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RECORDS OF LATER LIFE

BY

FRANCES ANN KEMBLE

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RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

PHILADELPHIA, October 26th, 1834.

DEAREST MRS. JAMESON,

However stoutly your incredulity may have held out hitherto against the various "authentic" reports of my marriage, I beg you will, upon receipt of this, immediately believe that I was married on the 7th of June last, and have now been a wife nearly five mortal months. You know that in leaving the stage I left nothing that I regretted; but the utter separation from my family consequent upon settling in this country, is a serious source of pain to me....

With regard to what you say, about the first year of one's marriage not being as happy as the second, I know not how that may be. I had pictured to myself no fairyland of enchantments within the mysterious precincts of matrimony; I expected from it rest, quiet, leisure to study, to think, and to work, and legitimate channels for the affections of my nature....

In the closest and dearest friendship, shades of character, and the precise depth and power of the various qualities of mind and heart, never approximate to such a degree, as to preclude all possibility of occasional misunderstandings.

"Not e'en the nearest heart, and most our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh."

It is impossible that it should be otherwise: for no two human beings were ever fashioned absolutely alike, even in their gross outward bodily form and lineaments, and how should the fine and infinite spirit admit of such similarity with another? But the broad and firm principles upon which all honorable and enduring sympathy is founded, the love of truth, the reverence for right, the abhorrence of all that is base and unworthy, admit of no difference or misunderstanding; and where these exist in the relations of two people united for life, it seems to me that love and happiness, as perfect as this imperfect existence affords, may be realized....

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Of course, kindred, if not absolutely similar, minds, do exist; but they do not often meet, I think, and hardly ever unite. Indeed, though the enjoyment of intercourse with those who resemble us may be very great, I suppose the influence of those who differ from us is more wholesome; for in mere *unison* of thought and feeling there could be no exercise for forbearance, toleration, self-examination by comparison with another nature, or the sifting of one's own opinions and feelings, and testing their accuracy and value, by contact and contrast with opposite feelings and opinions. A fellowship of mere accord, approaching to identity in the nature of its members, would lose much of the uses of human intercourse and its worth in the discipline of life, and, moreover, render the separation of death intolerable. But I am writing you a disquisition, and no one needs it less....

I did read your praise of me, and thank you for it; it is such praise as I wish I deserved, and the sense of the affection which dictated it, in some measure, diminished my painful consciousness of demerit. But I thank you for so pleasantly making me feel the excellence of moral worth, and though the picture you held up to me as mine made me blush for the poor original, yet I may strive to become more like your likeness of me, and so turn your praise to profit. Those who love me will read it perhaps with more satisfaction than my conscience allows me to find in it, and for the pleasure which they must derive from such commendation of me I thank you with all my heart.

What can I tell you of myself? My life, and all its occupations, are of a sober neutral tint. I am busy preparing my Journal for the press. I read but little, and that of old-fashioned kinds. I have never read much, and am disgracefully ignorant: I am looking forward with delight to hours of quiet study, and the mental hoards in store for me. I am busy preparing to leave town; I am at present, and have been ever since my marriage, staying in the house of my brother-in-law, and feel not a little anxious to be in a home of my own. But painters, and carpenters, and upholsterers are dirty divinities of a lower order, not to be moved, or hastened, by human invocations (or even imprecations), and we must e'en bide their time.

I please myself much in the fancying of furniture, and fitting up of the house; and I look forward to a garden, green-house, and dairy, among my future interests, to each of which I intend to addict myself zealously.

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My pets are a horse, a bird, and a black squirrel, and I do not see exactly what more a reasonable woman could desire. Human companionship, indeed, at present, I have not much of; but as like will to like, I do not despair of attracting towards me, by-and-by, some of my own kind, with whom I may enjoy pleasant intercourse; but you can form no idea—none—none—of the intellectual dearth and drought in which I am existing at present.

I care nothing for politics here, ... though I wish this great Republic well. But what are the rulers and guides of the people doing in England? I see the abolition of the Peerage has been suggested, but, I presume, as a bad joke.... If I were a man in England, I should like to devote my life to the cause of national progress, carried on through party politics and public legislation; and if I was not a Christian, I think, every now and then, I should like to shoot Brougham.... You speak of coming to this country: but I do not think you would like it; though you are much respected, admired, and loved here.

I have not met Miss Martineau yet, but I am afraid she is not likely to like me much. I admire her genius greatly, but have an inveterate tendency to worship at all the crumbling shrines, which she and her employers seem intent upon pulling down; and I think I should be an object of much superior contempt to that enlightened and clever female Radical and Utilitarian.

I was introduced to Mrs. Austin some years ago, and she impressed me more, in many ways, than any of the remarkable women I have known. Her husband's constant ill-health kept her in a state of comparative seclusion, and deprived London society of a person of uncommon original mental power and acquired knowledge; in most respects I thought her superior to the most brilliant female members of the society of my day, of which her daughter, Lucy Gordon, was a distinguished ornament.

MRS.
AUSTIN.

Once too, years ago, I passed an evening with Lady Byron, and fell in love with her for quoting the axiom which she does apply, though she did not invent it—"To treat men as if they were better than they are, is the surest way to *make* them better than they are:"—and whenever I think of her I remember that.

I congratulate you on your acquaintance with Madame von Goethe: to know any one who had lived intimately with the greatest genius of this age, and one of the greatest the world has produced, seems to me an immense privilege.

Your letter is dated July—how many things are done that you then meant to do?

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I am just now seeing a great deal of Edward Trelawney; he traveled with us last summer when we went to Niagara, and professing a great regard for me, told me, upon reading your "notice" of me, that he felt much inclined to write to you and solicit your acquaintance....

Good-bye, and God bless you; write to me when the spirit prompts you, and believe me always

Yours very truly,

F. A. B.

[My long experience of life in America presents the ideas and expectations with which I first entered upon it in an aspect at once ludicrous and melancholy to me now. With all an Englishwoman's notions of country interests, duties, and occupations; the village, the school, the poor, one's relations with the people employed on one's place, and one's own especial hobbies of garden, dairy, etc., had all been contemplated by me from a point of view which, taken from rural life in my own country, had not the slightest resemblance to anything in any American existence.

Butler Place—or as I then called it, "The Farm," preferring that homely, and far more appropriate, though less distinctive appellation, to the rather pretentious title, which neither the extent of the property nor size and style of the house

warranted—was not then our own, and we inhabited it by the kind allowance of an old relation to whom it belonged, in consequence of my decided preference for a country to a town residence.

It was in no respect superior to a second-rate farm-house in England, as Mr. Henry Berkeley told a Philadelphia friend of ours, who considered it a model country mansion and rural residence and asked him how it compared with the generality of "country places" in England.

It was amply sufficient, however, for my desires: but not being mine, all my busy visions of gardening and green-house improvement, etc., had to be indefinitely postponed. Subsequently, I took great interest and pleasure in endeavoring to improve and beautify the ground round the house; I made flower-beds and laid out gravel-walks, and left an abiding mark of my sojourn there in a double row of two hundred trees, planted along the side of the place, bordered by the high-road; many of which, from my and my assistants' combined ignorance, died, or came to no good growth. But those that survived our unskillful operations still form a screen of shade to the grounds, and protect them in some measure from the dust and glare of the highway.

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Cultivating my garden was not possible. My first attempt at cultivating my neighbors' good-will was a ludicrous and lamentable failure. I offered to teach the little children of my gardener and farmer, and as many of the village children as liked to join them, to read and write; but found my benevolent proposal excited nothing but a sort of contemptuous amazement. There was the village school, where they received instruction for which they were obliged and willing to pay, to which they were accustomed to go, which answered all their purposes, fulfilled all their desires, and where the small students made their exits and their entrances without bob or bow, pulling of forelock, or any other superstitious observance of civilized courtesy: my gratuitous education was sniffed at alike by parents and progeny, and of course the whole idea upon which I had proffered it was mistaken and misplaced, and may have appeared to them to imply an impertinent undervaluing of a system with which they were perfectly satisfied; of the conditions of which, however, I was entirely ignorant then. These people and their children wanted nothing that I could give them. The "ladies" liked the make of my gowns, and would have borrowed them for patterns with pleasure, and this was all they desired or required from me.

On the first 4th of July I spent there, being alone at the place, I organized (British fashion) a feast and rejoicing, such as I thought should mark the birthday of American Independence, and the expulsion of the tyrannical English from the land. I had a table set under the trees, and a dinner spread for thirty-two guests, to which number the people on the two farms, with children and servants, amounted. Beer and wine were liberally provided, and fireworks, for due honoring of the evening; and though I did not take "the head of the table" (which would have been a usurpation), or make speeches on the "expulsion of the British," I did my best to give my visitors "a good time"; but succeeded only in imposing upon them a dinner and afternoon of uncomfortable constraint, from which the juniors of the party alone seemed happily free. Neither the wine nor beer were touched, and I found they were rather objects of moral reprobation than of material comfort to my Quaker farmer and his family, who were all absolute temperance people; he, indeed, was sorely disinclined to join at all in the "festive occasion," objecting to me repeatedly that it was a "shame and a pity to waste such a fine day for work in doing nothing"; and so, with rather a doleful conviction that my hospitality was as little acceptable to my neighbors as my teaching, I bade my guests farewell, and never repeated the experiment of a 4th of July Celebration dinner at Butler Place.

ANNIVERSARY
OF
AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE

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Of all my blunders, however, that which I made with regard to the dairy was the most ludicrous. Understanding nothing at all of the entirely independent position of our "farmer"—to whom, in fact, the dairy was rented, as well as the meadows that pastured the cattle—and rather dissatisfied at not being able to obtain a daily fresh supply of butter for our home consumption, I went down to the farm-house, and had an interview with the dairymaid; to whom I explained

my desire for a small supply of fresh butter daily for our breakfast table. But words are faint to express her amazement at the proposition; the butter was churned regularly in large quantities twice a week, and the necessary provision for our household being set aside and charged to us, the remainder was sent off to market with the rest of the farm produce, and there disposed of to the public in general. Philadelphia butter had then a high reputation through all the seaboard States, where it was held superior to that of all other markets; it was sold in New York and Baltimore, and sent as far as Boston as a welcome present, and undoubtedly not churned oftener than twice a week. Fresh butter every morning! who ever heard the like? Twice-a-week butter not good enough for anybody! who ever dreamt of such vagaries? The young woman was quiet and Quakerly sober, in spite of her unbounded astonishment at such a demand; but when, having exhausted my prettiest vocabulary of requests and persuasions, and, as I thought, not quite without effect, I turned to leave her, she followed me to the door with this parting address: "Well—anyhow—don't thee fill theeseelf up with the notion that I'm going to churn butter for thee more than twice a week." She probably thought me mad, and I was too ignorant to know that to "bring" a small quantity of butter in the enormous churn she used was a simple impossibility: nor, I imagine, was she aware that any machine of lesser dimensions was ever used for the purpose. I got myself a tiny table-churn, and for a little while made a small quantity of fresh butter myself for our daily breakfast supply; but soon weaned of it, and thought it not worth while—nobody cared for it but myself, and I accepted my provision of market butter twice a week, with no more ado about the matter, together with the conclusion that the dairy at Butler Place would decidedly not be one of its mistress's hobbies.

Of any charitable interest, or humane occupation, to be derived from the poverty of my village neighbors, I very soon found my expectation equally vain. Our village had no *poor*—none in the deplorable English acceptance of that word; none in the too often degraded and degrading conditions it implies. People poorer than others, comparatively poor people, it undoubtedly had—hard workers, toiling for their daily bread; but none who could not get well-paid work or find sufficient bread; and the abject element of ignorant, helpless, hopeless pauperism, looking for its existence to charity, and substituting alms-taking for independent labor, was unknown there. As for "visiting" among them, as technically understood and practiced by Englishwomen among their poorer neighbors, such a civility would have struck mine as simply incomprehensible; and though their curiosity might perhaps have been gratified by making acquaintance with my various (to them) strange peculiarities, I doubt even the amusement they might have derived from them being accepted as any equivalent for what would have seemed the strangest of them all—my visit.

"NO POOR."

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A similar blessed exemption from the curse of pauperism existed in the New England village of Lenox, where I owned a small property, and passed part of many years. Being asked by my friends there to give a public reading, it became a question to what purpose the proceeds of the entertainment could best be applied. I suggested "the poor of the village," but, "We have no poor," was the reply, and the sum produced by the reading was added to a fund which established an excellent public library; for though Lenox had no paupers, it had numerous intelligent readers among its population.

I have spoken of the semi-disapprobation with which my Quaker farmer declined the wine and beer offered him at my 4th of July festival. Some years after, when I found the men employed in mowing a meadow of mine at Lenox with no refreshment but "water from the well," I sent in much distress a considerable distance for a barrel of beer, which seemed to me an indispensable adjunct to such labor under the fervid heat of that summer sky; and was most seriously expostulated with by my admirable friend, Mr. Charles Sedgwick, as introducing among the laborers of Lenox a mischievous need and deleterious habit, till then utterly unknown there, and setting a pernicious example to both employers and employed throughout the whole neighborhood. In short, my poor barrel of beer was an offense to the manners and morals of the community I lived in, and my meadow was mowed upon cold "water from the well"; of which indeed the water

was so delicious, that I often longed for it as King David did for that which, after all, he would not drink, because his mighty men had risked their lives in procuring it for him.¹

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To English people, the character and quality of my "mowers" would seem astonishing enough; at the head of them was the son of a much respected New England judge, himself the owner of a beautiful farm adjoining my small estate, which he cultivated with his own hands—a most amiable, intelligent, and refined man, a gentleman in the deepest sense of the word, my very kind neighbor and friend, whose handsome countenance certainly expressed unbounded astonishment at my malt liquor theory applied to his labor and that of his assistants.]

¹ In writing thus, I do not mean to imply that the abuse of intoxicating liquors, or the vice of drunkenness were then unknown in America. The national habits of the present day would suggest that such a change (albeit in the space of fifty years) would surpass the rapidity of movement of even that most rapidly changing nation. But the use of either beer or wine at the tables of the Philadelphians, when I first lived among them, was quite exceptional. There was a small knot of old-fashioned gentlemen (very like old-fashioned Englishmen they were), by whom good wine was known and appreciated; especially certain exquisite Madeira, of the Bingham and Butler names, the like of which it was believed the world could not produce; but this was Olympian nectar, for the gods alone; and the usual custom of the best society, at the early three-o'clock dinner, was water-drinking. Nor had the immense increase of the German population then flooded Philadelphia with perennial streams from innumerable "lager beer" cellars and saloons: the universal rule, at the time when these letters were written, was absolute temperance; the exception to it, a rare occasional instance of absolute intemperance.

Very many fewer than fifty years ago, a celebrated professional English cricketer consulted, in deep dudgeon, a medical gentleman upon certain internal symptoms, which he attributed entirely to the "damned beastly cold water" which had been the sole refreshment in the Philadelphia cricket-field, and which had certainly heated his temper to a pitch of exasperation which made it difficult for the medical authority appealed to, to keep his countenance during the consultation.

I need not say that, under the above state of things, no provision was made for what I should call domestic or household drunkenness in American families. Beer, or beer money, was not found necessary to sustain the strength of footmen driving about town on a coach-box for an hour or two of an afternoon, or valets laying out their masters' boots and cravats for dinner, or ladies'-maids pinning caps on their mistresses' heads, or even young housemaids condemned to the exhausting labor of making beds and dusting furniture. The deplorable practice of *swilling* adulterated malt liquor two or three times a day, begun in early boy and girlhood among English servants, had not in America, as I am convinced it has with us, laid the foundation for later habits of drinking in a whole class of the community, among whom a pernicious inherited necessity for the indulgence is one of its consequences; while another, and more lamentable one, is the wide-spread immorality, to remedy (and if possible prevent) which is the object of the institution of the Girls' Friendly Society, and similar benevolent associations—none of which I am persuaded will effectually fulfill their object, until the vicious propensity to drink ceases to be fostered in the kitchens and servants' halls of our most respectable people.

PHILADELPHIA, November 27th, 1837.

MY DEAR H—,

If in about a month's time you should grumble and fall out with me for not writing, you will certainly be in some degree justified; for I think it must be near upon three weeks since I wrote to you, which is a sin and a shame. To say that I have not had time to write is nonsense, for in three weeks there are too many days, hours, and minutes, for me to fancy that I *really* had not had sufficient leisure, yet it has almost seemed as if I had not. I have been constantly driving out to the farm, to watch the progress of the painting, whitewashing, etc., etc.: in town I have been engaging servants, ordering china, glass, and furniture, choosing carpets, curtains, and house linen, and devoutly studying all the time Dr. Kitchener's "Housekeeper's Manual and Cook's Oracle." You see, I have been careful and troubled about many things, and through them all you have been several thorns in both my sides; for I thought of you perpetually, and knew I ought to write to you, and wanted and wished to do so—and didn't; for which pray forgive me.

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I want to tell you two circumstances about servants, illustrative of the mind and

SERVANTS.

manners of that class of persons in this country. A young woman engaged herself to me, as lady's-maid, immediately before my marriage; she had been a seamstress, and her health had been much injured by constantly stooping at her sedentary employment. I took her into my service at a salary of £25 a year. She had little to do; I took care that every day she should be out walking for at least an hour; she had two holidays a week, all my discarded wardrobe, and every kindness and attention of every sort that I could bestow upon her, for she was very gentle and pleasant to me, and I liked her very much. A short time ago, she gave me warning; the first reason she assigned for doing so was that she didn't think she should like living in the country, but finally it resolved itself into this—that she could not bear *being a servant*. She told me that she had no intention of seeking any other situation, for that she knew very well that after mine she could find none that she would like, but she said the sense of entire independence was necessary to her happiness, and she could not exist any longer in a state of "*servitude*." She told me she was going to resume her former life, or rather, as I should say, her former process of dying, for it was literally that; she took her wages, and left me. She was very pretty and refined, and rejoiced in the singular Christian name of Unity.²

The other instance of domestic manners in these parts was furnished me by a woman whom I engaged as cook; terms agreed upon, everything settled: two days after, she sent me word that she had "*changed her mind*,"—that's all—isn't it pleasant?...

