgar but amusing persons: A pretty young lady of doubtful respectability, and her so called ma; and a little knot of gents, her admirers.

I enclose a little scrap whereon I flatter myself I have made a very happy attempt at portraying the lady: these are her adorers.

(Five Sketches)

An old gent, name unknown lately repudiated by the whole family for his vulgarity.

Mr. Check, a Boston dancing-master (a particular friend)

A gentleman from Canada

And his friend

An affable commercial traveller---a bashful hanger-on.

This is the young lady.

(On separate sketch)

We take great pleasure in watching this party.

By the way, I have heard a piece of news that can hardly be news to you; this: that Miss May Minturn is engaged, or as good as engaged, to Mr. Allan Marquand, professor of Fine Arts at Princeton. This would account for some of Miss Minturn's views, relating to the subject. I mean the subject Art.

You know I have bought a horse, Polly by name. I bought her for riding, but that is, I find, still too violent an exercise for me. I use her in a buggy; and take great comfort in her. I clean, harness, and rub her down, myself.

I am sorry to say that Mummie took cold the other day, and had a great deal of pain in her back and head. She had gone down to the hotel to spend the night with Florence, and is there still. To-day F. drove up and informed me that she was better; but for some days, I imagine, she will have no thought of returning.

To-day is a constant rain and a cold wind, but, in my mind, much preferable to the hot dry weather we have lately suffered from.

Part of Miss Brackett's establishment is already gone; Miss B. goes Thursday; the hotel is almost deserted; the trees are everywhere tipped and turning red and yellow, everything points to the end of the season and the return of J.E. I do greatly long to see him. I don't see why I could not run down to Worcester, when the weather is colder and see you and Harry. This is a good scheme; I shall debate it further.

I ordered three canvasses from Boston, but I have made no effort to paint upon 'em.

Florence's baby is a cunning little creature, rather a pretty child---very, I conclude, for it's age.

I should greatly like to see your flat. I should think it great fun to furnish of it.

My love to your husband and daughters.

Yours

E. M. T.

Stowe, Vt., Sept. 26, 1889

Dear Fanny:

We had but just gotten a peep at the sun, when down comes rain and mist; and again, after three days of most perfect clear, cold weather, we are plunged into unnatural gloom. Our last storm cleared with beautiful effects of frost and snow on the mountains, and was worth the week of rain; if this should clear in the same way, I shall have nothing to say against it.

When you write me, tell me a little news; I mean little scraps of news of all your friends and relatives.

There lives a wicked barber at Stowe who can only cut hair but in one fashion, namely; to cut it all off. So he did with me when I first came up here; so with the Pater, so with Mr. Gurney, and many others. Two months of growth could not efface the damage done to Robert's careful crop in a short five minutes--at least, Robert so stated it. And a little while ago, Judge Bradley, whose hair was of a very excellent, wavy length, for the purpose of having it trimmed, confided the same into the barber's clutches. Result, as before, with others. But fearful of the effects of the cold weather, and horrified at his singular metamorphosis, the enraged Judge starts suddenly for Waterbury, from that town he goes to Burlington; from Burlington to Montreal, for the single purpose of buying himself a wig. In this he failed; and on his return, suffered himself to be concealed in a kind of black turban. He presented a very interesting appearance like Louis the IXth, without the images. Did you ever hear of such a wicked barber? The oaths that have been lavished upon him, seem in no way to daunt his spirit, for since this last enormity even, he may be seen any afternoon in a kind of sulky (a vehicle, not a mood) straddling the hind legs of a bony bay horse, cavorting up and down the village street, as bold as brass.

My hair is very long now, and I had begun to clip off the ends myself, being desirous of having nothing whatever to do with the barber, and happening to mention these scissorial feats in Mr. Cobb's hearing, he informed me that all the hair cutting done in his family, was the work of the hired men. Imagine the jewel he possesses in this

I hear the axils of the Concord wagon chuckle on the hill, which indicates the return of Mrs. C. C. Taber to her tea. Farewell: be resident merdme to your husband and daughters.

Yours,
R. M. Taber

For a paper, leads
interesting, she had

and his engagement with a certain
established fact in his circle of
when it chanced that the lady, embarked
water (sea or lake, not specified), was
opic habit is supposed to be the result of

Dear Fanny:

What will you say to lack of brain fever, the immediate effect of this news? The Mr. Mansfield, full of elegant clothes, and, it is reported, space of some three hoast he boasted of such possessions; and it was his the stable and bowlin' dies half worn shoes, gloves and dresses, many of The Pater, W. and satin gowns, to the women of the neighborhood. about ten o'clock supposed, were sent him by the charitable ladies of his in the very act

the telegraph. Finally, you remember, he was not very particular about his Waterbury first during the winter, he read sermons of a Sunday, from the

At ab the Union Church, and in deference to the prejudices of the parlor, unity, the Sunday alteration made in his appearance was the re- of white- ing of his jersey, the cleaner side in front.

