

Chicago, Ill., March <sup>15<sup>th</sup></sup> -----, 1898.

Dear Cousin

*This is an allopathic dose, but as I don't prescribe for you you'll have to take it; and console yourself with the fact that you are only one of several victims.*

I have been intending to write to you ever since I reached the City, but have until now been too busy. - I have been here ever since the 22nd of February and shall be here still nearly or quite all of ~~this~~ week.

The Fair is going to be a great show. The largest building that of Mechanics and the Liberal Arts - covers thirty-one acres of ground. Machinery Hall twenty acres - another twelve acres, and so on. It is roughly estimated that all the buildings cover over two hundred acres. The buildings are beautiful, although they are none of them quite completed yet. The Woman's Pavillion is the nearest done. Although I <sup>have</sup> spent altogether about seven or eight hours there, I have not been nearly all over the grounds. There are several of the States Buildings nearing completion, and some have a few exhibits in. Kansas has a lot of stuffed foxes, panthers, buffaloes, and the last horse that died, that was engaged in the Custer massacre. Horticultural Hall attracts most attention inside, and is about the only one of the Fair Buildings that has anything in it. There are a lot of palms and shrubs and tropical plants.

There is a whole train of freight cars on the grounds containing the exhibits from Ceylon. The Fair will hardly get started the first of May, as there is a great deal to be done. Most all of the buildings have been more or less damaged by the frost and storm of the severe winter through which we have just passed and will have to be repaired. There is still a great deal of grading to do. There are a great many people visting the Fair now. The admission is 25¢ ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> over \$200,000 has already been taken.

~~Sunday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup> this morning, I heard my favorite preacher - Professor Swings, and after church went to the top of the Masonic Temple - the highest building in Chicago, and took a look over the City and out on the Lake. The building is 21 twenty-one stories high. I will send you by mail a pamphlet describing it.

Just now the authorities are having trouble with the water supply. The water to supply the City is taken from the Lake. What is called a Crib is built two miles out in the Lake. This is where the water enters a large tunnel under the Lake running to the City. The sewage all goes into the Chicago River, which runs through the City from west to east, and <sup>is</sup> ~~supplied~~ <sup>primarily</sup> into the Lake. To set the current in the opposite direction, and thus prevent the sewage from emptying into the lake from whence the City supply of water is taken, this garbage laden water from the River is pumped into an old canal, which leads from the Chicago River west into the Illinois River at Joliet, Illinois. Sometimes when there are sudden thaws or heavy rains the water of the River runs into the Lake in spite of them, and carries all the filth and sewerage of the City with it with such force as to go out to and beyond the crib, and so this dirty water is taken into the City through the Crib and tunnel and pollutes the water the people have to drink. Such is the case just now as the snow has been melting rapidly, and from the top of the Masonic Temple, I could see the muddy water away out beyond the two mile crib. The natural color of the Lake is a bright green and the water from the dirty river

is a drab or mud color, and it is easy to tell how far it goes out into the Lake. There has recently been another Crib built four miles out into the Lake so as to get it beyond the flow of the dirty river at such times. The water for the principal or central part of the City is taken through this Crib and is not so likely to become contaminated. The two mile crib supplies the North and West sides of the City, and the people living in those section have just been notified that they should boil all the water they use. The plan now is to have a new canal built over the same route as the one above mentioned, sufficiently large to carry all the sewage from the river to Joliet where it is to empty into the Illinois River which is to carry it on down to the Mississippi River, and thus to the sea. This is expected to insure a strong current from the Lake and thus leave the Lake water pure for drinking purposes. Considerable opposition has been met with to this project by the people in the territory through which these rivers run, and hence the delay in completing the project.

Several of the State buildings of the Fair will be very beautiful, and all built of native material brought here from the respective states, as are also the foreign buildings. The Maine building is of Granite - others of brick, stone and wood. The New York, Pennsylvania, ~~and~~ Massachusetts and Washington <sup>buildings</sup> are among the largest. The Washington building is built chiefly of immense logs of Red Wood brought from that far Western State. The two largest are at the bottom. They are 127 feet long and seven feet thick and as straight as a line. The Virginia building is an exact reproduction of Washington's home at Mount Vernon on the Potomac. Several of these State Buildings are of the architecture of Colonial times. They are making great preparations here to accommodate the crowds of people that will come. Almost all the private families in Chicago will take boarders <sup>or lodgers</sup> and blocks upon blocks of flats and apartment houses are being built which are to serve as hotels during the Fair, and afterwards <sup>be</sup> converted into apartments for renting. The rates will range from \$10 to \$15. per week for a room for two people without board up to hundreds of dollars a week in some of the finest hotels. Some of the best hotels here - among others, the Great Northern - where I am now stopping have announced that they will only charge the regular rate during the World's Fair period, but will double up the people, that is in a room with a double bed that lets for \$2. a day they will put two people and charge \$2. each, making \$4. instead of \$2. for a room, and they are now renting the rooms <sup>in</sup> advance at those rates. Some of the rooms and suits of rooms in this hotel bring very high prices. The least is \$1.50 per day without board. For those who arrange in time, or come early in the season, I think there will be little difficulty in getting accommodations at <sup>reasonable</sup> rates. The best place is near the grounds - that is <sup>within</sup> walking distance, as all the street cars and trains going to and from the City will be packed at all times and especially just at the time when one is going to or from the grounds, as they <sup>people</sup> will all go and come at about the same hours. Besides it will be next to impossible to move about in the streets of the City as they are frequently badly congested in ordinary times. When you are near the grounds much sight seeing can be done early in the morning before the greatest crowd arrives. The Fair grounds are about ten miles south of the City on the Lake front. Meals can be procured at reasonable rates either on or off

the grounds. All qualities at all prices, and it is so arranged by the management that prices within the grounds are to be kept at reasonable rates. There will be a great number of hotels, boarding houses, apartments and private families where rooms can be procured in the immediate vicinity of the grounds, as well as in the City proper, at the same time, as no one knows what the relative quantities of the supply and demand will be, it is safe to engage accommodations early.

When one is going to and coming from the grounds there will be a great rush. The best time to visit the Fair is generally considered to be from June 15th to July 15th, as earlier than that the exhibits will not all be in place, and later the crowds will be the greatest. Not less than ten days or two weeks will do the Fair or yourselves justice.

The temperature is gradually rising here. The weather for the most part fine. The streets are very dirty, but the authorities are making strong efforts to get them in good condition before the opening of the exposition.

I go from here to St. Paul and Minneapolis, and then as far west as Denver, and on my return stop at Kansas City, <sup>St. Louis and Cincinnati</sup> about the tenth of April I hope reaching home. Carvie is now in Brooklyn, but Kittie and Eddie are at Clifton, and all are well.

I would like Coribel and Eddie to read this after you have finished it, as some of it may be interesting and instructive to them.

I am still sticking to the best diet, and feeling well <sup>and vigorous</sup> mentally and physically though I have lost about 15 lbs since I began it.

I hope this will find you still improving and all the rest of your family well. My address for the next 10 days will be St Paul minus Genl delivery.

With love to all

Affectionately  
Will