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My dear H—, you half fly into a rage with me all across the Atlantic, because I tell you that I hope ere long to see you; really that was not quite the return I expected for what I thought would be agreeable news to you; however, hear further.... If I am alive next summer, I hope to spend three months in England: one with my own family and Emily Fitzhugh: one in Scotland; and one with you, if you and Mrs. Taylor *please*.... I have been obliged to give up riding, for some time ago my horse fell with me, and though I was not at all hurt, I was badly frightened; so I trot about on my feet, and drive to and from town and the farm in a little four-wheeled machine called here a wagon.

The other day, for the first time, I explored my small future domain, which is bounded, on the right, by the high-road; on the left, by a not unromantic little mill-stream, with bits of rock, and cedar-bushes, and dams, and, I am sorry to say, a very picturesque, half-tumbled-down factory; on the north, by fields and orchards of our neighbors, and another road; and on the south, by a pretty, deep, shady lane, running from the high-road to the above-mentioned factory.... I think the extent of our *estate* is about three hundred acres. A small portion of it, perhaps some seventy acres, lies on the other side of the high-road. Except a kitchen-garden, there is none that deserves the name: no flower-beds, no shrubberies, no gravel-walks. A large field, now planted with maize, or Indian corn, is on one side of an avenue of maple-trees that leads to the house; on the other is an apple-orchard. There is nothing that can call itself a lawn, though coarse grass grows all round the house. There are four pretty pasture meadows, and a very pretty piece of woodland, which, coasting the stream and mill-dam, will, I foresee, become a favorite haunt of mine. There is a farm-yard, a cider-press, a pond, a dairy, and out-houses, and adjuncts innumerable.

I have succeeded, after difficulties and disasters manifold, in engaging an apparently tolerably decent staff of servants; the house is freshly painted and clean, the furniture being finished with all expedition, the carpets ready to lay down; next week I hope to send our household out, and the week after I sincerely hope we shall transfer ourselves thither, and I shall be in a home of my own.

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Miss Martineau is just now in Philadelphia: I have seen and conversed with her, and I think, were her stay long enough to admit of so agreeable a conclusion, we might become good friends. It is not presumptuous for me to say that, dear H—, because, you know, a very close degree of friendship may exist where there is great disparity of intellect. Her deafness is a serious bar to her enjoyment of society, and some drawback to the pleasure of conversing with her, for, as a man observed to me last night, "One feels so like a fool, saying, 'How do you do?' through a speaking-trumpet in the middle of a drawing-room;" and unshoutable commonplaces form the staple of all drawing-room conversation. They are giving literary parties to her, and balls to one of their own townswomen who has just returned from abroad, which makes Philadelphia rather gayer than usual; and I have had so long a fast from dissipation that I find myself quite excited at the idea of going to a dance again.

I toil on, copying my Journal, and one volume of it is already printed; but now that the object of its publication is gone, I feel rather disgusted at the idea of publishing it at all. You know what my Journal always was, and that no word of it was ever written with the fear of the printer's devil before my eyes, and now that I have become careless as to its money value, it seems to me a mere mass of trivial egotism.... When I sold it, it was an excellent, good book, for I thought it would help to make a small independence for my dear Dall; now she is gone, and it is mere trash, but I have sold it....

My country life will, I hope, be one of study, and I pray and believe, of quiet happiness. I drove out to the farm yesterday, and walked nearly four miles, through meadows and lanes and by-roads, and over plowed fields, and found mill-streams and bits of picturesque rock, and pretty paths to be explored at further length on horseback hereafter.... I have one very great pleasure almost in contemplation; I think it probable that my friend, Miss Sedgwick, will visit Philadelphia this winter. If she does, I am sure she will remain a short time here, which will be a great delight to me.... I wish to have no more *acquaintance*—that is a pure waste of time: I do not wish to know any one whom, if opportunity served, I should not desire to make my friend, as well as my visitor. I have begun learning book-keeping by double entry, and find it unspeakably tiresome; indeed, nothing in it engages my attention but various hypothetical cases of Loss of Ships and Cargoes (as per invoice, so and so, and so and so); Bankruptcies, with so much in the pound for creditors; Dissolutions of partnership, with estimates of joint property, or calculations of profit and loss; Insurances and fire-catastrophes; Divisions of capital invested in failing securities, or unlucky speculations; instead of attending to all which in their purely business aspect, my imagination flies off to the dramatic, passionate, human element involved in such accidents, and I think of all manner of plays and novels, instead of "Cash Accounts," to be extracted therefrom....

COUNTRY
LIFE.

Good-bye, dearest H—.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

² A lady's-maid was quite an unusual member of a household in America, at this time; I remember no lady in Philadelphia who then had such an attendant: it is not impossible that the singularity of her service, and therefore apparently anomalous character of her position, may have helped to disgust my maid Unity with her situation. Probably the influence of Quaker modes of thought, and feeling, and habits of life (even among such of the community as were not "friends"—technically so called), had produced the peculiarities which characterized the Philadelphian society of that day, and made people among whom I lived strange to me—as I to them.

BRANCTOWN, May 1st, 1835.

DEAREST EMILY,

Reflecting upon the loss I have sustained in the death of my dear Dall, you exclaim, "How difficult it is to realize that life has become eternity, hope is become certainty! How strange, how impossible, it seems to conceive a state of existence without expectation, and where all is fulfillment!" I have marked under the word "*impossible*," because such a belief is literally impossible to my mind; the sense of activity, of desire for, and aiming at, and striving after something better than what I am, is so essential a portion of the idea of happiness to me that I absolutely can conceive of no happiness but in the attempt at, and consciousness of, progress. The state where that hope did not exist, and where the spiritual energies were not presented with deeper and higher objects of attainment, would be no state of enjoyment to me. I cannot imagine heaven without inexhaustible means of increasing knowledge and excellence.... Perhaps in that state, dear Emily, we shall be able to find out how a mummy of the days of Memnon should have preserved in its dead grasp a living germ for 3000 years.... [This last sentence referred to a striking fact, which Miss Fitz Hugh's uncle, Mr. William Hamilton, told us, of a bulb found in the sarcophagus of a mummy, which was planted, and actually began to germinate and grow.]

BRANCTOWN, May 27th, 1835.

... It is curious that in a comparatively inactive state of life, the sense of the infinite business of *living* has become far more vivid to me than it ever was before; existence seems so abounding in duties, in objects of interest and energy, in means of excellence and pleasure—happiness, I ought rather to say,—the immense and important happiness of constant endeavor after improvement.... Dear H—, my letter was interrupted here yesterday by a visitor. I will join my thread, and go on with a few words which I have this moment read in Hayward's Appendix to Goethe's "Faust." When Goethe had to bear the death of his only son, he wrote to Zelter thus: "Here then can *the mighty conception of duty* alone hold us erect—I have no other care than to keep myself in equipoise. The body *must*, the spirit *will*, and he who sees a necessary path prescribed to his will has no need to ponder much." The first part of this is noble; but I am not going to do what I used to quarrel so much with you for doing—fill my letters with quotations, or even make disquisitions of them; at any rate, till I have answered your last.

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I am extremely vexed at all the trouble you and Emily have taken about my picture: for the artist himself (Mr. Sully, of Philadelphia) is not satisfied with it, and I am sure would be rather sorry than glad that it were exhibited. That artist is a charming person; and I must tell you how he proceeded about that picture. When your letter came, acknowledging the receipt of it, he asked how you were satisfied: I told him the truth, and what you had written on the subject of the likeness. He did not appear stupidly annoyed, but sorry for your disappointment, and told me that he had been from the first dissatisfied with it as a likeness, himself. He pressed upon my acceptance for you a little melancholy head of me, an admirable and not too much flattered likeness; but as he had given that to his wife, of whom I am very fond, of course I would not deprive her of it; and there the matter rested. But when, some time after, some pictures he had painted for us were paid for, he steadfastly refused the price agreed upon for yours, because it had not satisfied him *himself*. He said that had you been even less pleased with it, he should not *therefore* have refused the money; but his own conscience, he added, bore witness to the truth of your objections, and when that was the case, he invariably acted in the same way, and declined to receive payment for what he didn't consider worth it. As he is our friend, we could not press the money upon him; but we have got him to undertake a portrait of Dr. Mease, and I have added sundry grains more to my regard for him. As to the likeness, had you seen me about three months after my marriage, you would have thought better of it. [The portrait in question, painted for my friend, and now, I believe, still at Ardgillan Castle, was one of six that my friend, Mr. Sully, painted of me at various times, the best likeness of them all being one that he took of me in the part of Beatrice, for which I did not sit.] You talk of "nailing me down," to send me to the Academy, and the expression brought a sudden shuddering recollection to my mind of the dismal night I passed in Boston *packing up our stage clothes* in dear Dall's bedroom *while she was lying in her coffin*. I know not why your words recalled that miserable circumstance to me, and all the mingled feelings that accompanied such an occupation in such company....

MY
PICTURE.

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You ask me if I do not love the country as I used to do. Indeed I do; for, like all best good things, it seems the lovelier for near and intimate acquaintance. Yet the country here, and this place in particular, is not to me what it might be, and will be yet. This place is not ours, and during the life of an old Miss B. will not belong to us: this, of course, keeps my spirit of improvement in check, and indeed, even if it were made over to us, with signing and sealing and all due legal ceremonies, I should still feel some delicacy in making wholesale alterations in a place which an elderly person, to whom it has belonged, remembers such as it is for many years.

The absolute absence of all taste in matters of ornamental cultivation is lamentably evident in the country dwellings of rich and poor alike, as far as I have yet seen in this neighborhood. No natural beauty seems to be perceived and taken advantage of, no defect hidden or adorned; proximity to the road, for obvious purposes of mere convenience, seems to have been the one idea in the selection of building sites; and straight, ungraveled paths, straight rows of trees, straight strips of coarse grass, straight box borders, dividing straight narrow flower-beds, the prevailing idea of a garden; together with a deplorable dearth of flowers, shrubberies, ornamental trees, and everything that really deserves the name.

Ever, as ever, yours,

F. A. B.

[The country between the Wissihiccon and Pennipack—two small picturesque streams flowing, the one into the Schuylkill, the other into the Delaware—is a prosperous farming region, with a pleasingly varied, undulating surface, the arable land diversified with stretches of pretty wild woodland, watered by numerous small water-courses, and divided by the main highroad, once the chief channel of communication between New York and Philadelphia.

Six miles from the latter city, at a village called Branchtown, and only a few yards from the road, stood my home; and it would be difficult for those who do not remember "the old York road," as it was called, and the country between that and Germantown, in the days when these letters were written, to imagine the change which nearly fifty years have produced in the whole region.

No one who now sees the pretty populous villadom which has grown up in every direction round the home of my early married years—the neat cottages and cheerful country houses, the trim lawns and bright flower-gardens, the whole well laid out, tastefully cultivated, and carefully tended suburban district, with its attractive dwellings, could easily conceive the sort of abomination of desolation which its aspect formerly presented to eyes accustomed to the finish and perfection of rural English landscape.

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Between five and six miles of hideous and execrable turnpike road, without shade, and aridly detestable in the glare, heat, and dust of summer, and almost dangerously impassable in winter, made driving into Philadelphia an undertaking that neither love, friendship, nor pleasure—nothing but inexorable business or duty—reconciled one to. The cross roads in every direction were a mere succession of heavy, dusty, sandy pitfalls, or muddy quagmires, where, on foot or on horseback, rapid progress was equally impossible. The whole region, from the very outskirts of the city to the beautiful crest of Chestnut Hill, overlooking its wide expanse of smiling foreground and purple distant horizon, was then, with its mean-looking scattered farm-houses and huge ungainly barns (whatever may have been its agricultural merits), uninteresting and uninviting in all the human elements of the landscape, dreary in summer and dismal in winter, and absolutely void of the civilized cheerful charm that now characterizes it.

NATURE OF
THE
COUNTRY.

Per contra, it then was *country*, and now is suburb: there were woods and lanes where now there are stations and railroads, and the solitude of rural walks and rides instead of the "continuation of the city" which has now cut up and laid waste the old Stenton estate, and threatens the fields of Butler Place and the lovely and beloved woods of Champlost, and will presently convert that whole neighborhood into a mere appendage of Philadelphia, wildly driven over by city rowdies with fast-trotting teams or mad, gigantic daddy-long-legs-looking sulkies, and perambulated by tramps pretending poverty and practicing theft.]

BRANCHTOWN, 1835.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I have not written to you since I received a most interesting and delightful letter of yours from Saxe-Weimar, containing an account of your stay in Goethe's house. My answering you at all is a movement of gratitude for your kindness in remembering me in the midst of such surroundings, and nothing but my faith in your desire to hear something of me would induce me to send into the world of romantic and poetic associations you are now inhabiting, any dispatch from this most prosaic and commonplace world of my adoption.

I think, however, it will please you to hear that I am well and happy, and that my whole state of life and being has assumed a placid, tranquil, serene, and even course, which,

after the violent excitements of my last few years, is both agreeable and wholesome. I should think, ever since my coming out on the stage, I must have lived pretty much at the rate of three years in every one—I mean in point of physical exertion and exhaustion. The season of my repose is, however, arrived, and it seems almost difficult to imagine that, after beginning life in such a tumult of action and excitement, the remainder of my years is lying stretched before me, like a level, peaceful landscape, through which I shall saunter leisurely towards my grave. This is the pleasant probable future: God only knows what changes and chances may sweep across the smiling prospect, but at present, according to the calculations of mere human foresight, none are likely to arise. As I write these words, I *do* bethink me of one quarter from which our present prosperous and peaceful existence might receive a shock—the South. The family into which I have married are large slaveholders; our present and future fortune depend greatly upon extensive plantations in Georgia. But the experience of every day, besides our faith in the great justice of God, forbids dependence on the duration of the mighty abuse by which one race of men is held in abject physical and mental slavery by another. As for me, though the toilsome earning of my daily bread were to be my lot again tomorrow, I should rejoice with unspeakable thankfulness that we had not to answer for what I consider so grievous a sin against humanity.

I believe many years will not pass before this cry ceases to go up from earth to heaven. The power of opinion is working silently and strongly in the hearts of men; the majority of people in the North of this country are opposed to the theory of slavery, though they tolerate its practice in the South: and though the natural selfishness with which men cling to their interests is only at present increasing the vigilance of the planters in guarding their property and securing their prey, it is a property which is crumbling under their feet, and a prey which is escaping from their grasp; and perhaps, before many years are gone by, the black population of the South will be free, and we comparatively poor people—Amen! with all my heart....

I had hoped to revisit England before the winter, ... but this cannot be, and I shall certainly not see England this year, if ever again.... I think women in England are gradually being done justice to, and many sources of goodness, usefulness, and happiness, that have hitherto been sealed, are opened to them now, by a truer and more generous public feeling, and more enlightened views of education.

I saw a good deal of Harriet Martineau, and liked her very much indeed, in spite of her radicalism. She is gone to the South, where I think she cannot fail to do some good, if only in giving another impulse to the stone that already topples on the brink—I mean in that miserable matter of slavery.

Yours very truly,

F. A. B.

[No more striking instance can be given of the rapidity of movement, if not of progress, of American public opinion, than the so-called "Woman's Rights" question. When these letters were written, scarcely a whisper had made itself heard upon this and its relative subjects: the "Female Suffrage" was neither demanded nor desired; Margaret Fuller had not made public her views upon the condition of "Woman in the Nineteenth Century"; the different legislatures of the different States had not found it expedient to enact statutes securing to married women the independent use of their own property, and women's legal disabilities were, in every respect, much the same in the United States as in the mother country. Now, however, so great and rapid has been the change of public opinion in this direction in America, that in some of the States married women may not only possess and inherit property over which their husbands have no control, but their personal earnings have been so secured to them that neither their husbands nor their husbands' creditors can touch them; while at the same time, strange to say, their husbands are still liable for their support, and answerable for any debts they may contract, and men must pay these independent ladies' milliners' bills, if all these additional *rights* have not brought with them some additional sense of justice, honesty, and old-fashioned right and wrong.

CLAIMS OF
WOMEN.

This amazing consideration for the property claims of women is not, however, without its possible advantages for the magnanimous sex bestowing it; and unprincipled speculators, gamblers, in pursuits calling themselves business, but in reality mere games of chance, may now secure themselves from the ruin they deserve, and have incurred, by settling upon their wives large sums of money, or estates, which, by virtue of the women's independent legal tenure of property, effectually enable their husbands to baffle the claims of their creditors. Every use has its abuse. The melancholy process of divorce, by which an insupportable yoke may be dissolved with the sanction of the law, is achieved in America with a facility and upon grounds inadmissible for that purpose in England. Pennsylvania has long followed the German practice in this particular, allowing divorce, in cases of non-cohabitation for a space of two years, to either party claiming it upon those grounds; in some of the Western States the ease with which divorces are obtained is untrammelled by any condition but that of a sufficient term of residence, often a very brief one, within the State jurisdiction.

