

It certainly has been a very great surprise, my dear Mr. Henry, to receive your letter, this morning – Need I add, what real pleasure it is to know there is an old-time friend actually wishing to see me. Come, whenever you can – and be sure to be welcome, in this empty home of an old friend. My two girls are delighted to think we shall have the joy of seeing, within our doors an American friend. . . That far-off and loved home of our's [sic], ever shall be for them, the Land of Promise and Plenty – a place to be dreamed about – and lovingly remembered – and, even here you a complete stranger for us, dear old friend, the mere fact of your being American would be a passport, here. –

It is almost impossible to realize the changes you mention – but what will you feel when you see me once more? . . Fancy a “Monument” with nearly white hair on its summit. . . and centuries on my shoulders – Life has laid a very heavy hand upon your old friend – but, do what it would, it could not reach the heart—

Any hour of the day, any day of the week, you will find me at home – no fear of my being engaged – I never see anybody, and very seldom go out – save for a walk with Violette and Daisy – you speak of old times – It is long, indeed, since my dear Mother was there, still – Charlotte is there – thank God! But aged and weakened by trouble and a great sorrow-- . . . for hardly a fortnight since we buried my youngest, kindest, dearest brother Ben – For him, it has been an immense relief – for he was great sufferer, poor brother . . . but for those who loved him, the empty place aches –

How many, many things we shall have to talk over ... let me know on what day I may expect the great pleasure of seeing you? -- The steamboats land almost in front of our windows – I shall meet you there – or at the Dépôt – just as you choose – One promise I make to receive you “just as we are” – America and its comforts are no more for us – best friends are ever, ever welcome.

It is so kind of you not to have forgotten your old, old

Marie M. Scharff.

