

AL/3705

Brunkenstein bei Alfeld.

Hannover.

July 22. 89.

My dear Betty — I think it is a good
rule of conduct to write to people when you
happen to think of them very vividly — pro-
vided it does not happen quite too rarely,
as your instance seems to be the case with you
in point of me — and it is on this impulse
I address you just now. Your nice letter was
most welcome at the time, and so was
the sample of Newburn — ribbons, indeed all
gather the kindly tone of both covered many
sins; yet I did not feel disposed to answer
at once, after having been kept at distance
and in expectation for so long. But since I
I have been here, and especially of late, I
think of you a great deal and wish you
so much by my side, that I will at least
attempts a little companionship by letter.
Through Mr. Neumann I heard the other

day that you were going to lose your situation
at the college, owing to want of funds, and I
must own that in spite of my imperfect sym-
pathies with kindred views and emphatic con-
dition I felt sincerely sorry. There is no doubt
that you will soon enough be put into
some other post where your special qualities
may tell as well if not better, but still
it must be a grief to every faithful worker
to lose her established sphere of action and
influence, where sympathies must have been
evoked and affections been rooted, that cannot
be exchanged for others in a twinkling.

However I trust that the future change will
be for the better, and in the meanwhile a
period of rest must have its great attractions
even apart from its beneficent influence.

I am sure to am so addicted to "shops" as you

used to be, it is even more necessary, if
less agreeable, than to others, and will help
to keep your mind properly balanced and
open to moderate, i. e. catholic influences.
I am only sorry I cannot number among
them, and thank you here to indicate by
my side. What jolly bouts of talk we
would have, either in company or like a
bite! But it is only tantalizing to indulge
vain regrets, so I will turn to reality, and
tell you what little there is to be told
about myself.

We are here since about a month and I
have been a good deal occupied with my
translation, though in the beginning the
weather was quite too hot to do much
in any way! It was even too hot for
walking in the day-time, but the scent
of new-mown hay, of roses and blossoming

birds, bees, and the delicious hum of bees in
them, made paradise existence an El Dorado.
After supper, though still very warm, it was
possible to walk in the woods, where the
flashing of innumerable fire-flies made
fairy-land. The very thought of camping
out once, but somehow it never came to
pass; it was so difficult to collect a company
on a certain day, and to go singly would neither
have been fun nor quite safe.

Since then the weather is very much changed
to a very gusty instability. Everybody has
got demoralized in his or her way, leaving
reading or writing, and taking regular con-
stitutions in the late afternoon. To such
charming scenery as this even the latter have
a charm. It is delightful to catch a sudden
and transient gleam of sunlight on the distance
illuminating and transfiguring it as by magic,
and the vines hereabout are busy in themselves.

You get the misty outlines of the Brochen
as in a glimmer and all around the entrance
of the Tay - and Yvon. Getting in varied purple
blues and greens, all up and undulating
with stretches of cornfields and muddy-bumped
villages between. But the chief impression
is that rare one of solitude near at hand,
and sheltering you all round with green woods
and silence. I know more than one hilltop,
from which you do not see so much as a
human habitation and hear nothing but
your own and then the cry of a bird of prey, drawing
its circles in the air, or the wind in the
tree-tops. And that is what I like best of all.
I have plenty to read too, getting fresh supplies
from Stuttgart almost every week, from
my friend who almost lives in assiduity
but makes up for it by excellent choice.
He is librarian to the king and about the
best-read man and critic I know, so that
my comparative want of receptiveness and
capacity abash me a little before him.

There must be me kindly to all your people

To-day I have been gone, going to the village church and reading Emerson all the while. I felt it to be quite right, my proper share in ^{public} worship.

Were you here I should wish you read "Thekla" by Meyer, the most beautiful poetry (a small epic) I have read for a long time. I wonder whether you will never take a literary business after all you have all the elements of her appreciation in that way as well as in others. A great deal of elating is barren I find, but whatever moves you deeply either to sympathy or admiration is equivalent to so much more life, and therefore fruitful.

I wonder what you are doing with your holidays, and whether you will take the trouble to let me know.

I had three different accounts of the Newburn festivities: yours, the Leopards and Miss Bidcans, and it was most amusing to

compare them. They represented chiefly three different degrees in temperature of the mind, yours breathing warm unqualified enthusiasm, the Leopards' a dignified not unmerciful but still thoroughly going approval, and Miss Bidcans' in the usual sceptical tone, conscious of all the ~~examples~~ ^{of you} you have. Still I believe very enjoyed it in her own separate way.

Miss Clough were sent me her photo — pardonable, but none the less a pity, i.e. for me; I should have liked an idea of the picture.

I find you tell me very little about old college friends. Did you meet many of our generation I wonder? Was Miss Power there? She wrote to me several times in the course of last winter about her candidature etc. and I was interested in the matter, unless news as a specimen

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of English puffing wherein you have not
succeeded to take your share, though I must
own a modest one. I really believe Miss
Borne would make a good head of a school
after previous practice and preparation
but some of the testimonials were indeed
such panegyrics I thought, and the whole
collection of them in questionable taste.
However there is something in bringing one
self forward. As to myself, I have little
doubt, but I might have got the position
as principal of the Victoria Lyceum had
I applied and pushed my claims. But I
would never undertake recommending an
individual whose shortcomings I know so
well as my own. And though I do not think
I should have hesitated to accept such a post
had it been offered to me, yet I value my
golden fringe almost higher.
Good bye now, dear Mely. My mother and both
my sisters send you their love. So I do with mine
and remain
Yours affly
Alix v. Cotha