Women lecture upon all imaginable subjects, and are listened to, whether treating of the right of their sex to the franchise, or the more unapproachable theme of its degraded misery in the public prostitution legally practiced in all the cities of this great New World, or the frantic vagaries of their theory of so-called Free Love. They are professors in colleges, practicing physicians; not yet, I believe, ordained clergywomen (the Quakers admit the female right to preach without the ceremony of laying on of hands), or admitted members of the bar; but it is difficult to imagine society existing at all under more absolute conditions of freedom for its female members than the women of the United States now enjoy. It is a pity that the use sometimes made of so many privileges forms a powerful argument to reasonable people in other countries against their possession.^{3]}

³ I have learned since writing the above that in some of the Western States and cities—among others, I believe, Chicago—women are now practicing lawyers. A "legal lady" made at one time, I know not how successfully, an attempt to become a received member of the profession in Washington. In this, as in all other matters, the several States exercise uncontrolled jurisdiction within their own borders, and the Western States are naturally inclined to favor by legislation all attempts of this description; they are essentially the "New World." In the Eastern States European traditions still influence opinion, and women are not yet admitted members of the New York bar.

BRANCHTOWN, 1835.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

It is so very long since I have written to you, that I almost fear my handwriting and signature may be strange to your eyes and memory alike. As, however, silence can hardly be more than a *passive* sin—a sin of omission, not commission—I hope they will not be unwelcome to you. I am desirous you should still preserve towards me some of your old kindness of feeling, for I wish to borrow some of it for the person who will carry this letter over the Atlantic—a very interesting young friend of mine, who begged of me, as a great favor, a letter of introduction to you.... I think you will find that had she fallen in your way *unintroduced*, she would have recommended herself to your liking. [The lady in question was Miss Appleton, of Boston, afterwards Mrs. Robert Mackintosh, whose charming sister, cut off by too sad and premature a doom, was the wife of the poet Longfellow.]

And now, what shall I tell you? After so long a silence, I suppose you think I ought to have plenty to say, yet I have not. What should a woman write about, whose sole occupations are eating, drinking, and sleeping; whose pleasures consist in nursing her baby, and playing with a brace of puppies; and her miseries in attempting to manage six republican servants—a task quite enough to make any "Quaker kick his mother," a grotesque illustration of demented desperation, which I have just learned, and which is peculiarly appropriate in these parts? Can I find it in my conscience, or even in the nib of my pen, to write you all across the great waters that my child has invented two teeth, or how many pounds of tea, sugar, flour, etc., etc., I distribute weekly to the above-

mentioned household of unmanageables? To write, as to speak, one should have something to say, and I have literally nothing, except that I am well in mind, body, and estate, and hope you are so too.

Our summer has been detestable: if America had the grace to have fairies (but they don't cross the Atlantic), I should think the little Yankee Oberon and Titania had been by the ears together: such wintry squalls! such torrents of rain! The autumn, however, has been fine, and we spent part of it in one of the most charming regions imaginable.

A "Happy Valley" indeed!—the Valley of the Housatonic, locked in by walls of every shape and size, from grassy knolls to bold basaltic cliffs. A beautiful little river wanders singing from side to side in this secluded Paradise, and from every mountain cleft come running crystal springs to join it; it looks only fit for people to be baptized in (though I believe the water is used for cooking and washing purposes.)

A "HAPPY
VALLEY."

In one part of this romantic hill-region exists the strangest worship that ever the craving need of religious excitement suggested to the imagination of human beings.

I do not know whether you have ever heard of a religious sect called the Shakers; I never did till I came into their neighborhood: and all that was told me before seeing them fell short of the extraordinary effect of the reality. Seven hundred men and women, whose profession of religion has for one of its principal objects the extinguishing of the human race and the end of the world, by devoting themselves and persuading others to celibacy and the strictest chastity. They live all together in one community, and own a village and a considerable tract of land in the beautiful hill country of Berkshire. They are perfectly moral and exemplary in their lives and conduct, wonderfully industrious, miraculously clean and neat, and incredibly shrewd, thrifty and money-making.

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Their dress is hideous, and their worship, to which they admit spectators, consists of a fearful species of dancing, in which the whole number of them engage, going round and round their vast hall or temple of prayer, shaking their hands like the paws of a dog sitting up to beg, and singing a deplorable psalm-tune in brisk jig time. The men without their coats, in their shirt-sleeves, with their lank hair hanging on their shoulders, and a sort of loose knee-breeches—knickerbockers—have a grotesque air of stage Swiss peasantry. The women without a single hair escaping from beneath their hideous caps, mounted upon very high-heeled shoes, and every one of them with a white handkerchief folded napkin-fashion and hanging over her arm. In summer they all dress in white, and what with their pale, immovable countenances, their ghost-like figures, and ghastly, mad spiritual dance, they looked like the nuns in "Robert the Devil," condemned, for their sins in the flesh, to post-mortem decency and asceticism, to look ugly, and to dance like ill-taught bears.

The whole exhibition was at once so frightful and so ludicrous, that I very nearly went off into hysterics, when I first saw them.

We shall be in London, I hope, in the beginning of May next year, when I trust you will be there also, when I will edify you with all my new experiences of life, in this "other world," and teach you how to dance like a Shaker. Be a good Christian, forgive me, and write to me again, and believe me,

Yours truly,

F. A. B.

BRANCHTOWN, June 27th, 1835.

MY DEAREST H—,

... Did I tell you that the other day our farmer's wife sent me word that she had seen me walking in the garden in a gown that she had liked very much, and wished I would let her have the pattern of it? This message surprised me a little, but, upon due reflection, I carried the gown down to her with an agreeable sense of my own graceful condescension. My farmer's wife gave me small thanks, and I am sure thought I had done just what I ought....

I have resumed my riding, and am beginning to feel once more like my unmarried self. I may have told you that I had some time ago a pretty thoroughbred mare, spirited and

good tempered too; but she turned out such an inveterate stumbler that I have been obliged to give up riding her, as, of course, my neck is worth more to me even than my health. So, this morning I have been taking a most delectable eight miles' trot upon a huge, high, heavy carriage-horse, who all but shakes my soul out of my body, but who is steady upon his legs, and whom I shall therefore patronize till I can be more *genteelly* mounted with safety.

You bid me study Natural Philosophy ... and ask me what I read; but since my baby has made her entrance into the world, I neither read, write, nor cast up accounts, but am as idle, though not nearly as well dressed, as the lilies of the field; my reading, if ever I take to such an occupation again, is like, I fear, to be, as it always has been, rambling, desultory, and unprofitable....

NEGRO
SLAVERY.

Come, I will take as a sample of my studies, the books just now lying on my table, all of which I have been reading lately: Alfieri's Life, by himself, a curious and interesting work; Washington Irving's last book, "A Tour on the Prairies," rather an ordinary book, upon a not ordinary subject, but not without sufficiently interesting matter in it too; Dr. Combe's "Principles of Physiology"; and a volume of Marlowe's plays, containing "Dr. Faustus." I have just finished Hayward's Translation of Goethe's "Faust," and wanted to see the old English treatment of the subject. I have read Marlowe's play with more curiosity than pleasure. This is, after all, but a small sample of what I read; but if you remember the complexion of my studies when I was a girl at Heath Farm, and read Jeremy Taylor and Byron together, I can only say they are still apt to be of the same heterogeneous quality. But my brain is kept in a certain state of activity by them, and that, I suppose, is one of the desirable results of reading. As for writing anything, or things—good gracious! no, I should think not indeed! It is true, if you allude to the mechanical process of caligraphy, here is close to my elbow a big book, in which I enter all passages I meet with in my various readings tending to elucidate obscure parts of the Bible: I do not mean disputed points of theology, mysteries, or significations more or less mystical, but simply any notices whatever which I meet with relating to the customs of the Jews, their history, their language, the natural features of their country; and so bearing upon my reading of passages in the Old Testament. I read my Bible diligently every day, and every day wish more and more earnestly that I understood what I was reading; but Philip does not come my way, or draw near and join himself to me as I sit in my wagon.

I mean this with regard to the Old Testament only, however. The life of Christ is that portion of the New alone vitally important to me, and that, thank God, is comparatively comprehensible.

I have just finished writing a long and vehement treatise against negro slavery, which I wanted to publish with my Journal, but was obliged to refrain from doing so, lest our fellow-citizens should tear our house down, and make a bonfire of our furniture—a favorite mode of remonstrance in these parts with those who advocate the rights of the unhappy blacks.

You know that the famous Declaration of Independence, which is to all Americans what Moses commanded God's Law to be to the Israelites, begins thus: "Whereas all men are born free and equal." Somebody, one day, asked Jefferson how he reconciled that composition of his to the existence of slavery in this country; he was completely surprised for a moment by the question, and then very candidly replied, "By God! I never thought of that before."

To proceed with a list of my *works*. Here is an article on the writings of Victor Hugo, another on an American book called "Confessions of a Poet," a whole heap of verses, among which sundry doggerel epistles to you; and last, not least, the present voluminous prose performance for your benefit.

These are some of my occupations: then I do a little housekeeping; then I do, as the French say, a little music; then I waste a deal of time in feeding and cleaning a large cageful of canary-birds, of which, as the pleasure is mine, I do not choose to give the rather disgustful trouble to any one else; strolling round the garden, watching my bee-hives, which are full of honey just now; every chink and cranny of the day between all this desultoriness, is filled with "the baby"; and *study*, of every sort (but that most prodigious study of any sort, *i.e.*, "the baby,") seems further off from me than ever....

I am looking forward with great pleasure to a visit we intend paying Miss Sedgwick in September. She is a dear friend of mine, and I am very happy when with her.

And where will you be next spring, wanderer? for we shall surely be in England. [Miss St. Leger and Miss Wilson were wintering at Nice for the health of the latter.] Will you not come back from the ends of the earth that I may not find the turret-chamber empty, and the Dell without its dear mistress at Ardgillan?

Dear H—, I shall surely see you, if I live, in less than a year, when we shall have so much to say to each other that we shall not know where to begin, and had better not begin, perhaps; for we shall know still less where to stop.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

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BRANCHTOWN, October 31st, 1835.

MY DEAREST H—,

I wonder where this will find you, and how long it will be before it does so. I have been away from home nearly a month, and on my return found a long letter from you waiting for me.... I cannot believe that women were intended to suffer as much as they do, and be as helpless as they are, in child-bearing. In spite of the third chapter of Genesis, I cannot believe [the beneficent action of ether had not yet mitigated the female portion of the primeval curse] that all the agony and debility attendant upon the entrance of a new creature into life were ordained; but rather that both are the consequences of our many and various abuses of our constitutions, and infractions of God's natural laws.

WOMEN'S
SUFFERINGS.

The mere items of tight stays, tight garters, tight shoes, tight waistbands, tight arm-holes, and tight bodices,—of which we are accustomed to think little or nothing, and under the bad effects of which, most young women's figures are suffered to attain their growth, both here and in civilized Europe,—must have a tendency to injure irreparably the compressed parts, to impede circulation and respiration, and in many ways which we are not aware of, as well as by the more obvious evils which they have been proved to produce, destroy the health of the system, affect disastrously all its functions, and must aggravate the pains and perils of child-bearing.... Many women here, when they become mothers, seem to lose looks, health, and strength, and are mere wrecks, libels upon the great Creator's most wonderful contrivance, the human frame, which, in their instance, appears utterly unfit for the most important purpose for which He designed it. Pitiable women! comparatively without enjoyment or utility in existence. Of course, this result is attributable to many various causes, and admits of plenty of individual exceptions, but I believe tight-lacing, want of exercise, and a perpetual inhaling of overheated atmosphere, to be among the former.... They pinch their pretty little feet cruelly, which certainly need no such *embellishment*, and, of course, cannot walk; and if they did, in the state of compression to which they submit for their beauty's sake, would suffer too much inconvenience, if not pain, to derive any benefit from exercise under such conditions....

When one thinks of the tragical consequences of all this folly, one is tempted to wish that the legislature would interfere in these matters, and prevent the desperate injury which is thus done to the race. The climate, which is the general cause assigned for the want of health of the American women, seems to me to receive more than its due share of blame. The Indian women, the squaws, are, I believe, remarkable for the ease with which they bear their children, the little pain they suffer comparatively, and the rapidity with which they regain their strength; but I think in matters of diet, dress, exercise, regularity in eating, and due ventilation of their houses, the Americans have little or no regard for the laws of health; and all these causes have their share in rendering the women physically incapable of their natural work, and unequal to their natural burdens.

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What a chapter on American female health I have treated you to!... Sometimes I write to you what I think, and sometimes what I do, and still it seems to me it is the thing I have not written about which you desire to know.... You ask if I am going through a course of Channing,—not precisely, but a course of Unitarianism, for I attend a Unitarian Church. I did so at first by accident (is there such a thing?), being taken thither by the people to

whom I now belong, who are of that mode of thinking and have seats in a church of that denomination, and where I hear admirable instruction and exhortation, and eloquent, excellent preaching, that does my soul good.... I am acquainted with several clergymen of that profession, who are among the most enlightened and cultivated men I have met with in this country. Of course, these circumstances have had some effect upon my mind, but they have rather helped to develop, than positively cause, the result you have observed....

In reading my Bible—my written rule of life—I find, of course, much that I have no means of understanding, and much that there are no means of understanding, matters of faith.... Doctrinal points do not seem to me to avail much here: how much they may signify hereafter, who can tell? But the daily and hourly discharge of our duties, the purity, humanity, and activity of our lives, do avail much here; all that we can add to our own worth and each other's happiness is of evident, palpable, present avail, and I believe will prove of eternal avail to our souls, who may carry hence all they have gained in this mortal school to as much higher, nobler, and happier a sphere as the just judgment of Almighty God shall after death promote them to....

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I have been for the last two days discharging a most vexatious species of duty—vexatious, to be sure, chiefly from my own fault. We have a household of six servants, and no housekeeper (such an official being unknown in these parts); a very abundant vegetable garden, dairy, and poultry-yard; but I have been very neglectful lately of all domestic details of supply from these various sources, and the consequences have been manifold abuses in the kitchen, the pantry, and the store-room; and disorder and waste, more disgraceful to me, even, than to the people immediately guilty of them. And I have been reproaching myself, and reproving others, and heartily regretting that, instead of Italian and music, I had not learned a little domestic economy, and how much bread, butter, flour, eggs, milk, sugar, and meat ought to be consumed per week in a family of eight persons, not born ogres.... I am sorry to find that my physical courage has been very much shaken by my confinement. Whereas formerly I scarcely knew the sensation of fear, I have grown almost cowardly on horseback or in a carriage. I do not think anybody would ever suspect that to be the case, but I know it in my secret soul, and am much disgusted with myself in consequence.... Our horses ran away with the carriage the other day, and broke the traces, and threatened us with some frightful catastrophe. I had the child with me, and though I did not lose my wits at all, and neither uttered sound nor gave sign of my terror, after getting her safely out of the carriage and alighting myself I shook from head to foot, for the first time in my life, with fear; and so have only just attained my full womanhood: for what says Shakespeare?—

"A woman naturally born to fears."

... God bless you, dearest friend.

I am ever yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

BRANCHTOWN, December 2d, 1835.

DEAREST DOROTHY,

... I was at first a little disappointed that my baby was not a man-child, for the lot of woman is seldom happy, owing principally, I think, to the many serious mistakes which have obtained universal sway in female education. I do not believe that the just Creator intended one part of his creatures to lead the sort of lives that many women do.... In this country the difficulty of giving a girl a good education is even greater, I am afraid, than with us, in some respects. I do not think even accomplishments are well taught here; at least, they seem to me for the most part very flimsy, frivolous, and superficial, poor alike both in quality and quantity. More solid acquirements do not abound among my female acquaintance either, and the species of ignorance one encounters occasionally is so absolute and profound as to be almost amusing, and quite curious; while there is, also, quite enough native shrewdness, worldly acuteness, and smattering of shallow superficial reading, to produce a result which is worthless and vulgar to a pitiable degree. Of course there are exceptions to this narrowness and aridity of intellectual

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EDUCATION
IN AMERICA

culture, but either they are really rare exceptions, or I have been especially unfortunate....

My dear Dorothy, this letter was begun three months ago; I mislaid it, and in the vanity of my imagination, believed that I had finished and sent it; and lo! yesterday it turns up—a fragment of which the Post Office is still innocent: and after all, 'tis a nonsense letter, to send galloping the wild world over after you. It seems hardly worth while to put the poor empty creature to the trouble of being sea-sick, and going so far. However, I know it will not be wholly worthless to you if it brings you word of my health and happiness, both of which are as good as any reasonable human mortal can expect....

Kiss dear Harriet for me, and believe me,

Very affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BRANCHTOWN, March 1st, 1836.

DEAREST H—,

Are you conjecturing as to the fate of three letters which you have written to me from the Continent? all of which I have duly received, I speak it with sorrow and shame; and certainly 'tis no proof that my affection is still the same for you, dear H—, that I have not been able to rouse myself to the effort of writing to you.... You will ask if my baby affords me no employment? Yes, endless in prospect and theory, dear H—; but when people talk of a baby being such an "occupation," they talk nonsense, such an *idleness*, they ought to say, such an interruption to everything like reasonable occupation, and to any conversation but baby-talk....

You ask of my society. I have none whatever: we live six miles from town, on a road almost impracticable in the fairest as well as the foulest weather, and though people occasionally drive out and visit me, and I occasionally drive in and return their calls, and we semi-occasionally, at rare intervals, go in to the theatre, or a dance, I have no friends, no intimates, and no society.

Were I living in Philadelphia, I should be but little better off; for though, of course, there, as elsewhere, the materials for good society exist, yet all the persons whom I should like to cultivate are professionally engaged, and their circumstances require, apparently, that they should be so without intermission; and they have no time, and, it seems, but little taste for social enjoyment.

