

2 years before  
before no. 18

Michigan Bluff - Haces Co.  
17th June 1858 -

Lost, strayed, or stolen!

a family composed of 3 adults  
& 2 infants, last heard of at Geneva Switzerland  
supposed from their mysterious & prolonged disappearance  
to have become the victims of some tyrannical plot  
and to have shared the fate of the "suspects" anywhere  
within grabbing distance of the French frontier -  
When last heard of several of the members of this  
unfortunate family had been known to express  
strong opinions about tyrants, liberty & so forth -  
~~And~~ Dearest Chas.

Unless you want me  
to put something like the above in the papers with  
a note for especial enquiries to be made at Cayenne  
You had better communicate with your humble  
servant. I expected you to be in England long before  
this time but I received today a letter from Wate  
dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, where he had not heard anything  
of you. Have you been so long incarcerated that  
you find the prison walls the most agreeable

shelter, or is the delay in flying to more congenial  
climate merely caused by the difficulty of winding  
up Grandmama's affairs? I often let our canary  
out and am amused to watch his proceedings; I now  
amuse myself with conjectures as to your movements  
but can form none satisfactory to myself & hence  
my anxiety to hear from you a little oftener than  
every 2½ months. We are getting along slowly, Biler  
cries (grows fat) nurses, goes to sleep, wakes. D.C. at five.  
He is however getting to notice enough to enable us  
to amuse him & make him laugh for half an hour or  
so when he feels well, which is a great relief.  
His only trouble is wind, wind, wind, and when  
free from that he is a very good baby. His eyes  
have got "straight" and the only source of anxiety in  
the maternal bargain as regards external appearance  
now is the slight tendency of his hair to "Carrots";  
we will trust to age to sober that down. When  
well he is really a very bright and, spite of his mouth  
& nose, almost a pretty child & as Mrs. P. 400. Gumbold  
wrote to a friend speaking of her youngest: If you could  
only see his pretty blue eyes, he would make a  
fool of you as he has already made of me  
(I have however 2 companions in my misfortune)

Emily is getting strong again, though slowly, & I do not expect her to be very strong as long as she has to nurse young Dropsy - This whole State has run stark staring mad about Frager River - Many thousands have already left, and are leaving San Francisco at the steady rate of 400 to 600 per day. The consequence is that all business is stagnating, mining is at a stand still, it being difficult to obtain ordinary labour at \$4 per day (many Quartz Mills have had to stop for want of men) and property can not be sold for anything - There will of course be a reaction in a few months and I have no doubt some good speculations might be made now with money -

From all the accounts we have hitherto received the District on Frager & Thompson Rivers must be both rich & extensive, but it is equally apparent that the climate is too severe to allow the mines there to be advantageously worked for many months in the year, and the Indians are sufficiently numerous and powerful to give a great deal of trouble unless very judiciously managed - The idea of a lot of California miners (the rowdy class, or say  $\frac{1}{2}$  of those who have gone) treating Indians

with judgement at any time or with justice when they  
think themselves strong enough to impose on them is  
simply absurd; and there will no doubt be trouble.  
There is also a great deal of discontent & grumbling  
at the exclusive monopoly of all trade by the Hudson  
Bay Co, which they will probably find it very  
difficult to enforce. Though I should not think  
that could lead to anything more than a little  
ill feeling between the 2 nations. If my business  
continues as dull during the summer as now, I ~~have~~  
had some thoughts of making a trip up there over  
land with 2 or 3 others to "look round", but I should  
neither leave any profitable occupation here to go  
nor go with any intention of staying now; only  
if I should see any opening for practicing or for  
mining, I could go there early next season -  
Emily joins me in best love to Papa, Mama, Mat  
Lucy & yourself. Write soon. Dear & tell  
us all about your movements & believe me

Your affectionate brother

W. H. Sturges

I ask Peter if he wants to send any message  
He says: Ah-cooo.-----