January. The next mail I presume will found you that I had reached San Francisco. I regret exceedingly the fall of the house in Shina, which seemed to be one destined to a most successful future, not only as it affects Bank's fortunes but in its mortification to the Woolcotts. Westray's conduct can be accounted for only in the supposition of absolute incompetency or something far worse, but what inducement he could have had to run our so disgraceful a failure I dont know. Do not let Frank remain idle now that he is at home until idleness gets to be a matter of course. His nothing about to Bales will not help him to a situation. I know that you find it hard to deny him pleasure after his long absence. I trust to part with him again will be but a removed trial, but he should have no time or opportunity in getting into business even if it involves a separation. It will come the harder to him by and bye. — I am glad that Laura's engagement is at length announced, it is for the best. I wrote her on the subject on my arrival in Oregon. Francis speaks of a letter from her at the same time with yours and his, but I have not received it. On opening to his last letter however I see that it is addressed to Alfred, & was probably sent to me by mistake. By the way I took pains to ascertain whether Alfreds farm was at all incumbered, fearing that if it was it might be an inducement to him to sell it, but it is not, and Dr Griffin says that it would be madness

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