

Rhigi Kulm Sep. 1st. 1852 Sunday

Dear Charlie,

Here I am, having survived my weeks travel on horse back - But with my journal horribly behind hand - For see me in that stile in the Tete-rose, whereas in truth we are through the Bernese Oberland - But as this professes to be a journal, I must go back & take it up at the proper point, & see what a little steady labour can do - So I left I think having just turned from the Col de Balme to the Tete-rose. I think that one of the pleasantest days journeys I have had; for the scenery was of near valleys & high peaks & like my imaginations of Switzerland. It grew very wild at the first part, quite desolate, for we rose above trees with high mountains clothed in scanty herbage rising on each side of a narrow pass, & a little stream running through the bottom by which we picked our way, without any very distinct path for part of the way. It rained hard. I was seated on mule-back with one shawl as a skirt, another over my shoulders, baggage strapped behind & hanging at my side, & holding an umbrella over my head; for the guide led the mule so I did not trouble myself with a bridle. I travelled so all the first day of the day up hill & down -

Soon the valley widened as we descended, & gave room for fields; & as we went lower we came to cultivation & chalets, & then passed through fields of grain, little hamlets, &c. it was a sweet valley below, & swelling up to hills, in their turn rising steeply into mountains with rocky sides & ragged tops; & through the gorge we could see a high peak with fresh snow from the rain, so do, of the day before - We had earlier seen the summit of the Buet & the glacier coming down - Soon we came again to the side of the stream, which had grown much larger, having received the addition from a beautiful cascade which came tumbling in at our left; then the valley narrowed again, grew wilder, & we skirted the stream through woods; it grew still wilder as we approached the mountain Tete-rose from Rh. the pass derives its name - The hills seemed thrown in a confused mass together, allowing narrow passages between; one side perfectly precipitous, the other standing a little perhaps; & wherever ^{sufficiently} ~~a~~ ^{precipitous} ~~precipitous~~ could be found to bear cultivation, it was all green & a little chalet on it - Often too inaccessible for mules - Nature, so rich wherever a blade of grass could grow, had huge ragged rocks & steep mountains in every little nook & cleft, with herbs & shrubs & trees, & such sweet wild flowers - & over all would tower sharp bare peaks - We moved along at length on a mule-road built directly on the side of the precipice, sometimes with the rocks quite overhanging us; then hundreds ^(Dr. Gray says 1000) of feet steep at our side, & in one place they have cut a passage through the rocks the famous "Gallies of the Tete-rose" - Sometimes we looked down on the hill tops with a green patch & goats & cows, then we only saw a wild rugged fen - But it is vain to try & describe scenery - I always feel it in reading descriptions or trying to write -

We arrived about 10 o'clock at the Auberge, a small rude house, but where we found a

