

New. Feb. 11th 1851

(1)

Dear Charlie,

To continue my journal very abruptly where I left it of last week, at the Opera, I want to say we saw Messrs. Frank Codman, Powell Perkins & Edward Crommishield at a distance - Messrs. Codman & Crommishield dined with the Lowells soon after I was there, & told me Mr. Perkins meant to come & see me, but he never came - The day we were at Versailles we met them coming through a suite of rooms as we were returning, & we stopped & had a few minutes talk with them, & that is all I saw of them to speak - Mr. Perkins said he came for his health - I thought he looked well - But he said he was not much benefitted as yet -

We had quite a laugh at the Opera, for Uncle Charles' wife was in America, my husband in London, & Aunt Lizzie's off at another theatre - Then in front of us was Charles Storrow with his wife across the water, & his brother without his wife! - We had quite an awkward thing on Friday - Mrs. Storrow had invited us to a small party Friday Evg. but we all wanted to go to the theatre if a favorite actress, Alice Merri, acted; so the note was delayed in answer - It was merely a familiar note to Aunt Lizzie, asking us under the general title of all, so that we had no idea of any particular attention - Friday morn. we sent a refusal, & after the tickets were all bought for the theatre, our came Mrs. Storrow to express our regrets, & intimating that the party was made for Aunt Lizzie - who had not dreamed of such a thing before; it was however too late then - Did I say that we passed the first evening after I got to Paris with Mrs. Storrow ^{where we met?} & a few New York ladies? -

Friday morn. Uncle Lowell had tickets to admit us to the Sainte Chapelle, a little chapel built by Louis IX, & now being repaired in the fairest Byzantine style - It was in confusion with crowds of workmen, & the only entrance at present is from below; and as the guide was up stairs with another party, we belaboured & shouted at the little wooden workman's door in vain, & were obliged to cool our heels amidst half cut stones, capitals of columns, &c. &c. until it pleased him to open it - At last mysteriously opened from above, the door admitted us into this sort of vault, from which at first we could see neither entrance or exit - At length Uncle Lowell found a spiral stone stair case in one corner, & we found our way up into the chapel, which is quite small - And now do you want to know what Byzantine ornament in a Gothic Church is? Well then, every column of a cluster is painted fairly of a different colour. The colours generally used are green, red, blue & gold - each colour bright, & no colour shaded & softened - these three colours, in various figures alluded with gold, sometimes the ground gold & covered with stars or Maltese crosses in colour, then the column, & the cross, fleur de lys, or star, gold, line the inside of the church. - The ceiling

by law, to live apart at the ball & the ale house as much as possible - They go off to dress, & she creeps out quite forlorn & frightened - They come out dressed, & she tries to make them go together, or to go with them; but they throw her back, & she stands ^{not} knowing what to do, when so deserted. Suddenly she flies to the window, & begins in most moving terms to scold the birds, who are going to leave their little one all alone to starve - The parents turn back to hear what is the matter; & she apparently quite unconsciously, tells them how the old birds forget the little one quarrelling between themselves, & were going to desert it - They are touched with its application to themselves; but, without being reconciled, return to their work; she, quite delighted but not satisfied, meditates another piece of mischief, & with her pimper rope throws down the vase, ^{smashes} it, & scatters the hoard - They run angrily to pick it up - And little Marie ^{exclaiming} with grief, that she has scattered her dowry - That the reason they had been working so hard, is that they knew their little girl would be a woman in a few years, & they must lay up a "dot" for her - They are quite touched & about to be reconciled when the lawyer comes in again, when Marie slips this note to her mother into her father's hand - Of course the indignation is turned against him, he is ignominiously hustled, ^{but I have not done it justice} & they run to pick "le dot de Marie!" It is a charmingly pretty little piece, & was admirably well acted, particularly by the child, who was a child in everything - But how I have spun it out, & left no room to tell about Rose-Cheri & Numa who acted in other pieces & who were both admirable - When we got home I found a long & very entertaining letter from Miss Clarke from Rome - Brought by Mr. Tyler Read - Saturday morn. Uncle Charles escorted Aunt Lizzie, Lizzie & myself to the Tuileries first - They are most magnificent suites of rooms, & showing still more of the furniture of a palace as it was inhabited than Versailles, look more regal to me than that does - Beautiful tables of Florentine mosaic or inlaid with precious stones, superb vases of Sevres' porcelain, painted ceilings, statues, gilding, & ornaments - It is useless & would be quite unsatisfactory to try to describe them - We wondered to see so many things; but we learned afterwards they had brought furniture, &c. from other places to fill up the destructions made by the mob of Feb. '40 - It was full of historical interest, & many rooms still bore traces of the ^{revolution} - Some handsome marble statues had lost a toe, or showed a knock ^{still for proof} - In a large room hung with pictures of the Marshals of France, the frames for Guechy & Soult were empty; they were torn down, & the wall behind still showed it - The throne shows where the canopy over the throne was pulled down, & the walls are still bare where the tapestry was torn off - We saw the room where the family used to sit in the evening, a pleasant room covered with blue - But the tables round which the princesses used to sit & work were broken up - I was surprised though to see in all the rooms magnificent mirrors & many fragile things left quite unharmed - Their particular spite seemed to be against the

