

I am very much obliged to you my Dear Maria
 for your two letters & am quite outrageous at Elizabeth Har-
 rison's neglecting me so, however I will write to Harriet
 if I have time because I promised her faithfully to do so, Johnny
 does not go until day after tomorrow but tomorrow sister Ellen &
 myself have to paste numbers on all of grand papa's books & it will
 take us nearly the whole day which I am very sorry for because besides
 wishing to write another letter I should like very well to have co-
 -pied a beautiful Desdemona from Shakespeare which I am afraid
 I can't do now for I only draw on Sundays & after this we shall
 only have one more Sunday & there is more to do in it than I
 can do in a day but to go on with our journey to the Natural
 Lodge after we had crossed that delightful mountain where the
 the temperature of the air was the most charming that I ever felt
 & the ~~the~~ ^{the} streams the most clear & rapid & the pros-
 -pect which we saw here & there through the openings of the trees the
 finest I ever saw, we came to a level part of the country that was
 entirely cleared & in cultivation I surrounded every ~~where~~ ^{where} by moun-
 tains when we had gone a mile or two grand papa called to us
 to look back & I never was more surpris'd than to see the mountain
 we had crossed so long that it seem'd from that distance to extend
 at least half way round the horizon in one continued & unbroken
 ridge, the next day tho' we saw one still longer, the mountains
 were on a different shape from those in Albemarle they
 were more round & regular in shape & some were like long
 & obtuse ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~heads~~ ^{heads} like sugar loaves, one that we saw the sides
 seem'd quite as perpendicular as those of a sugar loaf, I suppose

it must be impossible to climb up it. When we got to Greenleaf the house was an excellent brick house as well built as the houses of Lynchburg & there were three others building in the same yard two of brick & one of stone the one we went into was well finished in their side but the filthiest place I could not help thinking of sister Ellens wondering when she was a little girl if ^{in which she says} the horse had been sweep'd today & the people & the children look'd as if their cloths never had been taken off since they were put on new. I felt exactly as if the place was polluted. I could not bear to touch any thing. That night they carried us into a very good little room but the sheets of our bed were dirty & we were oblig'd to sleep on the outside. ^{the night} sister Ellen had such a dreadful pain ^{in the} face that she walk'd up and down the room all night. I did not sleep at all, grand papa said he had a very nice comfortable bed but he slept in the room with two or three people. The next day it rain'd as hard as it could pour until one o'clock it held up then I we went to the bridge tho' it was showery all day, about two or three hundred yards from the bridge of Patrick Henry a mulatto man lives, on the land of the widow Ochitree he keeps the key of the shot tower & generally goes with persons who go to see the bridge. He went with us, we knew the instant we were on the bridge & I can't conceive how any one can go on it without knowing, for you see the sides of the precipice; on looking down it has very much the effect on your head that looking down a well does, we sto'd on the edge & look'd down with perfect safety & afterwards look'd out of the shot tower window it is impossible to judge of the height from the top but when you go down & see how large objects are which you thought quite small you are astonish'd I thought I saw fern growing remarkably close to the ground & afterwards found out ~~they~~ it was young walnut trees about 3 or four feet high we saw a barrel sunk almost entirely in to the ground which prov'd to be a thing made to protect

some of the shot works about 8 feet high, the stream below looks
 like a little branch & was in reality larger than Moores Creek that
 I took for ~~the~~ ^{slipping} stones were large rocks large enough for is all
 to set on together with the greatest ease but above all that
 gave us the best idea of the height was a linen tube reaching
 from top to bottom, looking out of the window we thought it must
 be a great deal smaller at bottom than at top although it was so
 long but we found it was the same size all the way. There was
 only one steep difficult path to get down the hill & after we got
 there we found that a dam had been made which together with the rise
 of the water prevented us entirely from getting under the bridge & we
 should have been obliged to come away with scarcely an idea of the
 bridge if it had not been for the exertions of Patrick Henry who work-
 -ed for nearly an hour to contrive us a way by which we might
 get along, which he did by laying planks & logs from one point of
 the rock to ~~the~~ another with great difficulty we succeeded & then
 the scene was beyond any thing you can imagine possibly; I always thought
 the scene ^{of the stream} in the antiquary was unnatural but now I can easily believe
 it possible for the water risen higher where we were than
 have been no possibility of getting out of its way the least rise would
 have prevented us from returning the way we came & we could no
 more climb up the rock than we could up any other high wall
 but I believe it was at its highest for it did not rise while we
 were there tho' we staid untill 5 o'clock in the evening afterwards
 we walked about a quarter of a mile down a steep path to a cave
 the entrance into this cave ~~is~~ would make a beautiful picture, the
~~water~~ rise to a great distance above your head & before you is the
 stream which runs under the bridge & a little island but we were
 told that it was an island only when the water was very high, we could not
 stand upright in the cave but in two or three places because a great
 quantity of stones ^{had} been thrown into it which had been dug to make
 salt Peter grandpa ~~is~~ said he would ^{have} them all taken out & have a
 path made to ^{the} cave from the bridge & the dam taken away & several other
 improvements when we went in it was so cold that we did not stay
 there long enough to see what the temperature was by the thermometer
 being afraid of taking cold after heating ourselves by scrambling among
 the rocks. when we returned we had to cross the river & found me

had just got these in time to be able to get down. It was rising so fast
it rose six inches in the time that they came over in the boat & returned
with us & it is not very wide here. The people said they remembered
to have seen it rise so fast. I am my dress Virginia. I have neither
time nor paper to write any more. I dare say this will more than
satisfy you. I am your affectionate friend
Virginia Randolph
Monticello

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