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Pontefract House Oct. 18th. 1850.

Dear Sizie,

My letter to you, which I sent yesterday, & which I did not even have time to read over, ended with the Archery day at Whitfield - The next days plans were for Dr. Gray & Mrs. Bentham to return directly after breakfast to Pontefract, & Mrs. Bentham & I were to have the carriage after lunch - So we all gathered round the pleasant breakfast-table, & then as Mr. Clive was going directly past Pontefract, he took our gentlemen to leave them there. Dr. Gray had been expressing a very strong desire to see a hunt, & Mrs. Clive had promised him that when the regular hunts began in this country she would take him to see one - On reading her letters over after the gentlemen had gone, she found a note among them from Lady Gifford, saying that in making some appointment with Mrs. Clive, she would meet her the next day, as she was to drive Lord Gifford to the meet at the 10 mile stone - Mrs. Clive instantly said Dr. Gray must see it, & proposed that we should stay until the next day when she would drive us in the phaeton to see the meet at the 10 mile stone - She was so heartily earnest that we could not but agree, & as it was arranged that a messenger should be despatched after lunch to the gentlemen telling them they must return to Hare, & could join Mrs. Clive who was to return at dusk from some country meeting bringing with him the gentlemen - One of whom had joined us at breakfast in the morning - Mrs. & Miss Newweather took their leave, Mrs. Clive went to attend to her children, & we had the morning to amuse & occupy ourselves as we pleased - I went to my chamber & busied myself in writing & in reading an amusing book I found there, & came down stairs before two to be ready for lunch - The ladies met again at lunch, (cold & hot meat, vegetables, pudloing & tart, for it was the children's dinner, & we were not expected to go through the courses, but choose) Then Mrs. Clive asked whether we would prefer a drive or a walk. We preferred a walk, & Mrs. Clive said she would go on her pony, & the children begged to accompany us - We went through the edge of the wood bordering the park, keeping at first the gravel-walk. You must know a park is not a lawn all kept close shaven & swept like the lawn round the house - That looks always smooth & neat like a carpet - And if you get up early enough in the morning you will see old women sweeping the grass & gathering the dead leaves from under the trees - That extends only for a certain distance round the house & is generally divided from the park by a sunken fence or a wire one - The bark is left in a certain extent cleared, but in many parts they let underbrush & fern grow; & cattle, sheep, horses & deer graze there. In truth it is a sort of civilized pasture - There were no deer at Whitfield - But to get back



Monday morn about 12 o'clock the gate bell rung, & in came Mrs. Clive prettily, driving a pony chair & the two children with her - she said she had come to take us to see Kentchurch, Col. Scudamore's place - Mrs. Scudamore is Mrs. Bentham's sister - So lunch was ordered as soon as possible, & before we were through Mr. & Mrs. Brode, & some ladies staying with them, arrived, so purpose to drive us to Kilpeck - A curious old church - We had to decline for that day, & after they had gone, Mrs. Bentham & Maisy & Mrs. Clive driving, took our seats in the pony chair - A grove had led Mrs. Clive's pony, that she <sup>had</sup> ridden right side while we walked in the park, & little Alice was mounted on that - I wish you could know what a charming little thing a pony chair is! - It is a little, very light & very low sort of four wheeled chaise without a top, & with a little seat behind, which can be shut down if not wanted, thus holding four people; & a pony seems to be a breed of horse peculiar to England - very much smaller than a horse yet larger than a Shetland pony, & wonderfully strong for the size - A grey pony, which Maisy rides, drew us all with the greatest ease, trotting along most briskly - Alice, followed by the pony, came cantering behind, & when almost there, when she got a chance to speak to her mother, cried out "Mamma, I don't like horses as well as ponies; she leads so with the wrong foot." "But you mustn't let her, Ally! Check her in & make her start again!" - It sounded to me very & dear that little creature knew that a horse could lead with a wrong foot cantering! - The ride was very charming, such sweet views of wooded hills, & green meadows, & snug cottages. - But something about the place where we were going - The Bradfords are an old Welsh family, tracing their descent even from Dafydd Glanllower in the time of Henry II. And the old tower, which is part of the house, was said to have been built in his time - Col. Scudamore owns a great estate here, including many farms for some miles - He owns Ten-trials House, & Mr. Bentham rents it - Kentchurch is the name of his residence also giving the name to the little hamlet & church at the park gates - They are generally in the country at this season; but in August last they went to Boulogne, Mrs. Scudamore being just recovering from a severe illness - The first night they were there Col. Scudamore walking on the pier after dark, by some misstep or accident fell from the pier upon the stone steps below, some 20 or 30 feet, breaking the bone of one leg, & fracturing the knee pan of the other - It was a wonder he escaped with his life; & happily the tide was only a foot in, or he would have been drowned - He is now lying at Boulogne, through every week brings accounts of his continued improvement, & they hope he may be able to move to London or Paris by the end of November - Miss Scudamore is the only daughter <sup>& child</sup> to a great heiress - She will not able to enter by the great gate & avenue, for in the absence of the family it is kept locked, & we drove by the back entrance through pretty fields & park to the stables, which are in an old court yard with great arched stone gates, looking like the old strong entrance to the tower in warlike days; & so I could not help fancying the gates might have been built for that, though perhaps it was all my imagination - Dr. Gray & Mr. Bentham met us as we rode up, they having left before we did & walked it being about 2½ miles - We all descended, & Mrs. Clive mounted her pony & we started out to explore the park.