things belonging individually to Louis Philippe & his family - We went below (2) into the suite of the private rooms of Louis Philippe & his Queen; the bed-chamber was a beautiful room, & some beautiful furniture still left in it - Here the most committed great outrages, & some poor men & women held their vigils here for two or three days before the provisional government dared turn them out - There were two handsome armchairs there, one worked by the Queen the other by the princesses; the Queen's bathing room was most simply furnished - This suite of rooms was occupied by Marie Antoinette when she & Louis XVI were forced to come in to the Tuilleries. And we saw a little table which had belonged to her - One felt so sorry for Louis Philippe & his family, forced so to leave this beautiful home - One window in one great salon commanded such a magnificent view of the gardens, ending in the Place Concorde & down the great avenue of the Champs Elysees, & the superb triumphal arch showing plainly in the distance! But I think Louis Philippe a wiser man than I did - I would have run away had I been in his place - From the Tuilleries we went to the Louvre, which is joined by a long wing to the Palace of the Tuilleries, & so presents an enormously long side to the Quay; and a very handsome side, & which they are now repairing & recutting the stone - Here is that wondrous picture gallery, but unfortunately it is at present closed, for it is on this side; & the wall was so weak they are obliged to rebuild it, & of course half the building is closed - After going out on the Quay, then back again into one square & then another, we found the door at last - Our passports admitted us, & after going up one great flight of marble stairs & down another & up again, we began with rooms of drawings, room after room, of all ages & schools - Then came some beautiful enamel paintings, then a few rooms of pictures, all that are seen at present - But so crowded with artists copying one could not see much - There was that beautiful Mantegna, the Madonna with the Saviour standing on her knees & Elizabeth an old woman presenting the infant John on her knees, of which there is a copy in our Athenaeum - & only the lower part though, for the original has the upper part filled with a figure of the Father, & the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove - It is very beautiful, but it does not fill me as did the Madonna in the Leuchtenberg gallery at Munich - Then we went up stairs through an immense suite devoted to "Marine", models of ships & everything naval, &c - down again, & down still lower to see Assyrian, Egyptian, Etruscan, & Grecian & Roman antiquities, & a gallery of casts of all the most famous antique statues - We fairly lost our way, & did not know how to get out? we went over & over one great marble stair case, & at last appealing to one of the guards stationed in each room, we all burst into a shout of laughter when he pointed up it again, in which he joined - However we found

