

November 17, 1950

Dear Folks,

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People having been ganging up on me to prevent my doing anything whatsoever, which accounts for the deep silence since last Thursday. But thank you for your telegram, postcards, and letters. My cold having degenerated to a mere sniffle, I have worked my way downstairs, into my clothes, and even, against great odds, outdoors! Naturally after a week in bed I get tired fairly quickly, but I don't dare admit for fear I'll be herded back to bed again for an indefinite sentence. I am taking no chances on a reoccurrence, but nonetheless I like to do a little more every day so as not to be completely floored the first day I have to do my normal day's work. Naturally, my normal day's work will be very much lightened by the invaluable help of the wonderful Mrs. Watkins, who is extremely kind and goes out of her way to do the odd jobs that have accumulated around the house and have preyed on my mind. I was horrified to learn that one of her daughters, living in Florida, is expecting a baby toward the end of May. I had been hopefully thinking Mrs. Watkins would be able to sit for me during the day once I'm "on my feet again" and need to go into Washington for the many necessary purchases prior to our probable departure. Now of course she will have to go down there to help her daughter and the two-year-old grand daughter just about the time I'll be ready to start my normal and extra-normal activity. Since, in the two or three years I've been here I have failed to find any person able to come in regularly or irregularly to take care of a three-and-four-year-old, during the daytime, my hopes are even fainter of finding someone able to come during the day and to whom I would trust the safety of both a five-year-old and a small infant. I have told Mrs. Watkins my problem, and she has nobly said she would keep her eyes and ears open for someone able and willing in May and June, so I daresay my only recourse is to let Providence provide and cross that bridge when I come to it.

Laurence was very pleased with the series of three animal postcards, and enormously amused by the jokes about bears and deer. He laughed heartily at Mrs. Putnam's saying she was taking care of Abuelito so he wouldn't go too near the alligator's mouth, but Betsy was puzzled. "Doesn't Abuelito know better himself?" said she scornfully, with her usual Alice-in-Wonderland brand of realism.

Sad to say the diminution of my "appetite" turned out to be a temporary condition only, perhaps due to the cold and fever. In any case it is back in full force, with the usual horrible results if I fail to cater to it. What is even worse, I have stopped (temporarily) taking a nap in the late morning and afternoon, with the result that I have that much more time in which to be forced to eat. When Grand-mamma leaves and I have to get the breakfast and dinner, I shall return to my napping habit and perhaps be able to cut down by that much on the food intake.

Since we have gone nowhere and done nothing, the news is scanty. But at least it's good news, what there is of it.

Our love to you all,