

New April 13th - 1851

Dear papa & mother,

I left you all most uncivilly last week, standing on the stairs as it were, bidding Mrs. Lawrence good evening - The custom is for each person as they come up stairs to give their name to a servant in the middle of the flight, who shouts it out again to a sort of head man at the head of the stairs, who again shouts it in a loud voice as they enter the room or approach the lady - By the time we went down stairs, Mrs. Lawrence had got quite to the head of the stairs - On getting down stairs we found the library also turned into a cloak room; each person as they undressed gave their garment to an attendant, who gave them a duplicate of the number she tied to it before laying it away - The carriages are obliged to come to the door in a regular line, in which one passes the door & stops, its occupants get out, or if empty, the footman outside shouts "such a carriage stops the way" it is repeated by another half way up stairs, & another shouts it again in the entrance hall, where a crowd are waiting; if the happy person is ready they go down, otherwise the carriage drives round ^{to the end} again to take its turn by slow advance - So, if you want your carriage, you give your name to the footman in the hall, he shouts again down stairs, & it is caught up by the one in the street, & is echoed along the line until your servant hears it; for many of the carriages wait in by streets or on the opposite side until their owners names are shouted, before taking their place in line - And the best arrangement is, to have some appointed place for your carriage in a street near by, where you can walk to it at once & save time & patience - But Dr. Gray & his wife were ignorant, & the consequence is they lost both; for we had ordered our carriage at 10 1/2 thinking it only a dinner party, & we came down at a little after 11 - We sent down the name, & then took our station near the door, for in the crowd you might not hear your name & so would lose your chance for that then - It was some amusement, for there was quite a crowd waiting, & people's names were called out as they came in, & of course everyone as they went out; & I was close by & could see everyone - I had another very good look at the Duke of Wellington, & Lady Morgan - Saw Sir George Grey, & Lord Grey, Mr. Shaw

before, speaker of the house of Commons, Lord Castlereagh (Barrington's),
Lady this is that, the Prussian Minister, &c. &c. After awhile Dr. Jay
few impatient & went up & down the lane & into side streets & could see
nothing of our carriage, & said he was sure the man was fine - that
people had taken the place of the first crowd, then Rudolf Steiner
came down, she looks quite handsome, & is certainly English stout.
she was glad to get her carriage & to be back to her lady after a long waiting,
but still nothing was to be found of our Dr. Jay. Called out & police-
men were commissioned on every side - Many who were waiting almost
as patiently (or impatiently) as we, refreshed themselves in the coffee-
room, for there is no regular going down to coffee, but the refreshment
room is open all the day. At last after 12 1/2 & another magnification
of the main fine & side branches, Dr. Jay said the man must have
gone home, & we must go to an hotel. That idea I scouted, for how
could I breakfast next morning in full dress, & then get back & kneel
well then, he said, we must take a street car & go home. I still
had faith Curtis would appear would we wait to the end, but
compassionately Dr. J. despaired, & willing to save him from making
himself any longer a public embarrassment of it, I consented, & we
succeeded at once by getting me by steps in advance of the line,
& after driving up & down the lane to give our unfortunate trooper
(which looks now pained & pained) another chance, we at length
turned our faces towards the house there ever and a body who got
a pleasant, pained & pretty, & how to return spontaneously to embrace
with poor little Dr. Bell, we got down towards the, my poor land-
lady waiting all this time, & quite frightened lest some accident
had befallen us, we were generally so regular just as we were in
Avenue, Curtis came with my horse & I am glad - It seems to go
to the door about 10 1/2, & we not being ready must of course drive
on, so he went & took his station on a side street, too far off to hear
my cues, & stupid man, never came down to take his horse again
until about 1, when he saw the carriage men getting their horses.
all my trouble was well repaid in the convenience, though
whether I would ask Dr. Jay to go through it again is another
thing - And it cost something, more especially if you hire another
car to come home in, & run the risks of it lost & other dangers -
My horse, too, made a very respectable journey to the Chamber, & stuck upon
quite handsomely. But he is a good man, dear!