our way round an immense staircase to another long suite of rooms,
where were cases, brown &c. &c. &c. It is quite useless & would only weary
you to try to enumerate, but if you want to know I will send home a catalogue.
I must mention, though, one superb case of Louis quatorze - It was some
8 or 9 feet high, of the richest possible, with gold bands where came the
Louis markings additional, &c. And the handles were as of twisted gold open
as large as your wrist, at which two little bronze Cupids had climbed
were perched in at the top. The Cupids were at least 12 or 14 inch tall - It
was beautiful! - I hope to see the Louvre again with its pay in the sum-
mer when I hope the gallery may be open, & I shall doubtless more satis-
factorily in the pictures. One must see them again & again - I painted
hard when we came back, & we had to call a pause though it was only
a few steps - back time so generally much cheaper abroad, particularly
if you have more than 1, for no matter the number, it is the same
for the courier, that is just between the places - Vienna. One I saw -
Grand came to tea - Charles Morris dined with us - Emma there is one of
Prince Prussia's daughters, & so a cousin of Mother's - a sister of Princess
Prussia, she - She is a very pleasing little woman, very lady-like in ap-
pearance & manner, & something in her face put me in mind of John W.
Muir. She talks a little English - Her husband is a physician, a very liberal
pleasant, little man; & of course I have a high idea of his politeness,
as he talked French with me all the evening without laughing at my
barbarisms. He told me the Louis porcelain was a royal manufactory,
& so expensive it was rarely sold but for royal presents - So you felt
the fancy for those Louis China, just this week - He said
a very curious case had occurred lately - An Englishman bought lately a
tea-set, a sugar bowl & 8 cups & saucers, for which he paid 10 guineas, I am sure
I am under statement, supposing their real value. Some experienced per-
son said that it was; a low cut was brought Paris to be examined it to
test it, & at last said, the china was ~~valuable~~ the most precious just as the
& the flowers had been painted upon it recently to increase its value!

I had been very much annoyed by a cross woman who had taken my
measures & promised me my corsets Monday to try on, & waited until Wed-
nesday when I sent for her, & she came as old women sitting down & saying,
she promised them & I thought I should have them today, & so forth. They
did not come, & I made up my mind to go without, rather than have
any more trouble, & let her lose her 20 pence. Just as I was dressing for
church Sunday, she came! And as they needed some alteration, finally
sat down in my room & sewed away in them! It is a little sample of

our experience in Paris - The worst people are practically faithful. But
it is very strange to see how little Sunday is noticed. Most of the shops
open, nothing different from usual that you can see, except a greater
crowd, quite heeled, on the boulevards & in the Champs Elysees. The Louvre
was all devoted to a little last attempt for Sunday! Of course, they
declined - We did not ~~have~~ to understand a sermon on the Sunday before
& I found the preacher harder to follow - In our journey home we made 2
visit or two - And in the Ev. went to, next door to Mrs. Balch's, our Sunday
wife, who is at home Sunday & so found no one there but a gentleman
who came left - I had been trying to get an escort back to London - Our host
called Saturday Ev. but he was going Sunday & I could not get ready to go -
He had seen Aunt Anna in Rome, but I suppose you have heard some-
thing from him - George Graham dined with us Sunday, & said he should
go to England Tuesday, or Wednesday, & agreed to take one in charge, & I first
thought Monday morning. I wrote to let him he need not come to St. James
House one, as I had an escort to London - He all received invitations to
dine with them. Louis Wednesday, such a pile of notes, for, except the Lord
& Aunt Lizzie, each & every had a separate one. Of course, Uncle Charles &
Aunt Lizzie. ^{My dear Aunt Lizzie,} Uncle Charles was off early Monday morning on the de-
parture for Rome. He had to breakfast by 7 o'clock, & I did not
get up, but had him ~~put~~ ^{put} ~~up~~ ^{up} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~carriage~~ ^{carriage} before - The first of the week
he had been very much troubled with his stomach, was in the house for a
day or two, but improved much towards the last, & seemed to enjoy
going out with us Monday night. Was the first time he had in a
stable body coat, he had been obliged to wear one cut under the same - But
he seemed to go off in good spirits, & had superb weather, so far as we could
judge, the first half of the week - I hope he is now enjoying himself
in Naples, and I think he will be well repaid for the effort & time
so much to have seen - And he seems to enjoy all the intellectual & social
going so much! - It was so pleasant when we were all together in Paris.
Reached such a family circle, we would stare at each other & wonder if
it were true we were there! And it was so long since I had seen some
faces! - All were most kind & pleasant - I like never seen so much of
Lizzie before, and certainly she is one of the best tempered creatures I ever
saw! Always merry & bright. And she manages to accomplish an immense
deal! Argues as well as improves my mind - It is a comfort to see her so
well & she has gained flesh & colour, & she is always perfecting, patient
gentle, sweet & industrious - Mr. Balch has gone to that deal, & he is very
bright, & she told me my stories, & I was away in French as if at a picnic.
Aunt Lizzie seems very well - He & I had some discussions together. I can
see we always fight, & sometimes I think I had the best side - But he is always

