

Ghent, July 17. 1850 (Hotel Royal)

My Dear Lizzie

I am quite grieved to have got so behind hand

with my writing; and in pity Dr Gray has offered to take the pen, and write to my dictation. I have had a little attack of inflammation of the eyes for a week or more; so that I have been obliged to give up writing; and as eyes are so precious now-a-days, when one has chances offered them that they are unlikely to have again in their lives, I am very particularly careful.

Now to begin where I left off in letter to Susan, & tell you how I got here - which I must do very concisely, leaving out all descriptions of England for the present. - Let me remember. - I think I left off with the close of the first act of the unprotected female viz. her return to ^{my} Berghain.

We went on that evening where boxes and bad people are sent. viz. to Brastay, and thence to the fashionable watering-place of Leamington. Then we went, you know, to deliver Dr. Darlington's parcel & see the ultimate descendants of old Peter Colthorpe. Dr. G. did all that next morning; found the old lady laid up with serious injury from a fall. & the daughter - a spinster of 40, - polite & thankful, regretting that attendance at her aged mother's bedside prevented her paying any attention to me. - The rest of Tuesday was a great day with me. - O, Lizzie, if you could have seen our equipage; - a sort of barouche with only one seat, a sort of cron between a cab and a barouche (named in the bill a Phaeton),

drawn by one horse, ridden by a postillion, ^{a woman} in red jacket, small clothes, white top boots & a little jockey cap. Honeybun bobbing up and down at every step. The first drove thru green hedges

I am writing for my next letter with accounts of dear father-in-law's death - I enjoy the travelling very much; the chambermaids seem border; fully amused at my French; but I get on quite tolerably - shape is quite a poor thing when we get where it is more necessary.

including milking fields to Warrick, - & what a splendid view of Warwick Castle from the bridge over the Avon which crosses its base on one side. The entrance was through a ~~stone~~ heavy gateway, opening into a road cut deep through the rock - much like the Pass in the rear off lots. it pro-
longed for some hundred of yards & every now & then draped with ^{branches above with a thick of trees} ~~ivy~~ - opening out at length into a green lawn, & before us stood a real castle, looking even more romantic & picturesque than you see it in the pictures. And we ~~seen~~ all the interior, all the curious old-world things, and some good pictures - and some great yew trees in the ground - and a lovely view from the windows - all of which you must wait for me to tell you about. Then we drove to Guy's cliff (where ~~de~~ Guy of Warrick is thought to have lived), a picturesque and beautiful seat on the Avon, & then a few miles to the ruins of Kenilworth Castle, the finest ruins in England. As for attempting to describe these ruins, it is not easy, and the little things I noticed & which impressed me at the time, you must wait till I can talk unto myself, if I ever find time to do so. The picture at Warwick Castle which interested me most was that of a little Lord Brooke, which looked so like little Charlie. The drive ^{back} ~~thence~~ through 6 or 7 miles of Park of Stanleigh May (a fine seat of Lord Leigh), I wish Father could have seen the fine ground in high keeping, the beautiful green rolling hills, the trees singly & in groups, & the wood skirting round, and especially the Deer Park, & the many groups of fallow deer. The house and ground were also fine, the lawn like green velvet. All of Warwickshire we saw is like a garden. I was not very well, and did not go about the fashionable town of Leamington, but Dr. Gray did. It was now nearly empty.

Plenty of Mrs. Skenton's chairs, and invalid old ladies drawn about ⁱⁿ them, passed the windows of the Prince Regent Hotel, where we were established en grand. - Very stylish. Dinner all served on plated silver dishes, with covers of the same - as in Liverpool; - and tea with little silver tea sets, [Tables to match, S.S. Loggians.] Nice parlour - and fine, solid oak staircase to most comfortable bed room. - You must not think us extravagant; we came slept in an annex, & had only the ordinary accommodations for a gentleman & lady. - ~~Early next~~ ^{morning} I was so charmed with the little villages we passed thro', the cottages all so nice & flowers everywhere - inside and out. -

But we must cut short all accounts & gallop on,
or we shall never catch up, - & the letter must be mailed
to-morrow.