Seventy-five spiritualists are coming to the hotel: I am glad I day not there; I hate such morbid people. I can only hope they will and h'aise a ghost that will frighten them out of their poor remaining and, wits.

I was interested, and not a little amused by the notices of Clark University in the Worcester papers. It seems there are no end of professors, docents, etc., each with a list of terrible intentions --and only three scholars. Harry need have no nervous fears, I think, if he takes them about the fourth round, before the substitutes are called in, when they will be supported into the lecture room by their backers and bottle-holders.

There is something said about my going to Plattsburg to see Dr. Loomis--Perhaps I shall do this.

Mumie is all right again: she spends much of her time at the hotel with Florence; she seems to enjoy her so much.

I met Burt Corse yesterday, and he inquired about Henry. I told him how great a man Henry had become.

About the desk, you can't have it until I unlock and take my papers out of it:- And I have lost my bunch of keys! However, that is not important; when I go home (16th of Nov.) I shall find means to open it; I shall put my papers into tin boxes, and dispatch the desk.

I am sorry to send you seven pages full of nothing; but it is all the place, the times and my brain affords.

I hear the axils of the Concord wagon chuckle on the hill, which indicates the return of Mrs. C. C. Taber to her tea. Farewell: commend me to your husband and daughters.

Yours,

R. M. Taber

Stowe, Oct. 5, 1889

Dear Fanny:

What will you say to this melancholy and astonishing piece of news? The Mt. Mansfield hotel no longer exists: Yesterday, in the space of some three hours, the hotel with all its dependancies, except the stable and bowling-alley, was burned to the ground.

The Pater, H. Holt, wife and child, and the maid Abbey, left us about ten o'clock A. M.; and on the platform of the Waterbury Station, in the very act of embarking, learned, through a sudden excitement at the telegraph office, that the hotel was on fire, and the aid of the Waterbury fire-engine company entreated.

At about halfpast twelve, Mummie and I, sitting in our little parlor, heard the bell of the town-hall tolling, and saw a dense cloud of white smoke rise beyond Sunset hill. Conjecturing a fire in the village, Mummie hurried to inform Mr. Cobb, who, partaking of his mid-day meal, on the further side of the house, did not hear the bell. He and his two hired men, rush precipitately forth, harness up a horse, and make a swift descent to the village.

I should have followed them, but having a horrid cold in my head, I feared to run the risk of catching more; and with Mummie, Mary and the female part of the household, I walked out in the pasture south of the farm, where the village is in view. There we saw smoke and flames pouring from the roof of the hotel.

Mary, inspired with unusual ardor, declared that nothing was to be seen from this point, hastened accross the pasture, scaled the fence, with considerable agility, and hurried down the road.

She came back at about four o'clock, and described a very confused and dismal scene. The wind, in the early part of the afternoon, blew from the southwest; and it looked very much as if the greater part of the village would be destroyed. Carpets were torn up in the adjacent houses, drawn over the roofs and exposed sides, and continually saturated with water, conveyed from the river in pails, passed from hand to hand of a line of men stationed for this purpose.

The heat was intense; and the workers on the roofs, in order that they might not be driven off, received a like drenching. The

people in Schnol Street, in great anxiety, were emptying their houses, carrying furniture and clothing into the streets, where it sometimes caught fire from the falling sparks. Mary joined her efforts to those of the Quinn family, in their removal. Hattie Varsan, in tearful excitement, played the part of a rural Cassandra prophesying a speedy decline of all the business interests of Stowe, and lamenting the want of enterprise, that found them without means of any kind to quell the fire.

The poor people expected to see their houses go at any moment, the sparks falling so thickly that the roof of the school-house was at one time in flames.

Bedding, mattresses, furniture, crockery, were passed from the windows of the burning hotel, and lay in broken heaps.

The alarm bell tolled, men shouted, women cried, children screamed; and to add to the confusion, frightened horses, released from their stables, galloped about the streets.

Fortunately before the fire reached the new wing, the wind changed to the north, and drove the flames into the park at the back of the hotel. The stable was closed, the horses led out at the rear, and there harnessed to large wagons, which were brought as near the hotel as possible, filled with the rescued furniture and driven to a safe distance. Those things already in flames were hurried to the pond, and there quenched.

The fire started in the roof, near the cupola, probably from a defective chimney; and in consequence, the people were able to save a great deal, before the fire reached the lower stories.

On account of the change of the wind, both the bowling-alley and the stable caught, but the fire was slight and soon extinguished.

Mary has been down again this morning, and reports the village still the greatest confusion; the hotel stable and the church crowded with the saved material, the people are too exhausted to collect their goods, that still line the streets. Despondancy seems to have taken hold upon them; there seems to be a general impression that Stowe has received its death-blow, in respect of ever being a prosperous community. She met Churchill, who shaking his head despondingly said: "Robert will never come here again."

The village has a vastly different aspect. I walked out in the pasture again this morning. The group of trees, formerly in front of the hotel, are now first in view, scorched and blackened; limp carpets dangle before the houses; the whitened chimneys stand a little out of the general ruin of the hotel, still smouldering and smoking under a very dull and wintry sky.

