

San Francisco

13th October 1865 -

My dearest Mother

I don't know how long it has been since I wrote to you and only know that it was since I last heard from you - San Franciscans are only settling down from the excitement of a lively Earthquake which we had last Sunday, by far the worst experienced since the settlement of the Coast by Americans - It shook down several ^{brick} houses and cracked almost all more or less - We live in a wooden house and feel quite safe, though the ceiling ^{plaster} of my office was transferred almost bodily to the table and Carpet - No one was killed and only a few hurt by falling materials - A few weeks ago we also had a Conoulsion in the Railroad Company which resulted in Mr. Sewin being deposed and my being appointed in his place "Chief Engineer of the Western Pacific Railroad Company" - rather an imposing title especially to untravellered ears, but not of very much importance here - I think

I have done pretty well so far, considering that I had to fight the whole crowd at the beginning. The President and Chief Engr. have both had to leave and the Contractor has to take his orders from me, and although he hates me as bitterly as any man can hate one whom he has tried to injure and suffered himself from the recoil I try to get along as pleasantly as possible. The English Company's representatives are expected out here in a few weeks, and if they come I have no idea of what position I shall obtain if any. If they do not come I suppose I shall remain in my present position for a while at least.

My salary is raised from 300 to 400 per month but my ~~expenses~~ expenses are proportionately increased ~~and that is a great deal more than I can afford to pay~~, but it is a comfort to think I have no one to blame for it but myself, and I don't do that much since I have left off "worrying". Charley is well and growing in manliness more than in size. He is naturally delicate though he has the buoyancy and spirits which seldom

Accompany weakness or ill health. He is beginning
to take great interest in his lessons, and makes good
progress. He is a as good a little fellow as
I want him to be and I am very happy at being
with him so much. I am now able to be in San Francisco
two or three times a week - I am and have been
well though I am physically very weak and
thin compared to what I was some years ago -
I am beginning to get old - I have no doubt
it sounds laughable to you to hear me talk so at
a little over 33 - but that in California is equal
to 43 in staid old England - at least - I suppose
you have paid your visit to Charlotte, seen and
gloated over all your grand children (but one)
and returned home - Although we are not
working very fast on the RR, I am kept
riding about the Country from one end of the
Line to the other, ^{175 miles} and from both to here so as
to have very little time on my hands, which suits
me exactly, but it is a good excuse for being
an infrequent correspondent - I don't remember
when I write or didn't write) last to Charlotte -
send her my love when you write and
also give it to Mat & Lucy - I suppose

You are not in any alarm about the Tennis
troups I suppose you have some apprehensions
about the Cholera; those are about the
two only topics of European news now the
talk of the Atlantic Cable has died away
There is a prophecy of several years standing by
an old Spaniard that San Fco is to be "wiped out"
tomorrow by an Earthquake and unless but
I do afraid not think it certain to take place
on that account - How does Mark like his business
so far? I hope it is one that will ensure him
steady employment and that he will have sense
to see that that in time cannot fail to be profitable
My strong wish to that effect is based on the knowledge
that I ~~should~~ ^{have} not realized it myself at
any time until now - I am in a hurry, so
goodbye my dearest mother, with best
love to Papa. Believe me

Your very affectionate son

W Stanroon

God bless you all