

New York Sept 26/81

Dear Will

I was very glad to receive your last letter - written just after your return to Samokov for although I cannot say that I fully shared your anxiety about your return journey still I was glad to know that you were all right & that your forebodings of evil proved false. On the whole I think that most of my sympathy goes out to Miss Malby who certainly was in a very unpleasant position where upset in a ditch & deserted by her travelling companions:

However I will stop abusing you about that for just at present I have a much more serious grievance against you than any thing that you have done in Turkey & that is the

amount of old rubbish that you have left around this house. We have just fairly commenced to pull things up. (must be out of the house Saturday) & this afternoon I cleared out the bureau in my room & when I came to the bottom drawer I struck such reminders of former years as follows: an old fire box containing a marking stamp of yours & about a dozen pens all of which had been used a collar box full of stones (Lake Superior or Saginaw I suppose) a lot of empty envelopes some marked Tribune some Herald & Probytic &c about 20 or 30 programmes of a meeting of the University Convocation all for same date - half a dozen copies of the General Assembly Journal also all of one date about 250 cards of the firm of Day & Selden some old papers ^{in an envelope} marked private which I have not yet examined - a pair of spurs a silver tea spoon marked W. & A. B. several

empty bottle which had evidently been your property I ^{might} continue the list for half a page more but as I think that this list must have made you blush until crimson I will only add the one article that I do not class with the foregoing as rubbish & that was a picture of grandmarriage. After I had made an end of this mass Aunt Elyja made my hair stand on end by telling me that in her room, the back one up stairs there were a great many more of your things. I had not the courage to attack them to day but if I find them as bad a lot as this one I think that I will have to write a private letter to Ellen advising her to destroy all such valuables as fast as they accumulate otherwise when she comes to move she will be driven crazy.

To day is the day of the Presidents
funeral & as Aunt Eliza had not
been out to see the decoration I
hired a carriage (no business down town)
& took her down Broadway to the Battery
& back. It was a sight well worth
seeing but as you can read in the
papers a far better description than I
can give I will only mention two or
three things. The first thought that comes
to mind is the comparison with the
time of Lincoln's death & after some doubt
I have come over to the side of the
papers & say that it surpasses that
occasion. In the business part of the
city this is very apparent for in most
cases the buildings are literally covered &
on Broadway below Union Square every house
has something on & in the side streets
almost every one. In the residence part
of the city it seems to me about the
same perhaps a little more in the

poorer parts, & about the same in the middling classes the one weak point being 5th Ave & the streets near to it which are mainly noticeable for the lack of decoration about one house in ten being decorated.

As regards artistic effect I cannot compare the two events for I do not recall with sufficient clearness the appearance of the city sixteen years ago to compare it with the present but at present a great mistake has been generally made by using too much white with the black (half & half in many cases) so that in many streets looking from a distance the effect is rather of a gala day than of mourning. Of course there are many very many exceptions to this use of white but I will only speak of one & that is Tiffany & Co where a most startling effect is produced by covering the whole side of the building fronting

Union Square with black not one
speck of white being visible & the black
being so heavy that it more than half
hides ^{covers} the windows on that side

In my letters I say very little to you
about these public events as the papers
tell so much more & so much better than
can what is going on and so I have not
written much about the weather but
your last letter saying that it was
very hot & dry everywhere that you ^{begin} had
so exactly describe the weather here
that I cannot add to it unless to say
that yesterday the thermometer was 89
& today was hotter ⁹² yet & this with
a peculiarly trying state of the atmosphere
I consider as doing pretty well for the last
of September.

I am writing this from the old house
in 68 street but I expect that this
week will be my last here. It has
been very hard for aunt Elya to make
up her mind to give up living here

in New York & when she went out
to P. G. in the Summer I think that
she hoped to come back here to live.
When she returned I was alone in the
house & it was nearly two weeks before
Emily got back & I think that this
experience satisfied her that it was
impossible for her & me to live here alone
& when Emily came & said that she
would not stay aunt Elya reluctantly
made up her mind to break up.

It comes very hard indeed to her &
when she came in today & I was laughing
over some of your valuables she said
that is right laugh all you can for
if you don't laugh or do something I
shall break down.

I expect that she will go to P. G. the
last of the week.

I have not yet found a boarding place
but hope to obtain one in time to
prevent my few possessions from being
set on the sidewalk

9-26-84

By the way in speaking of your dangers in Bulgaria did you notice the article in one of the papers about the building I am in down town - You need not think that you have a monopoly of danger for every time that we hear an extra noise at the office we all look up to see if the ceiling is coming down on our heads.

A letter from you for uncle Scott came to the office the other day & I took it up to him. Both he & aunt Lucy were very much affected by Davy's death & do not seem to have much ambition left. John was taken quite sick the other day but is better now & is recruiting at P. S. but his father has made him give up his place & says that he shall not go back until well as it is enough to lose one in a family by overwork

Love to Ellen -

Yours truly

W. Ellager