Mamie has gone down to see Mrs. Garney, the wife of the unfortunate proprietor.

I feel very sad at this untimely end of the old hotel; and I dare

say you will also: It holds a very conspicuous part in the annals of the Taber family.

Mumnie, who arrived just now, brings more news. She saw Mr. and Miss Gurney, the latter ill in bed with a cold. From them she learned that Mr. Gurney's loss is very heavy, notwithstanding the insurance, which is rumored to be \$40,000. The Gurney's personal property is disposed all over the town, some clothes, etc. found scattered in the road, escaped from broken trunks.

The only guests left in the hotel were Mr. and Mrs. Van Wagner and Miss Crane, who took refuge at the Bingham's; the Gurneys were taken in by Mrs. MacMahon. Mrs. Cady (you remember her, Mrs. Bingham's sister!) devoted herself throughout the day to making coffee, to revive the energies of the workers.

The villagers worked with great energy and courage, and fortunately, beyond some colds and cuts, no one was hurt.

Some french-canadians are said to have carried off a wagon load of wines and liquors, feloniously drinking and quaffing of the same, until prostrated by intoxication.

Are not these melancholy events? Well, farewell--No more at present from yours,

R. M. T.

Love to Harry, Dorothea and Francis.
By the way, you remember the little carriage Dorothea used to be trundled about in? It was among the things saved.

Oct. 16, 1889

Dear Fanny:

We were very glad to get your letter, as not having heard from you for so long, we began to fear sickness or some disaster prevented your writing.

Mumnie sends you her love; and is sorry to hear of the hard time you are having with your youngest.

I have a piece of news of a kind particularly to delight you: a member of the Taber family is engaged to be married. Who do you think? No other than Sydney Richmond Taber, esq., of Chicago, Att'n'y at Law. Yes, sir (ma'am, I beg pardon). Miss Austin's hero finds his reward in a Miss Cox of Orange, N. J. I think the young lady has cause to rejoice.

Toby gave us a fright the other day. We went out driving and left him shut up in the house. Unfortunately Jessie (the cook) happened to open the front door; and Mr. Toby, spying his opportunity,

dashed out and started off up the road, in the hope of finding us. He ran across the pasture to the wood (where we often walk) pursued by Jessie and Mrs. Cobb, whose cries for assistance brought up the three hired men, at work in the fields. Not finding any trace of us in the wood, he starts back again, this time followed by the three hired men at their utmost speed, Mrs. Cobb and Jessie with loud lamentations, bringing up the rear. He escaped his pursuers and disappeared down the road, in the direction of the village. A horse was hitched up, and Mrs. Cobb and Jessie drove frantically down the hill after him. In the village they learned that Mr. Toby had made his appearance, barking prodigiously and galloping about evidently in search of the hotel, which, for obvious reasons, he was unable to discover. Mr. Garney, Miss Bingham, Mrs. Cady, Hattie Varsan and other children made successive attempts to capture him by speed and strategy, all unavailing. He a second time eluded pursuit; and when we returned from our drive, we were given the startling tidings of his escape, and the failure to recapture him. We drove homeward in some anxiety; but about midway on the hill, we found Mr. Toby sitting composedly on a water-bar, and great was the mutual satisfaction of the meeting.

He created the greatest excitement in the village; even the Garney's parrot though caged, caught the infection and cried out, "Tobe, Tobe, Toby!" in an agitated voice.

I had a delightful letter from Joe yesterday: he comes home the last of November.

Do write me a nice long letter.

Love to all your family.

Yours,
E. M. T.

Fanny

Oct. 20, 1889

Dear Fanny:

Still no letter from you: I hope you are well.

We have had the most delightful weather until to-day, which is dark and smoky. Blue skies have we had, and steady cold north winds. Behold me, still clinging to my straw hat, in my grantha Centle, and an assortment of jerseys, my hair of a theatrical length, in personal appearance a perfect Ojibwa--a half-converted one. (Sketch)

The decree of banishment is still in force; the 14th of Nov. a canceled date (it was then I hoped to be in New York, possibly by way of Worcester). We had thoughts of taken (ing) (if we could get it) Miss Brackett's for the winter, by Dr. Loomis says "No". Henry Molt went to him and explained the difference of the two situations, Cobb's and Miss B's.

The cold weather brings out some beautiful costumes. The french-canadians in particular wear most delightful weather-worn blues and browns, blouses and night-caps.

I am to stay here until Christmas. If I could persuade J. E.

(Sketch, French-Canadians)

to come and see me, supplying him with a fur coat and a pair of snow shoes, this would be an agreeable prospect. It is pleasurable in any view.

(Sketch of Cobb's house)

Do you remember Cobb's? Such it is. And the upper window on the left is the window of my room: Mummie inhabits one opposite, on the other side.

The woods are beginning to look cloudy and purple, the leaves are hurrying off so fast; and this is particularly trying to me just now, as I have had a little hut constructed from which I did hope to paint a landscape, and rashly commenced the same when the autumn leaves were in the very height of fullness and color; and I now experience the pain of beholding my model wasting away, before my eyes. Can note or my brush interpret its shrinking characteristics.

