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Washington, Feb. 24, 1874.

My dear Mr. Marsh.

I wish you would not apologise for occupying my "valuable time," as nothing gives me greater pleasure than to receive a letter from you, which I should be quite willing to read & answer, once a week, if I could get a chance. Where a "feller" writes more than four thousand letters a year, as I did in 1873, filling the same number of pages of a letter Copybook, a few more or less do not make any difference; at any rate, as they are all written by a Phonographic Secretary, they trouble me very little any how! So, there you have my declaration of opinion on that subject!

In reference to the gentleman to whom you refer, as wishing to try his hands at alpine climbing in the United States, there is not the least difficulty in going any where, ^{alone,} with safety. I do not believe you realize the extent to which the country has been opened since you left us. There is no mountain in the United States to which a man cannot go alone, & unattended, & but few that are more than a very short distance from a railroad, or stage route. For an idea of what has been done in the way of Mountain Climbing I would