

Michigan Bluff, Placer Co. Cal.

10<sup>th</sup> May 1860

My Dear Aunt Charlotte

I received your letter & mine of the 5<sup>th</sup> February some  
time ago but have been waiting, as usual, for some news to tell before  
writing. Since my last I have been vegetating in this old place, working  
a little, reading a little and doing a good deal. I get about enough  
work to pay my way, but not enough to pay off & quit all my  
interests on my Mining Claim, or to enable me to get away across the  
Mountains. I have been expecting to get the job of laying out  
a new Road across the Sierra, but am afraid I shall not have  
it, as the President of the Co. has a brother an Engineer, and wishes  
to have him get the job. It is not absolutely certain that I  
shall not get it, but I think my chances very slight. If not  
I shall not be able to get away until I get my access of  
pay for the R.R. Road work, <sup>when that</sup> which will be in very uncertain  
in the meanwhile I consider myself lucky to be making a living.  
I hear from Chasly about every week. He is very well, and seems  
to be improving fast, but I am beginning to get very uneasy and  
dissatisfied about him. He is now old enough to see his and imitate  
everything he sees and hears, and I do not think the influence by which  
he is surrounded at all desirable. As I have no doubt frequently  
explained to you, Laura is a very kind and good woman, but intolerant  
& slovenly (no doubt the result of repeated disappointments & discouragements  
& such, although she would do anything on earth for the boy, she is too  
indolent to have things as I wish them to be, could I have my mother  
and is very orderly and hard working, but she is only one in the household.  
Colburn himself is more disagreeable to me, sometimes I see him in his private  
and entering the house, and his last or previous appearance was very  
He is no doubt partly a peacock, but the influence of Chasly is the

the ~~worse~~ <sup>better</sup> on that account. Louie is so accustomed to it that she neither  
 notices nor cares for it, but her mother has always felt it and has  
 lately felt and told me she thinks Charly would be better away from  
 her. He is really kind enough and fond of the boy but he has  
 no self control nor probably any idea of the an occasion for it,  
 being one of those men who consider themselves especially persecuted  
 by providence (and therefore justified in following) when all their various  
 schemes do not succeed as well as they foolishly expect. My great  
 wish now is to get <sup>permanently</sup> ~~as soon as possible~~ settled in one place to  
 begin house keeping again and <sup>have</sup> ~~and~~ his grandmother live with me  
 and do not know how we shall manage, or how Mrs. Mather will get  
 along away from her daughter, but I am determined to try it as  
 soon as I can, and having once got her away from her I don't think  
 I shall let her return. As far as expenses is concerned it costs  
 me as much to live now (boarding out) with what I allow them  
 for Charly as it did to keep house when Emily was alive and her  
 mother lived with us. The expenses of housekeeping with care  
 and management are very slight compared to the prices charged  
 at hotels and boarding houses. My great fear is that Mrs. Mather  
 may not be well enough always to take care of him alone and  
 I should then be in a <sup>way</sup> ~~way~~ but if I can only get started in that  
 way I am willing to take the chances and the happiness of having  
 her with me will more than make up for any trouble or  
 inconvenience that can possibly arise. I don't see how  
 by the time this reaches Florence you will probably be getting ready  
 for your trip to Geneva, I much hope you will enjoy yourself  
 there as much as you can possibly wish or expect and that the sharp  
 and excitement of travelling will <sup>be good</sup> ~~be good~~ to your general health  
 and spirits. About a month ago I had a letter from Aunt Perry  
 and Alice. The latter was on the eve of her departure for Paris etc.

Complete her education as governess. She returned in good spirits and evidently  
was not inclined to brood much trouble from the future. She tells me  
Lammie's health was very delicate, <sup>and suffering from her throat</sup> so much so that Dr. Kennerly thought  
she could not bear health in so cold a climate as Stockport. Can it  
be that she is consumptive? Who knows, it would be sad for her to be  
taken away now, when I have no doubt her trials have softened her and  
given <sup>her</sup> <sup>immense</sup> <sup>improvement</sup>. ~~It is very possible that she is~~ <sup>seen</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>well</sup>  
spirited about ~~her~~ <sup>her</sup> prospects of making a living, and also seems much sorer  
about Harriet's behavior. What an unfortunate woman she is, how much of  
it is from her own fault I can not judge, but I am very sorry for her  
and for the girls, they have always been very kind to me. They still have  
Frank Evans he sailed for South America what to do and that Anne  
Eggle is no better. Hope to hear better news of her from you. We have very  
variable weather here, the latter part of last month was very warm, last week  
witnessed 3 or 4 days of snow and very cold weather, and now warm weather again.  
I think the summer has set in far too now and that the storm is the last  
definitive one of rain. I have been steadily pursuing my  
instruction in the art of self defence, and it has I think kept me in better  
health than I should have been without any exercise, and I know you  
would be amused at my preceptor's extravagant idea of my latent (!)  
powers. His impiety fails to see perhaps twice Benbow's weight  
rather than against him and avenges my Country's latitudinarian  
who would do the cause the excitement of the fight in England reached  
if it did not reach your transalpine abode. There was more  
excitement about it all through California than about the pending  
President's election. We only heard the result yesterday, and the  
Englishmen <sup>new</sup> <sup>sort</sup> of the <sup>illuminative</sup> mind see very much derided.  
We now get telegraph news from New York and is delayed by a new  
line across the continent called the Pony Express, which is carried  
<sup>between the ends of telegraphic communication</sup>  
through our coast by the route of about 400 miles horse road.  
Pretty good travelling. In attendant you & I doubt you would  
made. The letters whether by steamer or by overland stage take about

