

describe. What one speaks of first with us, carpets & fur-
niture one hardly noticed. - The carpet was a plain, blue
brussels, with a cross of drab, but in the pillared recesses
were rags of a volcra's skin, head & tail on, & in front
of the grate a large one of varied skins together. - I believe
all the couches & easy chairs were covered with chintz,
light pretty French, but some of the fancy chairs had
ant. covers, & most were felt, as were the pier tables
& the cornices & mouldings. - The curtains were blue rep,
I believe, with a rose-bud border. - But anyone who has
money can buy fine carpets & furniture, the things of
art in that room, family treasures handed down, one
couldn't buy. - The table was furnished as a writing
table, papeterie, post-box, ink-stand, scales, &c. &c. all
ornamented with malachite. - Little movable stand
of choice books, a fire-screen of plate glass in gilt frame,
full & not too full, a room for mere pure people lived
in, & yet not easily copied, - not like anyone else's. -
What I like in these English houses, is that they seem
to plan the rooms they want, & build the house round
them. - Not make a fine outside design as we do often,
& then divide the inside as we may. -

Miss Sullivan is a most cordial, hearty person & we
ceived us pleasantly, introducing two young ladies, one
her niece, then she showed us up stairs, the better mean-
time taking charge of Dr. Gray. - My room was large & ships
a light, plain, striped paper with a border of rose-buds
lined with blue ribbon, the carpet a white ground crossed
with blue bars & roses in the diamonds, the toilet set, the
border, rose-buds twined with a blue ribbon, the same
design on the loveliest little solitary tea-set on a stand

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New Oct. 22nd. 68

I finished of my letter, ~~last~~ ^{last} Saturday, while Mrs. Dabney was in the
Garden with Dr. Gray. - A gentleman called
announcing himself as Dr. Post, & sent him after
them to find Dr. G. - Presently Mrs. Dabney re-
turned, saying Dr. Gray had gone with Miss
Mrs. Post & baby to the Palm House. - Soon Dr.
Gray arrived bringing the baby, a nice boy of 2½, &
Mrs. P. & rest, while the gentlemen did more
light-seeing. - The poor child was tired & hungry,
like mother, a fragile looking, little creature,
who seemed too feeble to have the solitary care of
such a stout child. - It seems they are American Miss-
ionaries on their way back to Beirut, where he is
Professor in the College just started there. - It was
the little fellows return journey, for he was born on Mt.
Lebanon, & they were just arrived from America. - When
Dr. P. came in he gave most fascinating accounts of Syria,
Arabia, & journeyed to Damascus only 60 miles in French
Syria, & thence branching off taking one to Palestine,
settling us off into quite wild plans for next spring.
After all were gone came four ever welcome letters
as a charming surprise, for a newspaper coming in
the morng., I that I was to have no letters. - Thank
Charlie very much for his - His news quite astounded

us! How sorry I am for poor Dr. Will!

Sunday I reserved my forces for mother & her party. Dr. Gray had agreed to meet them in the train, to go to service at the Foundlings, said to be the finest music in London - But he had a cold & stayed at home, nursing himself for next day. About 3, mother arrived alone - Said they all went, & met Mrs. Dabney - Enjoyed the service, & stayed & saw all the little things done - They were to hear Spurgeon in the Ev., so mother only stayed & had some lunch & a cup of tea, which was to answer for her dinner, & then I walked across the bridge with her & saw her off in the train for London - They were to go to Southampton Monday Ev. so we should not see them again - Mother's letter, which she asked me to enclose, will tell how they fared on Monday -

Monday morn. We set off at one in a fly, with Mrs. Hooker for Miss Sullivan's - A brougham, it was, which looked quite seated. - I suppose it is about the grandest place we are likely to visit at, so I hit it into some detail - Miss S. was a niece of Lord Palmerston, & her father was some distinguished somebody in India - Broom House, Putnam, lies near on London, on the Thames, so the drive there was not particularly interesting, only we crossed a quaint old timber bridge looking quite homelike, & before reaching the ^{house} passed some architectural brick buildings, quite extensive, built by the father in memory of his wife - The approach to the house was through broad gate-door in a high brick wall, but

somebody in the Lodge opened the gate, & a sweep round a short lawn brought us in front of a brick house, looking large & comfortable, with a sunk porch & doors at each end - We entered through the lobby into a small hall, the stairs & upper gallery running round it, bay-windows filled with pictures, some beautiful India cabinets & other pretty things - A door led into the parlour, through a recess marked off with columns, one side all mirror, & a corresponding recess opposite, with great windows, all one pane, looking out on an architectural garden, separated by balustrade & raised from a lovely green lawn, with fine trees grouped here & there, sloping to the Thames, which made a gay & pretty back-ground, with boats of all kinds constantly passing - The main room had the fire-place set in painted tiles at one end, a bow opposite all window, looking at right angles on more garden & lawn, & one window of the bow opening into a little ante-room furnished with couch & little table, & from that down a few steps into a charming little conservatory -

