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It is interesting trying to help and direct Gertrude's ideas and tastes. She begins to look at the stories in Young People with an idea to style &c. In reading her French history she has come upon references to the Crusades and I shall try to get her some more extended account of them as she seems much interested in them. Facts are very much in Gertrude's line.

I read a good essay on Education by James Anthony Foude a few days ago. We see the large tower of the Ice Palace from our back window. There is to be a grand Industrial Parade Feb 1, exhibiting the industries &c. of St. Paul, and showing that the city "is in deed and in fact a great factor in the commerce of the world."

Dear Sister Alice,
Yours of the 16th came Friday afternoon. I hope by this time your cold is very much better. We are very well and free from colds despite the weather - 41 below yesterday a.m. We realize how much more protected from the weather our rooms are here than our house in C. was.

Ellen K. Fuller

And we realize too, an advantage in Harry and Albert not being obliged to travel three or four miles to work such a morning as yesterday. I have thought with some anxiety of Sue and Joe Burns since the dreadful storm and wish I knew how they are. I have just written to Harry and hope we may soon have some news of them.

I finished reading Ben-Hur Friday. I found it very interesting of course. Mary's extreme youth was new to me. And don't you think the description of the khans, stables, &c, gives one a rather different idea of the birth in a manger than you get in Sunday School? I think the book is very finely written. I shall buy to read "The Fair God" by Wallace some time. It is some thing of a puzzle to me to know how to make my reading count for the most; and I should like to have it amount to something the next year. But it is hard to determine on the best thing where there is so much to read and learned and where one has no very definite leanings. Still I suppose if I putter along as well as I may, some line will determine itself.

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In the letter to the left and transcribed below, Ellen K. Fuller fills her sister Alice K. Grierson in on the details her life. In a very sisterly fashion, Ellen discusses her interests in literature, her children, the weather and everyone's health. To the right is a picture of the Ice Palace that Ellen could see being constructed. One can only assume she and Gertrude would soon enjoy the festivities of the Winter Carnival.

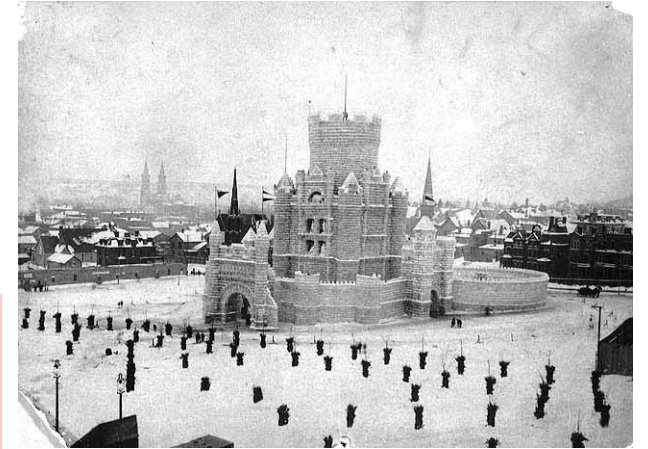
Letter to Alice from her sister Ellen K. Fuller
St. Paul, Jan. 22d, 1888

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With love
As Ever Yours
Ellen K. Fuller



In the fall of 1885, a group of Eastern newspaper correspondents visiting St. Paul and reported to readers at home that Minnesota in general was another Siberia, "unfit for human habitation." This kindled the start of the St. Paul Winter Carnival. To prove those correspondents wrong, a group of businessmen created a winter festival in 1886 to showcase the beauty of Minnesota winters. Using Montreal as the model, as it already had a winter carnival, the first ice palace was built on Feb 1, 1886 at a cost of \$5,210 with a height of 106 feet. The first carnivals were held in 1886, '87, '88 and 1896. They were revived in 1916 and 1917. Beginning again in 1937, they continued through 1942, resuming on a permanent basis in 1946. Like the Montreal carnival, a legend concerning King Boreas and the Queen of the Snows and other activities filled out the festivities. Today, the St. Paul Winter Carnival continues as the oldest winter festival in the United States. It is produced by the St. Paul Festival and Heritage Foundation.

Information from www.wintercarnival.com