time free to warm a dry cocoon - Is Sunday, of my sleep, & set out by near the fire,
& dried my dress, & changed a good dinner of mountain traps & potatoes - The sun had
now & then tried to keep through all the morning, & while we were at dinner it
suddenly cleared away finally; after dinner we set off again, & leaving the train which
glared down the side of the mountain into the river, turned round the mountain again
by follow of the river - for after first seeing from the gorge it is difficult to name
it a road. The river was large, & ^{and} flowing down through woods, & we passed by
its side, sometimes high above it a gap in the trees. The woods looked so wild, & dripping
with the rain, & the long grey moss hanging sadly from the branches. At length the
river grew smaller, the woods disappeared & we were to turn suddenly & strike steep
gorges around the valley & pass over to Braslay, & the kept up the valley a little
longer to it and & second steeply the Col de Balone, which the gentleman was
quite anxious to do, for it had cleared so finely that they thought we should get a
fine view of Mt. Blanc, & could descend now more, seeing the mist in the gaps.
Outpost - So we turned that way. But I felt too tired as we went on to think of
passing the next day to mile back, & preferred to do pass to let me & alone to then
again into the guide, where he & his chamber should join me the next morning.
So you would not mind, but would on your words me to Braslay, so we left
our chamber with his guide to ascend the Col de Balone, & took our way over the
Molay - then we reached the summit of the pass we had a fine view of the valley
of the Rhone. From the height we were it looked very flat with steep mountains rising two
to each side, like the empty bed of a great river with steep precipitous banks. Through it
ran the Rhone, & a small white road leading up to it, which was in reality the left bank
could see some more precipitous peaks of the Bernese Alps, & a view as in the right-hand of the
great mountain range. The point of descent was - the descent was steep & rough & then
being running down the hill as a long straight line, & a narrow muddy path paved with big stones,
rough & muddy down, down, down - I was so tired at last that I got up, walked back to the
it suddenly that I was tired after awhile to sit up again, but then we came through forest,
then rich fields, then past, & at last to Chamonix, but before reaching the valley
& the point where we were on our side, commanding the view of the valley of the Rhone
& down the top to the lake of Geneva, on the left the tower & some ruins of a small castle. It
must have been a magnificent site. I was very glad to arrive at Chamonix, a quiet town in
the Rhone valley, where we got a nice room in a very comfortable inn, with comfortable
strong furniture & furniture, for the town has been subject to terrific inundations & other
build the house in preparation - It is low down I was, & the next morning too! But I slept
most deliciously! - The next morning we took a carriage & a mance, following down the
Rhone through flat meadows with steep mountains on each side. It takes three times the usual
alligance for travellers, on the lake of Geneva, where we were to meet the steamboat.
We sailed on our way a fine cascade - It was a fine day & the bathed women were all out in
extreme, which indicates in the general state. Pretty much all the cottages seem to be built
on high trees, and a cap is so much lower in most of them. The lake was blue, blue
& a woman with a red carriage, & who pulled up a pretty little boat, but there was a dead woman
was a cap - Between Canton and a Canton called we had a stop again & have passed by
several, & a fine view of the lake. We took the steamer from Villeneuve at 10 o'clock. Embarking
in a little boat to get on board, which seems to be the station on Lake Geneva - St. Smith &
wife of Boston's wife, who were on board, set being some good English gentlemen & lady with

whom we had travelled from Fribourg to Balne, & they met us again very cordially -
At length I saw a mountainous pathman at whom I started, & who looked at me, for I
could scarcely believe that it could be John Hoggins, or that I could be Paul Jones. But it
was so, & now that we were to meet & with an old man who was come up with whom
the latter had travelled - he had never met to many Americans before. He talked
over Boston news, & they could sit one a good many things - the sale of Geneva & most beautiful
& I enjoyed it much more than I could see - he had a thunder storm, but not near enough
to hear the thunder echo among the hills, though we had plenty of rain - I preferred to be in
bed, & so we walked everything appropriate, and could not quite hear it, but it was about
and beyond description, from - "Munich" - Such quantities of musicians were, as we
to find a very public place to father & son day for their institutions on travelling & to be
with her father in me, for & her time in another seemed to pass regularly in the steam-
boat, for we found the both times, after a day or two her daughter went down to the lake, & to a
place to each person for their contributions - and has shown us that a night on board
whose tables were wonderfully good - he found articles at that the papers again by
himself left behind, & to be with, & part of the time. Back, our English friends, came to
the dinner place - I was delighted to get that dinner, which I felt & enjoyed, which I have
acknowledged before - the new champagne which was - thank you, Charles, for the
dinner from me. The next morning at breakfast in my bed & then a fine view of the lake,
where he had been before at Chamonix, I had a very little with him, arranged his
boat - spent the morning walking in the afternoon, when my friend called, & he was
coming in much more than ever, his mother - still been but not occupation, which he
got up to travelling, winter, and always for people who took - He was waiting after dinner,
he met in the lake, he came back with us. He Smith came in to talk over his plans, & soon
went to being my mother to leave from my mother's authority - I am in what authority to be, because
they were all to leave next morning for Chamonix - to find at dinner most that the
the table was in the form of Mrs. Amy's before he left England - I was very much
all the morning during the rest of our stay in Geneva with parties, & some of
which were made, & in determining my time for you may imagine, the rain had
quite spoiled the other, but as yet had been so far to be on the water that it
had been a little through, & though my time travelling was which has passed since
being rather much, but at my day a day of rain - which he actually did with to be
in the lake, & had the lake in the lake, & had in the mountain travelling -
The next day at the time some pretty friends of the various places he had seen,
for they are quite numerous, & I mean to arrange them when I get home - I could not
I could send them now with my journal, this would be all the last the day
making most careful, & cannot sketch! but to find it necessary to get another
sketches for many people - Saturday we were to go to Mont Blanc, & to be
being invited to tea in the house in town - Further we duly repaired, & had a
most agreeable dinner - The was hardly enough - I got some in a beautiful porcelain
cup - Then was handed a ^{and extremely} superb soup, compound of fruit, very com-
fortable, very pretty, & very rich - Then a variety of dishes of various sorts of fishes, & shell
fishes, & all about I eat one that seemed to be in the outside chocolate, then a most
delicate meringue, & the inside like to most liberal cream cake - I was very glad to see
dishes - Then came into see in them - One half the dinner, the other half, & all
of different flavors - The tea came again every now & then - Some of the time we had