just round the house is smooth, shaven green, & by a dark fence surrounded by a wire one it is separated from the park, a large extent of ground, stretching a long way up the hill, looking fresh & green, & occasionally fine large trees, & other clumps, & on the summit quite wooded - We spent a long time walking over a part - It grows very wild in some places, & is beautifully broken into glade & gale - And as we gazed some little while, beautiful views were before us; the hamlet & <sup>with</sup> Kentchurch below, more distant the spire of the church at Fromont, & the ruins of Fromont castle; & some fine high hills, some lying in long ranges, others rising in one sharp, bold outline, the Rynd & the Super Way, (or everything, & place, a point, a wood, a lane, & farmhouse, have a name here,) made a fine back ground - The park was full of deer, & we saw the peaceful, pretty creatures running about, & started them from repose in all directions - There were some fine old trees, a remarkable pollard oak, which looked as if it might number 500 or 600 years, & was with great trunks, which Dr. Gray could only reach round with four stretches - There were also sheep & cattle grazing, for Col. Reddmore takes great interest in farming - And buys extensively cattle which are fattened & then sold again - They say the home farm is well worth seeing, with its great stables & barn yards, &c. And I hoped to have seen it, dear papa, & have edified you with my remarks; but we had only time to pass the house - The front of the house & the greater part used is modern, with in some 50 years, & is of blundstone face stone, fronting a terrace & smooth shaven grass-plot - The east side joins the old tower, & is beautifully covered & crowned with air & very picturesgue - It looks out on one of the lovely gardens cut in the smooth green turf - Such prettily shaped bed filled with some very flowers, prettily contrasting with its neighbour - A sort of high picturesque mound was made of old stumps, filled with earth heaped up together, & planted with all sorts of shrubs, for in this our moist climate shrubs grow so easily - One side of a broad terrace walk, with stone steps & pillars at each end, was lined with fine hybrid roses in full flower, & the other side was a sort of shrubbery with laurels, arbutus & sundry pretty things, which won't stand <sup>out</sup> with us - I began to think England the climate for gardening, you see so many pretty things - Such lovely shrubs, the Laurels, the beautiful green polished holly with its bright red berries, the graceful arbutus, &c. &c. & in every cottage garden are these pretty china roses, still very pink with flowers even now, & have been all summer - The garden at Kentchurch was prettily surrounded with trees & shrubbery, & that side of the house was one of the prettiest things I ever saw - They had sent down from the house to wish the fates for us, as we drove down through the avenue - Little Alice following at a jockey trot & riding on her stump quite perfectly - She passed us to have a good trot down the long avenue, which is finely shaded on one side with large elms, & it was indeed wonderful to see the little creature sit her horse - And let me tell you again she is not 7 until the end of this month - It was quite dusk by the time we got home again, but we had had a very pleasant excursion -

