

Letter from Florence to Aunt Emeline – Brooklyn March 15, 1869

Dear Aunt Emeline,

What will you think of me for not answering your letter before. I beg you will have patience with me and not think too harshly of me, for indeed I have had no opportunity to write till now. You were very kind to answer my letter so soon. I appreciated it very much. Perhaps you wonder what I have been so busy about. I think I mentioned in my last letter that we're going to have a great "Fair" in Brooklyn. Well this Fair has completely taken up our time and attention for the last two or three months. We were busy for a long time making articles for it. I made a set of tablemats(6) three dollars. Ella made a handsome pair of mats and Minnie made a tidy valued at four dollars and did a great deal on a carriage afghan valued at \$100 besides other little things. People did not pretend to do anything for themselves for a long time before the Fair which commenced Feb. 22 Washington's birthday. Of course there was nothing else thought of while that lasted which was 2 weeks. We each of us had a season ticket 2 dollars a piece, and some of us were there nearly all the time. There were fine departments at the Fair. The "auditorium" or main room, where all the fancy articles were displayed and such elegant things I think were never seen before, it would take a week to tell about them. The Mechanics Race was filled with everything that the skill or ingenuity of man could invent, sewing machines, clothes wringers, organs, etc. The "New England Kitchen" is a history by itself. There we saw the old fashioned dresses of "long ago" saw the tables set with blue china and the old New England dishes pork and beans, pumpkin pies, & I saw the spinning wheels around the room, the great brick oven. In fact everything was made to appear just as we imagine it did in our Great Grandfather's times. The picture Gallery was filled with elegant paintings by our best artists, one could well spend a day here. The Museum went ahead of Barnum I think. Single tickets at the Fair was a dollar and it was well worth it. One could have spent a day in each of the Departments and not seen all of them. We all enjoyed it much a band of music was in attendance every evening. I forgot to mention Knickerbocker Hall the refreshment Salon it was enough to make ones mouth water just to enter it. It was filled up superbly and the tables were spread bountifully. I cannot realize now that the Fair is over. It was a splendid success. We realized \$400,000 noble for Brooklyn isn't it. If New York doesn't raise a million we have beat her taking into consideration our relative size you know. We edited a daily paper all during the Fair called the "Drum Beat". The money raised is for the benefit of the "Sanitary Commission" it aids our sick and wounded soldiers.

We had some beautiful flowers during the Fair. Flowers are so lovely in the winter I think, and they are very expensive too. Each of us had five or six elegant bouquets presented to us, every shade and variety, Japonica, heliotrope in fact the choicest varieties. Minnie had a splendid basket of flowers presented to her worth eighteen dollars. It was the most beautiful thing I ever saw its fragrance filled the whole house. I wish you could have seen it, it was so lovely. Well our Fair is over now and I thought then I should have plenty of time to myself, but I find I have none at all. I cannot find time for sewing and anything else, it is just company all the time. Sarah was with us nearly all winter and since she left us we have had a steady run of company nearly all the time. The days seem so short that we barely find time to attend to necessary household matters and the evenings are given up to social engagements. We either go to a lecture, concert or sociable or else we have company at home so that we cannot pretend to do anything then. I have written to Sarah once since I last wrote to you and that is the only

letter I have written at all. I never can sit down here to write a letter without having to stop to entertain two or three callers.

I think that party you had must have been ever so pleasant. I should have enjoyed being there much. I have those evergreens yet that I got at Spruce Swamp. I look at them every little while and think of that nice picnic we had, when you didn't come up and scare us. Tell Herbie I still remember the nice time we had going berrying together, and hope sometime we may go again. I wish I could see little Emma is she well. I suppose she has all together forgotten Cousin Florence. Mr & Mrs Edward Dayton were here last week we enjoyed their visit very much, they went to Albany from here and probably are home by this time. We expect Mrs Watson and Mrs Tyler from Middleburg to visit us soon. This week we expect company from Harlem and last week we had company from the same place. We enjoyed Sarah's visit here very much and think she did; though the season was unusually dull with us, we did not go out near as much as usual. I have been out more since she left. We were sorry to hear of Cousin Mag's illness. The family must have missed her extremely. Sarah did not say what was the matter with her. So they have at last got a minister in Gilboa. Do you like your minister as well as ever. Are Gleason and Mary Candace Rutsffson? At home this winter. They are my particular friends from home.

Please remember me to them when you see them also Connie R, Chrissy P----, Mina Choate and the others. I liked them all very much. Now Auntie please answer this. I fear my letters are very uninteresting now a days. Mother and all send much love. This from your affectionate niece Florence.