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There is here no rich and idle class: there are two or three rich and idle individuals, who have neither duties nor influence peculiar to their position, which isolates without elevating them; and who, as might be expected in such a state of things, are the least respectable members of the community. The only unprofessional man that I know in Philadelphia (and he studied, though he does not practice, medicine) who is also a person of literary taste and acquirement, has lamented to me that all his early friends and associates having become absorbed in their several callings, whenever he visits them he feels that he is diverting them from the labor of their lives, and the earning of their daily bread.

MY
OCCUPATIONS.

No one that I belong to takes the slightest interest in literary pursuits; and though I feel most seriously how desirable it is that I should study, because I positively languish for intellectual activity, yet what would under other circumstances be a natural pleasure, is apt to become an effort and a task when those with whom one lives does not sympathize with one's pursuits.... Without the stimulus of example, emulation, companionship, or sympathy, I find myself unable to study with any steady purpose; however, in the absence of internal vigor, I have borrowed external support, and on Monday next I am going to begin to read Latin with a master.... Any pursuit to which I am compelled will be very welcome to me, and I have chosen that in preference to German, as mentally more bracing, and therefore healthier.

I have already described what calls itself my garden here—three acres of kitchen-garden, and a quarter of an acre of flower-garden, divided into three straight strips, bordered with mangy box, and separated from the vegetables by a white-washed paling.

I am the more provoked with this, because there are certain capabilities about the place; money is spent in keeping it up, and three men, entitled gardeners, are constantly at work on it; and it is not want of means, but of taste and knowledge and care, that makes it what it is. The piece of coarse grass dignified by the name of a lawn, in front of the house, is mowed twice in the whole course of the summer; of course, during the interval, it looks as if we were raising a crop of poor hay under our drawing-room windows. However, the gardening of Heaven is making the whole earth smile just now; and the lights and shadows of the sky, and wild flowers and verdure of the woods are beneficently beautiful, and make my spirit sing for joy, in spite of the little that men have done here gratefully to improve Heaven's gifts. This is not audacious, for Adam and Eve landscape-gardened in Paradise, you know; and I wish some little of their craft were to be found among their descendants hereabouts.

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My paper is at an end: do I tell you "nothing of my mind and soul"? What, then, is all this that I have been writing? Is it not telling you more than if I were to attempt to detail to you methodically, circumstantially (and perhaps unconsciously quite falsely), the state of either?...

I am expecting a visit from Dr. Channing, whom I love and revere. After reading a sermon of his before going to bed the other night, I dreamt towards morning that I was in Heaven, from whence I was literally pulled down and awakened to get up and go to church, which, you will allow, was a ridiculous instance of bathos and work of supererogation. But, dear me, that dream was very pleasant! Rising, and rising, and rising, into ever-increasing light and space, not with effort and energy, as if flying, but calmly and steadily soaring, as if one's *property* was to float upwards, *mounting eternally*. I send you my dream across the Atlantic; there is something of my "mind and soul" in that.

God bless you, dear.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

[After my first introduction to Dr. Channing, I never was within reach of him without enjoying the honor of his intercourse and the privilege of hearing him preach. I think he was nowhere seen or heard to greater advantage than at his cottage near Newport, in the neighborhood of which a small church afforded the high advantage of his instruction to a rural congregation, as different as possible from the highly cultivated Bostonians who flocked to hear him whenever his state of health permitted him to preach in the city.

King's Chapel, as it originally was called, dating back to days when the colony of Massachusetts still acknowledged a king, was dedicated at first to the Episcopal service of the Church of England, and I believe the English Liturgy in some form was the only ritual used in it. But when I first went to America, Boston and the adjacent College, Cambridge, were professedly Unitarian, and the service in King's Chapel was such a modification of the English Liturgy as was compatible with that profession: a circumstance which enabled its frequenters to unite the advantage of Dr. Channing's eloquent preaching with the use of that book of prayer and praise unsurpassed and unsurpassable in its simple sublimity and fervid depth of devotion.

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I retain a charmingly comical remembrance of the last visit I paid Dr. Channing, at Newport; when, wishing to take me into his garden, and unwilling to keep me waiting while he muffled himself up, according to his necessary usual precautions, he caught up Mrs. Channing's bonnet and shawl, and sheltering his eyes from the glare of the sun by pulling the bonnet well down over his nose, and folding the comfortable female-wrap (it was a genuine woman's-shawl, and not an ambiguous plaid of either or no sex) well over his breast, he walked round and round his garden, in full view of the high-road, discoursing with the peculiar gentle solemnity and deliberate eloquence habitual to him, on subjects the gravity of which was in laughable contrast with his costume, the absurdity of which only made me smile when it recurred to my memory, after I had taken leave of him and ceased hearing his wise words.]

... There is one interest and occupation of an essentially practical nature, such as would give full scope to the most active energies and intellect, in which I am becoming passionately interested,—I mean the cause of the Southern negroes.

We live by their labor; and though the estate is not yet ours (elder members of the family having a life interest in it), it will be our property one day, and a large portion of our income is now derived from it.

I was told the other day, that the cotton lands in Georgia, where our plantation is situated, were exhausted; but that in Alabama there now exist wild lands along the Mississippi, where any one possessing the negroes necessary to cultivate them, might, in the course of a few years, realize an enormous fortune; and asked, jestingly, if I should be willing to go thither. I replied, in most solemn earnest, that I would go with delight, if we might take that opportunity of at once placing our slaves upon a more humane and Christian footing. Oh, H—! I can not tell you with what joy it would fill me, if we could only have the energy and courage, the humanity and justice, to do this: and I believe it might be done.

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Though the blacks may not be taught to read and write, there is no law which can prevent one from living amongst them, from teaching them all—and how much that is!—that personal example and incessant personal influence can teach. I would take them there, and I would at once explain to them my principles and my purpose: I would tell them that in so many years I expected to be able to free them, but that those only should be liberated whose conduct I perceived during that time would render their freedom prosperous to themselves, and safe to the community. In the mean time I would allot each a profit on his labor; I would allow them leisure and property of their own; I would establish a Savings Bank for them, so that at the end of their probation, those into whom I had been able to instill industrious and economical habits should be possessed of a small fund wherewith to begin the world; I would remain there myself always, and, with God's assistance and blessing, I do believe a great good might be done. How I wish—oh, how I wish we might but make the experiment! I believe in my soul that this is our peculiar duty in life. We all have some appointed task, and assuredly it can never be that we, or any other human beings were created merely to live surrounded with plenty, blessed with every advantage of worldly circumstance, and the ties of happy social and domestic relations,—it cannot be that anybody ought to have all this, and yet do nothing for it; nor do I believe that any one's duties are bounded by the half-animal instincts of loving husband, wife, or children, and the negative virtue of wronging no man: besides we *are* villainously wronging many men.... What would I not give to be able to awaken in others my own feeling of this heavy responsibility!

I have just done reading Dr. Channing's book on slavery; it is like everything else of his, written in the pure spirit of Christianity, with judgment, temper and moderation, yet with abundant warmth and energy. It has been answered with some cleverness, but in a sneering, satirical tone, I hear. I have not yet read this reply, but intend doing so; though it matters little what is said by the defenders of such a system: truth is God, and must prevail.

Enough of this side of the water. Your wanderings abroad, dear H—, created a feeling of many mingled melancholies in my mind: in the first place, you are so very, very far off, the dead seem scarcely further; perhaps they indeed are nearer to us, for I believe we are surrounded by "a cloud of witnesses." Your description of those southern lands is sad to me. I have always had a passionate yearning for those regions where man has been so glorious, and Nature is so still. I thought of your various emotions at my uncle's grave at Lausanne. Life seems to me so strange, that the chain of events which forms even the most commonplace existence has, in its unexpectedness, something of the marvelous.

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I rejoice that dear Dorothy is benefited by your traveling, and pray for every blessing on you both. As to the possibility of my coming to England and not finding you there, my dear H—; I can say nothing and you must do what you think right.

God bless you.

I am ever yours,

[The ideas and expectations, with which I entered upon my Northern country life, near Philadelphia, were impossible of fulfillment, and simply ridiculous under the circumstances. Those with which I contemplated an existence on our Southern estate, or the new one suggested in this letter, in the State of Alabama, were not only ridiculously impossible, but would speedily have found their only result in the ruin, danger, and very probably death, of all concerned in the endeavor to realize them.

The laws of the Southern States would certainly have been forestalled by the speedier action of lynch-law, in putting a stop to my experimental abolitionism. And I am now able to understand, and appreciate, what, when I wrote this letter, I had not the remotest suspicion of,—the amazement and dismay, the terror and disgust, with which such theories as those I have expressed in it must have filled every member of the American family with which my marriage had connected me; I must have appeared to them nothing but a mischievous madwoman.]

BRANCHTOWN, March 28th, 1836.

MY DEAREST H—,

You say that thinking of you makes me fancy that I have written to you: not quite so, for no day passes with me without many thoughts of you, and I certainly am well aware that I do not write to you daily.... But, dearest H—, once for all, believe this: whether I am silent altogether, or simply unsatisfactory in my communications, I love you dearly, and hope for a happier intercourse with you,—if never here—hereafter, in that more perfect state, where, endowed with higher natures, our communion with those we love will, I believe, be infinitely more intimate than it can be here, subject as it is to all the imperfections of our present existence.

You laugh at me for what you consider my optimism, my incredulity with regard to the evils of this present life, and seem to think I am making out a case of no little absurdity in ascribing so much of what we suffer to ourselves. But I do not think my view of the matter is altogether visionary. Even from disease and death, those stern and inexorable conditions of our present state, spring, as from bitter roots, some of the sweetest virtues of which our nature is capable; and I do not believe it to be the great and good God's appointment that the earth should be loaded as it is with barren suffering and sorrow. And as to believing that women were intended to lead the helpless, ailing, sickly, unprofitable, and unpleasurable lives, which so many of them seem to lead in this country, I think it would be a direct libel on our Creator to profess such a creed....

I walked into town, the other day, a distance of only six miles, and was very much tired by the expedition: to be sure I am not a good walker, riding being my *natural* exercise, in which I persist, in spite of stumbling and shying horses, high-roads three feet deep in dust, and by-roads three feet deep in mud, at one and the same time. Taking exercise has become, instead of a pleasure, a sometimes rather irksome duty to me; a lonely ride upon a disagreeable horse not being a great enjoyment; but I know that my health has its reward, and I persevere....

The death of an elderly lady puts us in possession of our property, which she had held in trust during her life.... Increase of fortune brings necessarily increased responsibility and occupation, and for that I am not sorry, though the circumstance of the death of this relation, of whom I knew and had seen but little, has been fruitful in disappointments to me.... In the first place, I have been obliged to forego a visit from my delightful friend, Miss Sedgwick, who was coming to spend some time with me; this, in my lonely life, is a real privation. In the next place, our proposed voyage to England is indefinitely postponed, and from a thing so near as to be reckoned a certainty (for we were to have sailed the 20th of next month), it has withdrawn itself into the misty regions of a remote futurity, of the possible events of which we cannot even guess....

We have had a most unprecedented winter; the cold has been dreadful, and the snow, even now, in some places, lies in drifts from three to five feet deep. There is no spring here; the winter is with us to-day, and to-morrow the heat will be oppressive; and in a

week everything will be like summer, without the full-fledged foliage to temper the glare.

I have taken up your letter to see if there are any positive questions in it, that I may not this time be guilty of not replying to you while I answer it....

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I do not give up my music quite, but generally, after dinner, pass an hour at the piano, not so much from the pleasure it now gives me, as from the conviction that it is wrong to give up even the smallest of our resources; and also because, as wise Goethe says, "We are too apt to suffer the mean things of life to overgrow the finer nature within us, therefore it is expedient that at least once a day we read a little poetry, or sing a song, or look at a picture." Upon this principle, I still continue to play and sing sometimes, but no longer with any great pleasure to myself.

Good-bye, dearest H—.... Oh, I should like to see you once again!

I am ever yours,

F. A. B.

BRANCHTOWN, July 31st, 1836.

MY DEAREST H—,

You ask me if I do not write anything; yes, sometimes reviews, for which I am solicited. It is an occupation, but returns neither reputation, the articles being anonymous; nor remuneration, as they are also gratuitous; and I do it without much interest, simply not to be idle. As to anything of more literary pretension, I never shall attempt it again: I do not think nature intended mothers to be authors of anything but their babies; because, as I told you, though a baby is not an "occupation," it is an absolute hindrance to everything else that can be called so. I cannot read a book through quietly for mine; judge, therefore, how little likely I am to write one....

You ask me if I take no pleasure in gardening; and suggest the cutting of carnations and raising of lettuce, as wholesome employments for me. The kitchen-garden is really the only well-attended-to horticulture of this place. The gardener raises early lettuces and cauliflowers in frames, which remunerate him, either by their sale in market or by prizes that he may obtain for them. His zeal in floriculture is less; as you will understand, when I tell you that, discovering some early violets blowing along a sunny wall in the kitchen-garden, and seizing joyfully upon them, with reproaches to him for not having let me know that there were any, he replied—"letting fall a lip of much contempt,"—"Well, ma'am, I quite forgot them violets. You see, them flowers is such frivolous creatures." Profane fellow!

FRIVOLOUS
CREATURES.

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I spend generally about three hours a day pottering in my garden, but, alas! my gardening consists chiefly of slaughter. The heat of the climate generates the most enormous quantity of insects, for the effectual prevention or destruction of which the gardeners in these parts have yet discovered no means. The consequence is that, in spite of my daily executions, every shrub and every flower-bush is fuller of *bugs* (so they here indiscriminately term these displeasing beasts) than of leaves. They begin by *eating up* the roses bodily (these are called distinctively, rose-bugs; of course, they have a pet name, but it's Latin, and is only used by their familiars); they then attack and devour the large white lilies, and honeysuckles; finally, they spread themselves impartially all over the garden, and having literally stripped that bare, are now attacking the fruit. It is an insect which I have never seen in England; a species of beetle, much smaller, but not unlike the cockchafer we are familiar with. Their number is really prodigious, and they seem to me to propagate with portentous rapidity, for every day, in spite of the sweeping made by the gardener and myself, they appear as thick as ever. But for the dread of their coming in still greater force next year, if we do not continue our work of extermination, I should almost be tempted to give it up in despair.

I have a few flower-beds that I have had made, and keep under my own especial care; also some pretty baskets, which I have had expressly manufactured with exceeding difficulty; these, filled with earth, and planted with roses, I have placed on the stumps of some large trees, which were cut down last spring and form nice rustic pedestals; and thus I contrive to produce something of an English garden effect. But the climate is

against me. The winter is so terribly cold that nothing at all delicate can stand it unless cased up in straw-matting and manure. We have, therefore, no evergreen shrubs, such as the lauristinus, and Portugal and variegated laurels, which form our English garden shrubberies; nor do they seem to replace these by the native growth of their own woods, the kalmias and rhododendrons, but principally by hardy evergreens of the fir and pine species, which are native and abundant here. Then, with scarcely any interval of spring to moderate the sudden extreme change, the winter becomes summer—summer, without its screen of thick leaves to shelter one from the blazing, scorching heat. Everything starts into bloom, as it were, at once; and, instead of lasting even their proverbially short date of beauty, the flowers vanish as suddenly as they appeared, under the fierce influence of the heat and the devastations of the swarming insects it engenders.

To make up for this, I have here almost an avenue of fine lemon-trees, in cases; humming-birds, which are a marvel and enchantment to me; and fire-flies, which are exquisite in the summer evenings.

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I have, too, a fine hive of bees, which has produced already this spring two strong young swarms, whose departure from the parent hive formed a very interesting event in my novel experiences; especially as one of the stablemen, who joined the admiring domestic crowd witnessing the process, proved to be endowed with the immunity some persons have from the stings of those insects, and was able to take them by handfuls from the tree where they were clinging, and put them on the stand where the bee-hive prepared for them was placed. I had read of this individual peculiarity with the incredulity of ignorance (incomparably stronger than that of knowledge); but seeing is believing, and when my fiery-haired Irish groom seized the bees by the handful, of course there was no denying the fact.

There is a row of large old acacia-trees near the house, inhabited by some most curious ants, who are gradually hollowing the trees out. I can hear them at work as I stand by the poor vegetables, and the grass all round is literally whitened with the fine sawdust made by these hard-working little carpenters. The next phenomenon will be that the trees will tumble on my head, while I am pursuing my entomological studies. [To avert this catastrophe, the trees had all to be cut down].... Dear H—, I never contemplated sacrificing my child's, or anybody else's, health to my desire for "doing good." There is a difference between living all the year round on a rice-swamp, and retiring during the summer to the pinewood highlands, which are healthy, even in the hot season; nor am I at all inclined to advocate the neglect of duties close at hand for quixotical devotion to remote ones. But you must remember that *we are slave owners*, and live by slave-labor, and if the question of slavery does not concern us, in God's name whom does it concern? In my conviction, that is *our* special concern.... There is a Convention about to meet at Harrisburg, the seat of Government of this State, Pennsylvania, for the election of Van Buren, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency....

OPERATIONS
OF ANTS.

The politics of this country are in a strange, uncertain state, but I have left myself no room to enlarge upon them.

