

San José - 23^d January 1886

My dearest Mother

I have just received yours of the 24th November. A week ago today I met with an accident which proved very slight but, which I could not expect to escape alive once in twenty times - I was always lucky in that way and have more reason now than ever to consider myself so and to be very thankful. I was on a hand car, which is a light railway carriage worked by two men turning a crank & which we use to travel rapidly over the line - I was turning the crank for the sake of exercise and we were going very fast (about 25 miles an hour) when my foot slipped on some mud in the bottom so as to let my body fall forward onto the crank handle - That threw me over, making me turn a complete somersault and strike on the top of my head 12 or 15 feet ahead of the car which then of course passed over me and ran on some hundred feet before they could stop to come back to me - Everything was in my favor - I^o that my head struck on soft ground ^{between} instead of on one of the ^{wooden} ties or sleepers which are only 24 inches apart and lay between them until the car, which is only 10 inches high passed over it and struck me across the thighs - my legs must have been bent like this but both my boot heels tore



off so as to let them strangle out without breaking - The whole
result was two ^{dislocated} sprained ankles, one dis elbow & wrist,
^{one broken rib} two badly bruised thighs and general soreness all round -
I was carried to bed and kept soaked in whiskey for four
days & nights and yesterday was brought down stairs -
Today I can travel round on crutches and have little doubt
but that in a week I shall be all right again - Isn't that
almost too much luck for one man? You may remember
that I ~~have~~ very strong muscular legs, in fact the muscle
on my thighs is greater than I almost ever saw and the Doctor
remarked that that only had saved me from two broken legs -
I have had very little pain and have only to keep quiet.

My relations with ~~the~~ my employes are pleasant
enough in every respect but that of getting my pay
and that is more than I can accomplish just now,
but I intend to make a stand for it before long -

The Contractor like the sneaking bully & coward he
is, after apologizing and professing all possible friendships
has lately been working ^{again} to get me discharged although
I have done everything in my power not only to be
but to appear reasonable, but ~~the~~ such a bitter
feeling exists between him and my employes that
they would ~~be~~ ^{retain} me to spite him if for no other
reason - We are now of course open enemies and
I have made public his entire course towards me, viz?