(Sketch)

I really feel I shall have to wait over a year or paint a true winter picture.

Love to all yours.

E. M. T.

Monday, Nov. 25 '89

Dear Fanny:

How much I wish you were here; it would be great sport. Your husband seems to relish a rural life. The last letter you received from him, reached you, due to heroic self-sacrifice on my part. As it was late and inconvenient for other means of transmission, I allowed him to saddle my cherished Polly and ride down to the post-office to mail the note. Actually to impose a weight of 160 lbs. upon her delicate spine. I hope you appreciate this: I don't ride her myself for fear of injury to her growth. I passed a miserable

half-hour; however, he returned her intact, not in sections as I feared.

I hear delightful stories of Dolly's sayings; she must be most cunning. And the other child had turned out a blond after all, which she appeared so dark in early youth.

I think his stay is going to do your husband good: he studies not at all, and I think he is not quite so thin as when he came. It may have been his comic attempt at a mustache that conveyed the impression, but at first sight I did not think him looking well. I seem to see an improvement already.

My love to your very cunning eldest daughter: I don't know what to send to anything at once so solemn and capricious as a baby of Miss Francis's years.

Yours,

E. M. T.

Jan. 15th, (1890 ?)

Dear Fanny:

I wrote you a letter the other day, but mislaid it; and it seems to be lost. It was suggested by the plumpness of the packet of your letters to me, received during the year. I was arranging my letters, and the number of yours was a touching reminder of your kindness in writing me so frequently, when you had so many things to occupy you.

I am so sorry to hear of Harry's and your illness. How I wish you were here!

Yours,

E. M. T.

Feb. 9, 1890

Dear Fanny:

I send you a box of Huyler's candy that Aunt Mary Schell very kindly sent me, and which I fear to attack, having so lately been a prey to the tooth-ache demon.

Mumie wishes me to enclose the accompanying cutting for Harry; she thinks it may interest him.

When shall I see you? soon rhymes with June; but the month seems remote from our present snowy outlook. My thoughts run after

summer merrily.

'Merrily, merrily shall we live then'

Are forever the words on my brain, tongue and pen.
Love to all.

Yours,

E. M. T.

Fanny

Stowe, Vt., March 8, 1890

Dear Fanny:

I have not heard from you for a year and a day: Why is this?

I suppose you enjoyed my Mother's visit: She seemed to have

had a pleasant time at Worcester, judging from her letters.

I don't know when I have enjoyed a winter so much as I have

this one. Never any more city life for E. M. Tabor.

Tell your husband that by this time, the oranges are altogether

waterlogged out of the plane of the ecliptic.

I fear you are guilty of a theft: I think you stole your

Harris' Insects out of my room when you were last in New York; for

I have sent for it, and it is not to be found.

Love to all your family.

Yours,

E. M. T.

There are no words in the English or any other language to describe the beauty of the past 4 or 5 days.

2 Fanny

Stowe, Vt.

March 24, '91

Dear Fanny:

Thanks for your letter. I too have all my thoughts and hopes set on next summer, - except a little, that I reserve for the prospect of Harry's and O. H. Palmer's visit. Do you think you could let Harry come up for a week at Easter time? I don't want to urge it too selfishly.

I thank Heaven the snow has a great deal diminished; there is much of excellent bare ground.

We had a comfortable journey up; and Mummie left Waterbury

Saturday noon, and is now at 34 Gramercy.

I'm sorry, as long as Harry got up to see us off, that he

didn't arrive.

I had a most delightful time at Worcester. I can't tell you how much I enjoyed you all.

I have to ask Harry to attend to a matter for me, that of trying on a pair of rubber boots at the Worcester rubber company. The place is at 324 Main Street; the article, fishing boots (tall boots that only weigh 14 ounces); the size 7 1/2* the price \$6.00. Will he, if he comes up to Stowe, carry them with him, and so save the expressage? I have now only six dollars for current expenses. I cannot send the money; but I suppose he believes he will be repaid.

I send you the paper doll that I spoke of.

My love to Harry, and to the dear, dear children, and to yourself,

from

Mintie

I must send you some silly drawings Florence sent me--I think these very funny.

*I don't know if 7 1/2 is a regular size, but 8 is a little too large for me, 7 too small.

Fanny

May 3d '91

Dear Harry:

I was surprised to get your note last night containing such very delightful news. I congratulate you on an occasion, that will call-let-er (Carlotta) similar expressions from the family and friends on every hand.

Give my love to Fanny. I'm delighted to hear that she's "as well as possible".

I indulged myself last night in an unwonted glass of wine, to the health of both.

Most affectionately
Mintie

Stowe, Vt.

July, 1891

Dear Fanny:

So sorry as I have been to hear of your sickness, so sorry as I continue to be, that it continues, I have nevertheless, found no moment to write you the littlest bit of a note; for the truth is I've been just about as busy as I could very well manage, with my stock of energy, such as it is.