Wednesday morning, went on to London - most kindly & cordially
received by the Wards. - Mr. Ward again sick - the
is a great invalid - but getting better. Mrs. Ward & the girls seem
to think of nothing else but of going on here to see ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{the}
and were most attentive.

Thursday, 14th same: I kept quiet, except to see a flower exhibition at Clapham in the afternoon. Dr. G. went to Har., & saw Hooker & Lady H. I came home with an invitation to ~~me~~ visit them the next week when H. was to be home with Miss Hooker - then off in June.

Friday morning. We went to London & saw Charles Moore
whose last MS. found for us at Dr. Botto's. Wednesday evening
He was in fine spirits & was having a capital time. Had been
most kindly treated every where, and men so much that all
ordinary troubles miss. There we walked from the
Strand ~~up to~~ across Great Gardens to Dr. Botto's, where I was
most cordially received by Madame Botto, Dr. Botto & his wife.
It was the only time I saw Dr. Botto, for he has been sick
ever since. Madame Botto kindly offered to take me a
shopping, and was as kind as any lady could be. Then I walked
a ~~few~~ little way to the Natural Museum, & was introduced to Robert Brown.

Mr. Ward insisted on Dr. Gray sitting to his daughter in law.
(who takes likenesses in chalk admirably) - She began that
afternoon, and died at Clapham.

Saturday afternoon - to Conversation at the Royal Bot.
Society's garden in Regents Park (going thro. fine parts of
London & Westminster) - ground beautifully laid out. Consecrating
large & peculiarly well laid out, everything planted in the ground,
and arranged pictorially. - You would have been there to laugh
with me at some of the old ladies, - some most queer faces
& dresses to match - Mrs. Stanton was there. - 1000 people
there.

Sunday Morning, we came to town & went to church
at Westminster Abbey. (met Charles Brace & companions
there - also Charles Anton, & Edward Cabot). First impressions
very grand & solemn. ~~And O. came home and dined with us.~~ ~~He gave a rich account of their travels in E.~~
~~He gave a rich account of their travels in E.~~ Charles B. &

Monday Dr. Gray went to New with Charles B. &
party & Charles Anton to show them the Gardens. ~~A~~ Saw the Victoria
in blossom, etc. - Mr. Ward took me a drive thro. suburban
villas & to Norwood Cemetery beyond Clapham. I see we know
nothing of ornamental gardening in America. Had a party of
Scientifics to dine, Prof. Huxley, Prof. Forbes, &c. - very nice.
A Mr. Bean, one of the Masters of St. Paul's school: funny man!

Tuesday, quiet all day. Dr. G. to London every morning,
running about with all his might, seeing old friends, &c. &c. -
& Mr. Ward occupied with a patient in the city who kept him
nearly 24 hours.

Wednesday Dr. G. & Mr. Ward went upon a most
agreeable excursion to Herford, some 30 or 40 miles - with the
Linnaean Club, - which they enjoyed to the utmost. Dr. G.
says he never had such a time, & breaks out into ecstasies
every time he thinks of it. They Breakfasted at 11 in Herford
(a quaint old town) - visited a gentleman's ground. (Bayfordbury)
- fine park, grand cedars of Lebanon - & a large Pinetum.

Put waff.

Near 600 species of Vainifera planted on the ground - all the new rare kinds. - Then to Lord Grosvenor's place of Panshanger. - the finest of Parks & ground - I saw the famous Panshanger Oak, - a noble tree, still in full vigor - & certainly 1000 or 1200 years old. - Dr. G. was the guest of the Club. x

Miss Ward & I went shopping in London - I bought a doll for Kitty & ^{some} knives for the boys - But ~~my~~ expecting to send them Saturday, but my eyes gave out, & they must wait now till I get back to London. -

Thursday. We went to Kew by Rail road from Vauxhall. Went over the magnificent gardens with Sir Wm & returned with him to dine at their house, West Park. Lady & Miss W. were very pleasant & kind indeed, & Horner, after showing us all over the garden - & afterward walked with us - at dusk - a mile to the Muttlake Depot. I walked fully six miles that day, - so you may see that I am getting on famously. The Hookers were extremely kind & expect us to visit them on our return.

