

March 18<sup>th</sup>  
1819

I received your letter of March 12<sup>th</sup> only yesterday  
my dear Mother, and <sup>along with it</sup> Cornelia's of the same date - I am afraid  
I shall not have time to answer both, as it is late and I have  
several little things to do. yesterday I reached my place of  
destination and settled myself quietly on the Church Hill, where  
~~however~~ as you may suppose I am literally buried, for it is so  
distant from the fashionable part of the town that we might as  
well be in Albemarle for gaiety. Aunt ~~Knappley~~ is very sick  
has been confined to her bed for more than a week & this  
made me delay coming to her, as I feared being in her way.  
this fear I find to be quite groundless, and from the cordiality  
of her reception I am sure she is pleased to have me with her.  
I spent some days with Aunt Randolph at her particular re-  
quest - some reports have gone abroad with respect to a disagree-  
ment said to exist between her & our family and it was even  
said that this was the cause of my staying at Col. Nicholas's.  
The good people of this town have so much time to attend to  
affairs that do not concern them that there is no action however  
simple that can hope to escape their charitable animadversions.  
Many causes have concurred to delay the operation which was  
to be performed on my mouth; I am assured it will be very  
simple, and have no fears on the subject - I have not once thought  
of it since I came down except to regret the putting of it off.  
I am very glad to hear that Virginia is certainly coming  
down - besides the advantage of getting her teeth filed she will  
spend her time very pleasantly I am sure - the spring will be  
so far advanced as to admit of her going out as much as she  
pleases, and many persons who would not or could not visit

her in winter will think nothing of a walk or ride in  
fine weather. She will find a number of girls here near  
her own age. She may I think calculate upon every grati-  
-fication which the polite attentions of the Nicholas family  
can procure her. Cornelia says something about her dresses  
& not knowing the fashions - almost any kind of trimming  
will do. Tucks, plaunces, work &c - are all worn indiffer-  
-ly - some of her frocks had better be cut out in the neck  
in the way they have been worn for more than a twelve  
month past, & her ruffs should be very full in order to  
admit of their being quilted to a collar long enough to  
fit the neck of the half-way dress. if she has a <sup>carton</sup> crape  
instead of trimming it in ~~that~~ troublesome manner <sup>of puffings</sup> in which  
she was ~~used~~ - two deep plaunces of silk the colour of the  
crape hemmed at the bottom & set on one above the other  
either with - silk bands to hide the whips or else gathered  
into conchitas as we used to do our pills when Aunt Hack-  
-by staid at Monticello. Mrs Patterson is expected from  
Baltimore the day after to morrow and she may perhaps  
bring some new fashions, but I find my last winter cloathes full  
good enough for me. advise Virginia to bring with her all the  
little things she may have occasion for, soap, pins, pomatum &c.  
for all these little things run up what is a long bill for poor  
people; there is a pack of visiting cards in my table drawer  
belonging to Cornelia and myself which she had better bring  
as Elizabeth and herself will probably visit together & these  
cards have "the Miss Mandelys" written on them. worked ruffs  
are quite fashionable, so if she has any let her bring them. I have  
no doubt her ~~craper~~ wrapper will answer full as well as if  
it had been cut by the regular pattern and will be a  
handsome stylish dress. I suppose she has a muslin or two for  
parties - her <sup>yellow</sup> carton crape will be usefull in this way. there is a  
sort of walking dress which Julia Wickham wears & which the  
Miss Nicholas's are having made, I will describe it although

I do not know whether Virginia can avail herself of the description - it is a cambric petticoat, flounced, tucked or embroidered with an open wrapper of Canton raze worn over it - the raze should be of a spring color. Julia Wickham's is pale yellow - the Miss Nicolai's green. There should be gloves & shoes of the same color. ruffs are worn almost altogether very little, I think not at all by the elegantes, but of this I am not quite certain - the ruffs, such as we wore at home, a broad or narrow collar, with one pill at the top & another at the bottom, quilled <sup>in the middle</sup> in very large quills, and worked, plain, or trimmed with edging, as you please.

I had no idea of filling a letter written to you with a history of fashions my dearest mother; I always have so much to say about my own affairs, & particularly about my own feelings, that I do not perhaps think as much of other people as I ought to do. in this case the wish to give V. the benefit of my <sup>limited</sup> knowledge on the subject of dress, and the want of having time to write another letter has made me depart from my general rule of talking of myself. I a great deal to say which must make the subject of another letter, for if the feelings of the moment have evaporated before another post, they will be succeeded by others, the expression of which will be equally interesting to me, & I fear equally wearisome to you.

Adieu my dearest mother, the only unalterable sentiment which I am perhaps capable of feeling is the most devoted attachment to you.

Eliza Mandolph

Papa is still at Virginia - give my love to all the family particularly to my dearest grandfather & to Jefferson when you see him.

I have written in the midst of "Hell's hubbub" and although I know what I intended to say I am by no means certain it will be equally intelligible to you.



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