

IVY LODGE
TRINITY, EDINBURGH

31-8-84.

my dearest George,

The date of your
last letter, shall be nameless!
Let us suppose I received
it yesterday!! Now, isn't
it good of me to reply so
promptly? - Somehow, you
feel so awfully far away
when in the distant West;
that I never can muster
sufficient faith to believe
in a letter reaching you at
all. Well, the much-looked-for
word-to visit, is now a

thing of the past, but it
had left many bright memories.
I feel I could appreciate
Auntie, so much better than
when we saw her last; I
seemed nearer her own age,
this time; I did so enjoy
her broad, common-sense
way of looking at things.
In that particular, she so
often reminded me of my own
mother. I didn't get half
enough of her; there were so
many of us to serve, that
all we could get, was a
very wee bit each. How
extremely young she keeps:
I didn't know any difference

in all since the last visit.
Indeed, I thought she was
altogether brighter now, than
then. - Uncle, I saw next
to nothing of Maggie, was
the lucky one; as her house
was so central, this time
so limited. One delightful
evening we had, when he
lectured, in the Queen St. Hall.
What a difference it makes,
when one has any interest
in the lecturer. I couldn't
help laughing at myself
afterwards: I felt so pain-
fully responsible about
the whole affair. There was
some delay in their appearing

on the platform, that audience
was showing signs of impa-
tience. Till that time, while
the Lord Provost was making
some introductory remarks,
I felt myself getting alternately
hot & cold, as tho' the whole
success of the meeting, or
rather, non-success, would
be attributable to me. The
moment Uncle stepped forward
with his quiet, self-possessed
manner, & fluent utterance:
I was at perfect rest. I
never listened to a more enjoy-
able lecture; it held the
audience in unrupt attention
throughout; once, I found
myself wander for a second,
(when your name was mentioned

as the authority for some
fact quoted) just to wonder
whether I ^{IVY LODGE} would ever
^{TRINITY, EDINBURGH}
hear you lecture: how I shd.
like to! — Oh, how long and I
remember, have you read
"John Ingledun", by Shorttouse?
He called it a Philosophical
Romance. If you have it, do
please get hold of it sometime,
tell me what you think
of it. I am sure you wd.
feel quite repaid: but in
anyway consider the time
spent in reading it, wasted.
I think it quite the finest book
I have ever read; I should
much like to have your


opinion of it. I don't know
whether or not our tastes
in matters of these sort, run
alongside one another, as
we have never read a book
together since I arrived a
year of discretion (?) but I
am very curious, (or rather,
something much better than
curious) to find out.

We are staying just now
at Ballinbeg (Perthshire) in
the midst of the most lovely
scenery: & such weather!
day after day, warm, & filled
with sunshine: much more
like the middle of June, than
Sept. - I felt wearied before

we left home, & fully deter-
mined, of all things, to avoid
people; but seemingly, human
interests are not to be with-
stood; we find our sympathy
shelved enlisted when there
is need of it, in spite of our
selves. There is such a bright
courageous woman opposite,
who is to be sent to the
Saint. Hospital this week
with an internal complaint
I do so hope she may be cured
She will rest with us for
a few days I think, when
we get home. Then there is
a man a little further on,
who had a dumbstroke in
India; first, his limbs were

entirely paralyzed, then he
became blind: There he sits
these sunny days in the
open doorway, looking so sad
stirred; he's very intellectual
& cultured. What a strange world
we live in! It would be quite
disheartening, but for the thought
of him, who went about
continually doing good. —

This letter is all wrongly dated
of course, as it was begun
at home, & only finished on
Sept. 17 — Disgraceful! yes, I know!
but I also know you will
forgive, your loving Cousin
Ellen.

We have just heard 
of Uncle's new honour; & congratulate
It is heartily deserved, tho' it cannot
make him greater than he was. —