

New. March 19. '51-

Dear father & mother,

I am sure I do not receive so many invitations that I should omit the record of them. So I should say that before that famous call on Mrs. Lawrence, Dr. Gray had a card from her for an at home at 10 o'clock ^{on} the next Thursday - he had decided to go, though I was out, but late on the Thursday afternoon arrived a card for Dr. & Mrs. Gray - Unfortunately it rained & Dr. Gray did not care to venture - I should not have gone at any rate, as it was too late; we should not have been home until 1 or 2. So there you have the record of the invitations I have received since I was, with the dinner at Mrs. Gray's & the party at the Wards, where I did not go.

My usual quiet routine was quite disturbed on Friday - I was busily finishing my letters, when the dress-maker came in to see about altering a dress for me; I sent her off for half an hour that I might complete my mail, & she was scarcely gone when Miss Crocker arrived in a carriage with Miss Winslow, & proposed I should take a drive with them - She said they were going to make some calls on the Green & would return for me - So I smashed away at my letters, ^{which I had not finished,} when to my horror, I saw the carriage back again - I hastily put them in the envelope, stuck on the stamp & pasted it up, & then ran & threw on my things, running on my bonnet without stopping to look in the glass, catching whatever was most convenient, & ran down to the carriage with my gloves in my hand, for as it was only the 2nd time Miss Crocker was out I could not bear to keep her waiting - I was quite vexed to find the carriage empty, for she had sent it back while they were making their call! And I had plenty of time to sit & think before they came out; & all the drive, ^{visions of} my letter losing its stamps or coming unsealed it was so hastily closed, & some one of the nine contents dropping out ^{before me}! - The drive to Miss Hallett's, & as I owed no call I did not mean to sit out, but Miss Crocker urged it, positively intimating she had come for me to make some calls with her - Agreeable! & I dressed so like a witch, in such a hurry! Well, there was no helping it, so in I went - The next place was to Bishop Selwyn's sister, & I thanked the lady in my heart when they said she

had gone away for a few days - We drove through Richmond into Kew
around Park by Richmond Terrace, the place is well known by sight;
& the view is very beautiful; & in summer when the leaves are
out it must be charming - The Thames is winding below you, you
see where Pepin's villa at Surbiton was, & Strawberry Hill,
Kew's half-past six place; & we were looking from a spot close to
the House Sir John Reynolds built. We could see Windsor Castle
dimly on the horizon - This view is from the Terrace, & just
beyond Sir John's Park, through the gates of which we drove.
And Miss Brandon begged me to be on the look out as we passed
one particular spot, concerning which there is famous tradition
here in Richmond - There is a sort of avenue opening down
through the trees in one place, where getting on just the right spot,
you can look through & see the Tower of London in the long
vista; a little house is opposite this vista, & on this it is said
Henry the 8th stood while Anne Boleyn was executed. As soon as
she was beheaded, a rocket was sent up from the White Tower, which
Henry could see from his post of observation, & then ^{he} fell off
at once to many fine legends, who was staying near by at Peter
Cham - But the ^{very} lay on thick London-mist, we could see
nothing - In Richmond Park is a house the Queen has given
Lord John Russell, I saw the gates, & the house also where
Lord Langdale, Master of the Rolls, lived, & also the Duchess of
Gloucester's house, & some houses more interesting from historical
associations, where ^{William} Temple lived, &c. &c. And in no way
back we passed an old house where Cromwell once lived -
As I said in my last letter, we were to have gone to London to-morrow
on Saturday to accompany Miss Brandon so far in her way home,
& for ourselves to visit the Tower - But it rained, rained: & we
had to stay at home - However Sunday we were up early & off
to go with London to service at St. Paul's. By an undignified
run we reached the station just in time to jump into the
cab, & when we reached London we walked to the Cathedral -