Fri day, We went to the City - thence to the Courts. (Dr. B. much better) - farewell call - then Ward & daughters met us & we went to see the House of Lords in the new & magnificent House of Parliament. - A private ticket from the Garter King at arms had been procured for us by Mr. Ward. But it proved to appeal day, & the room open; we stood at the Bar of the house & saw Lord Brampton hearing a case argued on appeal from the Chancellor. ^{heard} Sir Fitzroy Kelly & Sir J. Romilly - the new Attorney general - the lawyers in robes & queer wigs. Our ticket is saved for another day, when we can go over the rooms throughout - see the throne &c. - A very gorgeous room indeed, all carving & gilding - all burnished gold, but yet managed in some way so as not to be glaring, but wonderfully rich. Came home, Dr. G. sat again to young Mrs. Ward, and I sketched the size & some strawberries we had for dinner,

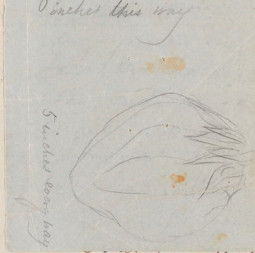
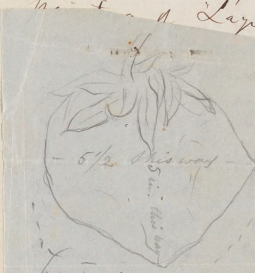
Wright to Mrs. Ward, who said they were not as large as she had seen, by considerable. - They bore a very delicious flavor. I shall send further some roots of this, & perhaps other varieties in the fall (Myatt's seedling, & British Queen. The saw much larger root day at Horticultural Exhibition. They looked like ^{small} tomatoes for size & shape. - huge distorted things. Mr. Ward's brother, also his son S. Ward at dinner at 7 o'clock. - nice times. - music in the evening. - Mr. Ward of Groom (also a surgeon) such a merry man.

+ Saturday, S. G. went to town in the morning on business. - ~~I packed in the morning~~ The west, Mr. Ward, & Miss Ward & I, in a hansom (stopped first on Clapham Common to see the splendid house & grounds of Mr. Hutton) & drove Mrs. Ward with, Putney, & across Hamsworth bridge to Chiswick. - the 3rd & last great Horticultural Show of the season. - Many thousands of people there - (tickets 5/-) scattered over the ground & most splendid flowers & fruits, shown under open tents. - Heaths in pots bearing some millions of flowers on one plant. The Duke of Devonshire threw open on this occasion his (adjacent) grounds - so fine slays & picturesque, and such noble cedars of Lebanon near the Villa, among the very largest in England, the lower limbs stretching out 40 or 50 feet & spreading a thick plateau of foliage, the extremity of the lower layers resting on the ground. There were three of the finest bands in England, that of the 1st Life Guards, of the Coldstream Guards, & the other regiment I forgot. - The villa was fine, not very large. - Hosker, ^{pointed out} ~~showed~~ the room in which Buckingham died. - Fox died in the room on the other side of the building. - We found Sir M. Hosker & Mr. Brown ~~waiting~~ looking for us. Of course it was the gala day of my life in St. George's Square; for Mr. Brown escorted me on this occasion for a long time, & was very polite & agreeable. - Hosker brought letters for S. G. to use on the continent. - Morning in drive home

through Kensington - Saw Holland House & Kensington House in the distance. - Stopped at Mr. Stokes (a friend & connection of Ward's) to tea. - He is the best living marine painter, the house full of & admirable painting &c. - & a little garden that was a jewel under. - I should not forget to tell you that at Chiswick house, Mr. Stokes pointed out to us three windows, "Laying down the Law" the dog as Chancellor.

improving of it. - & we got a very good view of the house of course was not there, but was friends who feared for his caprice, his dress on the ground, mingling with the in was the ditch of Rotherland, & Mr. Laurence unfortunately we missed. I went early to call on Mrs. L. of course, well in Cadogan House & was very cordial, ditto. - very polite. - She was in that black & I was - was much exhausted, as she was and anxious consequent on the death of Kitty looked well. After tea we drove Park at dusk. & drove Bolgeria (Hed.) bridge home to Clapham.

