

Oberlin, May 12, 1851

Dear Father

I am happy

to announce that I have just purchased some new pens. We have been having some boiling weather; yesterday May 11, the stoves at 93° in the shade! You cannot heat that. I think of Milton's lines about stowing in ice their subethereal warmth; to undergo the change of fire extremes, extremes by change more fire. This climate goes on the fierce, positive principles of never doing things by halves. So the moment that winter lets or its grip, summer claps

the corpus of the weather,  
and sends it pointing on  
its journey, lashing it  
with a whip of scorpions.  
The long delicious winter  
of springtime, about 4 months  
at home, is not so long  
here. There came up a  
thunder shower last night  
that agreeably cooled the  
air so that it is quite  
fine today. When I went  
to bed about half past  
ten, looking out toward  
the N. E. I saw three tall  
pillars of cloud, silvered by  
the meridian moon. "No  
thunder clouds" I said, and  
went to bed. After a while  
I slept, but a sort of a  
blue thing seemed to strike  
through my head, I awoke,  
a sound of dripping rain

on the kind roof, water rick-  
ing off of the eaves, and  
pretty soon a low broken  
squash of thunder. As a  
thunder shower it was not  
very mighty, but it did  
freshen things up nicely.  
I will indicate just how  
this shower business goes here.  
A current of warm air, as  
for a few days last week,  
has moved up from the  
Miss. Valley. It moves un-  
til the pressure that caused  
it is relaxed, then ceases.  
Then a fearfully sultry day.  
But the heat causes a rare-  
faction of the air in the  
Miss. Belt, air from the  
borderland presses across the  
lakes, cools, this meets with  
the hot air of the region  
south of the lakes, the mois-

ture of the warm damp air  
is precipitated, and so with  
a continuous line of dripping  
rain and ~~soon~~ falling light-  
ning, with thunder, the  
cool air as its son, the  
cool atmosphere presses down,  
until it has filled the  
vacancy down South, and then  
elastically begins a retrograde.  
In the wake of these northern  
movements is cooling, fresh-  
ness, revivification. These  
aerial oscillations ~~to~~ contin-  
ue with great regularity all  
summer. Thus it is that  
the lakes are a means of  
salvation to this country.

They keep cool. In the winter  
they become covered with ice,  
this in breaking up in the  
spring, rushing, sinks some,  
In April the water is ice cold,

and it takes nearly all summer  
to warm those vast quantities  
of water. Only until a large  
amount of the winter water  
is drained off, and its place  
supplied by the warmer water of  
the river and brooks that  
are quickly heated by the spring  
sun, are the lakes warmed.  
Then mark the effect of  
this large body of <sup>summer</sup> warmed water.  
It partially shields Michigan  
Ohio, and New York, from  
the winter cold. Illinois,  
Wisconsin and Minnesota, are  
rebed by the <sup>winter</sup> blizzards, since  
they <sup>draw</sup> come from the West,  
but these blizzards lose much  
of their sting by the time  
they have coursed along the  
lakes for a few hundred miles  
so that here the climate is  
comparatively mild. The cold  
here was less by some 10 or 20°  
than at places <sup>further</sup> West

There is this difference to be noted between the effect of lakes and that of mountains. They may both produce cool strata of air, and so induce condensation. But at home, as long as the wind blows from the warm South onto the cold mountains, there is continual condensation, or long rains. Here the condensation <sup>or rains</sup> occurs only at the edges, & the warm and cold strata <sup>where</sup> ~~where~~ meet, and as there is nothing to hinder this rain, or edge, to move back and forth, the storms are short, showers, and extending over small areas each one. In winter the blizzards, of course, coming by other causes, produce longer storms. But even in winter the storms are short, and the rain does not extend over large areas at once, as at home

I wrote to Uncle Addison soon about prospects in Iowa and have received a very satisfactory reply. He will let me leave all the work I want to do on the farm, anyhow, and as there are three churches around near by, there may be something for me there. He has written to see about them, & if I do not get work here I shall go there. I may go around by way of the lakes. The fare to Chicago and back is \$15. From there to Kellogg it would probably be \$12 each way, = \$24. I shall get a scalp ticket at Chicago I guess, and may thus save something, \$15 + 24 = \$39, I think I can surely ~~save~~ <sup>make</sup> enough to pay for it, and doubtless more, if I get anything but work on the farm.

I should be careful about  
working in the heat too much.  
I should put wet rags into  
my hat, etc etc.

We have had the Ohio  
Association here this week.  
They had two days at it,  
closing yesterday. The discussions  
and papers were marked by  
a very high degree of ability.  
I was especially struck by the  
general disposition to put the  
thought of the church in line  
with the best scientific thought,  
— the propriety and broadness  
of tone. Doctrines were not  
alluded to, methods of work  
were discussed exhaustively.

I wish you all well.  
More anon (kald). I positively feel dis-  
gust at those <sup>two</sup> words (thus used.)

Adv. W. S. S. M.