I have just finished reading Judge Talfourd's "Ion," and Lamartine's "Pélérinage" to Palestine. God bless you, dearest H—.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

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[Sydney Smith said that he never desired to live in a hot climate, as he disliked the idea of processions of ants traversing his bread and butter. The month of June had hardly begun in the year 1874, when I was residing close to the home of my early married life, Butler Place, when the ants appeared in such numbers in the dining-room sideboards, closets, cupboards, etc., that we were compelled to isolate all cakes, biscuits, sugar, preserves, fruit, and whatever else was kept in them, by placing the vessels containing all such things in dishes of water—moats, in fact, by which the enemy was cut off from these supplies. Immediately to these succeeded swarms of fire-flies, beautiful and wonderful in their evening apparition of showers of sparks from every bush and shrub, and after sunset rising in hundreds from the grass, and glittering against the dark sky as if the

Milky Way had gone mad and taken to dancing; but even these shining creatures were not pleasant in the house by day, where they were merely like ill-shaped ugly black flies. These were followed by a world of black beetles of every size and shape, with which our room was alive as soon as the lights were brought in the evening. Net curtains, and muslin stretched over wooden frames, and fixed like blinds in the window-sashes, did indeed keep out the poor mouthful of stifling air for which we were gasping, but did not exclude these intolerable visitors, who made their way in at every crack and crevice and momentarily opened door, and overran with a dreadful swiftness the floor of the room in every direction; occasionally taking to the more agreeable exercise of flying, at which, however, they did not seem quite expert, frequently tumbling down and struggling by twos and threes upon one's hair, neck, and arms, and especially attracted to unfortunate females by white or light-colored muslin gowns, which became perfect receptacles for them as they rushed and rattled over the matting. After the reign of the beetles came that of the flies, a pest to make easily credible the ancient story of the Egyptian plague. Every picture and looking-glass frame, every morsel of gilding, every ornamental piece of metal about the rooms, had to be covered, like the tarts in a confectioner's shop, with yellow gauze; whatever was not so protected—unglazed photographs, the surface of oil pictures, necessary memoranda, and papers on one's writing-table—became black with the specks and spots left by these creatures. Plates of fly-paper poison disfigured, to but small purpose, every room; and at evening, by candlelight, while one was reading or writing, the universal hum and buzz was amazing, and put one in mind of the—

"Hushed by buzzing night-flies to thy slumber"

of poor King Henry. The walls and ceiling of the servants' offices and kitchen, which at the beginning of the spring had been painted white, and were immaculate in their purity, became literally a yellow-brown coffee color, darkened all over with spots as black as soot, with the defilement of these torments, of which three and four dustpanfuls a day would be swept away dead without appreciably diminishing their number.

These flies accompanied our whole summer, from June till the end of October. Before, however, the beginning of the latter month, the mosquitoes made their appearance; and though, owing to the peculiar dryness of the summer of 1874, they were much less numerous than usual, there came enough of them to make our days miserable and our nights sleepless.

These are the common indoor insects of a common summer in this part of Pennsylvania, to which should be added the occasional visits of spiders of such dimensions as to fill me with absolute terror; I have, unfortunately, a positive physical antipathy to these strangely-mannered animals (the only resemblance, I fear, between myself and Charles Kingsley), some of whose peculiarities, besides their infinitely dexterous and deliberate processes for ensnaring their prey, make them unspeakably repulsive to me,—indeed, to a degree that persuades me that, at some former period of my existence, "which, indeed, I can scarcely remember," as Rosalind says, I must have been a fly who perished by spider-craft.

It is not, however, only in these midland and comparatively warmer states of North America that this profusion of insect life is found; the heat of the summer, even in Massachusetts, is more than a match in its life-engendering force, for the destructive agency of the winter's cold; and in the woods, on the high hill-tops of Berkshire, spiders of the most enormous size abound. I found two on my own place, the extremities of whose legs could not be covered by a large inverted tumbler; one of these perfectly swarmed with parasitical small spiders, a most hideous object! and one day, on cutting down a hollow pine tree, my gardener called me to look at a perfect jet of white ants, which like a small fountain, welled up from the middle of the decayed stump, and flowed over it in a thick stream to the ground. As far north as Lenox, in Berkshire, the summer heat brings humming-birds and rattlesnakes; and of less deadly, but very little less disagreeable, serpent-beasts, I have encountered there no fewer than eight,

PROFUSION
OF INSECT
LIFE.

in a short mile walk, on a warm September morning, genial even for snakes.

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The succession of creatures I have enumerated is the normal entomology of an average Pennsylvania summer. But there came a year, a horrible year, shortly before my last return to England, when the Colorado beetle (*alias* potato-bug), having marched over the whole width of the continent, from the far West to the Atlantic sea-board, made its appearance in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. These loathsome creatures, varying in size from a sixpence to a shilling, but rather oval than round in shape, of a pinkish-colored flesh, covered with a variegated greenish-brown shell, came in such numbers that the paths in the garden between the vegetable beds seemed to *swim* with them, and made me giddy to look at them. They devoured everything, beginning with the potatoes; and having devastated the fields and garden, betook themselves to swarming up the walls of the house, for what purpose they alone could tell—but didn't. In vain men with ladders went up and scraped them down into buckets of hot water; they seemed inexhaustible, and filled me with such disgust that I felt as if I must fly, and abandon the place to them. I do not think this pest lasted much more than a week; then, having devoured, they departed, still making towards the sea, and were described to me by a gentleman who drove along the road, as literally covering the highway, like a disbanded army. One's familiar sensations under this visitation were certainly "crawling and creeping"; it is a great pity that flying might not have been added to them.]

BRANCHTOWN, Monday, August 29th, 1836.

DEAREST H—,

[Pg 39]

You are in Italy! in that land which, from the earliest time I can remember, has been the land of my dreams; and it seems strange to me that you should be there, and I here; for when we were together the realities of life, the matter-of-fact interests of every-day existence always attracted your sympathies more than mine; nor do I remember ever hearing you mention, with the longing which possessed me, Italy, or the shores of the Mediterranean.... If, as I believe, there is a special Providence in "the fall of a sparrow," then your and my whereabouts are not the result of accidental circumstance, but the providential appointment of God. Dearest H—, your life's lesson just now is to be taught you through variety of scene, the daily intercourse of your most precious friend [Miss Dorothy Wilson], and the beautiful and lofty influences of the countries in which you are traveling and sojourning: and mine is to be learnt from a page as different as the chapters of Lindley Murray's Grammar are different from those of a glorious, illuminated, old vellum book of legends. I not only believe through my intuitive instincts, but also through my rational convictions, that my own peculiar task is the wholesomest and best for me, and though I might desire to be with you in Italy, I am content to be without you in America.... How much all separation and disappointment tend to draw us nearer to God! To me upon this earth you seem almost lost—you, and those yet nearer and dearer to me than yourself; your very images are becoming dim, and vague, and blurred in outline to my memory, like faded pictures or worn-out engravings. I think of you all almost as of the dead, and the feverish desire to be once more with you and them, from which I have suffered sometimes, is gradually dying away in my heart; and now when I think of any of you, my dear distant ones, it is as folded with me together in our Heavenly Father's arms, watched over by His care, guarded over by His merciful love, and though my imagination no longer knows where to seek or find you on earth, I meet you under the shadow of His Almighty Wings, and know that we are together—now—and forever.

[To those who know the rate of intercourse between Europe and America now, these expressions of the painful sense of distance from my country and friends, under which I suffered, must seem almost incomprehensible,—now, when to go to Europe seems to most Americans the easiest of summer trips, involving hardly more than a week's sea voyage; when letters arrive almost every other day by some of the innumerable steamers flying incessantly to and fro, and weaving, like living shuttles, the woof and warp of human communication between the continents; and the submarine telegraph shoots daily tidings from shore to shore

SEPARATION
OF
FRIENDS.

of that terrible Atlantic, with swift security below its storms. But when I wrote this to my friend, no words were carried with miraculous celerity under the dividing waves; letters could only be received once a month, and from thirty to thirty-seven days was the average voyage of the sailing packets which traversed the Atlantic. Men of business went to and fro upon their necessary affairs, but very few Americans went to Europe, and still fewer Europeans went to America, to spend leisure, or to seek pleasure; and American and English women made the attempt still seldomer than the men. The distance between the two worlds, which are now so near to each other, was then immense.]

Let me answer your questions, dear H—; though when I strive most entirely to satisfy you, I seem to have left out the very things you wish to know....

I am reading Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici." What charming old English it is! How many fantastical and how many beautiful things there are in it!

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Yesterday I walked down, with a basket of cucumbers and some beautiful flowers, to Mrs. F—'s, the wife of the Unitarian clergyman whose church I attend, and who is an excellent and highly valued friend of mine; and I sat two hours with her and another lady, going through an interminable discussion on the subject of intellectual gifts: the very various proportions in which they were distributed, and the measure of consciousness of superiority which was inevitable, and therefore allowable, in the possessor of an unusual amount of such endowments....

I wish Mr. and Mrs. F— lived near me instead of being merely come to spend a few weeks in this neighborhood.... I do not keep a diary any more; I do not find chronicling my days helps me to live them, and for many reasons I have given up my journal. Perhaps I may resume it when we set out for the South....

We are now altogether proprietors of this place, and I really think, as I am often told, that it is getting to be prettier and better kept than any other in this neighborhood. It is certainly very much improved, and no longer looks quite unlike an English place, but there are yet a thousand things to be done to it, in the contemplation of which I try to forget its present mongrel appearance.

Now, dear, I have answered as many of your questions as my paper allows. Do not, I beseech you, send me back word that my letter was "thoroughly unsatisfactory."

God bless you.

I am ever your affectionate

F. A. B.

BRANCHTOWN, Wednesday, October 5th.

MY DEAREST H—,

It is a great disappointment to me that I am not going to the South this winter. There is no house, it seems, on the plantation but a small cottage, inhabited by the overseer, where the two gentlemen proprietors can be accommodated, but where there is no room for me, my baby, and her nurse, without unhousing the poor overseer and his family altogether. The nearest town to the estate, Brunswick, is fifteen miles off, and a wretched hole, where I am assured it will be impossible to obtain a decent lodging for me, so that it has been determined to leave me and baby behind, and the owner will go with his brother, but without us, on his expedition to Negroland. As far as the child is concerned, I am well satisfied; ... but I would undergo much myself to be able to go among those people. I know that my hands would be in a great measure tied. I certainly could not free them, nor could I even pay them for their labor, or try to instruct them, even to the poor degree of teaching them to read. But mere personal influence has a great efficiency; moral revolutions of the world have been wrought by those who neither wrote books nor read them; the Divinest Power was that of One Character, One Example; that Character and Example which we profess to call our Rule of life. The power of individual personal qualities is really the great power, for good or evil, of the world; and it is upon this ground that I feel convinced that, in spite of all the cunningly

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THE
SLAVERY
QUESTION.

devised laws by which the negroes are walled up in a mental and moral prison, from which there is apparently no issue, the personal character and daily influence of a few Christian men and women living among them would put an end to slavery, more speedily and effectually than any other means whatever.

You do not know how profoundly this subject interests me, and engrosses my thoughts: it is not alone the cause of humanity that so powerfully affects my mind; it is, above all, the deep responsibility in which we are involved, and which makes it a matter of such vital paramount importance to me.... It seems to me that we are possessed of power and opportunity to do a great work; how can I not feel the keenest anxiety as to the use we make of this talent which God has entrusted us with? We dispose of the physical, mental, and moral condition of some hundreds of our fellow-creatures. How can I bear to think that this great occasion of doing good, of dealing justly, of setting a noble example to others, may be wasted or neglected by us? How can I bear to think that the day will come, as come it surely must, when we shall say: We once had it in our power to lift this burden from four hundred heads and hearts, and stirred no finger to do it; but carelessly and indolently, or selfishly and cowardly, turned our back upon so great a duty and so great a privilege.

I cannot utter what I feel upon this subject, but I pray to God to pour His light into our hearts, and enable us to do that which is right.

In every point of view, I feel that we ought to embrace the cause of these poor people. They will be free assuredly, and that before many years; why not make friends of them instead of deadly enemies? Why not give them at once the wages of their labor? Is it to be supposed that a man will work more for fear of the lash than he will for the sake of an adequate reward? As a matter of policy, and to escape personal violence, or the destruction of one's property, it were well not to urge them—ignorant, savage, and slavish, as they are—into rebellion. As a mere matter of worldly interest, it would be wise to make it worth their while to work with zeal and energy for hire, instead of listlessly dragging their reluctant limbs under a driver's whip.

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Oh, how I wish I was a man! How I wish I owned these slaves! instead of being supported (disgracefully, as it seems to me) by their unpaid labor....

You tell me, dear H—, that you are aged and much altered, and you doubt if I should know you. That's a fashion of speech—you doubt no such thing, and know that I should know you if your face were as red as the fiery inside of Etna, and your hair as white as its snowy shoulders.

I have had the skin peeled off the back of my neck with standing in the sun here, and my whole face and hands are burnt, by constant exposure, to as fine a coffee-color as you would wish to see of a summer's day. Yet, after all, I got as sharp a sunstroke on my shoulders, driving on a coach-box by the side of Loch Lomond once, as could be inflicted upon me by this American sky. The women here, who are careful, above all things, of their appearance, marvel extremely at my exposing myself to the horrors of tanning, freckling, etc.; but with hair and eyes as dark as mine, a gipsy complexion doesn't signify, and I prefer burning my skin to suffocating under silk handkerchiefs, sun-bonnets, and two or three gauze veils, and sitting, as the ladies here do, in the dark till the sun has declined. I am certainly more like a Red Indian squaw than when last you saw me; but that change doesn't signify, it's only skin deep....

You speak of the beauty of the Italian sky, and say that to pass the mornings with such pictures, and the evenings with such sunsets, is matter to be grateful for.

I have been spending a month with my friends, the Sedgwicks, in a beautiful hilly region in the State of Massachusetts; and I never looked abroad upon the woods and valleys and lakes and mountains without thinking how great a privilege it was to live in the midst of such beautiful things. I felt this the more strongly, perhaps, because the country in my own neighborhood here is by no means so varied and interesting.

I am glad you are to have the pleasure of meeting your own people abroad, and thus carrying your home with you: give my kindest love to them all whenever you see them....

I have not been hot this summer: the weather has been rainy and cold to a most uncommon degree; and I have rejoiced therefore, and so have the trees and the grass,

which have contrived to look green to the end of the chapter, as with us....

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If I am not allowed to go to the South this winter, it is just possible that I may spend three months in England.

Good-bye, my dearest H—.

I am ever yours,

F. A. B.

[This was the last letter I wrote to my friend from America this year; it was decided that I should not go to the South, and so lonely a winter as I should have had to spend in the country being rather a sad prospect, it was also decided that I should return to England, and remain during my temporary widowhood with my own family in London.

I sailed at the beginning of November, and reached England, after a frightfully stormy passage of eight and twenty days. I and my child's nurse were the only women on board the packet, and there were very few male passengers. The weather was dreadful; we had violent contrary winds almost the whole time, and one terrific gale that lasted nearly four days; during which time I and my poor little child and her nurse were prisoners in the cabin, where we had not even the consolation of daylight, the skylights being all closely covered to protect us from the sea, which broke all over the decks. I begged so hard one day to have the covering removed, and a ray of daylight admitted, if only for five minutes, that I was indulged, and had reason to repent it; the sea almost instantly broke the windows and poured down upon us like Niagara, and I was thankful to be covered up again as quick as possible in dry darkness.

STORMY
PASSAGE TO
ENGLAND.

This storm was made memorable to me by an experience of which I have read one or two descriptions, by persons who have been similarly affected in seasons of great peril, and which I have never ceased regretting that I did not make a record of as soon as possible; but the lapse of time, though it has no doubt enfeebled, has in no other way altered, the impressions I received.

The tempest was the first I had ever witnessed, and was undoubtedly a more formidable one than I have ever since encountered in eighteen passages across the Atlantic. I was told, after it was over, that the vessel had sprung its mainmast—a very serious injury to a sailing ship, I suppose, by the mode in which it was spoken of; and for three days we were unable to carry any sail whatever for the fury of the wind.

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At the height of the storm, in the middle of a night which my faithful friend and servant, Margery O'Brien, passed in prayer, without once rising from her knees, the frightful uproar of the elements and the delirious plunging and rearing of the convulsed ship convinced me that we should inevitably be lost. As the vessel reeled under a tremendous shock, the conviction of our impending destruction became so intense in my mind, that my imagination suddenly presented to me the death-vision, so to speak, of my whole existence.

This kind of phenomenon has been experienced and recorded by persons who have gone through the process of drowning, and afterwards recovered; or have otherwise been in imminent peril of their lives, and have left curious and highly interesting accounts of their sensations.

I should find it impossible adequately to describe the vividness with which my whole past life presented itself to my perception; not as a procession of events, filling a succession of years, but as a whole—a total—suddenly held up to me as in a mirror, indescribably awful, combined with the simultaneous acute and almost despairing sense of *loss*, of *waste*, so to speak, by which it was accompanied. This instantaneous, involuntary retrospect was followed by a keen and rapid survey of the religious belief in which I had been trained, and which then seemed to me my only important concern....

The tension, physical and mental, of the very short space of time in which these processes took place, gave way to a complete exhaustion, in which, strangely

enough, I found the sort of satisfaction that a child does in crooning itself to sleep, in singing, one after another, every song I could call to memory; and my repertory was a very numerous one, composed of English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, German, Italian, and Spanish specimens, which I "chanted loudly, chanted lowly," sitting on the floor, through the rest of the night, till the day broke, and my sense of danger passed away, but not the recollection of the never-to-be-forgotten experience it had brought to me.

I have often since wondered if any number of men going into action on a field of battle are thus impressed. Several thousands of human beings, with the apparition of their past life thus suddenly confronting them, is not a bad suggestion of the Day of Judgment.

I have heard it asserted that the experience I have here described was only that of persons who, in the full vigor of life and health, were suddenly put in peril of immediate death; and that whatever regret, repentance, or remorse might afflict the last moments of elderly persons, or persons prepared by previous disease for dissolution, this species of revelation, by the sudden glare of death, of the whole past existence was not among the phenomena of death-beds.