But I am happy to learn that you are a little better, and I doubt not that Stowe air, when you get it, which I trust will be soon, will do as much for you as it has done for me.

At last we begin to see some prospect of the completion of the work here; and just so soon as the painters, carpenters, etc., are out of the house, I shall hope to see you enter it, dear Fanny.

I send you a little sketch of Dolly I made to-day--her head tied up in a handkerchief after a shampoo. Both children are well and jolly.

With much love,

Minnie.

Stowe, Vermont:

Jan. 25, 92.

My dear Harry:

I wish I could see and speak to you, to express what I feel in some other than this cold method.

You know, I think, how much I loved and appreciated dear Fanny: My dear, dear fellow, how I wish I might do something for you, beside sending these few words!

During the last two months I have been almost daily on the point of writing you, to give my sympathy some expression; but I feared that condolences at such a time would only trouble you, and if you should have thought of me, you would have been sure, then as now, of my deep and affectionate sympathy.

Your

Minnie

11 Jan./93

Dear Harry:

Do you suppose I've ceased to expect to visit you? Not so; I still hope to do so; and if agreeable to you, perhaps the latter part of January.

I enclose a note (I found it in a pocket of my ulster) addressed to you. I suppose you left it there by mistake.

I see by the papers that your friend Donaldson has been dissecting an elephant--a large order--A dead one, of course; even the most vivacious vivisectionist might find a live one a little too much--too, too solid flesh.

I hope the dear babies are well. My love to them.

Ever yours

E. M. T.

March 8th,

Stowe, Vt.

Dear Harry:

I've been intending to write for several days past, but somehow I've not found time. I'm painting now, and not without hope of completing the picture in time for the exhibition--indeed I've committed myself so far as to send to Joe to ask him to get me a frame.

You'll see Robert shortly, shall you not? I cannot think of going to Boston, but I still hope, if I can raise money enough, to go to Brooklyn (New York I mean) for April--I feel as if I must do so, as this may be my last chance of seeing Robert as Romeo for

several years--if I'm going to be his play write, instead of Mr. Shakespeare, that is.

Mazzio sends her love, and thinks perhaps you'll be wondering at her silence;- but she feels very sad just now, and though better than when she was in Worcester, not yet quite so well as when she left Stowe a month ago.

She has seen Dr. Church, and although he does not find her all right, there is not so much trouble as she fancied there might be--It seems to me that she is improving, she goes about doing just as usual and is at times very cheerful. If she is any less well, I'll let you know, but I think you need not worry about her now.

My love to the dear children--Remember me to Sandford.

Yours

R. H. T.

I don't know that I've thanked you for the pleasure of my Worcester visit, but notwithstanding Toon, I enjoyed it very much.

I have ordered of Magoon my little two story study or cabin or whatever you call it. I hope you'll share it with me next summer--be tenant number two of the Diogenes flats.

R. H. T.

Did a bottle of whiskey sent by express, reach you?

Thursday, 6th April

Dear Harry:

You have seen Robert, and doubtless have much to say on the subject: say it, I pray thee in your next letter. If it had been Romeo who appeared at the Worcester theatre, (for I've seen Orlando, and Malvolio has not such power to draw me) I'd have taken train for Worcester without delay (and thereby, perhaps, have retained a now lost molar--but that's another story). Tell me, I beg you all about him--Of course you saw him "behind the scenes" "the actor at home," etc. -----What said Worcester, stronghold of Philistines? I trust Sandford saw him, in which case I doubt not he had an appreciative auditor.

About the other story, a teasing tooth ache kept me on pins and needles for upwards of 30 hours, when I had the tooth extracted at Waterbury Monday evening. I speak of it to recommend the process by which it was pulled--practically without pain. The Waterbury doctor (like all country physicians) strongly advised against my taking gass, and not to seem pig-headed I consented to try a method (lately introduced) which consists in injecting an

me-----, largely cocaine, into the gum. With some people it works well, with some, not. My tooth came remarkably hard, was wriggled up and wriggled down, and resisted two distinct and separate pulls, finally leaving the jaw with the report of a small pistol shot; and yet the process was less painful than my experience of gass, at Worcester. Is not this really worth knowing?

You'll be sorry to hear that I failed to finish my picture for the spring exhibition. It was a remarkably disagreeable spell of weather that thwarted me, for by the middle of the month I was in a fair way to success, so far as finishing it sufficiently for exhibition, may be so termed. But after that there was nothing but rain and thaw and cloudy skies. I worked rather hard at it, and felt extremely vexed at my failure to finish it: indeed, I fancy I used myself up somewhat, and that my tooth trouble was the result.

Charlie stayed here Saturday, Sunday and Monday, going down to Waterbury with us. We had expected to see Florence here by the end of this week, but she is still ill a-bed, and does not dare attempt the journey.

Mammie is pretty well--Charlie's visit cheered her wonderfully. The change of the weather to a more springlike temperature is good for her, and us all.