kind & agreeable — Aunt Lizzie is always most sweet, most kind, most loving — I am afraid we may not meet again this side the water — For they come over to Eng-land sometime in the first of May to the Exhibition, and their summer plans of travel are as yet uncertain, as they all want to go different ways — They seem to have pretty much decided to pass next winter in Italy, & Uncle Lowell says if they would agree to stay another year, they could see all the places they so much wish — But Lizzie & Ella want to go home — I should not be surprised if Augustus should go next autumn, he wants to get into business —

But to get back to Monday — Aunt Lizzie & I went across the river to call on Madame Marcov, Jane Belknap, but unfortunately did not find her in — She goes to America, I hear, in March — Then we went to call on Madame Louis, & found her with another French lady — It was rather embarrassing, for neither Aunt Lizzie nor I are famous French scholars, & I had to pretty much the talking, which is awkward when two people are listening! — It is amusing to hear the French ladies bewail Paris now, & contrast it with before the revolution! — They say Paris is nothing, — it is gone! — By the time we had taken up Lizzie from her French lesson we must go home to meet George Upham & arrange about going — We got back just in time, & I despatched a note when he was gone, to my Dr. Gray to meet me at the London Station at 10 1/2 evening; he had a quiet evening by himself — Tuesday morn. I packed, & then before the carriage came Aunt Lizzie & I went to walk in the gardens of the Stulleries; they are quite extensive, & laid out chiefly in stately broad gravel walks, with plots of grass & rows of trees between, ponds of water & fountains, & beautiful statues interspersed; the east is quite a wood — Here all the children are brought to play & walk bright days, & Mamma's come to promenade; & it is a gay pretty sight from the Lowell's windows between 3 & 4 — When we went out in the carriage we did some shopping, & then went with Lizzie to look for a ^{travelling} ~~writing~~ desk — We did not find anything satisfactory that was not too expensive — We met Joseph Peabody in one of the bazaars. He looked very well, said he thought of going home in the summer, & putting us in our carriage, we bade him good bye — He came home tired enough — We were to dine at 5, as Uncle Lowell, Augustus & John Felton, who was to dine too, were going to some great display at the theatre, I was to depart at 1/4 to 7, & in the eve. Aunt Lizzie & Lizzie were to go to a great ball at the Opera, where they had tickets in a box, to look on & see the show — The children had to take their ^{dinner} ~~supper~~ in the parlour, Mr. Felton came in & talked to Lizzie on the sofa, while the violin squeaked on the other side of the room — He left the children dancing & went in to dinner, & had just got through the soup, when a note was brought to one, saying George Upham was sick & could not go till next day — I was in consternation, as Dr. Gray could be exhausting his precious self waiting in the station at 10 1/2 at night — But Uncle Lowell & Aunt Lizzie would not hear of my going alone, & a hasty note was written, & Julia despatched in a flying way, & put it in to the P.O. announcing my non-arrival, & one of the maids came in to say —



Gray, Jane Loring. 1851. "Gray, Jane Feb. 11, 1851 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/225927>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/262614>

Holding Institution

Harvard University Botany Libraries

Sponsored by

Arcadia 19th Century Collections Digitization/Harvard Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The Library considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection

License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.