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As a curious instance of the very mistaken inferences frequently drawn from our actions by others, when the storm had sufficiently subsided to allow of our very kind friend, the captain, leaving his post of vigilant watch on deck, to come and inquire after his poor imprisoned female passengers, he congratulated me upon my courage. "For," said he, "at the very height of the storm, I was told that you were heard singing away like a bird."

I am not sure that I succeeded in making him understand that that was only because I had been as frightened as I was capable of being, and, having touched the extremest point of terror, I had subsided into a sort of ecstasy of imbecility, in which I had found my "singing voice."

I returned to my home and family, and stayed with them in London all the time of my visit to England, which, from unforeseen circumstances, was prolonged far beyond what had originally been intended.

LONDON
SOCIETY IN
1836.

I returned to the intercourse of all my former friends and acquaintance, and to the London society of the day, which was full of delightful interest for me, after the solitary and completely unsocial life I had been leading for the two previous years.

My friend, Miss S—, was still abroad, and her absence was the only drawback to the pleasure and happiness of my return to my own country.

My father resided then in Park Place, St. James's, in a house which has since become part of the Park Hotel; we have always had a tending towards that particular street, which undoubtedly is one of the best situated in London: quiet in itself, not being a thoroughfare, shut in by the pleasant houses that look into the Green Park below Arlington Street, and yet close to St. James's Street, and all the gay busyness of the West End, Pall Mall, and Piccadilly.

While we were living at No. 10 Park Place, my cousin, Horace Twiss, was our opposite neighbor, at No. 5, which became my own residence some years afterwards; and, since then, my sister had her London abode for several years at No. 9. The street seems always a sort of home to me, full of images and memories of members of my family and their intimates who visited us there.

My return to London society at this time gave me the privilege of an acquaintance with some of its most remarkable members, many of whom became, and remained, intimate and kind friends of mine for many years. The Miss Berrys, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Morley, Lord and Lady Lansdowne, Lord and Lady Ellesmere, Lord and Lady Dacre, Sydney Smith, Rogers, were among the persons with whom I then most frequently associated; and in naming these members of the London world of that day, I mention only a small portion of a brilliant society, full of every element of wit, wisdom, experience, refined taste, high culture, good breeding, good sense, and distinction of every sort that can

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make human intercourse valuable and delightful.

I was one of the youngest members of that pleasant society, and have seen almost all its brilliant lights go out. Eheu! of what has succeeded to them in the London of the present day, I know nothing.]

PARK PLACE, St. James's, December 28th, 1836.

Nevertheless, and in spite of all your doubts, and notwithstanding all the improbabilities and all the impossibilities, here I am, dearest H—, in very deed in England, and in London, once again. And shall it be that I have crossed that terrible sea, and am to pass some time here, and to return without seeing you? I cannot well fancy that. Surely, now that the Atlantic is no longer between us, though the Alps may be, we shall meet once more before I go back to my dwelling-place beyond the uttermost parts of the sea. The absolute impossibility of taking the baby to the South determined the arrangements that were made; and as I was at any rate to be alone all the winter, I obtained leave to pass it in England, whither I am come, alone with my chick, through tempestuous turbulence of winds and waves, and where I expect to remain peaceably with my own people, until such time as I am fetched away. When this may be, however, neither I nor any one else can tell, as it depends upon the meeting and sitting of a certain Convention, summoned for the revising of the constitution of the State of Pennsylvania; and there is at present an uncertainty as to the time of its opening. It was at first appointed to convene on the 1st of May, and it was then resolved that I should return early in March, so as to be in America by that time; but my last news is that the meeting of the Convention may take place in February, and my stay in England will probably be prolonged for several months in consequence....

Your various propositions, regarding negro slavery in America, I will answer when we meet, which I hope will be ere long.... I wish to heaven I could have gone down to Georgia this winter!...

Your impression of Rome does not surprise me; I think it would be mine. I have not seen dear Emily, but expect that pleasure in about a fortnight....

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My father took his farewell of the stage last Friday. How much I could say upon that circumstance alone! The house was immensely full, the feeling of regret and good-will universal, and our own excitement, as you may suppose, very great. My father bore it far better than I had anticipated, and his spirits do not appear to have suffered since; I know not whether the reaction may not make itself felt hereafter.

Perhaps his present occupation of licenser may afford sufficient employment of a somewhat kindred nature to prevent his feeling very severely the loss of his professional excitement; and yet I know not whether a sufficient *succedaneum* is to be found for such a dram as that, taken nightly for more than forty years....

Who do you think Adelaide and I went to dine with last Friday? You will never guess, so I may as well tell you—the C—s! The meetings in this world are strange things. She sought me with apparent cordiality, and I had no reason whatever for avoiding her. She is very handsome, and appears remarkably amiable, with the simple good breeding of a French great lady, and the serious earnestness of a devout Roman Catholic. They are going to Lisbon, where he is attaché to the Embassy.

I had a letter from Mr. Combe the other day, full of the books he had been publishing, and the lectures he had been delivering. He seems to be very busy, and very happy. [Mr. Combe had lately married my cousin, Cecilia Siddons.] ...

MR. COMBE.

Farewell, my dearest H—.

I am ever your most affectionate,

F. A. B.

PARK PLACE, ST. JAMES'S, May 13th, 1837.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

You will never believe I am alive, not sooner to have answered your kind letter; yet I was grateful for your expressions of regard, and truly sorry for all you have had to undergo. Certainly the chances of this life are strange—that you should be in Toronto, and I in London now, is what neither of us would have imagined a little while ago.

I wish I could think you were either as happy or as well amused as I am. I hope, however, you have recovered your health, and that you will be able to visit some of the beautiful scenery of the St. Lawrence this summer; that, at least, you may have some compensation for your effort in crossing the Atlantic.

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I heard of you from my friend, Miss Sedgwick, whose sympathies were as much excited by your personal acquaintance as her admiration had been by your books. I heard of you, too, from Theodore Fay, whom I saw a short time since, and who gave me a letter of yours to read, which you wrote him from New York. [Mr. Theodore Fay was a graceful writer of prose and poetry, and achieved some literary reputation in his own country; he was for some time United States Minister at Berlin.]

Lady Hatherton, whom I met the other evening at old Lady Cork's, was speaking of you with much affection; and all your friends regret your absence from England; and none more sincerely than I, who shall, I fear, have the ill fortune to miss you on both sides of the Atlantic.

I find London more beautiful, more rich and royal, than ever; the latter epithet, by-the-by, applies to external things alone, for I do not think the spirit of the people as royal, *i.e.*, loyal, as I used to fancy it was.

Liberalism appears to me to have gained a much stronger and wider influence than it had before I went away; liberal opinions have certainly spread, and I suppose will spread indefinitely. Toryism, on the other hand, seems as steadfast in its old strongholds as ever; the Tories, I see, are quite as wedded as formerly to their political faith, but at the same time more afraid of all that is not themselves, more on the defensive, more socially exclusive; I think they mix less with "the other side" than formerly, and are less tolerant of difference of opinion.

I find a whole race of *prima donnas* swept away; Pasta gone and Malibran dead, and their successor, Grisi, does not charm and enchant me as they did, especially when I hear her compared to the former noble singer and actress. When I look at her, beautiful as she is, and think of Pasta, and hear her extolled far above that great queen of song, by the public who cannot yet have forgotten the latter, I am more than ever impressed with the worthlessness of popularity and public applause, and the mistake of those who would so much as stretch out their little finger to obtain it. I came to England just in time to see my father leave the stage, and close his laborious professional career. After a long life of public exhibition, and the glare of excitement which inevitably attends upon it, to withdraw into the sober twilight of private life is a great trial, and I fear he finds it so. His health is not as good as it was while he still exercised his profession, and I think he misses the stimulus of the daily occupation and nightly applause.

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What a dangerous pursuit that is which weans one from all other resources and interests, and leaves one dependent upon public exhibition for the necessary stimulus of one's existence! This aspect of it alone would make me deprecate that profession for any one I loved; it interferes with every other study, and breaks the thread of every other occupation, and produces mental habits which, even if distasteful at first, gradually become paramount to all others, and, in due time, inveterate; and besides perpetually stimulating one's personal vanity and desire for admiration and applause, directs whatever ambition one has to the least exalted of aims, the production of evanescent effects and transitory emotions.

I am thankful that I was removed from the stage before its excitement became necessary to me. That reminds me that, within the last two days, Pasta has returned to England: they say she is to sing at Drury Lane, Grisi having possession of the Opera House. Now, will it not be a pity that she should come in the decline of her fine powers, and subject herself to comparisons with this young woman, whose voice and beauty and popularity are all in their full flower? If I knew Pasta, I think I would go on my knees to beg her not to do it.

PASTA AND
GRISI.

I find my sister's voice and singing very much improved, and exceedingly charming. She

speaks always with warm regard of you, and remembers gratefully your kindness to her.

My dear Mrs. Jameson, it is a great disappointment to me that I cannot welcome you to my American home, and be to you that pleasant thing, an old friend in a foreign land. It appears to me that we shall have the singular ill-luck of passing each other on the sea; at least, if it is true that you return in the autumn.

Much as I had desired to see my own country again, my visit to it has had one effect which I certainly had not anticipated, and for which I am grateful: it has tended to reconcile me to my present situation in life, comparatively remote as it is from the best refinements of civilization and all the enjoyments of society.... The turmoil and dissipation of a London life, amusing as they are for a time, soon pall upon one, and I already feel, in my diminished relish for them, that I am growing old.

To live in the country in England!—that indeed would be happiness and pleasure; but we shall never desert America and the duties that belong to us there, and I should be the last person to desire that we should do so; and so I think henceforth England and I are "Paradises Lost" to each other,—and this is a very strange life; with which "wise saw," but not "modern instance," I will conclude, begging you to believe me,

Ever yours most truly,

F. A. B.

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[Madame Pasta did return then to the stage, and her brilliant young rival, Grisi, was to her what the Giessbach would be to a great wave of the Atlantic. But, alas! she returned once more after that to the scene of her former triumphs in London; the power, majesty, and grace of her face, figure, and deportment all gone, her voice painfully impaired and untrue, her great art unable to remedy, in any degree, the failure of her natural powers.

She came as an agent and emissary of the political party of Italian liberty, to help the cause of their *Italia Unita*, and our people received her with affectionate respect, for the sake of what she had been; but she accepted their applause with melancholy gestures of disclaimer, and sorrowful head-shaking over her own decline. Those who had never heard or seen her before were inclined to laugh; those who had, *did* cry.

The latent expression of a face is a curious study for the physiognomist, and is sometimes strikingly at variance with that which is habitual, as well as with the general character of the features. That fine and accurate observer of the symptoms of humanity, George Eliot, gives her silly, commonplace, little second-heroine in "Adam Bede," Hester, a pathetic and sentimental expression, to which nothing in her mind or character corresponds, and which must have been an inheritance from some ancestress in whom such an expression had originated with a meaning.

Madame Pasta was not handsome, people of uneducated and unrefined taste might have called her plain; but she had that indescribable quality which painters value almost above all others—style, and a power and sweetness of expression, and a grandeur and grace of demeanor, that I have never seen surpassed. She was not handsome, certainly; but she was *beautiful*, and never, by any chance, looked common or vulgar.

Madame Grisi was almost perfectly handsome; the symmetry of her head and bust, and the outline of her features resembled the ideal models of classical art—it was the form and face of a Grecian goddess; and her rare natural gifts of musical utterance and personal loveliness won for her, very justly, the great admiration she excited, and the popularity she so long enjoyed. In a woman of far other and higher endowments, that wonderful actress, Rachel, whose face and figure, under the transforming influence of her consummate dramatic art, were the perfect interpreters of her perfect tragic conceptions, an ignoble, low-lived expression occasionally startled and dismayed one, on a countenance as much more noble and intellectual, as it was less beautiful than Grisi's,—the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual disgrace, which made it possible for one of her literary countrymen and warmest admirers to say that

MADAME
RACHEL.

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she was adorable, because she was so "*délicieusement canaille*." Emilie, Camille, Esther, Pauline, such a "delightful blackguard"!

Grazia, the Juno of the Roman sculptors of her day, their model of severe classical beauty, had a perfectly stolid absence of all expression; she was like one of the oxen of her own Campagna, a splendid, serious-looking animal. No animal is ever vulgar, except some dogs, who live too much with men for the interest of their dignity, and catch the infection of *the* human vice.

With us coarse-featured English, and our heavy-faced Teutonic kinsfolk, a thick outline and snub features are generally supposed to be the vulgar attributes of our lower classes; but the predominance of spirit over matter vindicates itself strikingly across the Atlantic, where, in the lowest strata of society, the native American rowdy, with a face as pure in outline as an ancient Greek coin, and hands and feet as fine as those of a Norman noble, strikes one dumb with the aspect of a countenance whose vile, ignoble hardness can triumph over such refinement of line and delicacy of proportion. A human soul has a wonderful supremacy over the matter which it *informs*. The American is a whole nation with well-made, regular noses; from which circumstance (and a few others), I believe in their future superiority over all other nations. But the *lowness* their faces are capable of "flogs Europe."]

BANNISTERS, August 1st, 1837.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

After a riotous London season, my family has broken itself into small pieces and dispersed. My mother is at her cottage in Surrey, where she intends passing the rest of the summer; my father and sister are gone to Carlsbad—is not that spirited?—though indeed they journey in search of health, rather than pleasure. My father has been far from well for some time past, and has at length been literally packed off by Dr. Granville, to try the Bohemian waters.

I am at present staying with my friends, the Fitz Hughs, at Bannisters. I leave this place on Friday for Liverpool, where I shall await the arrival of the American packet; after that, we have several visits to pay, and I hope, when we have achieved them, to join my father and Adelaide at Carlsbad. I am pretty sure that we shall winter in America; for, indeed, I was to have written to you, to beg you to spend that season with us in Philadelphia, but as I had already received your intimation of your intended return to England in the autumn, I knew that such an offer would not suit your plans.

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How glad you will be to see England again! and how glad your friends will be to see you again! Miss Martineau, who was speaking of you with great kindness the other day, added that your publishers would rejoice to see you too.

I do not know whether her book on America has yet reached you. It has been universally read, and though by no means agreeable to the opinions of the majority, I think its whole tone has impressed everybody with respect for her moral character, her integrity, her benevolence, and her courage.

She tells me she is going to publish another work upon America, containing more of personal narrative and local description; after which, I believe, she thinks of writing a novel. I shall be quite curious to see how she succeeds in the latter undertaking. The stories and descriptions of her political tales were charming; but whether she can carry herself through a work of imagination of any length with the same success, I do not feel sure.

I saw the Montagues, and Procters, and Chorley (who is, I believe, a friend of yours), pretty often while I was in London, and they were my chief informers as to your state of being, doing, and suffering. I am sorry that the latter has formed so large a portion of your experience in that strange and desolate land of your present sojourn. You do not say in your last letter whether you intend visiting the United States before your return, or shall merely pass through so much of them as will bring you to the port from which you sail. As I am not there to see you, I should hardly regret your not traveling through them; for, in spite of your popularity, which is very great in all parts of the country that I

have visited, I do not think American tastes, manners, and modes of being would be, upon the whole, congenial to you.

I believe I told you how I had met your friend, Lady Hatherton, at a party at old Lady Cork's, and how kindly she inquired after you....

We are here in the midst of the elections, with which the whole country is in an uproar just now. My friends are immovable Tories, and I had the satisfaction of being personally hissed (which I never was before), in honor of their principles, as I drove through the town of Southampton to-day in their carriage.

The death of poor old King William, and the accession of the little lady, his niece, must be stale news, even with you, now. She was the last excitement of the public before the "dissolution of London," and her position is certainly a most interesting one. Poor young creature! at eighteen to bear such a burden of responsibility! I should think the mere state and grandeur, and slow-paced solemnity of her degree, enough to strike a girl of that age into a melancholy, without all the other graver considerations and causes for care and anxiety which belong to it. I dare say, whatever she may think now, before many years are over she would be heartily glad to have a small pension of £30,000 a year, and leave to "go and play," like common folk of fortune. But, to be sure, if "*noblesse oblige*," royalty must do so still more, or, at any rate, on a wider scale; and so I take up my burden again—poor young Queen of England!...

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Emily sends you her best remembrances.... We shall certainly remain in England till October, so that I feel sure that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you here before I return to my *other* country—for I reckon that I have two; though, as the old woman said, and you know, "between two stools," etc.

I should have thought you and Sir Francis Head would have become infinite cronies. I hear he is so very clever; and as you tell me he says so many fine things of me, I believe it.

Ever yours most truly,

F. A. B.

[The admirable novel of "Deerbrook" sufficiently answered all who had ever doubted Miss Martineau's capacity for that order of composition; in spite of Sydney Smith's determination that no village "poticary," as he called it, might, could, would, or ever should, be a hero of romance, and the incessant ridicule with which he assailed the choice of such a one. If, he contended, he takes his mistress's hand with the utmost fervor of a lover, he will, by the mere force of habit, end by feeling her pulse; if, under strong emotion, she faints away, he will have no salts but Epsom about him, wherewith to restore her suspended vitality; he will put cream of tartar in her tea, and (a) flower of brimstone in her bosom. There was no end to the fun he made of "the medicinal lover," as he called him. Nevertheless, the public accepted the Deerbrook M. D., and all the paraphernalia of gallipots, pill-boxes, vials, salves, ointments, with which the facetious divine always represented him as surrounded; and vindicated, by its approval, the authoress's choice of a hero.

MISS
MARTINEAU'S
NOVEL.

I do not know whether Mr. Gibson is not, to me, decidedly the hero of Mrs. Gaskell's "Wives and Daughters." I like him infinitely better than all the younger men of the story; and I think the preponderating interest with which one closes George Eliot's wonderful "Middlemarch" is decidedly in behalf of Lydgate, the country surgeon and hospital doctor. To be sure, we have come a long way since the Liberalism of Sydney Smith and 1837.