the same time viz. 2 Octo 23 days. What does Pope think that French acquire  
means by the annexation of Savoy? I think Geneva is doomed to change  
his state before many years. I have been reading lately the first vol. of  
that has appeared of "Buckle's history of civilization in England" - It is interesting  
but I rather wish to be carefully concealed and determined to make everything  
grow in favour of the views. Have you seen it? I have lately printed  
a little book which has passed through the hands of "the great ones of  
the world" - Headmaster of Rugby for many years - He shows more true Christian  
feeling and spirit and toleration in his everyday life as well as his letters  
than I have often seen or heard of in a Champion of the Church of England  
and he was visited accordingly. I don't know when I have read a life  
whose simple & plain <sup>beauty</sup> I have admired as much. I have lately made another  
acquaintance - a man named Baker, <sup>from</sup> a tenant of this County, some years ago  
they live on a small land a few miles below Dover in Sussex  
I know him for some time and Tyler is a great friend of his. Some weeks  
ago we went over on Sunday afternoon for the walk and stayed to spend  
the evening. We have since then at their invitation walked over every  
Sunday afternoon to dinner. We spend the evening pleasantly, though  
generally singing sacred music, in which I generally manage to hit a small  
percentage of the Beau notes, than or thereabout. He is a quite pleasant  
person - about 35, just out from Massachusetts - and apparently with  
more refinement of thought and manners than the generality of his  
kind here. The silver fever still rages high in the new mine at Westwood  
(the other side of the river) but one or two of the mines have almost been  
started and the bubble will soon burst. Now the work is getting off  
the ground in thousands have gone over there and have suffered for  
death from want of provision. The hard times are now mostly  
over - The Indians are beginning to be troubled and I shall  
try to buy paper that is partly of Indian paper - I have called a number  
(20 or 30) of men in one night. If they begin that they will  
business they will soon be exterminated - or driven away  
I shall be glad to hear of your success in your  
work.

Although I have but little doubt the white men have been (as usual)  
the very first aggressors, the attribution generally falls on the  
the innocents on both sides. These Indians are an entirely different  
Race from our California Indians and I think I told you before  
Within a few weeks of the last time I was over there in 1857 and  
went into their camp with only one companion, they started by surprise  
and seized several men - they are my enemies and have  
determined to oppose the settlement of white men in their country  
as far as they are able and I am glad I had not then means to go  
then when I first came back here, among constitution objects  
Naturally to a limited supply of food, and however much coupling it  
I can bear when necessary I should not do it from choice when  
no benefit is to be derived from it. All those who went there  
at first have been spending at the rate of \$25 to \$40 per week for  
the bare necessities of life and excepting the lucky few, very few  
who have got such Clans, have not done anything or get  
so much more than will be plenty of time for me if I can get some  
money by that time, and as for my old man doing anything  
I shall not worry about it. My term is about the  
same as ever. Give up on your study with the same increasing  
quantities of paper, note, and paper to be in the washing  
and I can't perceive how I may do something for you in time  
when don't see that I can with that I know of a "pioneer" realize  
our position that created the small intestine which harmed Spedie  
in his journey, an excitable population like the white people  
and were hurt in our day. Clans and some of them an acquaintance of mine  
killed a few Mexicans and talked about it a few hours afterwards  
as if an everyday occurrence. On Sunday evening the first  
quarreling drew their pistols and fired a couple of shots in passing  
and killed a man sitting quietly by the stove in the room (or rather room)  
it was a strike, not one killed anything, but a man who was  
killed had been in bed for some time and he had been  
killed by a shot in the back of the head.

Lucius and that was the last of him. The two men though it would  
had they should be sent to Auburn to be tried for manslaughter  
and I did not seem to know any more of killing that man than  
if he had been a dog and I have a recollection of gambled  
and several men straggled over the town except when in the  
improvement state of feeling her improved appearance without any

Mr. Young who had arrived safely in Washington where he temporarily  
resided she seems to think she will return to California before very  
long. I hope so for she and Emily were so intimate that it  
is quite perfectly more drawn towards her than it is towards Lucius.  
I tell Maria that to please her I have laid the flattery under  
her which she recommended. I must confess not to be half a young girl  
in part to the course of my head with what result beyond that of such  
and my fellow cases. I exceedingly good time only with some other in

last I talked of looking over the other day for some papers that  
I made a letter I have of my face and I do not tell much to  
about the suit seems that circumstances after Carey in this  
article in Copy Books. I hope I will enjoy more of the latter as

Expectations it remained one of the story told of Macahey, who was Mrs. Beecher's  
captured her admittance of the space, and gave Ferdinand as her favorite character  
"anxious of course, of course, sympathy for her fondness for black  
men". Talking of the expense of living I am told by Charles Plate, whose  
family live at New Haven that the family returns there live exceedingly well  
for \$3,000 a year in the society there being entirely different from  
what it is in New York or even in Boston. I should think the society there  
would suit a Papa better than that of any place I know. I have  
no idea that you can give some over a much greater it and you have  
of course not seen my name in the various papers, though it has been  
mentioned in the California one, in connection with the Boston one.

They put names in papers on very slight provocation here as I  
of how and times to that Lucy Paper. Maria believe me dear Charles  
Your very affectionate brother -

W. H. Taft  
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