

Cumberland Place, New - Jan 6th. 1851.

Monday Twelfth night

Dear Charlie, I really felt quite cross this afternoon. To think that here we were in England, near London, & this Twelfth-night, & the last of the holidays, and truly I might have been in Patagonia as to anything I have seen or known of these famed English times! To be sure there were some little frosted cakes displayed in the solitary baker's shop & P. B. here at New, & to appease me a little, I believe, Dr. Gray sent to get one, for which we paid a pretty smart price, & gave the half to our nice, old landladies - It turned out only a very ordinary kind of wedding cake - I have saved the extraordinary figures of King & Queen &c. on the top, to put, in the next package which goes home, for the children - But it is something of a disappointment to have these days go by so quietly & unnoticed, wh. on the other side of the Atlantic, we are apt to fancy a sort of national jubilee -

But to continue my journal since I posted last Friday's letter. It certainly rained very steadily that afternoon, & night closed in even earlier than usual. I did not say in my last letter what an amusing epistle we received from Martins; you would have enjoyed it - He began by congratulating Dr. Gray, that, "at last, my dear friend, I may write in the happy certainty that all is over!" - He then assures him that "he had a sudden & mysterious anxious feeling for him, on Sunday aft. Nov. 30, at 5 o'clock," which was the Sunday after the accident, when the physician was so anxious, as I afterwards learned; for he told his fear to Dr. Harvey, & advised him to give me some preparation, lest I should be too much frightened should they decide to send for surgeons for a consultation - Dr. H. gave me some hint, but I took a wrong idea, & was anxious for other imaginary troubles, when they feared a piercing of the diaphragm; but this is a depression; however, I feel quite Mrs. Nicklebyish tonight, & roam away as the ideas suggest - However after telling Dr. Gray, (to get back to Prof. Martins) that though it "must have suffered in this days!", "she may have proved to you what an angelic being is such an loony woman in the hours of her husband's suffering." (unfortunately I must tell him on the contrary Dr. Gray used his first long breath to give me a scolding, which ended in a lively quarrel; ^{I was so very naughty} he winds up with "I am well for ever!" - But though his English is odd, he certainly is as warm-hearted as man can be! -

Saturday it cleared off, and I took an exploring walk in Richmond, some 1/2 miles off, to explore the circulating library & the shops - I felt sure I should come with a little flat iron - But that I do not expect to do much, in doing up ourselves it is too troublesome - It would have been a pleasant walk, but for my poor lame feet - I made myself busy during the rest of the day, but the cold in my head had descended, & become a most tremendous part, & I don't think the walk improved it. I wonder I should not infect the noise in my conversation, but the head turned me out, & Dr. Gray walked alone in the Independent Chapel at Richmond. In the afternoon we took advantage of the private key to the sea, & so kindly provided us with, & had the pleasure of a walk in the garden quite by ourselves - For public visitors are not admitted on these days. I cannot tell you how superb & extensive these gardens are, & how beautiful even at this season of the year, the trees so charmingly fresh & green, so many large leaved evergreen shrubs, Castagners, Laurels, Arbutus, Camélias, &c. & our own rhododendrons & Calceolarias helping their leaves as fresh as summer, then holly trees & pine oaks & evergreens take much away from the winter aspect of the trees that have lost their leaves, the crows & ducks were swimming in their pretty pond, many little hot-house things were already pushing above ground, & if it were not for the very short days one would feel spring was near - There are so many fine ^{fine} flowers too, & on each fine order. X Today I have been lazy, & not been ^{out, indeed} out in the first part of the day, so I made an excuse of my cold to myself, & settled for indoor occupation - And when it brightened later, I was busy, & put it off until too late - Poor Mr. Moser has been in bed since Saturday with lumbrago - He is quite an invalid in health just now - He had an attack in his throat last summer, & it has left him subject to spasms in his throat, very distressing & alarming, but they help him gradually improve - Miss Bowdler had been an invalid & delicate for years - And Lady Foster was threatened with dyspepsia a year & a quarter ago, & has never recovered her strength & vigor since - So they are really quite an invalid household - Lady Foster sent us a quantity of the very nice little brooked herrings, Gornworth's Flounder. They are very different from our large shrew thing, & Dr. Gray thinks them very much worth his breakfast - And Saturday she sent me such a sweet bunch of radishes - they have been scuttling for some time since! - I have been writing to Charles Brace - He found a letter from him when we reached here, saying

he was to pass the winter in Germany - I say tell me if Aunt Anna has any address at Rome - And pray if any of you ever see that woman called Mary Hopper, reproach her unmercifully that she has never written to me - & tell me something about her -