Tuesday Mrs. Bentham & I took our walk to the village, having gone with business at the shop - a sort of omnium gatherum, furnishing the people for miles around with dry goods, containing a book of every thing from butter & cheese to traps & traps. A little farther on is the Apothecary's, who also sells hardware, & other contrivances. It is a little rambling village; & indeed the houses here are very much scattered, not drawn together as the villages are, & yet you meet few or perhaps in a walk or drive - Tuesdays after lunch we sat out, called out for a long walk to the ruins of Frampton castle; we passed  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile & crossed the fields & meadows, but it was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles there - I strolled now with the picture colours are still, & made first undifferentiated apparently, (or rather, though) through whole ranks of horned cattle - Up hill & down, sometimes through woods, sometimes through alleys, with pleasant green & sunny villages surrounded by trees bursting in leaf, we took no way, & at length crossing a wooded lane & climbing up a hill, came suddenly in view of Frampton castle, a pretty ruin, beautifully enclosed with trees, & the most striking part a tall chimney, looking like a pretty tall tower, & all pastered & decorated with this lovely art - How I longed for the power to sketch it! As I do so some time old since, & delight to ramble over them & make out the old rooms, & inquire up old inhabitants! - It was a good walk for me, 5 miles, was it not? - But I bore it hardly - Some of the others I recollect say I do not say anything about my health - But I announced that I thought a serum who could do so much, and were no more bulletins, but be pronounced sick well!

Tuesday Oct 2nd - Three weeks since we reached Pontresina! How time flies by! I hope to have begun to get half through his work, for though they are so very big & we had, & I like Mrs. Bentham's very much, I think books quite enough infestation - So far though seems to think that we shall have to stay longer - Thursday morning I spent as writing for the steamer, & now scarcely I wrote for hours! I post I recollect to Cummer May letter to see - See somebody number 18 for me - In the afternoon Mr. K. Stewart is a stage to see stand some stock to be sent for - It was very small article, very small! But very neat, and an old woman in cap & spectacles waiting her title out by the fire, & observe her a little child is a halo around her, with her little hands folded & sitting so very, very still, she looked & like a halo the woman sat down - On our way back we met Mr. Chapman, an old gentleman who, with his wife, an Aunt of Mrs. Bentham (as close by them) who accused us of being so impudent to see the factors before they were opened, that we had been driven to the shop. So Mr. Jones the Chapman had just returned the night before from one of his annual visits to London, for state important thing, the fashion's worn in this little out-of-the-way town. Friday morn I began my letter to you, & while busy writing, hearing the sound of voices, looked out of the window & saw the old & dear woman all alone, & then up goes the good Chapman the hence, taller man - The barking of the dog & the ringing of the church & an occasional appearance of a red coat through the windows of the road rather interested with me writing, which was all the more interrupted by occasional runs down to the gate, & a little walk up the neighbour's path, one of a better new, & where I was situated of every day & men & horses new & here a boy reader as in again Mrs. Alice had arrived me up the gate at a fast run - then off again, & the sounds

having gradually quietened - all become quiet, she often a while came downing back & came in, the children with her, & Alice following in triumph the first time which Lord Foppard had seen her - Lady Foppard blushed, & was a Mrs. Holland came in, an old friend of Mrs. Bentham's, & with really great beauty Lord Foppard came in in a condition not particularly neat & agreeable, being quite bedaubed with blood, & he said he could not shake hands - His manner was particularly pleasant though, & I was surprised it was so gentle coming from such an exterior - He is Master of the hounds for Burfordshire, & it seems a strange compensation for a man to have himself pretty much to hand, says I, & you did the reason he gave for not going into the house of lords was, that he should be sure to spend some of his friends whichever way he voted, & he thought it best to keep clear of politics. They are rather strengthened in circumstances, for she had not much money, & his father who was Master of the Hounds a few years back before he could amass enough property - Lord Foppard was terribly stung in Pontresina, some two or three weeks since - It has made him quite sick - The effects of their poison - He was hunting, & his horse stumbled on a hornet's nest - He jumped from the horse, real, stone dead when he was, but unmounted & killed another for when he recovered - But has been under the care of physician ever since - Stings were taken from his head - Perhaps our paper may have excluded it from the English papers - It was quite an adventure with the little, poor horses - And I, is said, to be one of the best riders in England - So I looked with <sup>in admiration</sup> on his horse, just I am afraid the red coat burdled' over, for I saw nothing remarkable - But then English horses are superior. I should have said that returning from our walk the day before, Mrs. D. I went into the mill, near by I were weighed - I weighed 110 lbs or 1 stone 8 lbs & the more than I weighed the day after I was married, & as I was thinner when I left home than then, I have gained more than 5 lbs. He was the pilot of Burford, & called us "Your honour" etc etc. Then Mrs. Bentham was expecting at Mrs. Bradford, who lives alone, & miles off & here with a daughter he met at the bakery at Whitfield, to whom he was coming with one of his daughters, & we walked up & down on the terrace until the poor gentle knightswoman they did not come - They were to pass the night also - At last just as took my dressing candle to go up stairs, Lord Foppard came in & said that the coachman had just arrived bringing word that their horses had run away, & in going down a very steep hill they had all been thrown out, & killing several. The Bradford's son was killed - So Mrs. & Mr. Bentham set off at once to London. As we strolled, which was just two miles of Frampton castle, I saw that passed it on our Wednesday's walk - They found Mrs. Bradford with her arm past set, it was broken at the wrist, & just about to set off on his way home again - It was an unfortunate accident, for our coachman family goes out, & they were particularly pleased that he was coming in this occasion - So to much better plan our last board, & we are invited to dine there, I pass the night one day just before he says the accident must not perturb the rest - He taught to everyone & goes out at all first. And our gentleman of birth is the wife, at 7 yrs.