Thursday Dr. Jay's brother had sent for us to dine there, but there was so much
letter writing that week, & Dr. Jay so, that I went up on the morning to
call & say we could not come. But Dr. Jay's brother insisted upon it
that I had to yield, particularly as she had a friend with her she
wished us to meet, a Scotch lady, Miss Davidson - so after running & working
over my riding until the last minute I hastened up. Miss Davidson
was very pleasant, with a manner perhaps a little brusque, but so warm
& cordial, & so much for sense & quick wit, that I liked her very much.
She has a good deal of Scotch accent, which is as if she gave every word
a twinge, & sounds the more very much, with a burr though more than the
Scotch cell. The painted miniatures beautiful, & there were three times
of her painting, two copies from different pictures of Mary Stuart, very
sweet & lovely, & another from an old picture of some Scotch lady.
Today I had just dispatched two books to her. I sat with my work
made, & flung myself on the sofa to rest, when on her coming back
she escorted us to Mr. & Miss Davidson - they had come for me to
walk with them in the pleasure grounds - In the Museum we
joined Miss Walker, & then walking past the pond where the
mole swan made great demonstrations towards us for venturing
near the net where it made its sitting, we passed through the
temple gates & were in the pleasure ground which is some 1/2 acre,
& which Dr. Jay is now improving by cutting down old trees, planting
shrubs, &c. & in fact making it a fine arboretum - It had been
much neglected since Queen Charlotte's time, when it had been
filled with temples, mosques, palaces, &c. &c. in miniature, accord-
ing to the taste of that period, as an appearance to the palace.
Of these buildings only a few temples are left still scattered about
the garden & grounds, & the Pagoda which is quite a structure
some 10 stories high, & up which Dr. Jay now kindly took us to
see the fine view from the top - It was beautiful, & the view from
a shower which wrapped us for awhile & brought out gleams of sun-
shine in the distance; there are many beautiful cedars of Lebanon
around, & we could look directly down up their tops & so get new
realizations of their exceeding & unusual beauty. Dr. Jay's brother did
(not try to mount the weary stairs. It was a great walk for her to
come so far & walk as far than this around the grounds, past the
little Chapel built for Queen Charlotte as a ruined Chapel, & which is
now pretty & rather striking - Inside it is in much order, & the Queen

used to come here & take tea; & Victoria has a fancy to do the same, & certain prompts are to be enclosed about it for her, & the rest to be thrown open to the public as liberally as the gardens, they having been open before only two days in the week. The air was chilly & raw, & though Spring is so early here it comes on very much slower than with us. Saturday I went up to dine early with the Hookers at 1 1/2. And then went with Miss B., Miss Davidson & Sir Wm. to see Mr. Cole's paintings which he is going to send to the Exhibition of the Academy this year. Did I speak of meeting Ann at Mr. Ward's last summer? He was so very amusing when I saw him there! He went to the Tyrol & to Venice last summer, where he painted a great deal. And these pictures are Venetian views - I admire his sea views very much, he is thought very promising as an artist, & quite the leading one in marine views. He is a small man, very excitable, & shews it in his face, but has an earnest, interesting expression. He has a great deal of taste in many ways; the gate of his house has for the name plate the hare's-tongue fern forked, & "the ferns" upon it, the name of his house in Kensington. There is a little yard behind & laid out in pretty little miniature, a little brook with a rustic bridge, rockery, & a wilderness of old stumps where he means to grow all sorts of ferns, his particular fancy. And there is a pretty little green-house, fern house - where they grow in all sorts of ways, in little pots of water, against the wall, &c. &c. His mother & two sisters live with him, he is a widower with two sons, & still a young man - One sister married Stephen Ward, Mr. Ward's oldest son, & the physician. Then we drove to Clapham to call upon the Wards, then to leave Miss Davidson with a friend, & so back to Kew, where I preferred going at once home as the clouds looked very threatening.

Sunday Dr. Gray & I in going to Church at New West Sir Wm. & Miss Hooker turning their steps in the same direction, so we joined them, before parting with them we agreed to go with them next day to see a superb Camellia. In the afternoon Dr. Gray & I had a delightful walk through the gardens & houses. The orchid house has some splendid things. One plant has 8 superb great bunches of flowers, each bunch 2/3 of a foot long, hanging down from it.