Friday Jan 10th

Tuesday I walked up to call on the Hookers & accompany Dr. Gray home - And in the evening came the American letter. I had not expected them - For the steamer did not get in as usual Sunday, & we had not them for the paper till as it had come - She came also one from Aunt Alice at Paris - Thanks to her, Lizzie, John & Joe - I am glad for Anna Maria's happy prospects, but it must be very sad for Aunt Maria, & Uncle to be left without their children - How dark it seems to be back & see what we were doing different days at the same time, & in the weather, & all were - The evening before last Cath's birthday was the first even we have seen, & the next day it seems it arrived with you - I see how I laughed over your dear Maria - You & Patrick have such moods, I always fancy you in the midst at something in that unhappy line, you must go out, the comfort - I am sure you could neither of you induce to travel in Europe - I should think Cath's dress would be very handsome - But don't dress them too much, she dear - That is only for their own sake, for I fear to have them think too much of it, though one enjoys seeing them so prettily. And you are so sweet & cheerful with your needle, I quite envy you - Your unwell-few Patrick are worth a great deal! I am afraid I shall be thought as devoted an Auntie on this side of the Atlantic as the other, for I laugh at over the children's speeches I cannot keep them to myself - I am afraid little Pat is standing in my footsteps in the orthodoxy line - & to make it - I know I was obstinate over a sum 3 days, because as the face never to be divided & were alive, no man must dare call a force, or God and Little Charlie's vanity! - Why didn't you send the long funny letter too, Lizzie, the postage would have included it, and you need never be afraid I can't get the many letters - And do not think me ungrateful for what I said about Jones - But I suppose you often so to myself, think of a thing some time, intending to write it, then fancy you have - And decide I am unaccountable, & would fain lead two lives at once, one here & the other at home with you all - And be sure I send your letters & all many times over - And thank you many times for your nice long account of Kitty, I will retract all I have written, abusing you for not telling about her - How vexatious it sometimes is for you write & the next mail brings what you wanted! When your reproaches come long after what you wished has been done, & seem most ungrateful - You are all so very faithful in writing to me! - I do think Kitty's thanks to her was very

bright! it shows what a good tempered little thing she is not to cry - I long
to see her - She will be more changed than any when I get home! - And I
shall prize the daguerrotype immensely - By the way send it by the Poston
we shall be sure to see them in London - Poor Charlie's heart I fear is
quite too tender! - I am glad to hear Dizzie Bancroft is so well - What a
baby engagement of Betty Appleton's, & she in such poor health too! - I was
sorry to hear Mrs. G. G. Greene was in such poor health ^{I heard it from the Berts} - Tell me some-
thing about her, Lizzie - I hope Cora Shaw's baby won't have quite so much
fun made over her as she grows older, for it will be a poor preparation
for this life, to say nothing of an other - I truly pity a child which is too
much idolized & worshipped, & surrounded with everything wealth can
procure - Temptations so innumerable are crowded around it, while
the very strength to resist is undermined! - Pray tell John he shall have
a long business epistle next week. - Wednesday we dined with Lady
Brooker - And had a very quiet, pleasant day - Poor Sir Wm. was not down
stairs - Yesterday we planned for a day in London, hateful, horrid place!
so noisy, so confused, so large, & so dirty! - I am afraid I feel towards it
very much as poor Southey did, the first vol. of whose memoirs I have been
reading lately - We took the R.R. here at 10.50 am. & it was bright & clear,
& we got safely to the Waterloo station, whence we walked to take an
omnibus - going over Waterloo Bridge I saw on the opposite side that
wonderful cage containing a cat, a mouse, an owl, a squirrel, a bird,
&c. &c. I would have stopped to look had it been our side, but crossing
is a serious undertaking from the crowd of vehicles, you must watch
your chance to dart between - Then the English "ratty" is certainly justified
in London streets, & they are so "freaky"! this little shining mud, which makes
one slip so! - And you experience all the discomforts in their fullest
when you go into the "city," where the dress-maker to whom the birds
carried me, who does my sewing is found - I looked with dismay
as we crossed Waterloo Bridge at the cloud of smoke hanging over
the "City," & thought of my new bonnet, more especially the new cap in it!
However I got through very well with the dress-maker, who was to alter
my blk silk, low-necked waist, which she has been making for a
dinner dress - And then we wandered about, sometimes in omnibuses
sometimes on foot, doing some little things & not finding others - I think
on the whole shopping is more expensive than at home - Perhaps

he said he was otherwise bright, & walked off to Sir Aris this morn.
where we dine today - A little dinner party - I fancy - Or rather one
or two gentlemen & one lady -

Oh, I must tell one of our adventures yesterday! I had been looking
for a tea-caddy, & finding nothing to suit me, decided to get a common
box, which should answer for the present - And passing a window
saw some apparently very cheap ones, labelled 1 Shilling! We went in
& chose one, & laying down a shilling, were informed it was 1s. 11d.
the said 11 pence being very small on the bottom of the card! When
upon Dr. Gray quietly laid down the box, took up the shilling & we
walked off - I with rather a heightened colour! - Wasn't it rich!