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I was indebted to my kind friend, Lord Lansdowne, for the memorable pleasure of being present at the first meeting between Queen Victoria and her Houses of Parliament. The occasion, which is always one of interest when a new sovereign performs the solemnity, was rendered peculiarly so by the age and sex of the sovereign. Every person who, by right or favor, could be present, was there; and no one of that great assembly will ever forget the impression made upon them. Lady Lansdowne, who was Mistress of the Robes, was herself an important member of the group round the throne, and I went with her niece, Lady

Valletort, under Lord Lansdowne's escort, to places most admirably situated for hearing and seeing the whole ceremony. The queen was not handsome, but very pretty, and the singularity of her great position lent a sentimental and poetical charm to her youthful face and figure.

The serene, serious sweetness of her candid brow and clear soft eyes gave dignity to the girlish countenance, while the want of height only added to the effect of extreme youth of the round but slender person, and gracefully moulded hands and arms. The queen's voice was exquisite; nor have I ever heard any spoken words more musical in their gentle distinctness, than the "My Lords and Gentlemen" which broke the breathless silence of the illustrious assembly, whose gaze was riveted upon that fair flower of royalty. The enunciation was as perfect as the intonation was melodious, and I think it is impossible to hear a more excellent utterance than that of the queen's English, by the English queen.]

WEDNESDAY, July 26th, 1837.

Bannisters!

(Think of that, Master Brook!!)

DEAREST H—,

These overflowing spirits of mine all come of a gallop of fifteen miles I have been taking with dear Emily, over breezy commons and through ferny pine-woods, and then coming home and devouring luncheon as fast as it could be swallowed; and so you get the result of all this physical excitement in these very animal spirits; and if my letter is "all sound and fury, signifying nothing," under the circumstances how can I help it?

That rather ill-conducted person, Ninon de l'Enclos, I believe, said her soup got into her head; and though "comparisons are odious," and I should be loth to suggest any between that wonderful no-better-than-she-should-be and myself, beyond all doubt my luncheon has got into my head, though I drank nothing but water with it; but I rather think violent exercise in the cold air, followed immediately by eating, will produce a certain amount of intoxication, just as easily as stimulating drink would. I suppose it is only a question of accelerated circulation, with a slight tendency of blood to the head.

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However that may be, I wish you would speak to Emily (you needn't bawl, though you are in Ireland), and tell her to hold her tongue and not disturb me. She is profanely laughing at a sermon of Dr. South's, and interrupting me in this serious letter to you with absurd questions about such nonsense as Life, Death, and Immortality. I can't get on for her a bit, so add her to the cold ride and the hot lunch in the list of causes of this crazy epistle—I mean, the causes of its craziness.

DR. SOUTH.

Do you know old South? I don't believe you do even this much of him:—

"Old South, a witty Churchman reckoned,
Was preaching once to Charles the Second:
When lo! the King began to nod,
Deaf to the zealous man of God;
Who, leaning o'er his pulpit, cried
To Lauderdale by Charles's side:—
'My Lord, why, 'tis a shameful thing!
You snore so loud, you'll wake the King!'"

I quote by memory, through my luncheon, and I dare say all wrong; but it doesn't matter, for I don't believe you know it a bit better than I remember it. I and my baby came here on Monday, and shall stay until to-morrow week; after that I go to Liverpool, to meet and be met; and after that I know nothing, of course.... If, however, by that time you are likely to be near London, we will come up thither forthwith, and you must come and stay in Park Place with us. We shall be alone keeping house there; for my mother is in the country, and my father and Adelaide are going to Carlsbad, where we think to join them by-and-by; in the mean time, we hope to enjoy ourselves much sight-seeing all over London, which we shall then have entirely to ourselves; and you had better come and help us.

Good-bye, dearest H—.

Yours ever,

F. A. B.

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[This letter was written from Bannisters, the charming country home of my dear friend, Miss Fitz Hugh. For years it had been a resort of rest for Mrs. Siddons, who was always made welcome as one of her own sisters, by Mrs. Fitz Hugh; and for years it was a resort of rest for me, to whom my friend was as devoted as her mother had been to my aunt.]

LIVERPOOL, Saturday, August 17th, 1837.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have but one instant in which to write. I hope this will meet you at Emily's, in Orchard Street [No. 18 Orchard Street, Portman Square, Mr. Fitz Hugh's town house]; it is to entreat you to remain there until I come to town, which must be in less than a week....

I left Bannisters—most unnecessarily, as it has proved—a fortnight ago, which time I have been spending in heart-eating suspense, waiting in vain, and bolstering up my patience, which kept sinking every day more and more, like an empty sack put to stand upright. I have, since I arrived here, received a letter which has caused me considerable distress, inasmuch as I find I must leave England without again seeing my father and Adelaide, who are gone to Carlsbad in the full expectation of our joining them there....

The political body upon whose movements ours are just now depending has not dispersed, but is merely adjourned to the 17th October. This allows its absent member but a few days in Europe, as we must sail on the 8th September; and those few days are gradually becoming fewer in consequence of this long prevalence of contrary winds, which is keeping the vessel just at the entrance of the Channel, within one good day's sail of me.

All this is a trial, and my heart has sunk, as hour after hour I have watched that watery horizon, and seen the masts appear and disappear, and yet no tidings of the ship I look for.

I have ridden, bathed, tried to write, tried to read, marked my Shakespeare for you, and laid my hand—but, God knows, not with all my heart—to whatsoever I found to do: still I have been ashamed and displeased at the little command I have achieved over my impatience, and the little use I have made of my time. It has been my great good fortune to meet with old friends, and to make new ones, during this period of my probation; and never was kindly intercourse more needed and more appreciated. But, after all, is it not always thus? and are not unexpected pleasures and enjoyments furnished us quite as often as the trials which render them doubly welcome?

'Tis now the 14th of August, and yet no tidings of that ship. There is no ground whatever for anxiety, for it is the prevalence of calm, and light contrary winds, which alone delay its arrival.

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Dearest Harriet, I shall soon see you again, and will not that be a blessing to both of us? Farewell, my dear friend. How long it is since we have been even thus near each other! how long since we have hoped so soon to hear each other's voice!

Ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

[This letter was written from Crosby, a little strip of sandy beach, three miles from Liverpool, to which I betook myself with my child, rather than remain in the noisy, smoky town, while waiting for the arrival of the vessel from America which I was expecting.

STAY AT
CROSBY.

I dare say Crosby is by this time a flourishing, fashionable bathing-place. It was then a mere row of very humble seaside lodging-houses, where persons constrained as I was to remain in the close vicinity of Liverpool, were able to obtain fresh air, salt water, and an uninterrupted sea view.

A Liverpool lady told me that, having once spent some weeks at this place one summer, her son, a lad of about twelve years old, used to ride along the sands to Liverpool every day for his lessons, and that she could see him through the telescope all the way to the first houses on the outskirts of the town. Just about midway, however, there was a spot of treacherous quicksand, and I confess I wondered at my friend's courage in watching her boy pass that point: he knew it well, and was little likely to take his pony too near it; but I confess I would rather have trusted to his caution to avoid the place, than watched him pass it through a telescope.

From Liverpool, the long-expected ship having arrived, we went to London, and spent as much time with our friends there and elsewhere as our very limited leisure would then allow; and by the 10th of September, we were again on the edge of English ground, about to sail for the United States.]

LIVERPOOL, Friday, September 8th, 1837.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

My time in England is growing painfully short, for the watch says half-past eleven, and at two o'clock I shall be on board the ship. My promise, as well as my desire, urge me to write you a few parting words. And yet what can they be, that may give you the slightest pleasure?

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My parting with my poor mother was calmer than I had ventured to anticipate, and I thank Heaven that I was not obliged to leave England without seeing her once more. I have heard from my sister, who had just received the news of my sudden departure from England when she wrote. She was bitterly disappointed; but yet I think this unexpected parting without seeing each other again is perhaps well. Our last leave-taking, when she started with my father for Carlsbad, was quite cheerful, because we looked soon to meet again. We have been spared those exceedingly painful moments of clinging to what we are condemned to lose, and in the midst of novelty and variety she will miss me far less than had I left her lonely, in the home where we have been together for the past year.

Dear Lady Dacre, pray, if it is in your power to show her kindness at any time, do so; but I am sure that you would, and that such a request on my part is unnecessary.

The days that we spent in London after leaving you formed a sad contrast to the happy time we enjoyed at the Hoo. We were plunged in bustle and confusion; up to our eyes in trunks, packing-cases, carpet-bags, and valises; and I don't believe Marius in the middle of his Carthaginian ruins was more thoroughly *uncomfortable* than I, in my desolate, box-encumbered rooms.

You know that we were disappointed of our visit to Bowood, but we spent a few days delightfully at Bannisters, and I am happy to say that *we* are leaving England with the desire and determination to return as soon as possible.

I found on my arrival here a most pressing and cordial invitation from Sydney Smith (I cannot call him Mr.) to Combe Flory, which, like many other pleasant things, must be foregone. Pray, if you are with him when or after you receive this, thank him again for his kindness and courtesy to us. I did not quite like him, you know, when first I met him at Rogers's; but that was Lady Holland's fault; even now, his being a clergyman hurts my mind a little sometimes, and I fancy I should like him more entirely if he were not so. I have a superstitious veneration for the cloth, which his free-and-easy wearing of it occasionally disturbs a little; but I feel deeply honored by his notice, and most grateful for the good-will which he expresses towards me, and should have been too glad to have heard him laugh once more at his own jokes, which I acknowledge he does with a better grace than any man alive,—though the last time I had that pleasure it was at my own expense: I gave him an admirable chance, and I think he used his advantage most unmercifully.

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And now, dear Lady Dacre, what message will you give your kind and good husband from me? May I, with "one foot on land and one on sea," send him word that I love him almost as well as I do you? This shall rest with you, however. Pray thank him with all my heart, as I do you, for your manifold kindnesses to me. God bless and preserve you both,

and those you love! Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Sullivan. I cannot tell you how my heart is *squeezed*, as the French say, at going away. Luckily, I am too busy to cry to-day, and to-morrow I shall be too sea-sick, and so, farewell!

Believe me, my dear Lady Dacre,
Yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

[The occasion of my becoming acquainted with my admirable and very kind friend, the Rev. Sydney Smith, was a dinner at Mr. Rogers's, to which I had been asked to meet Lord and Lady Holland, by special desire, as I was afterwards informed, of the latter, who, during dinner, drank out of her neighbor's (Sydney Smith's) glass, and otherwise behaved herself with the fantastic, despotic impropriety in which she frequently indulged, and which might have been tolerated in a spoilt beauty of eighteen, but was hardly becoming in a woman of her age and "personal appearance." When first I came out on the stage, my father and mother, who occasionally went to Holland House, received an invitation to dine there, which included me; after some discussion, which I did not then understand, it was deemed expedient to decline the invitation for me, and I neither knew the grounds of my parents' decision, nor of how brilliant and delightful a society it had then closed the door to me. On my return to England after my marriage, Lady Holland's curiosity revived with regard to me, and she desired Rogers to ask me to meet her at dinner, which I did; and the impression she made upon me was so disagreeable that, for a time, it involved every member of that dinner-party in a halo of undistinguishing dislike in my mind.

SIDNEY
SMITH.

My sister had joined us in the evening, and sat for a few moments by Lady Holland, who dropped her handkerchief. Adelaide, who was as unpleasantly impressed as myself by that lady, for a moment made no attempt to pick it up; but, reflecting upon her age and size, which made it difficult for her to stoop for it herself, my sister picked it up and presented it to her, when Lady Holland, taking it from her, merely said, "Ah! I thought you'd do it." Adelaide said she felt an almost irresistible inclination to twitch it from her hand, throw it on the ground again, and say, "Did you? then now do it yourself!"

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Altogether the evening was unsuccessful, if its purpose had been an acquaintance between Lady Holland and myself; and I remember a grotesque climax to my dissatisfaction in the destruction of a lovely nosegay of exquisite flowers which my sister had brought with her, and which, towards the middle of the evening, mysteriously disappeared, and was looked for and inquired for in vain, until poor Lord Holland, who was then dependent upon the assistance of two servants to move from his seat, being raised from the sofa on which he had been deposited when he was brought up from the dining-room, the flowers, which Adelaide had left there, were discovered, pressed as flat as if for preservation in a book of botanical specimens. The kindly, good-natured gentleman departed, luckily, without knowing the mischief he had done, or seeing my sister's face of ludicrous dismay at the condition of her flowers; which Sydney Smith, however, observed, and in a minute exclaimed, "Ah! I see! Oh dear, oh dear, what a pity! Hot-bed! hot-bed!"

It has always been a matter of amazement to me that Lady Holland should have been allowed to ride rough-shod over society, as she did for so long, with such complete impunity. To be sure, in society, well-bred persons are always at the mercy of ill-bred ones, who have an immense advantage over everybody who shrinks from turning a social gathering into closed lists for the exchange of impertinences; and people gave way to Lady Holland's domineering rudeness for the sake of their hosts and fellow-guests, and spared her out of consideration for them. Another reason for the toleration shown Lady Holland was the universal esteem and affectionate respect felt for her husband, whose friends accepted her and her peculiarities for his sake, and could certainly have given no stronger proof of their regard for him.

The most powerful inducement to patience, however, to the London society upon

which Lady Holland habitually trampled, was the immense attraction of her house and of the people who frequented it. Holland House was, for a series of years, the most brilliant, charming, and altogether delightful social resort. Beautiful, comfortable, elegant, picturesque,—an ideal house, full of exquisite objects and interesting associations, where persons the most distinguished for birth, position, mental accomplishments, and intellectual gifts, met in a social atmosphere of the highest cultivation and the greatest refinement,—the most perfect civilization could produce nothing more perfect in the way of enjoyment than the intercourse of that delightful mansion. As Lady Tankerville pathetically exclaimed on Lady Holland's death, "Ah! poore, deare Lady 'Olland! what shall we do? It was such a pleasant 'ouse!"—admission to which was, to most of its frequenters, well worth some toleration of its mistress's brusqueries.

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If, as a friend of mine once assured me (a well-born, well-bred man of the best English society), it was quite well worth while to "eat a little dirt" to get the *entrée* of Stafford House, I incline to think the spoonfuls of dirt Lady Holland occasionally administered to her friends were accepted by them as the equivalent for the delights of her "pleasant 'ouse"; and that I did not think so, and had no desire to go there upon those terms, was, I imagine, the only thing that excited Lady Holland's curiosity about me, or her desire to have me for her guest. She complained to Charles Greville that I would not let her become acquainted with me, and twice after our first unavailing meeting at Rogers's, made him ask me to meet her again: each time, however, with no happier result.

LADY
HOLLAND.

The first time, after making herself generally obnoxious at dinner, she at length provoked Rogers, who, the conversation having fallen upon the subject of beautiful hair, and Lady Holland saying, "Why, Rogers, only a few years ago, I had such a head of hair that I could hide myself in it, and I've lost it all," merely answered, "What a pity!"—but with such a tone that an exultant giggle ran round the table at her expense.

After dinner, when the unfortunate female members of the party had to encounter Lady Holland unprotected, she singled out one of the ladies of the Baring family, to whom, however, she evidently meant to be particularly gracious; not, I think, without some intention of also pleasing me by her patronizing laudation of American people and American things; winding up with, "You know, my dear, we are Americans." The young Baring lady, who may or may not have been as familiar as I was with the Bingham and Baring alliances of early times in Philadelphia, merely raised her eyebrows, and said, "Indeed!" while I kept my lips close and breathed no syllable of Longfellow's house near Boston, which had been not only Washington's temporary abode, but the residence, in colonial days, of the Vassalls, to whom Lady Holland belonged, and where Longfellow showed me one day an iron plate at the back of one of the fire-places, with the rebus, the punning arms (*Armoiries parlantes*) of the Vassall family: a vase with a sun above it, *Vas Sol*.

Je suis méchante, ma chère, as Madame de Sévigné wrote to her daughter; *et cela m'a fait plaisir*, to suppress the nice little anecdote which might have helped Lady Holland on so pleasantly just at that juncture.

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But, holding one's tongue because one chooses, and being compelled to hold one's tongue by somebody else, is quite a different thing; and I am not sure that the main reason of my dislike to Lady Holland is not that I held my tongue to "spite her" during the whole course of the last dinner-party to which Rogers invited me to meet her. The party consisted of fewer men than women, and Lady — and myself agreed to take each other down to dinner, which we did. Just, however, as we were seating ourselves, Lady Holland called out from the opposite side of the table, "No, no, ladies, I can't allow that; I must have Mrs. Butler by me, if you please." Thus challenged, I could not, without making a scene with Lady Holland, and beginning the poet's banquet with a shock to everybody present, refuse her very dictatorial behest; and therefore I left my friendly neighbor, Lady —, and went round to the place assigned me by the imperious autocratess of the dinner-table: between herself and Dr. Allen ("the gentle infidel," "Lady Holland's atheist," as he was familiarly called by her

familiars).