The flowers are a superb yellow shaded with a deeper colour -
 The next day Sir Wm. Knip Walker, Dr. Gray & I went to Mr. Martin's
 to see the *Camellia reticulata*; he is a gentleman living at Kingston
 in a beautiful villa on the bank of the Thames, ^{which} being placed
 in a bend of the river is most admirably planned so that each room
 has a view of the river, of its river - The house is in no style of archi-
 tecture, but an admirable taste without striking effect. We were
 shown into a large handsome room, another circular room open-
 ing into it, & on the opposite side you looked into a most charming
 green-house, the vines or trained that they met the lean-to roof
 from the other side, & thus made a pretty arch, & entirely taking off
 the effect of awkwardness which the one slant is apt to give; we
 passed through this house, where ^{were} some beautiful flowers, Camellias,
 an acacia trained as a vine, &c. &c. out doors on to the lovely lawn
 leading down apparently to the water's edge, & beautiful trees
 scattered over it. Thence passing round the house & through a
 sort of shrubbery of roses, which in the season they say are superb,
 we came to a green house, semi-circular in the centre & wings
 on each side - The whole of the centre was filled with this mag-
 nificent plant, a huge tree-like bush, reaching to the roof & spread-
 ing in all directions! Mr. Martin said they had taken off 3,000
 buds & there were 3,200 on! - About half were out - Each flower
 measures more than 6 inches across, & they are not perfectly
 double, & of a rich cherry red shading with the warmth & softness
 of a rose! - I never saw anything more magnificent in the
 vegetable kingdom - Mr. Martin then took us into his grape house
 not very large, but admirably arranged, & several in succession -
 When we got back he ^{took} us up upstairs to see the view from
 a charming room arranged as a library, just the beau ideal
 of one's heart for a "morning room" - Altogether the house is I think
 the handsomest gentleman's house I have been in in England -
 There was more elegance throughout the arrangements & more
 in keeping - I have been in larger & more pretentious looking
 ones - Mr. Martin is an East Indian nabob - We drove back
 through Richmond, & saw what was left of Queen Elizabeth's
 famous Green Palace, viz. an old gateway, & a portion of the
 wall which has been built in to some modern houses -

On reaching New Prof. Hooker's I went to call on Mrs. Compbe, & Dr. Ross
left us to go down to Southam Green to call on Dr. Lindley, he re-
turned in the E.G. with a most extraordinary & peculiar favour
in the shape of an invitation to go in with Dr. Lindley next day
& see the interior of the Crystal Palace! He went to keep the rest
however as a secret, for visitors by rule are excluded, but Dr. Lindley's
fear of the Commissioners & said he thought he could pass us in -
So we were off to town early Tuesday morning, Dr. Hooker met us on the
way to the Station, having returned from Wicheam the E.G. before he
was in his way to London on business. I was surprised to see him so
young & looking man (he will be 34 in June) and he has made a great
impression on the South Cole, been some years in the business, &c. &c. &
already so much famous! He is very different in appearance & manner
from Sir Wm. Not so tall, & very lightly made, but very active.
He has not the courteous manner of his father, but has a quick ab-
solute way of speaking, but so much sincerity & seems so good natured
that you cannot but like him. He seems full of life & energy.
On reaching London my first movements were to buy a new coat,
I got a straw very prettily trimmed with white & with lavender-
coloured bunches of lilies inside. Then after a little more shopping
during which Dr. plays patience, & wonder that I did not think the
belt near enough at elbow, were quite expanded, (though I told
him he would be the first to notice the deficiency of Manning
when I put it on,) we went to Marlborough House to see the common
gallery. It is a collection of paintings by English artists. There
were some landscapes by Constable & Gainsborough that pleased
me much - some paintings by Landseer, but by far the most
my first idea of him, & for some of the other artists I must say
I prefer the engravings as better adapted to the subjects ^{manages}
of treating them. A great many have been engraved, & most of them
in that collection of Mrs. Bear paper, which Mrs. Hume gave you
are from that gallery. "Rabbit as a King" is I think a prettier en-
graving than picture. Some of the first three some of Turner's
landscapes, they are very striking, but I want to see more of them.
Then from the gallery we took our way to Charing Cross, where today
a cab we were dropped in front of Dr. on our way to Dr. Hooker, where