Thursday Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> -

Yesterday morn. brought me again the weekly mail from home - From Sue, from Lizzie, John, & Anna Joe - Many many thanks! I was sorieved though to hear of dear little Charlie's illness - Thank God! You could write me he was better! - And dear, dear grand-father, how I wish I could look on his face once more! - It seems to me that some times I can scarcely wait for next August to be among you all once more! Oh only to find you the same! - Dear Sue, I wish I could hear those you were saying: It seems hard sometimes, that health is coming back to me, & you still doomed to feebleness & suffering. - Now all the faces I past looked upon rise up before me: little Charlie crying so bitterly in the window as the carriage drove away, thinking that we were all leaving him - Little Pat smiling so blandly in the street below - His pale face, in that pink bonnet, at the carriage window, & Patrick's earnest, determined by cheerful look to the last - Will's kind smile & Charlie's big eyes with their deep gaze, & their figures standing in the bals & waving their hats - Tears blazed my eyes then, & tears lie now when I think of it - And how I am surrounded by mementos of you all! - Father's trunk stands comfortably before me whenever I enter my chamber, mother's admirable little writing toy is one of my most constant companions, Lizzie's bag is swelled out of all graceful proportions, it so ingeniously holds every odd thing I ever was myself that I do not thank Sue's kind stitches; when I look through my forgettes I stroll through your eyes, Charlie; I remember Patrick when I fold Mr. Gray's vest to tuck them into an odd corner, & that last Monday morn. is always associated with Will's kind patience - Even the children with the useful little prayer, & knitting sheath!

You cannot think more of me than I do of you all! - And long, long sometimes to be at home again - Though I long so much, & am happy, & stirring pleasant recollections for life. - Dear Lizzie, how annoying that Cottney at your mother's must have been - Pray tell her how sorry I am for her! - Do you know I was so wicked as to be disappointed that John had bought at Omstoa - I had hoped he would have built at Lambridge & I should have the neighbour. I think Patrick must buy that lot opposite the garden-house & build there - Oh how very nice it would be!

As for young Luis I am quite vexed people are making such fools of themselves! There are really other things to be admired in this world besides a fine voice, & music is not the only good thing under the sun - And one might receive a public character, without tormenting her life out, or disgusting her & the rest of the world with exaggerated praise & flattery & attention! - I wonder the clergymen don't preach from the 2nd Commandment "Thou shalt not make any idol unto thyself" I should like to hear her as well as anyone, & I should like to pay her any civil & hospitable attention - But the Americans seemed determined to outvie each other in folly, if one may judge from the papers. You say nothing of any of my letters you are all wonderfully patient & good if you have received none - But pray tell me when they do come, for truly I have written faithfully - I should think Louisa Norton's engagement a very nice one - As for Anna T. Brown's pray congratulate Uncle Gray & Aunt Sally on their new Aunt - Susan exclaims at Mrs. Francis being at a concert - Why? -

I pray give most affectionate warm love to all from your loving, Jeannie -

If you send the children's daguerrotypes pray send them by private hand, & ask the bearer to put them in his pocket when landing to avoid the duty - Dr. Bott, 24 Upper Lower St, London, or Mr. H.B. Ward, Clapham Lane, near London would take charge of it for me -



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Gray, Jane Loring. 1850. "Gray, Jane Oct. 18, 1850 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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