St. Paul's is in the City, whose Western limit is at Temple bar. Not
that there is not just as much City, & crowd & business & throng
beyond, but that is the boundary of old London, & in the
City Government the division is still marked; And they talk
in Regent St. of going down into the City - And in the City of going
to the West end, Mayfair, Piccadilly, &c. &c. - We walked on the
Surrey side of the river - Where there is less confusion, but where
the streets seem firmly settled into dust, darkness & heat. And the
dim evening light of London is the more striking, coming as we did
from the country where it was so much brighter. On crossing
Blackfriars bridge & getting into Ludgate St. St. Paul's seemed so
fine & it was quite interesting. As we passed through the streets generally
& noisy & bustling with crowded shops, & more comparatively so just
the met two little Charity children in their quaint, neat dress -
Each school has its own costume - These little girls wore brown stuff
jackets, short sleeves & coming just to the ankle, with stout heavy
boots on - Then they had little white linen aprons, the belt fasten-
ing behind, & a little square piece coming up in the waist - small
round caps with a nicely crumpled ruffle in the throat, exactly
the shape we need to wear as children; & little white linen caps,
the shape, I see, of Aunt Anne's night cap, with a border nicely crum-
pled round the face, & a pink ribbon tied in a daisy bow on the
top of the head. One of the children was very pretty, & as they
looked away after pecking their steps across the muddy street
with their arms folded under their aprons, they looked as if they
had jumped out of a picture frame - I haven't given my cap half
a glance enough, the fashionable air - Under the left arm there was
a silver plate as large as an advertising card, with the child's
number upon it - We found we were late at the service, for it
began at 7 1/2 before 11, instead of 11 1/2, & being there at 11 we had thought
bunched quite early. Only the choir is fitted up for service - And
I do not think the style of architecture as imposing for a church
as the Gothic - They did not have nearly as fine music as at
St. Patrick's at Dublin - But two of the Cantors who chanted the
Litany just behind us, had fine voices, & some fine voices in the
congregation joined in the responses, the effect was solemn - The

sermon was miserably poor - There was some fine oak carving
about the stalls, which are the seats on each side of the choir for
the dignitaries of the church - But it rather distressed me to see
little angels with no legs but a tulip instead, & with wings for arms,
supporting a canopy on their heads; it looked as if it must be their
home - And above were little heads that looked as if they were
cold, & so had wrapped themselves up in their wings, only peeping
their heads out - We wandered about in a good many odd streets
& corners after service was through, (hoping the congregation would
come out of St. Stephen's, Dalbrook, another of Mrs's churches, wh.
we wanted to see - But we were too early, for the parish
churches do not go in until 11 - We went through Paternoster Row,
Cheapside &c - & at last came out by the Mansion house & Bank,
where we took an omnibus down Holborn - We looked about for
some place to get some refreshment, & saw a confectioner's shop
with the shutters half up, & going in, got a quiet cup of coffee -
Then we walked up to Dr. Booth's, where we made a call, &
staid until nearly afternoon service at 3 - Dr. Booth's influenza was
better, & he hoped to go to Paris yesterday - Madam Booth seemed
very well, & greeted me very affectionately - Then we walked
towards Regent St.; on our way we met a coffin borne on men's
shoulders, & a pall of black edged with white thrown over it - Behind
walked the mourners - The men had crape or black silk from 3/8 to
1/2 a yd. wide, tied the width spread out, round the hat & making an
enormous bow behind & the ends hanging down - The women had black
silk mantles thrown over the head & drawn round the throat & round
the waist - There were not more than four or five couples, & last came
some little children dressed in black, & a nurse-maid dressed in
also in mourning carrying a little infant all dressed in white - What
a story the whole told! - We walked down Regent St., & seeing a
chapel open, Dr. Gray asked a man who stands at the door in a sort of
livery, what it was - "Hanover Chapel!" So, running our chance, we went
in - It was a small church & the pew-opener showed us to seats in
the gallery opposite the pulpit - No one opens their pew for themselves,
a woman is generally in each gallery & on the ground floor to show