The room was full of beautiful things, the walls covered with pictures, here, there & every where, tables filled with books & pretty things, Conches, easy chairs, fancy chairs, etageres with choice China, Siam balls, Chinese & Japanese jars, little cups, elegant bottles of Dresden no finer than four little finger, one a cauliflower, another a bunch of heliotropes, glass cases mounted in metal containing exquisite miniatures & precious jewels (diamonds or intaglios) & things too valuable not to be under lock & key - lovely flowers here & there, & the whole with an air of richness yet comfort, hard to

J., the vicar & myself - Miss Sullivan, Miss Hunter, & the Curate, who had joined us, in the other open -

We took off our things & arranged dress a little, & then went in to tea - A great silver tea urn, large ear. for teapoint, at one end, with the tea things, a most unique & beautiful coffee-pot at the other, bread & butter oc. A table set at one side with meat & vegetables - Cheese & pleasant & spruce were handed, those who preferred kept to bread & butter - Then we returned to the parlour & saw beautiful photographs & many fine things - I confess, if I had been vicar I should have gone to bed, & so I thought later when I laid awake quite overdone, & ignominiously had to go home next morn. of fine up Kensington Museum - Dr Gray's dressing-room was opposite our chamber, alas a chimney fire burning, & which he said as big as sheets, & every thing so comfortable! -

The next morn. came the house-maid with a huge can of hot water, & offering me a cup of tea. Dr J. had the advantage of a fire again - He sat in the dining-room at 9 o'clock; presently Miss Sullivan appeared & in a few minutes the butler looked in & said something; Miss S. led the way into a small room across a passage, where on one side stood the maids & men, books in hand, books of the Bibles lay on the table for us, marks at the Bibles for the day - We stood opposite Miss S. in the middle, she read one verse, all joined in the next, then when the Bibles for the day were through, all knelt & she read prayers, & simply & earnestly, & with so much expression, a gift uncommon as far as my general experience of reading English service goes -

in the corner by the fire place, a big arm chair at the side - The same colour & ideas carried out on the ink stand, tapers, match box, pen tray on the writing table in front of the couch, & on the tray on the toilet table - Of course there was the large white table between the windows of the bow, but the smeltin cover laid & trimmed with blue satin ribbon & bows, was only on the top, leaving the drawers for use - There was a large handsome simple wardrobe of some fine, light wood, the centre front a ^{big} mirror, an old-fashioned chest of drawers from floor to ceiling, a quaint looking-glass over the fire place, old pictures, old china on the mantel-shelf, a couch at the foot of the bed - Of course curtains & windows, & the great four poster, so everywhere in English bed-rooms - Such here as down stairs the upholstery was the last thing you noticed, only how rich & comfortable & luxurious everything looked -

On going down stairs we were ushered in to the lunch dinner at 2 o'clock - The dining-room opened from the parlour, a larger room, & now again opening on to the lawn, & quite surrounded with trees - The door we came in by one of those ^{best} receptions one reads of, so perfect I looked up once bewildered as to where we had entered - In the centre of the table was a silver vase, with a pot of crimson-leaved dracæna in it - On three sides small graceful silver stands supporting glass engraved plates, one paper, another raspberries, the other little fancy cakes - The soup tureen in front of Miss S. - When that was taken away a hare was put on, head up, & very lively looking! But before that

was carved croquets were handed round - There was mutton on a table set at one side, & vegetables were handed in a large silver disk divided into three compartments, plain potatoes in one, mashed in another, string beans in the third - After that course came cheese looking like little croquets, I must find how they do it - Then pudding, & stewed pears served round with custard, then the course of plain cheese & butter, handed round, then in front of Miss S. was set on the table to the other floor silver stands, containing superb Duchesse d'Angoulême's, & tasting better than any pears I expected to find in England - The butler waited, a most respectable looking old man out of living, a fortune in simple livery, of red waistcoat, large buttons on coat with cord, & a red cord down the pants -