Oh, I didn't tell you that Wednesday morn. I walked over to
Brentford the other side of the river, to get a money order cashed
for Dr. Gray - First you will ask what a money order is, & it is a very con-
venient thing - Say anyone in Liverpool wishes to pay you 5s. he goes
to the Post Office there, pays the 5 shillings, & 3 pence for an order on the
P.O. nearest you, saying to the clerk there in whose favour he has drawn
it, & encloses the order in a letter to you - You go to the P.O., give the order,
having signed it with your name, & tell the clerk here who drew the
order in Liverpool - He has been notified by the clerk in L. who drew
the order, & in whose favour - And if your statement agrees, the money
is handed over to you - You may send any amount small or large,
only you cannot draw more than £5 ~~£25~~ in one order, & pay 6d if it
is over £2 - But it is much safer than sending money in a letter, & very
convenient for sums less than a bill, or note as they call it here, & of
which they have none less than £5 - And postage stamps are not al-
ways desirable - But, Brentford is an old town, Shakespeare
speaks of it, & is now a great manufacturing place - It was very
dirty, & the streets seemed to me to consist of Gin shops, public
houses, & pawn brokers, with every now & then a baker, butcher's, or grocery
shop - It was a forlorn looking place, & a queer, miserable looking set
of people - I am sure I shall be indifferent to walking when I get
home; & will not complain even when the frost is coming out of
the ground; for that is only for a time - But here, where they have so
much wet weather, the dry walking is, I should think, the exceptional -
No wonder the English ladies dress in stout shoes & ordinary clothes for
walking; they could not do otherwise; & no wonder they drive so much, & have

a different toilette for that - Gray give most affectionate love to all from your ever loving, Jane -

after one has been there sometime & learnt exactly where to go it may be different, but except in some trifling things, ribbons perhaps, & one or two others, everything is dearer as I find it, & shops are so scattered, it is hard work, for me at least, to find what I want - We had intended to go to Mrs. Lawrence's, but I was in no condition what with mud, &c. so we agreed to postpone it; & after getting some most abominable soup for lunch, took our way to the Boott's - There Dr. Gray left me while he went to the Bot. Museum, &c. - And there I heard that Louisa Norton was to be so soon married, & that they were coming abroad; & sundry other nice little pieces of news - Madam Boott is a very interesting, delightful, old lady & is kind & affectionate; they are all very kind - Then Dr. Gray called to put me in an omnibus to go home, as he was to stay for a meeting of the Royal Society, & come home later - We walked & walked, & met no white omnibuses for Richmond, but at last saw a New Bridge which would only leave me $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile from our house; but in despair we got in, as time was wearing fast away - Dr. Gray rode down to Piccadilly, as he was to go & get a belt to support his side, & then bade me good bye, meaning to come at 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ - and hoping I should get to the Bridge before dark - But as it grew dark my heart began to fail at the thought of the solitary walk, & at last all the passengers were out but myself. The conductor then politely asked me if I should have any objection to getting in to that other omnibus? which was a Richmond one - I said "no", & rejoiced in my heart, for they pass directly by our door; & so I got home very nicely - With an unsatisfied feeling as to the day's results, but still there is some amusement seeing the queer sights - I am sure one feels that Dickens does not exaggerate the half one suppresses when you see the strange figures & hear one meets; beggars & paupers, street-sweepers & fine ladies - I saw Mr. Dombey driving about - And then such odd names - Saw a fish-monger, & the day before in Brentford G. Fox a butcher, reading five - then there was Knapp & Bumpus &c. &c. - I was hungry & tired, & glad to see our tiny rooms again; & industriously employed myself all the evening in making a pair of sleeves for today, & as it came 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ wondered my spouse did not arrive, & doped he had been persuaded to stay all night; but in a few minutes after $\frac{1}{4}$ to 12 he came, having been obliged to walk some 2 miles; those deceitful omnibuses! professing to go to New Bridge, & then having only one passenger so far, saying "they never go so far that time of night!" I feared Dr. Gray would be quite knocked up - But though he complained that his side felt weaker this morn.



Gray, Jane Loring. 1851. "Gray, Jane Jan. 6, 1851 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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