

My dear Nicholas.

Coolidge, Jos. Jr.
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My Boy had arrived safe, and many thanks to you, and dear Virginia, for your care of him: to this, and the change of climate, we probably owe his life; and, after he has been turned out loose, to run wild, as a colt, in the allowable hives, I firmly count on his becoming in time a man! I have been much perplexed of late with petty cares, which have distracted my thoughts and frittered away my time: my Father's deafness gives me uneasiness, because it renders him wholly incapable of taking care of his estate; this is running to waste from want of proper management, and my sisters are all the worse for the want of a candid and judicious friend to influence and control them: my Brother, too, from having taken the wrong road at the turning point of life is ruined: he failed some three years since, and has been sinking in public esteem ever since; - with beauty, talents, and a wife, he does nothing - and worse than nothing. I despair of his ever retrieving his fortune or character: he will end his life in some brawl, or in the hospital, or jail! Circumstances have caused an alienation between myself and Brother-in-law - both; and his wife my sister, espousing his cause, without knowing any thing of the case, has ceased to visit us, almost to speak to me. So that you see we are here on troubles; - thank God I have comforts, too, in the affection of my wife, and the good wife of them; our arrangements are nearly completed; that is you have come to an understanding as to the future. Allen will go to

the Aunt Macky: Randolph to Lyell; the Wind to Cambridge, to the
Rest to Meade, son in law and neighbor of the Woods; and Tom
Jeff. will accompany us. I know of no plan so good as this, and
my wife thinks so too; even if we were to remain at home, rich,
and perfectly independent, I should feel such a temporary
disposition of my children deplorable, and so would their mother,
but the thought of parting from them is very painful to her: she
says nothing, but I find her frequently in tears: I presume
hence in recommending the course I have named, ~~addressed~~, from
an inheritance conviction that it is but - first for them, as
I have said, and secondly for their mother, whose health of body
and mind requires, absolutely, rest and change: she is feeble,
thin, nervous, and worn; the sea, and a new world, will
do more for her than medicine, and break up the recurrence
of headaches which cause her great suffering, and may finally
destroy her. I feel that she ought to go away, and also
that I ought not to go without her. "It is not good for man
to be alone", and we have been already too much separated.
I expect, therefore, that she will accompany me to China - to remain
I know not how long, but perhaps not more than two years:
and when we return ~~we shall~~ it may be by way of Egypt, &
Europe! I shall look forward to being near you, when I am
near at home; perhaps something may occur to fetch you in
Phil., and in such case, I would remove there: But it
is not worth while to look forward so far, now.
I mentioned in a former letter that I wanted Septimia to accompany
us to China; this was that she might be a companion to E.

and in the hope that A. W. would offer to her, and be accepted. To this
idea we should have made a partial course, and done very well for some
time in the last ^{and}. The singular folly has put an end to my hopes: and
my letter will not reach her eye. I wish all else her conduct creates
but little surprise, being such as I always anticipated. She was right
in her remark to Virginia - I never did much like her -; and the strong
course she has pursued since she has been a woman has confirmed the
impressions made on me in her childhood. What think you of three im-
pressions in three years? to men of whom she knew nothing, whom it
was impossible she could respect? Thank Heaven she did not take A.
W. she is wholly unworthy of him: but I will say no more.
We do not think of inviting either to or Mr. to accompany us; they would
neither of them suit us -; and the latter will be much happier with
Virginia than any where else. entirely and she is, I think, devotedly attached
to A. W. and if he would give any encouragement would yield up every
thing to follow him -; but her want of grace, youth, and looks chills and
reels his imagination -; he has tried to love her, but cannot; respect and esteem
he does - and appreciates her talents &c. - She has defects of temper wh.
are undeniable, such as doggedness, disputatiousness, and something very
like sullenness -; but she has also ^{high} principle and a fine understanding. Could
she have married young, her defects would have been corrected by a man
she loved -; it is too late now. Have you ever noticed how little help she
is in sickness, in company, at times when her aid is required, and
when another would see this and render it? There is an apparent
selfishness about her which is unlovely. These things obscure her good
qualities. Do not mistake me - I am writing unnecessarily - because, with you,
I had always to tell the whole truth. - The other sister - C. - is
more amiable, has more lively talents, and is much more useful than M.
but is yet a mere every day character. They are all three much very
nearly behind you wife and mine. We, my dear Nicholas, have drawn the
highest prizes in the lottery of marriage.

I have attended to your commissioning - procured a new glass for your clock - had the lock and pistol repaired - placed the camera-obscurata in proper hands - & purchased a weighing apparatus: the book, too, which you have written for David endeavored to trace and procure. The weighing apparatus cost me much trouble - I went to five purveyors, all of whom have patients, and all of which would have satisfied you - the difficulty was to choose; I was therefore determined by the price - and ^{then} sent you a dealer's balance with Spanish weights. I think of adding to it, a small English apparatus, which seems convenient. I have applied to Mr. Beach for your eye -; and will get from him the direction about the disposal of your chairs de left in New York - and comply with it. When I have time to read over your letters I will see if there is any request of yours left unattended to - Before I sail I shall write you fully, and repeatedly: Mary etc will be the medium of correspondence between us when I am in China -; they are most attentive and admirable fellows, and friends of mine. If you visit agents in New York, choose them - dearest. Send me the above some days ago. We have a letter from Aunt Harkley, declining to take Ellen. she finds the responsibility - We are going immediately to Mr. H., to see her about this. - What say you to the Washington dispatch, my view of it is precisely that of the New York American. yet I admired Leggett's admirable letter to Mr. H. I would send you the newspapers, but suppose that as Consul you get more than you can read. You recommend to me the Democratic Review; I subscribe for it - though its doctrines in this region are like aspidochelone, backbone to the community of gentlemen. - at this moment Dr. Reynolds, celebrated for his skill in diseases of the ears and eyes is coming to examine Randolph. I have but little hope that he will ever recover in any degree his hearing. Flagg, the dentist, told me the other day that if there had been a discharge from the ears the tympanum becomes indurated and the disease incurable. kindest love to dear Virginia - If I go from New York to Phila (possible) I will go and see your boy. say what is necessary for me to Septimia. and believe me ever yours faithfully and affectionately. Long-loved & loved