Monday day, Mrs. Ward well enough to come into driving room in afternoon. - We went to Clapham Common church in morning. + Monday noon, (bid adieu to our good friends) left with three quantities of baggage & one carpet bag behind the trunk, & went by railway to Dover, between Folkestone & Dover very striking, going thro' long tunnels & terraces of the chalk cliffs that overhang the sea. - Chalk cliffs more improving than you would imagine from the pictures, towering up so very tall & white, covered with green at the top - the sea washing their base. - Gatte very picturesque. -



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you remember the improving of it. - & he got a very good
view of it, by stealth. The house of course was not there
then - this it is said the Duke proposed to do it, but was
overruled by his friends who feared for his caprice. -
We saw his Highness on the ground, mingling with the
mass. - With him was the Duchess of Rutland,
Lady Dover & daughters. - Lord John Russell, the
Irish Minister, & Mr. Launce - unfortunately we missed
[Lord John S. G.]. I went early to call on Mrs. L. of course,
who reads very well in Cadogan House & was very cordial.
Saw Mrs. Launce sit to - very pretty. - She was in that black
silk, & looked thin & worn - was much exhausted, as she
told me, with the cares and anxieties consequent on the death
of her eldest son, Kitty looked well. - After tea we drove
thro. a part of Hyde Park at dusk - & thro. Belgrave (the
regiment) & over Vauxhall bridge home to Clapham.

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would imagine from the pictures, towering up so very tall &
white, covered with green at the top - the sea washing their base.
Coast very picturesque -

We dined at 1/2 past 5. (Dr. G. walked out under the
cliff a mile or two to Shaker-pen cliff.) About 10
P.M. we went on board the steamer in a little boat. Stayed
on the deck till ^{long} after midnight so close below. - Started
at 1/2 past 11. - women sick below. Reached (land) at 6 A.M.
(wished to stay all night on deck, Dr. G. would not let me: so damp)
Nice breakfast at the station when the baggage was examined.
Great jatter of French English & Flemish intermixed. -
Left at 7 1/2 in fine cars on decent railway for Bruge,
(through richly cultivated plain) where we were soon after 8 o'clock.
We now felt we were in a foreign land. Such a quaint old place.
& queer old gables - much deserted - clean, silent streets. -
Cathedral impressed me much - first Catholic one - the fine
oil paintings of earliest Flemish masters! - the Belfry & Chimes -
the church Notre Dame - Hotel de ville. - the comfortable hotel & fine
capital table d'hôte (I defy any one to beat here). (Dr. G. & no need
of it. she is so well, how she does eat! & she is growing positively fat)
the ride that evening to Ghent, & all things I saw there -
I will write of in next letter. -) We reached Ghent Tuesday evening
16th. - obliged to be very careful of my eyes - but visited the Cathedral & saw
fine pictures of Van Eyck, &c. - Dr. G. ran about much - fine hotel -
& good table d'hôte. - & so cheap. Left at 7 o'clock by rail road
for Antwerp. - reached at 9. - Dr. Gray has been writing this last
night & now this morning (18th). - Our room here in Hotel du Parc,
so large & handsome, & fortunately papered & carpeted in green, which is pleasant
for my weak eyes - its two great windows look out over the Place Verte to
a most beautiful view of the Cathedral, with its graceful spire (one
of the finest & tallest in Europe) and the chimneys are so sweet, every 1/4 hour.
I never heard such sweet chiming. - A particularly long & full peal of its
music waked us this morning at 5 o'clock.
I mean to keep very quiet to-day, & to wait here till my eyes can
safely be used. The right eye is better, the inflammation much subsided.
The left is now attacked slightly - but I must take every precaution.
I am wonderfully improved. Sleep soundly, eat freely, forget all about
dyspepsia. - walk a great deal, which troubles my poor feet as
so unused to it. - the pavements are rough & cobbly. few sidewalks. -
I have not read this over - & know not much what Dr. G. has written,
while I have gone on dictating. He has written much on his
own book [You will be fortunate if you can read it at all]. How much I love
longing I think of you all - the most affectionate remembrance to each individually.
I am always Yours. Jane L.G.



Gray, Jane Loring. 1850. "Gray, Jane July 17, 1850 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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