sold (plated I suppose) tea-spoons - The salon was very handsome, & such superb & beautiful vases of flowers, so handsomely arranged in a sort of open work baskets. But the floor was of wood, of inlaid woods - There were many scientific people & some who spoke English; so I had a very nice time -

Sunday morn. we started to find our way to the church of "le Pasteur Dubuy" a friend of Dr. Gray's - It was outside the city wall - And among the things I should most like to transport to our good country would be that church bodily. It was a perfect little model for a village church, small, neat, every way adapted for its purpose; very simple & I am sure cheap, though substantial, & so tasteful. If I could only have sketched I would have drawn it outside & in, & taken it home as a public benefit - The services were very interesting though all in French - But I was surprised to find how well I could follow them; they were very much as in our congregational churches - But he addressed his flock in the voice of authority from the pulpit which I thought few of our Yankee congregations could have borne - But his manner was earnest & impressive, more oratorical than with us, but the gestures & intonations seemed all to come from the heart, & not from study - The music was very beautiful. There was a good organ very well & sweetly played, & a clerk led off & all the congregation joined, different voices taking the different parts - There seemed to be one tune for all, but it was a sort of solemn chant, only more varied, & long & rich - It was very fine! - Sunday was a great day in Geneva - We were wakened in the morn. by cannon, & learned it was "the grand fête de navigation." And as we breakfasted we could see fairly dressed barges putting off & the steamboat ornamented with flags - After dusk we went out to see the return - And the boats dressed out with colored lamps, little boats carrying bright lights, fireworks on shore, & the crowds of people, made a very gay sight - There was one woman stood close by me, I see, with one little child younger than Charlie, ^{holding in front.} & putting her baby to sleep on her breast. The Genevese costume is horribly ugly - Consisting of an enormous Leghorn hat without shape or grace worn just on the back of the head -

Monday morn. I went with Mr. Decandolle to the Town Library - An old building of the time of Calvin, who founded the Library - I saw there many interesting old paintings, chiefly portraits, & manuscripts - The sermons of St. Augustine of the 6th. or 7th. century, written on papyrus & parchment - The household accounts of Philip le Bel on wax tablets; old illuminated bibles - The colours still so rich & fresh, & the text so beautiful, like beautiful copper-plate! And then the quaint pictures of Cain & Abel in middle age costume, with long pointed shoes! - There were many of these manuscripts of various sorts so richly & heavily bound! I had no idea they were so handsome - Then some very interesting old French books, deposited here for safe keeping in the time of their persecutions; & various interesting autographs - Sir Isaac Newton's, &c. &c. & volumes of Rousseau's works in his own handwriting, & of Calvin's manuscripts, letters & sermons -



Gray, Jane Loring. 1850. "Gray, Jane Sept. 1, 1850 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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