everyone to their seats - Sometimes the men in livery do it on the ground floor - We heard a very good sermon, which was truly a refreshment - The preacher in manner & voice put me much in mind of Dr. Walker - And Dr. Gray pronounced him American - When church was through we found we were too late for the $\frac{4}{2}$ train, & so must go through Piccadilly, & run our chance for an omnibus - On we walked, through crowds, some fairly & fashionably dressed, others mechanics, others so quaint & odd! I think Dickens exaggerates much less than I had supposed, one sees so many queer figures in the streets; & people who would draw all eyes at home, pass quite unnoticed in the mixture here - We walked to Hyde Park, & still met no omnibus going as far as we wished; so for awhile ^{we} kept on, admiring with one eye the equipages rolling the other side of the railing for the Sunday drive in the park, & with the other keeping an anxious eye for the white omnibus "Richmond" among the crowd of vehicles in the street - But I think I was a little inclined to break the 10th Commandment - One quite longed to call one's great Brougham, & drive off according to one's pleasure - And I think sometimes it must be very pleasant to be rich, & do what one pleases - "But if wishes were horses, beggars would ride!" & we gladly hailed a New Bridge bus at last, for I was tired with walking - Of course that left us the other side of the Bridge, & then came the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile walk home, where I was glad enough to get, & well tired! On adding together the separate bits of walking, we thought it must make 7 miles! I amuse myself often with the odd signs & names - "Caught" a butcher, "Iron" a laundress, "Staff" & "Mantle" haberdashers, "Mr. Inford", a clergyman, "Downs" &c. &c.

Friday - The record of Monday Tuesday & Wednesday must be rain, rain, rain! - Monday I was content to stay in the house as I had walked so much the day before; but Tuesday, owing to some cleaning in the study, Dr. Gray could not work at the Hookers, & so we had arranged a nice play day to see the Tower, Tunnel, &c. - The morning looked very doubtful, & as the rain began to come down, I happily, after

much deliberation, decided not to go, & Dr. Gray Reported alone to
work at the British Museum instead of play - He, how it
pained! Although first at sunset as he got back, the sun flamed at
but it was too late & too wet for me to get out - My letters hope
to comfort me for the day's pain, for they arrived at noon -
Come, Mrs. Lizzy, John, & Lizzy's letter - What joy times you
are having with the fancy ball! I shall have to come home
for dissipation - If I could go to a fancy ball I think I would
persecute Mrs. Nickleby - For a great part of the brilliancy & fun
must be the support of the characters, & besides Mrs. W. coming
half natural to me, it would leave me at liberty to say just
what they pleased, vice & velle - If one wanted grotesque con-
tinues I could send you odd enough ones from Lake Geneva,
Aurich & Holland - But I think only handsome people or
those who could not possibly support a character, should dress
slightly for costume & effect - Beauty sets off any dress - But a plain
face looks out of place, unless the character gives it piquancy -
Now Willie comes on, Lizzy! I am glad the dear little soul is
pleased with the doll - Dr. Gray is very much amused to think
you & Sue should admire its beauty, for he called it all sorts
of names from its complexion - I can scarcely fancy Betty talking
so much - I wonder whether a letter of yours has divided, Lizzy,
for it was four weeks since I had had one from you - About
opening the letter - The reason Dr. Gray had picked the seal off that
one, was that he was sending it to Paris & wanted to lighten
the weight - I always get the letters fast - for they are delivered
here at our lodgings, & being at home, not only open my own, but often
his - And even when he is at home, he says 'Give it, & read it me' - when
a letter comes to him - Oh my goodness! funny! chamber an' dation!!!
You keep advising me to read articles in the Magazines, Sue - Truth to
tell me read much less of those here than at home - One very striking
difference is the scarcity of newspapers. They are so much cheaper, with
us - New people rather depend on book clubs & circulating libraries for their
magazines, or I have but little chance of seeing them - For if I go to the
library they are so much in demand that I scarcely can get them for
a day or two - & Sue, except that article on Blackwood concerning which