I did think to make a little story for Francis' and Dolly's benefit, of Mr. Tucker's adventures and the vagaries of a three year old, with incidental comedy in the pusillanimity of Mr. Tucker's friend. Perhaps I'll finish it for them sometime. These are all scribbles I've done in the evening, and instead of throwing away, saved for them at your suggestion.

I hope they are well. Give my love to them all.

I'll keep sending the Punches--you can keep them till you come up, and so save mailing of them.

Yours,
H. M. T.

Oct. 30, '93

Dear Harry:

I forward in this mail one of those vile collections of short stories which the drowsy time dotes on. This is, however, a case with an exception; 'it is not wholly vile because'--it contains a story of Turguenieff's; new to me, and I guess to you also: 'The Brigadier'.

How are the little girls? I hope they prosper in kindergarten pursuits.

Have you read David Balfour? Do so. it is wonderful; all Stevenson's old power, or lacking but little of it, and coupled with something more masterly, more inevitable in the telling.

You know I shall see you in Worcester some time this winter (for winter it is here with us, -thermometer 28°,- snow) for I'm pretty well recovered again and think not at all of abandoning my design of going to New York, Worcester, etc.

I have a hope that Thayer will accept me for a pupil for a month or so, or be willing to criticise my work daily (for I hope to do a little painting of heads, of the nude perhaps, while I am in New York). Is it not a pleasing possibility, that of returning for a short space to the delightful irresponsibility of pupildom?

Mumie and all are well here.

Shall I not send you the Atlantics Florence sends me? (she makes me a present of the subscription) They are interesting--a very different sort are they from the Century's, Harpers, Scribners and such like abominations.

I hear from Robert, who is happy in his company--finding the Coughlans, and one Stewart, a Scotchman of the king's clan, a lineal descendant of Allen Breck's, all very companionable.

Charlie is deep in political struggles;-- and the not anticipating success (for the people are sluggish and indifferent, and unwilling to trouble themselves to vote) still believe(s) the work well begun and the position of the Good Government Club with which he is connected, firmly established. Indeed it appears to be the only active organization in opposition to Tammany Hall, the Republican machinery being but a busted concern.

Forewell. Love to the babies. Remember me to Sanford.

Yours

R. H. T.

Stowe, Vt., Mch. 15th '94

Dear Harry:

Neither Mumie nor I have heard of you or of the children, for a coon's age - or some such indefinite interval of time. How do you come on?

You will be interested to hear that Brush liked my landscape, and was so kind as to write me to that effect. He and Thayer voted for it for the Webb prize;-- the two out of all the list of American artists, whose good opinions I should have been anxious to secure. I am pleased and surprised--but not after all, unduly elated;

for of all persons it is I, who know best the bar(e)ness and mean-ness of that attempt.

Porgive all my crossings out; I am a little tired, and have gotten into a tongue-tied state, the wrong words only presenting themselves.

How are the babies: I hope Carlotta will not have lost that very cunning form of baby talk by the time I see her again.

Mummie begs you will let her have a line about the children, if you can possibly find time.

Love to the three.

Yours

E. M. T.

I enclose newspaper cutting (from the Post) that will be of interest to you. I should not have been surprised if in a few years Trumbull would have made a considerable figure in So. American politics: He was a very ambitious fellow, I imagine.

E.M. T.

Nov. 20th, '94

Dear Harry:

I thought of Kipling the other day, and in a charitable spirit: I remembered the Punch parody of his account of his American experiences; how, when he left the train at Brattleboro he seemed to find himself encased, set, as it were, in a great sapphire. Now this was true, and showed a discriminating sense of color. Toward evening the snow is sapphire tinted, and the moon and stars shine with a cold, blue light.

The contents of your postal is no excuse for Herring, but shows a feeble taste in titles on the part of Mrs. Grigelow.

Why don't you run up and see us--on Thanksgiving particularly? It is real winter here, though not much of snow; but you like the song of the owl, do you not? Why not enjoy it for a bit? Or must it still be for the time, --"you, that way;-- I, this?"

Faithfully

E. M. T.

Mummie bids me send her love to you and to the children, in which I join. She also thinks it would be of best happening, if you could run up for a little.

E. M. T.

31st. Dec. 1894

Dear Harry:

We are not coming to Worcester at all this winter, so there's an end of that. I'm very much disappointed; I should have enjoyed the relief of absence from this place so exacting, apart from the enjoyment I expected to take in your society and the childrens. These doctors are a strange set; to them the world is made up of "Me, my patient, and other doctors". That any one should entertain any idea or hope beyond that of physical improvement, comes not within their calculations.

Mummie I daresay is also disappointed that traveling is postponed; but she is delighted to have the matter definitely settled, for under the circumstances, I must agree to consider it so.

The weather here is most wintry but fine; Cannot you get a few days absence; leave on a Thursday or Friday, and overlap your free Sunday some two days into the following week, spending that time here? Think of this; and bring Sandford with you. If you choose a good time, when snow is plentiful, and not too late in the winter, we can visit a lumber camp.

