

Dresden.

October 20th
1859.

My dear Mamma

To day I heard the pleasant news from uncle Jeffry that uncle Joe is coming to Dresden and immediately too; from what I heard I suppose he will be here before 1st November. Uncle Jeffry had engaged lodgings for him in the opposite house in Carola Strasse.

I have had no letter since Monday but I suppose there will be one next tomorrow or next day. The Jahr-Market or annual (i.e. quarterly) fair is to be held here in a few days and there are already great preparations making.

The household here is pretty much as usual except that the Baroness is unwell, but that is an occurrence which happens only too often. There is still no sign of frost, though it is gradually getting colder; I think it is not till the middle of November that the cold

usually sets in. There are great wood
rafts going down the Elbe now; I saw
one a few days ago with 27 men on it
and small ones may be seen passing
every hour of the day; the long ones
go twisting in the most curious
way and it seems as if it were
impossible for them to pass the
bridge, particularly as the water is very
low now - 2 of the usually full
arches are now quite empty.

It is a great nuisance that the
picture gallery is shut now and
they say it will not be reopened
for some time to come; I think
they are cleaning it.

21st Your letter arrived this evening.
There has been a Great fire here this
evening - The Linkische Bad, a large
restaurant and concert room has been
completely burned down - no lives lost and

the building was insured. It began about
6^{h. m.} o'clock and at 9 was still burning;
it is a long way off in the New Stadt
so we saw nothing of it except the
reflection. There is ^a very good arrange-
ment here by which the moment a
fire breaks out, it is known all over
the town, and also in what part it
is; on the top of one of the churches
watchmen are stationed, and the moment
they see fire (not smoke alone) they ring
on the great bell, ^{each} the part of the
town ~~where it is~~ being design-
ated by a certain number of rings as its designation.
Thus this evening when the bell began
to give out five strokes, then a moment's
intermission, then five again, and so on,
everyone in Dresden knew that there
was a fire in the New Town.
The cause of this fire is supposed to be

an escape of gas.

You seem to forget that I see all the Illustrateds at Carola Strasse, but I missed a month or two in summer. I am glad to hear of the paper, and am also glad that the shoes are not coming, for in winter I always (here it is almost indispensable) wear boots, and the Dresden work is good enough for anything except a walkingtour. You are right about the German money; the Austrian and Bavarian florins, the Saxon and Prussian ~~and~~ Thalers, and one or two others are the only respectable coins that there are. There is no money so beautiful and convenient as the francs and the Swiss 5. 10. & 20. centime pieces made of billon, a metal like argentine.

Francis E. Prendergast.