we had a pleasant call. And our lunch. Thence we walked, passing
& take an omnibus, but some passed us, to the Horticultural Society
Regent St. Here we found Prof. Hooker & Sir Wm. who were going out.
Dr. & presently Dr. Lindley came in with another gentleman who was
to be of the party, & in the Boston's roughness & a cab we were all
droved away, & drove to Hyde Park - Dr. Lindley readily passed
us in, but to give you a description of the interior is quite impossible.
I will bring home a print. They have colored the inside with
work, blue & white, certain bare red, & others yellow, but the whole effect
in seeing such a great mass is not gaudy but soft & good. Briefly
the managers of the interior showed us about, through the galleries
where we could look down, & below, & I wondered almost as much
at the man's memory in knowing what was to be seen & what
there as at anything else. There were but few things unpacked,
but extensive preparations in cases glass pointed, stands of every
possible shape, &c. &c. in every direction. In one place they were put
up on immense ovens, in another were huge specimens of
chemicals, an enormous dome of carbonate of soda, hills of
tartaric acid - It seemed impossible that all could be finished,
but they speak very confidently that it will be speeded. The
may I down the center are to be statues & fountains. The fountain
will be all glass! There was one statue, one of the most admirable
things I ever saw; an Amazon on horseback attacked by a tiger, the
tiger rears entirely on the horse, & its claws are planted in the
frightened creature's sides, while its fierce jaws seek its throat.
The expression of terror in the horse, its quivering shuddering, & the
look in the Amazon's face of dead extremity, & yet the soul that
sees & meets it as she draws back to plunge her spear are very
grand. I was never more impressed by statuary. The Australians
are fitting up their compartment as four rooms. And such
superb furniture I never saw before. In bedstead of bound wood
is most exquisitely carved with pretty flowers all over, it is a beautiful
dark stained wood, & there is a both-case of two stools of ash, almost
the colour of our curled maple, superbly carved. The only thing
disappointing was the American or rather States' department, for
they seemed to be doing nothing, & a few boxes in their great space
seemed as if their contents could not half fill it. The general
impression seems to be that they have too much room. And of all

Exhibitions it is one we could least hope to rival, for as yet we import almost all manufactured things; or if we make them only imitate the foreign - It was certainly a most wonderful & interesting sight, & curious to see in its days of preparation - The Manager (~~I have forgotten his name~~) told us one of the hardest things was to persuade the foreigners they really would open in the 1st of May - They advertised that after such a day no more carts would be allowed to enter the building; he said the next morning there were quite a number of foreigners assembled early to see if they would keep their word - But he said at 10 o'clock the Ex. before they had had a gang of men ready, & by morning some acres of flooring were already down: & the ~~gate~~ entrance quite closed - He said it had fastened them in their preparations more than ^{the building covers 10 acres -} anything else, - And you walk ^{miles inside} ~~3 or 4 miles by~~ Dr. Gray & I began to congratulate ourselves on being abroad to see this great show & I advise everyone to come that can -

When I got back Tuesday Ev. I found the week's letters I acknowledged last week - And today (Friday, April 10th.) I am to thank Sue, Patrick & Charlie for this week's - How glad I was to hear Mary Hoppen was better -

Next week Wednesday or Thursday Dr. Gray & I propose going to Paris - We stay there some six weeks, & are back here the first of June or thereabouts - We stay here until August, except going to Ipswich to the meeting of the British Association the 1st of July, & perhaps one or two other excursions; And we expect to sail for home the middle of August - I must therefore beg again to have you write on their paper & enclose to Brown & Shipley, paying to them, they will forward; & in writing to you we will pay to them, & in return for our pay from Liverpool to Paris, you must pay ocean steamers - But every other week you can send per. Horse steamers -

Dr. Putnam made us a flying visit from Paris yesterday afternoon - He was to be off to Edinburgh to-day - He looked well but sleepy from his ^{little} night's travel -

Many thanks to Charlie for his interesting drawings - And a great deal of love to all from your very loving
Flannie -
Dr. Gray desires much love -



Gray, Jane Loring. 1851. "Gray, Jane Apr. 13, 1851 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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