I answered long since, I cannot possibly say no. - But about the great
question of the papal aggression we can scarcely judge fairly on the other
side of the Atlantic - We must live awhile in England & see & realize
how church & state are so woven together that each an act, becomes
wonderfully offensive & dangerous. For us, the prominent & religion are so
radically independent, that the Pope may come over & establish him-
self & call it his dominion in the United States, & people would only
laugh - But here it is quite incomprehensible to see how church & state
are interwoven, & church dignitaries are state dignitaries - And something
made to the Irish Catholic church make the English question more diffi-
cult, especially that the English church must needs acknowledge the
Roman church as a true, though corrupt one - But I think, and John
Russell has proved that the Pope has done in England what he would
not venture to do in a Catholic country - But there is no doubt the
Pope was much misled by his advisers, & is conscious of a mistake,
though the Roman church can never retract - I think they might
bring much more powerful influence, ^{in the English church} against Catholicism, by putting
some interesting & powerful preachers into their pulpits - There seems
in a strange condition in England, & old parties are breaking up &
forming former distinctions in new differences - It seems as if much the
same crisis were working everywhere in the political world - Mrs.
Traveller has come this week - But Dr. Gray saw a piece of news in
an Am. paper at Delf's in London - Mrs. Manning's resignation of his
professorship, & Dr. Torrey indicated as his successor - Why didn't come
of you tell me of such an interesting change at home - Everything
seems changing! Shall I see anything familiar! -

Wednesday, about the sun shone bright & when Dr. Gray departed,
I promised to come up to the brokers & walk home with him - But a
storm clouded over & rained heavily all day - I must confess it was
rather stupid, shut up for three days, & quite alone I pass each day -
& of course nobody to speak to - The consequence, is that when I do
go out, I talk to much I am overflooded! - Dr. Gray brought home a funny
story that Dr. Fisher the Boston medical man, told. He is quite a wit,
& always has something funny - He said there was one family he
visited, when he thought were a little too good, & a little too scrupulous -
The lady being under his care, he called there the other day, & in entering
the parlorman down stairs, he said, 'You will not find Mrs. - quite so
well today' - He have had a very serious affliction, a very heavy trial -
But we are comforted now, we are wonderfully supported, you will
find me tranquil - Dr. Gray, up to see the lady, he found her in the

same condition, "depressed, sad, but calm & resigned" - He thought they had lost some dear friend, & on enquiring if it were so, he found the severe affliction this. It seems they have a son of 10, a boy of 14 or 15, ^{being} at home a few days - in company with the house-maid had - killed her! As Mrs. Julius said the woman was 20 & quite able to take care of herself, he did not think any very serious consequences were likely to ensue, & it would have been as well to keep the "serious affliction" more private.

Thursday was a bright day at last, & Dr. Gray came back at 12 to escort me over to the garden to see some beautiful drawings which Sir Wm. was to meet the artist to see, & had kindly invited us too. They were drawn by a young man, who from his admiration of the descriptions of tropical scenery was induced to take a voyage to tropical America solely to make drawings of the scenery - They were indeed very beautiful! Generally large sketches in pencil, but such freedom of touch, & such beautiful execution! I never saw any so fine! - He is going to publish them in lithographs, but I am sure they cannot do justice to the drawings - And such rich, luxuriant scenes, such swelling, overflowing richness of vegetation, in such thousand picturesque shapes - There were beautiful tree ferns among them - There are some tree ferns in the Palm store here; & fancy a polished, smooth, black trunk as large as a large man's arm, some 8 feet high, & then branching out into a crown of leaves; each leaf you must fancy 4 or 5 feet long, & made as if you should take ^{the leaves of} one of our large & beautifully cut ferns, a foot long, & arrange them on each side of the main stalk, gradually tapering to the end, & can you imagine anything more rich & graceful, more soft & feathery? But in the tropics they grow 40 or 50 feet high ^{the crown of leaves always at the top} - The trunk loses something of its smoothness as they grow older, for as it is composed of the leaf stalks they present their abrupt ends when the old fronds fall off, the new ones rising above, & the centre ones unfolding in that crozier-form ^{in which} one sees the common ferns rise from the ground - They are my perfect delight in the Palm store, & I go up into the gallery to look down on their broad spreading softness, & long to be an angel or something light enough to rest on that delicate cloud of green - The young artist was quite an interesting man, & spoke English very well!