If possible, choose the full of this moon, some ten days hence. What say you? Mummie calculates that our traveling expenses being 0 this winter, she could pay your fare if you should undertake such a jaunt.

My love to the little girls. I enclose some scribbles for them.

Yours

R. M. T.

21st, '94

Dear Harry:

How sad and sudden is this news of Stevenson's death! What a loss! The best living writer of English, "the youngest son of old Sir Walter", the last of the story tellers gone; while the realistic novel flourishes as a green bay tree, and the freer field exists for those "brainy" authors who deal with the vital questions of the day.

How the philistines of N. Y. are triumphing in their testimonial to Dr. Parkhurst. They are in such a glow of virtuous self-

complacency that they go near to making themselves ridiculous. Indeed, they begin to resemble not a little, "Jump to Glory Jane", and the like. They've got religion; and conviction of sin being past, comes Glory Hallelujah-, and it comes a gronin'!

If this feeling could be expressed in the endowment of some permanent charitable institution it might pass, or if, like Slingsby Guy and Lionel, they could make their testimonial entirely of ginger bread, no great exception could be taken. But they will as like as not put the worthy man on a monument, his foot on the crouching policeman, or equestrian, spearing the Tammany tiger, with, of course, a basso relieve representation of classical ladies playing leap frog around the pedestal. Well, perhaps you are happy to be in Worcester, and I in Stowe.

We will not think of going cityward, until this weather which is so mild and treacherous, has declared for positive winter. We are in reasonable health.

I trust this will reach you by Christmas to carry a Merry Christmas to you and to the dear little girls. I wish I had something else to send them, beside wishes.

Farewell

Yours

H. M. T.

P.O. Box 21, Bainbridge, Georgia
Dec. 28th '95

Dear Bolly, Frances and Carlotta:

You cannot imagine how glad Grannie and I were to get your presents, and to know you were thinking of us on Christmas day. I think if it were not for such reminders, we should hardly know what day was Christmas, because in this country the air is as warm as in summer with us, the trees are green, and the people who live here (they are mostly black people, negro's you know) have the strangest way of celebrating the season: They march in procession with bands playing, and shoot off fire crackers and rockets and Roman candles, so that it seems to us more like the 4th of July than like Christmas.

We live in a house where there are two children, somewhat older than you are. One is a boy named Oliver, and the other is a pretty little girl called Hortense. Hortense had given her for Christmas, a little necklace and a kind of zither, a musical instrument with strings like a harp, but set in a wooden case. She is

trying to learn to play on it. Oliver has a rifle; and this morning, I am sorry to say, he shot a bird, a large handsome bird with bright brown feathers called a thrasher. Hortense felt very badly; I think I heard her call Oliver a "wicked, cruel boy".

I think the little pin cushion is very pretty: Did you make it yourselves? If so, I think you must be learning to sew very well.

I hope you had a very happy Christmas; and that all are well in Oread Place. Please remember me to Miss Chapin. The rest of this letter will be a few words to Fardie, so after you have read your part, will you show it to him?

Much love to you all, from

Uncle Mintie.

Dear Harry:

What is it possesses all the writers of today? How little, even when most in admiration (as brer Rabbit says) did we appreciate Stevenson! Have you read this Jude the Obscure? I sent poor Florence a five or six page letter on the subject; it contains my sentiments on this last book as well as "Tess", which you remember we discovered at Stowe. I dare say you are glad that I am physically incapable of such another effort. Yet here is Geo. McDonald: in spite of theoretic tendencies, his works hitherto have had fine artistic quality; it is not lacking in "Lilith", but you meet the deadly thrust of the theory, it seems to me, with greater frequency and delivered with greater disregard of the shattered illusion. In a word, he is less an artist than he used to be.

About this abominable war scare: what a miserable spectacle it is! It seems our representative government doesn't work: here are the president and both the houses ("a plague upon your houses.") so completely out of touch with the people, that they advocate (in the base hope of pleasing their constituents at any cost) a course totally at variance with the true sentiment of the people.

It is all well enough to say that if honest men exerted themselves to elect honest representatives, all would be well. The thing has happened, and therefore may again; it is a danger of our system to be guarded against or corrected; and the only way to do so, seems to me, is to have the upper house non-elective. Yet who is competent to appoint such a body? and how could it be appointed without danger of political trickery creating a state of things as corrupt as now prevails by the elective system? To have the same kind of carrion as our present senate is composed of, a fixture at Washington! The English should thank God for their House of Lords!

I have your note about Philip de Comyns; but I have had no opportunity to get the book. You see I like "Lilith" only pretty well. I hear of a Fairy Story called "The Adventures of Two Dixiet Dolls and a Colliwogg". It sounds lovely; have the children it? We were so much pleased and touched to get their little Christmas gifts.

Yours,
E. M. T.

Washington, Connecticut, July 17th '96

Dear Harry:

What a summer of beauty this must be at the fairest of all places: God grant I may be able to see it again, and that within a 3 months' time!