Directly after dinner we set out on the long drive to Sydenham - Mrs. A., Miss S., Dr. J. & myself in the first carriage, open, drove a spoon on top with long light coats to their feet - The two young ladies in another open carriage, only a coachman - It was 9 miles drive to Sydenham, over commons covered with grass, past fine country houses, rows of villas, through little towns of closely settled streets, very pretty in summer but rather cold to such tender plants as Dr. Gray & me & unused to it, as he poor man, found this cost next day - The palace is very impressive from its vast size, but the expansion gives me a very good idea of it - We were there early too. & wander about, & just take peeps at all the wonders it contains - The Courts of all the

various countries seeped in architecture & decoration, are alone worth a long study - And many of the effects in the central hall are very fine, especially round a marble pond, with water-falls spouting in it & peaceful, lovely tree ferns sprouted about - The same Abyssinian Theodore's chariot, a much better pony looking horse, watched the lighting up of the monstrous building with a row of stars all round the top, marking its outline very peacefully, heard the band play, some went to hear the Egyptian king, had a cup of tea & at last came the time to take our reserved seats & see the fire-works - He elegantly sat in the balcony, a space covered in overhead & around, but open in front - The fire-works were very fine, but it would be useless to try to describe them - There were pagodas, & a waterfall of golden rain with green fern leaves at the side, such superb rockets, such quantities of them, & two balloons soaring away with magnesium lights attached, & light like two brilliant stars, attended by dusky moons, then at the last the fountains all illuminated with green & red & blue, as if the water were all lovely colours in varied spray! It was dazzlingly brilliant & very new to me, it was long since I have seen anything of the kind -

They were over before Miss Sullivan expected, & as the carriages were not ordered until I've amused ourselves with watching the crowd, I heard some very fine organ playing in the space arranged for the monster concerts - There were 14,000 people there, the paper said next day, they had a shut up carriage & drive home in, Mrs. A., Dr.

All joined in the Lord's prayer, & the blessing ended the service -

Then we went back for breakfast - A smaller silver urn, but a most graceful design, coffee as before, honey, marmalade, rolls, bread & butter, & dry toast - Treats again on the side-table -

Mrs. Hooker was obliged to be at home before 10'clk. her children's dinner hour & lunch for the elders, & I tho't it wisest to join her, leaving Dr. Gray to visit the Bishop's garden at Fulham with Miss S. - So we bade good bye to that beautiful parlor, the morning sun streaming so cheerily in, the bright fire, its air of comfort & beauty & elegance & splendour - The brougham took us to the Station with from a fortune on the way! But it costs something to poor folks to make visits at fine places with the fees it is customary to give the servants -

Of course getting there so much before I was expected, there was no fire lighted, & things were rather upturned - But I covered myself up on the sofa & solaced myself with Kate's letter, which I found on the table - By lying still & some slight dozing I threw off my trouble, & really bore the long undertaking better than I could have thought -

Dr. Gray came unexpectedly before lunch, having had a nice walk with Miss S., & then taken the next train - But by night he began to have pain in his jaw, & then toothache & tenderness & swelling,

& has been pretty miserable ever since —

However we went to London again yesterday as I had some things I wanted to get, & he said he was not fit for anything else — I wanted too to call on Mrs. Bentham, for I had not yet been there; & I found from Mrs. Hooker we were to go to the bazaar on Saturday (tomorrow) instead of Tuesday. It seemed impossible, getting ready in that hot weather last summer, that one could want all the bundling one does in this chilly England, & I find Dr. Gray & I both have to dress very warmly — So I have been getting flannel for linings, &c. &c. & Confess I am kept busy sewing more than I could have supposed — I found some nice, ingenious, pretty things as one needs must in London, but the prices of every thing! Except floors, I believe every thing the same or dearer than at home — Today the Dicks, Ann & Charlotte, came to lunch — It is the first time I have seen Ann, & a real pleasant, sociable time we had — Dr. Gray did not get up until three o'clock, but seems very much better this day —

We lunched yesterday at Mrs. Bentham's — They have the dearest, little miniature house, just the size for the two —

Mother's letter came yesterday just as we were setting off — But good night & good bye —

Much love to all — Ever Affely, Jane —



Gray, Jane Loring. 1868. "Gray, Jane Oct. 22, 1868 [to Susan M. Jackson]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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