

Aurora, W. Va.,
Sept. 13 1903.

Dear Walsh,

I'm a month or so behind my correspondence owing to illness and—well, a stupid repugnance to writing letters. Really I am becoming a curmudgeon philosopher.

I was ill all summer, but could not well leave Washington until a month-and-a-half ago. Since then I've been here on the summit of the Alleghenies, looking down into the country where I soldiered forty-two years ago when the world was new and worth while.

They found a dead rebel with his rifle down in one of those hazy valleys a little while ago, and I shall go down and beg his pardon.

When the frost begins to pinch my nose I shall gather a pocket-full of chestnuts and go back to Washington. Later, I may go to New York and occupy one of your rose jars for a night. Wouldn't that jar you?

I trust that Mrs. Walsh has learned "how to be happy though married"—to you. When I marry Claire there will be something doing in the way of superior happiness.

You may give both ladies my love if you happen to remember when you see them.

Say, I've had three more books dedicated to me recently—when am I to have yours? Or is your literary career at an end? Your light still "lies along the paths of men"—you are my "favorite author."

Now will you be good?

Sincerely yours,
Ambrose Bierce.

My Washington address is best.