The lindens are in flower now - or should be, but perhaps this rich warm rainy season has pushed the development of all vegetation somewhat ahead of time.

I am sure you have not had a sultry day at Stowe, however all the rest of the world may suffer from heat and humidity.

I have done some narrative scribbles (rather mechanical attempts to keep up my spirits or aid in forgetting just how low they have gotten); and these I thought to send to the children; but it has occurred to me that perhaps the papers would be too much affected by close contact with me, my increased troubles of throat and lungs, so that you would prefer they should not be sent. I'll wait for your answer; and I hope you'll say with perfect frankness how you feel about it.

I am surprised and delighted to hear of the big crop cut from the small piece north of the house. If the weather does not turn dry now, we may look for solid results from that piece for the next 4 years. I hope all the new stock has done as well.

Love to the dear babies. Kindest regards to the Pratt family.

Yours ever,
E. M. T.

I hope the Insurance matter arranged itself satisfactorily.

Washington, Connecticut, Aug. 3d, '96

Dear Harry:

You can scarcely imagine how much pleasure it gives me to hear whatever trivial detail of Fourwinds farm's affairs. Your letter was a great pleasure, and I hope you will find time to do me so

good a turn soon again--any kind of information that touches on the place, the dogs, the horses, the people of the village, on any Stowe matter (in fact) will give me the liveliest satisfaction. The short note enclosing Power's and Cheney's form for receipt I recied; and I sent them the slip signed yesterday: And also it pleased me greatly to avail myself of your permission to dispatch those scribbles I have mentioned to the little girls.

Mummie and I picture them constantly indoors and out; and wish for a little real glimpse of them; and regret (alas!) how deeply that a whole summer--a year--has gone by without a sight of them. It is cruelly hard for Mummie; and you may guess, as the origin or cause of such seperation and delay, that I am quite as regretful.

I'll send you an article in the "Auk" (ornithological publication) by Thayer. Observation on the protective coloring of birds. Full of interest.

With love,
E.M.T.

Monday: Aug. 10th, 1896

Dear Harry:

We have had the most desperately hot weather--almost indiscribable. I trust you and your dear babies have escaped it so far. Charlie was here last night--and during the week Florence stayed with us for two or three days. She expects to bring her children up here, before the close of the week. She hires rooms in the town, almost 1/4 mile distant.

It would perhaps be the saving of my life to be in Stowe or the Adirondacks now. A little more of this excessive heat, I think, will kill me. Pray God it lessens. To-day we have a little breeze, though 93 is the temperature on the piazza.

I thank Heaven the dear little girls have had a place so comparatively cool, for this hideous summer.

With love,
E. M. T.

Oh for Stowe! Oh for the north! Send me word of it! every detail!

Dr. Church is in Stowe--Perminently? or has he really sold his Practice?

E. M. T.

Washington, Connt., Aug. '96

Dear Harry:

I thank you so much for your letters, and no news is more interesting to me than that concerning the little darling girls.

I cannot write much--my dear brother, I am a dying man,-- I am more hopeless every day; and I begin to fear that I may not be able to die in Stone. I thought to go there--my home--on the chance; but now I fear I am too weak to reach you living. But I shall make the effort if I possibly can.

I think I could die contented there--and to live again! ah, it is too much--that I dare not hope.

God alone knows the intensity of my sufferings--I pray for death; but I want to die in sight of the mountain in my own country, under my own roof.

I meant merely to acknowledge your kind letters, but I cannot forbear this expression--do not consider it extravagant--it is bitter truth.

Love to the darling babies and to the good kind people with you,
from

Yours, E. M. T.

Washington, Conn.
Aug. '96

Dear Harry:

I feel constrained to send you this line concerning the darling children. They have been an inspiration to me; and were it not that death is dealing with me, would have been the inspiration perhaps of something permanent; for 4 or 5 fairy stories have been running in my head for the past year, and always made interesting to me by connecting them with the idea of that audience of 3. No artist could hope for a better-- but what I want chiefly to say is in warning regarding Francis. Her delicate constitution, her great susceptibility, her poetic nature, may at times induce a very morbid condition. I feel sure that if she is not most carefully watched and guarded, there is a chance of her incurring great suffering.

I speak solemnly, Harry, as a dying man. How I love those babies!

Goodbye
E. M. T.

Aug. 25th, '96.
Washington, Conn.

Dear Harry:

Has Mammie spoken to you of your coming to help me to Stowe?

I can scarcely wait for the days to pass before starting for that, my last refuge. I feel that I have the alternative--Stowe, or the surgeon's knife, for I understand that something can be done in the latter way for my relief. I have no good hope of recovery by either method; but if I cannot live and improve (for God forbid that anyone should linger on in so much suffering) at Stowe (my paradise) I can die so much more happily than in the four walls of an hospital, or the two of this sad narrow valley.

I hope the hours are few now before we shall meet.

Love to your darlings. Forgive me the infliction of these outbursts of sadness--I am a very weak creature. I must find relief in some expression. Dear Harry.

Yours,
E. M. T.