in Washington here - the thermometer has fallen to 80° and a soft breeze is coming in from the back yard & I ought to be writing to a gentleman who is taking testimony in Oregon, but with the impressions of this position which Satan has implanted in me, here I go scribbling on a third sheet - and as I look at its black border it seems to be a mockery -

But I was going to tell you when I started off on this course that I once had the idea of writing a novel myself. I got as far as the title page, and had selected a list of characters; but was unfortunately too busy