+ He left shortly before 1 to go in to London, & taking the omnibus were
 dropped at Hyde Park corner shortly after 2. They are pressing on the
 Crystal Palace as fast as possible, & as we passed it yesterday, could
 judge a little of the effect of the painting outside, which corresponds
 with the inside, white, & the depressing pale French blue. I cannot
 make up my mind yet as to how I like it, & must still think
 + bronze would have been handsomer for iron-work. We walked to
 Mrs. Lawrence's, & instead of asking if she were at home, boldly sent in
 our cards to see if she would see us. She received us most cordially,
 & soon Bijelow came in, & she sent for Mr. Lawrence, who was as
 delighted to see us as he always is. I must say I never saw Mrs.
 Lawrence appear better. To be sure she was somewhat in deshabille,
 but then she said she had been hunting ^{for} an old article in the
 newspapers of last November, before arranging herself, but she has
 gained some flesh, & I never saw how many handsome points there
 were in her face before. Her hair is still handsome, & she looked
 refined & lady-like, without certainly the addition of dress, which would
 have been neat & suitable for the morning, except for the arrange-
 ment resulting from her occupation. And there is a something in-
 describable about the faces of our women, an air of delicacy, of refinement,
 of something spiritual & intellectual, which one misses in English faces;
 especially & particularly in the faces of their young girls. To be sure I
 have seen English faces in which were all these. But I think there
 is more consciousness of feature in their faces, & something in the American
 eye above all, which gives a higher character to ^{our} face. In the
 whole, after much deliberation, I have fixed upon the eye as the
 great difference; & I ^{have} amused myself in public conveyances with try-
 ing to find out where it is. And I have decided it is very hard to
 tell the lady from the lady's maid, ^{here} except by dress. And I do not wonder
 so much at English ladies dressing so much every day, for a bare
 neck & arm, & the effect of full dress, show high breeding & the lady
 often where the face does not. And though one sees more strikingly
 ugly & grotesque & queer faces, male & female than with us, (I have seen
 all the faces I am sure of Mr. Pepp's diary) the English women are
 not so generally plain as we have been told. You see many a
 pretty face. I am disappointed in their size. The ^{general} stoutness is mostly in

the servant maids. Mrs. Lawrence received us in a handsome room furnished as a library, but with something of the inconspicuous mixture of Park St. - She regretted not having seen us before; & I told her we had been out of town all winter. She appointed us to come & dine with them a week from next Wednesday, when Cavalier Bunsen was invited to dine with them; & promised to come out & see New Gardens. Poor woman, I doubt whether ambassador's lady is any sincere! She said they had engagements to dinner every day nearly, until the 12th. of April. - And so many visitors! -

From there we went to call on Mrs. Clive, "Not at home"; & then after stopping at a confectioner's to lunch on a bun, we went to the National Gallery. - I was disappointed in the size of the collection; & the rooms for elegance of appearance & good order, do not compare with Holland, Paris or Munich. - There were some good Rubens, Rembrandt's, Can dykes, Titians, &c. & lovely, lovely Murillo's children! There is no painter that compares with him in giving the pure, innocent, unconscious, true child-look & expression! But I must confess to disappointment in Raphael. - And I felt more than ever, how little I should value engravings of either Rubens or Titian, they only misrepresent these painters. - I saw better Guidos than I have yet seen. - But it is certainly inferior to the other great collections I have seen. - I could not think at first what made them such old, familiar things, or why little bits of criticism sprang to my mind; until I remembered, papa, your book "the National Gallery," & how I used to pore over it when a child. - When we got home we found cards from Mrs. Conybeare, whom I saw a few days ago at the Hookers. - On hearing my name & country she asked whether I knew Mr. Horace Gray; young Horace Gray of New York I found she meant. - It seems both he & Uncle Gray's mother were very kind to her sisters, Miss Bancittarts, who were in America a few years ago, & staid with Mrs. Gray. - She expressed great pleasure in seeing anyone who had known friends who were so very kind to them. - One sister is, I believe shortly to be married. -

Tomorrow we go to Oxford for a few days, hoping to be away when Dr. Hooker arrives from India. - I get such amusing letters from Dr. Harrey! How I have made little tests & preached sermons on them in this letter! - With most affectionate love to all, I am, dear father & mother, your
very devoted Jeanne -



Gray, Jane Loring. 1851. "Gray, Jane Mar. 19, 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/262619>

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>.