

To be forwarded to  
Mrs. Gray  
Box 7, Gardens  
Cambridge, Mass.

Dec. 17 - '58  
Sydney, N.S.W.

Sydney, New South Wales, Dec. 17, 1858

My dear Mr. Gray

I have written so many letters, both on business & private, by the present mail that I am fairly used up, as far as the brain goes. I heartily tired of writing & of pen & paper. Nevertheless I must try & send you a little chat, as this is the last opportunity I shall have of writing from this side the Pacific (what a weary word, my next posting place being Valparaiso - where I hope to arrive sometime in March, if not the end of February. There is no calculating - as vessels put off their sailing so frequently, that till I have passed the lighthouse I shall not believe myself started.

I found your very welcome letter of April 14, waiting for me with a great heap of home letters on my arrival here about ten days ago. So however I almost as soon as I could I by the first ship. I was, I must confess, in the various news it brings of my American friends, & but it does not do to reply to matters at half a year's distance after they have perhaps faded from your correspondence's memory. However the matter of Throgs, which (or stolen) was a serious decision, to be remembered. I hoped that Prof. Henry is out of hot water, & that he has laid low all the opposition of his plans. As I am personally interested (for the present) in the matter, the news of his victory will be still more pleasing. These hateful party spirit quarrels occur all over the world & here as to day they are ripe. I have just been in the middle of the mass or melee, having volunteered to defend the B. F. Gardner here against a Report of a Special Committee of the Legislature Council, got up against the present arrangement, on what appears to the eye like "public grounds" - but what the microscope readily detects to be no better than private malice. Long hatch, & being, for the cockatrice and every way & then. So that I was in a position to rebuke parts of the evidence, laid before Council, & from that I argued on the rottenness of the rest. Only think of long, casual conversations said to have passed between Sir W. Hooper & one of the M. L. Co.



who met him in Society in London - as evidence before  
the Select Committee, for the special & only purpose  
of blasting Mr. Moore (the garden Curator's) reputation!  
I showed that Sir W. could not have said a part  
of this evidence - relating to a matter said to be of fact  
but which I knew to be not a fact - & then left the  
rest of the Hon. Member's evidence to tumble down  
as the parchment assailed was the "Malakoff tower" of  
his argument! - Of course I got well abused, but  
my skin is pretty thick - & I only laugh thereat. One of the  
belligerents calls my letter "stupid & partisan" - another  
ridicules my scientific qualifications, as I am only "a picker  
up of seaweeds" &c. But the result consoles me for all  
the hubbub - as the for<sup>g</sup>ent has just quashed the  
whole proceeding & planned to tell the Select Committee  
"look up their own dirt-pie", for that he did not  
agree with their Report. -

You ask me whether I could arrange to lecture at the  
Dorset on my way home. I reply I should much like  
to spend six weeks with Asa at the Bot. Garden -  
& he would also like to pocket 1000 dollars - but that  
I know not what subject to lecture upon - believing that  
Asa has already lectured the folks to the full, on Botany  
in all its branches. I thought of a subject, Reports of Rep-  
utation - a sort of travelling account of the different flora  
he has seen in a voyage round the world. But as  
Asa has been lecturing at Washington on "Vegetation" it  
is very probable that he has already forestalled  
me both there & at the Dorset. Besides, I could not  
get up diagrams in time, & am uncertain whether  
Asa has the sort I want - Vauquelin's S. Africa, Australia,  
Ceylon, S. America <sup>and Pacific Islands</sup> - for large drawings of the "Portia" off  
remarkable trees - the big Cacti of Mexico - Gnaraltes  
& Welwitschia - Knigia - Nuytsia - Banksia &c. Therefore  
I leave the matter an open question, to be decided on  
by Asa, according to his lights. If arranged, I could only  
take the November course, as before, as I must leave  
for England by the 1<sup>st</sup> boat in January at farthest.

As you see my Journal letters I will say, nothing of my  
six months tour in the Pacific - except that the  
collections are not very extensive & I fear not very  
important. I was very much hurried at places  
where I wished to explore more - & sometimes had  
time to spare at others where there was little to be  
done. I cannot say what land plants - I have  
got, as I had no books of reference - & most  
went to me strange forms - I fear there will  
be nothing new, as I was only at places which  
are frequently visited. At Tonga group I  
chiefly devoted myself to Alga - at Feejee  
altogether to the land flora, as the Alga were  
not captivating. But in many places my stay  
was limited to a bush ramble of a couple of  
hours or so - when I had only time to snatch at  
what came in my way.

My route homeward is now pretty definitely fixed -  
Sydney to Valparaiso - thence up the Coast to Guayaquil -  
detour to Quito & Ende, of Pichincha & back to Guayaquil -  
thence by Steam to Panama - Aspinwall - New York - Boston -  
Liverpool - Dublin - T.C.D. (I wish it were Q.E.D.!) -

I doubt whether I have time to go further north along  
the Coast than Panama. I am strongly advised to  
visit a part of Alga, a little to the north, the name  
chief I at present forget - & I had a fancy for  
looking into the mouth of the Gulf - but I think it  
probable that once at Panama I shall feel  
the action of the Gulfstream so strong that I  
must needs yield to its influence, & drift away  
homewards.

I am sorry to hear such a poor account of Mr. Jackson.  
My kind regards to her - I have not forgotten Box & Co. - or  
Whitlock Hall! - &c. &c. Yours ever affectionately  
{ I am very much grayer than  
I was when you saw me - & even the  
region of the chin is now mottled! - } U. All.



Harvey, William H. 1855. "Harvey, William Henry Dec. 17, 1855 [to Jane Loring Gray]." *William Henry Harvey letters* –.

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