

Tuesday Morn. 20 March.

Truly, my dear Gray, I must think with your (much) gentler half, that you were somewhat "cross" on the morning of Saturday - *Grayia spinosa*, *quotha* - no, nor does even the superlative adjective *spiniosissima*, come up to my ideas - nothing short of *G. ferox*, or *G. horrida* seems to suffice as indicative of the specific character of the writer of the letter before me! Perhaps *G. Phystrix* might be appropriate, for the following paragraph does really represent the prickly (but harmless(!)) little animal rolled up upon himself, concealing all his softer parts from view, & presenting only his sharp spines to all & sundry -

"I have not time nor patience to write to you. I will answer all your questions & talk over all sorts of quiddities when you come on. But write I will not - that's poz" - !!!

Why the very paper seems to hiss & fizz; & the corners of the sheet would soon turn up, did I not keep it from bouncing by holding them down with my left arm, whilst I write - Meekly did I lay before you my (perhaps insufficient, or even injudicious) conclusions, when lo! with gun-cotton force is discharged upon me your annihilating snipe! Well, I have the comfortable reflection that the exploded charge leaves an empty barrel; & even the Hedge-hog has by far the longest period of his life devoted to repose - I must therefore this letter may reach you, in the evening, when, like that amiable animal, you are quietly occupied in munching your warts - black-beetles (?) Be this as it may - I would deprecate your further ire, & thankfully acknowledge the kindness of your proposition, even whilst I feel constrained to decline it,

in accordance with any already expressed views on the subject.
But there is one point on which, could I hope to realize the
scornful force of your peculiar style, I want even feel
disposed to say my own share at scolding - How could you
suppose that I want to permit you to set Gallars (few or
many!) against any little services I might render you, within
or without doors, whilst a sojourner under your friendly roof?
I thought you knew me better, by this time, than to believe
that even your pragmatic & (obst.) firm as you are, could
by any possible means bring me to acquiesce in such an
arrangement - "Oh! No, whitbread, fire upon you, Sir!"

Your other view is a correct one - My Chambers be, in
fact, cost me as you suppose; the rent is payable
equally whether I occupy them or not - but I have so many
traps - not household gods, certainly; not exactly, perhaps, enigmas,
but plagues & incumbrances, when not needed, but which must
yet be cared for, & bestowed somewhere - & are too cumbersome
to be toted great distances without much exp^d. inconvenience.

And now, once more thanking you for the kindness
which you throw at my head so generously

I am, My Sir, your
Very truly &c. J. G.

To Mr. Gray!

Tuesday Morning

My dear Mr. Gray - With the severest sorrow &c I learn
that your health is again declining - I had hoped better
things, & feel disappointed, tho' I shall still continue to hope
that the coming Summer will ~~set~~ set you up.

I dare not write to your high lord any requisition
upon his time - however short - but I should again put him
in one of his tantrums, from the effects of the last of which
I have not yet recovered - I pray you, therefore, to get from
this lord by him of yours (when he is not lashing himself
with his tail, & foaming at the mouth) the style & address
of Mr. Magnin-Landon, to whom I may have occasion
send a paper, by &c, if I get one from Jellinham.
Also, if it seems safe to risk the chafing of the noble animal
by further queries) try to get out of him Dr. Bramfield's address.
"Feeding time" is not thought the safest, I believe, for approaching
(sav.) with animals - but I leave the time when - & the manner
how to your woman's wit - which will not fail - In fact,
we have here, at this time, a certain Miss - whose name
& portrait are on the posting-bills, & who goes into the day
of livers & hairs - Van Ambure fashion! Nothing is to be done, therefore,
I heartily thank you for the kind & friendly manner in
which you second the doctor's invitation, & which I do not
stimulate the less, in that I decline to avail myself of it on
the present occasion - I beg my best respects to your good
papa, & love to the ladies & kind regards to the gentleman of the
lucky party - Very sincerely, &c, J. G.



Prof. A. Gray
Cambridge
Massachusetts-



Carey, John. 1837. "Carey, John Mar. 20 [no year]." *John Carey letters to Asa Gray*

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