But though one man may take the mare to the water, no given number of men can make her drink; so, having accepted my place, I determined my complaisance should end there, and, in spite of all Lady Holland's conversational efforts, and her final exclamation, "Allen! do get Mrs. Butler to talk! We *really must* make her talk!" I held my peace, and kept the peace, which I could have done upon no other conditions; but the unnatural and unwholesome effort disagreed with me so dreadfully, that I have a return of dyspepsia whenever I think of it, which I think justifies me in my dislike of Lady Holland.... I do not feel inclined to attribute to any motive but a kindly one, the attention Lady Holland showed my father during a severe indisposition of his, not long after this; though, upon her driving to his door one day with some peculiarly delicate jelly she had had made for him, Frederick Byng (Poodle, as he was always called by his intimates, on account of his absurd resemblance to a dog of that species), seeing the remorseful gratitude on my face as I received her message of inquiry after my father, exclaimed, "Now, she's done it! now, she's won it! now, she's got you, and you'll go to Holland House!" "No, I won't," said I, "but I'll go down to the carriage, and thank her!" which I immediately did, without stopping to put a bonnet on my head. Lady Holland was held, by those who knew her, to be a warm and constant friend, and had always been cordially kind to my father and my brother John.

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After Lord Holland's death she left Holland House, and took up her abode in South Street near the Park. One morning, when I was calling on Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lady Morley came in, and being reproached by Lady Charlotte for not having come to a party at her house on the previous evening, in which reproach I joined, having been also a loser by her absence from that same party, "Couldn't," said the lively lady, "for I was spending the evening with the pleasantest, most amiable, gentlest-mannered, sweetest-tempered, and most charming woman in all London—Lady Holland!" A conversation then ensued, in which certainly little quarter was shown to the ill qualities of the former mistress of Holland House. Among several curious instances of her unaccountably unamiable conduct to some of even Lord Holland's dearest friends, who, for his sake, opened their houses to her, allowed her to come thither, bespeaking her own rooms—her own company, who she would meet and who she would bring, and in every way consulting her pleasure and convenience, as was invariably the case on the occasion of her visits to Panshanger and Woburn,—Lady Morley said that Landseer had told her, that he was walking one day by the side of Lady Holland's wheel-chair, in the grounds of Holland House, and, stopping at a particularly pretty spot, had said, "Oh, Lady Holland! this is the part of your place of which the Duchess of Bedford has such a charming view from her house on the hill above." "Is it?" said Lady Holland; and immediately gave orders that the paling-fence round that part of her grounds should be raised so as to cut off the Duchess's view into them.

LADY
MORLEY.

Upon my venturing to express my surprise that anybody should go to the house of a person of whom they told such anecdotes, Lady Morley replied, "She is the only woman in the world of whom one does tell such things and yet goes to see her. She is the most miserable woman in England; she is entirely alone now, and she cannot bear to be alone, and, for his sake who was the dearest and most excellent and amiable creature that ever breathed, one goes on going to her, as I shall till she or I die." But what a description of the last days of the mistress of Holland House!

Sidney Smith, with whom I had become well acquainted when I wrote the letter to Lady Dacre in which I mention him, used to amuse himself, and occasionally some of my other friends, by teasing me on the subject of what he called my hallucination with regard to my having married in America. He never allowed any allusion to the circumstance without the most comical expressions of regret for this, as he called it, curious form of monomania. On the occasion to which I refer in this letter, he and Mrs. Smith had met some friends at dinner at our house, and I was taking leave of them, previous to my departure for Liverpool,

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when he exclaimed, "Now do, my dear child, be persuaded to give up this extraordinary delusion; let it, I beg, be recorded of us both, that this pleasing and intelligent young lady labored under the singular and distressingly insane idea that she had contracted a marriage with an American; from which painful hallucination she was eventually delivered by the friendly exhortations of a learned and pious divine, the Rev. Sydney Smith." Everybody round us was in fits of laughter, as he affectionately held my hand, and thus paternally admonished me. I held up my left hand with its wedding-ring, and began, "Oh, but the baby!" when the ludicrous look with which my reverend tormentor received this overwhelming testimony of mine, threw the whole company into convulsions, and nothing was heard throughout the room but sighs and sobs of exhaustion, and faint ejaculations and cries for mercy, while everybody was wiping tears of laughter from their eyes. As for me, I covered up my face, and very nearly went into hysterics.

The special and reportable sallies of Sydney Smith have been, of course, often repeated, but the fanciful fun and inexhaustible humorous drollery of his conversation among his intimates can never be adequately rendered or reproduced. He bubbled over with mirth, of which his own enjoyment formed an irresistible element, he shook, and his eyes glistened at his own ludicrous ideas, as they dawned upon his brain; and it would be impossible to convey the faintest idea of the genial humor of his habitual talk by merely repeating separate witticisms and repartees.

On that same evening, at my father's house, the comparative cheapness of living abroad and in England having been discussed, Sydney Smith declared that, for his part, he had never found foreign quarters so much more reasonable than home ones, or foreign hotels less exorbitant in their charges. "I know I never could live under fifty pounds a week," said he. "Oh, but how did you live?" was the next question. "Why, as a canon should live," proudly retorted he; "and they charged me as enemy's ordnance."

A question having arisen one evening at Miss Berry's as to the welcome Lady Sale would receive in London society after her husband's heroic conduct, and her heroic participation in it, during the Afghan war, Miss Berry, who, for some reason or other, did not admire Lady Sale as much as everybody else did, said she should not ask her to come to her house. "Oh, yes! pooh! pooh! you will," exclaimed Sydney Smith; "you'll have her, he'll have her, they'll have her, we'll have her. She'll be Sale by auction!" Later on that same evening, it being asked what Lord Dalhousie would get for his successful exploit in carrying of the gates of some Indian town, "Why," cried Lady Morley, "he will be created Duke Samson Afghanistes." It was pleasant living among people who talked such nonsense as that.

A party having been made to go and see the Boa Constrictor soon after its first arrival at the Zoölogical Gardens, Sydney Smith, who was to have been there, failed to come; and, questioned at dinner why he had not done so, said, "Because I was detained by the Bore Contradictor—Hallam"—whose propensity to controvert people's propositions was a subject of irritation to some of his friends, less retentive of memory and accurate in statement than himself.

Sydney Smith, not unnaturally, preferred conversation to music; and at a musical party one evening, as he was stealing on tip-toe from the concert-room to one more remote from the performance, I held up my finger at him, when he whispered, "My dear, it's all right. You keep with the dilettanti; I go with the talkettanti." Afterwards, upon my expostulating with him, and telling him that by such habits he was running a risk of being called to order on some future eternal day with "Angel Sydney Smith, hush!" if he did not learn to endure music better, he replied, "Oh, no, no! I'm cultivating a judicious second expressly for those occasions."

Of his lamentations for the "flashes of silence" which, he said, at one time made Macaulay's intercourse possible, one has heard; but when he was so ill that all his friends were full of anxiety about him, M—, having called to see him, and

affectionately asking what sort of night he had passed, Sydney Smith replied, "Oh, horrid, horrid, my dear fellow! I dreamt I was chained to a rock and being talked to death by Harriet Martineau and Macaulay."

Rogers's keen-edged wit seemed to cut his lips as he uttered it; Sydney Smith's was without sting or edge or venomous point of malice, and his genial humor was really the overflowing of a kindly heart.

ROGERS.

Rogers's helpful benevolence and noble generosity to poor artists, poor authors, and all distressed whom he could serve or succor, was unbounded; he certainly had the kindest heart and the unkindest tongue of any one I ever knew. His benefits remind me of a comical story my dear friend Harness once told me, of a poor woman at whose lamentations over her various hardships one of his curates was remonstrating, "Oh, come, come now, my good woman, you must allow that Providence has been, upon the whole, very good to you." "So He 'ave, sir; so He 'ave, mostly. I don't deny it; but I sometimes think He 'ave taken it out in corns." I think Rogers took out his benevolence, in some directions, in the corns he inflicted, or, at any rate, trod upon, in others.

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Mr. Rogers's inveterate tongue-gall was like an irresistible impulse, and he certainly bestowed it occasionally, without the least provocation, upon persons whom he professed to like. He was habitually kind to me, and declared he was fond of me. One evening (just after the publication of my stupid drama, "The Star of Seville"), he met me with a malignant grin, and the exclamation, "Ah, I've just been reading your play. So nice! young poetry!"—with a diabolical *dig* of emphasis on the "*young*." "Now, Mr. Rogers," said I, "what did I do to deserve that you should say that to me?" I do not know whether this appeal disarmed him, but his only answer was to take me affectionately by the chin, much as if he had been my father. When I told my sister of this, she, who was a thousand times quicker-witted than I, said, "Why didn't you tell him that young poetry was better than old?"

Walking one day in the Green Park, I met Mr. Rogers and Wordsworth, who took me between them, and I continued my walk in great glory and exultation of spirit, listening to Rogers, and hearing Wordsworth,—the gentle rill of the one speech broken into and interrupted by sudden loud splashes of the other; when Rogers, who had vainly been trying to tell some anecdote, pathetically exclaimed, "He won't let me tell my story!" I immediately stopped, and so did Wordsworth, and during this halt Rogers finished his recital. Presently afterwards, Wordsworth having left us, Rogers told me that he (Mr. Wordsworth), in a visit he had been lately paying at Althorpe, was found daily in the magnificent library, but never without a volume of his own poetry in his hand. Years after this, when I used to go and sit with Mr. Rogers, I never asked him what I should read to him without his putting into my hands his own poems, which always lay by him on his table.

A comical instance of the rivalry of wits (surely as keen as that of beauties) occurred one day when Mr. Rogers had been calling on me and speaking of that universal social favorite, Lady Morley, had said, "There is but one voice against her in all England, and that is her own." (A musical voice was the only charm wanting to Lady Morley's delightful conversation.) I was enchanted with this pretty and appropriate epigram, so unlike in its tone to Mr. Rogers's usual *friendly* comments; and, very soon after he left me, Sydney Smith coming in, I told him how clever and how pleasant a remark the "departed" poet (Sydney Smith often spoke of Rogers as dead, on account of his cadaverous complexion) had made on Lady Morley's voice. "He never said it," exclaimed my second illustrious visitor. "But he did, Mr. Smith, to me, in this room, not half an hour ago." "He never *made* it; it isn't his, it isn't a bit like him." To all which I could only repeat that, nevertheless, he *had* said it, and that, whether he made it or not, it was extremely well made. Presently Sydney Smith went away. I was living in upper Grosvenor Street, close to Park Lane; and he in Green Street, in the near neighborhood. But I believe he must have run from my house to his own, so short was the interval of time, before I received the following note: "Dans toute l'Angleterre il n'y a qu'une voix contre moi, et c'est la mienne." Then followed

SYDNEY SMITH.

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the signature of a French lady of the eighteenth century, and these words: "What a dear, innocent, confiding, credulous creature you are! and how you *do* love Rogers!

"SYDNEY SMITH."

When I was leaving England, I received two most kind and affectionate letters from him, bidding me farewell, and exhorting me, in a most comical and yet pathetic manner, to be courageous and of good cheer in returning to America. One of these epistles ended thus: "Don't forget me, whatever you do; talk of me sometimes, call me Butler's Hudibras, and believe me always.

"Affectionately yours,

"SYDNEY SMITH.]"

LIVERPOOL, Monday, September 11th, 1837.

Here we are again, dearest Harriet, returned from our ship, after a wretched day and night spent on board of her most unnecessarily. When we reached the quay yesterday morning, we saw the vessel lying under close-reefed sails; the favorable wind had died away, and the captain, whom we found standing on the wharf, said that, it being Sunday morning, he did not know how he should get a steamboat to tow us out. All this seemed to me very much like not sailing, and I begged not to go on board; at all events, I proposed, if we did not sail, that we should return to shore, and received a promise that we certainly should do so; so we went off in a small boat to the ship. She is crowded to excess, and the greater proportion of passengers are emigrant women and children.... I busied myself in stowing away everything in our state-room, and removing the upper berth so as to secure a little more breathing space. I even was guilty of the illicit proceeding—committed the outrage, in fact—of endeavoring to break one of my bull's-eyes, preferring being drenched to dry suffocation in foul air; but my utmost violence, even assisted with an iron rod, was ineffectual, and I had to give up breaking that window as a bad job. I found Margery's state-room one chaos of confusion, she at the same time protesting that everything was as tidily disposed of as possible; so I had to stand by and show her where to put every individual article, and having cleared the small space of the heap of superfluous things with which it was crammed, and removed the upper berth, I left it to her option whether she or baby should occupy the floor at night.

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At about half-past ten the captain came on board to say that we should not sail then, but if the wind grew fair, we *might perhaps* sail in the afternoon. He then took himself off the vessel, the wind was fast veering to dead ahead, ... and, with an aching heart and head, I remained in my berth all day long. In the night a perfect gale arose, the ship dragged her anchor for two miles, and we had thus much consolation that, had we put to sea, we should have encountered a violent storm, and, in all probability been driven back into the Mersey. This morning the wind was still contrary, and so we at length exerted ourselves to return to shore. Had we done so yesterday in good time—or, rather, not gone on board at all, you and I might have spent two more days together, and the baby and myself been spared considerable misery. But lamenting cures nothing; ... but I wish we never had left the quay yesterday morning, for everything showed against the probability of our sailing, and so here we are back in our old quarters at the Star and Garter, and you are gone.

We have taken places at the theater for this evening, to see Macready in "Macbeth." The Captain says we are to sail to-morrow morning, but I shall do my utmost this time to avoid going on board except in his company; and then, I think, we shall perhaps have some chance of not spending another day in vain in our sea-prison.

Ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

[The foregoing letter gives some idea of the difference between crossing from England to the United States in those days, and in these; when a telegram bears

the defiance to fate of this message: "We sail in the *Russia* on the 3d; have dinner for us at the Adelphi on the 11th."]

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PHILADELPHIA, Sunday, October 29th, 1837.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

We landed in New York, ten days ago, *i.e.*, on Friday, the 20th October; and had we come on immediately hither, your letter would have been just in time to greet me on my arrival here; but our passage was of thirty-seven days, stormy as well as tedious, and I was so ill that I did not leave my bed six times during the crossing; the consequence was, that on landing I looked more like a ghost than a living creature, and was so reduced in strength as hardly to be able to stand, so we remained in New York a few days, till I was able to travel.... Our fellow-passengers, the women, I mean, were rather vulgar, commonplace people, with whom I should not have had much sympathy, had I been well. As it was, I saw but little of them, and may consider that one of the counterbalancing advantages of having suffered so much.

One of them was in circumstances which interested me a good deal, though there was little in herself to do so. Her husband was a Staffordshire potter, and had gone to the United States to establish a pottery there; to begin the building up of a large concern, and lay the foundation for probable future wealth and prosperity. He had been gone two years, and she was now going out to join him with their four children. In his summons to her after this long separation, he told her that all had prospered with him, that he had bought a large tract of land, found excellent soil, water, and means of every description for his manufacturing purposes, obtained a patent, and established his business, and was every way likely to thrive and be successful.

AN
ENERGETIC
MAN.

What hope, what energy, what enterprise, what industry, in but two years of one human existence! What a world of doubt, of distressful anxiety and misgiving in the heart of the woman, left to patient expectation, to prayerful, tearful hopes and fears! What trust in man and faith in God during those two years! And now, with her children, she was coming to rejoin her helpmate, and begin life all over again, with him and them, in a strange country, in the midst of strangers, with everything strange about her. I lay thinking with much sympathy of this poor woman and her feelings, during my miserable confinement to my berth through that dismal voyage. She was an uneducated person, of the lower middle class, and not in herself interesting; though I do not know why I say that, when I was deeply interested about her, and I do not know that any creature endowed with a heart and soul can fail to be an object of interest in some way or other; and human existence, with all its marvelous developments, going on round one, must always furnish matter for admiration, pity, or sympathy. Moreover, this woman was carrying out with her the wives of several of her husband's workmen, who had accompanied him out on his experimental voyage; and, being settled in his employment, had got their master's wife to bring their partners out to them. Think what a meeting for all these poor people, dear Harriet, in this little hive of English industry and energy in the far west, the fertile wildernesses of Indiana! How often I thought of the fears and misgivings of these poor women in the steerage, when our progress was delayed by tempestuous, contrary winds, when the heavy seas leaped over our laboring vessel's sides, and when, during a violent thunderstorm, our masts were tipped with lambent fire, which played round them like a halo of destruction.

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All this while I have forgotten to tell you why I have not written sooner; and I suppose my accusation is yet bitter in your heart while you are reading this. I told you on my first page I was obliged to stay in New York to recruit my strength; the first time I went out, after walking about a quarter of a mile, I was obliged to sit down and rest, for half an hour, in a public garden, before I could crawl back again to the hotel.

On Monday, when I was a little better, we came on here. I am every day now expecting to be fetched to Harrisburg.... A woman should be her husband's friend, his best and dearest friend, as he should be hers: but friendship is a relation of equality, in which the same perfect respect for each other's liberty is exercised on both sides; and that sort of marriage, if it exists at all anywhere, is, I suspect, very uncommon everywhere. Moreover, I am not sure that marriage ever is, can be, or ought to be, such an equality;

for even "When two men ride on one horse," you know, etc. In the relation of friendship there is perfect freedom, and an undoubted claim on each side to be neither dependent on, nor controlled by, each other's will. In the relation of marriage this is impossible; and therefore certainly marriage is not friendship.... A woman should, I think, love her husband better than anything on earth except her own soul; which, I think, a man should respect above everything on earth but his own soul: and there, my dear, is a very pretty puzzle for you, which a good many people have failed to solve. It is, indeed, a pretty difficult problem; and perhaps you have chosen, if not the wiser and better, at any rate the easier and safer part.

God bless you, dear friend.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

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HARRISBURG, Friday, November 14th, 1837.

Thank you, dearest Harriet, for your epitome of the history of the New Testament. I have read the same things, in greater detail, more than once.... I have repeatedly gone over accounts of the history and authenticity of the Gospel narratives; but I have done so as a duty, and in order to be able to give to others some reason for the faith that is in me,—not really because I desired the knowledge for its own sake; and therefore my memory had gradually lost its hold of what I had taken into my mind, chiefly for the satisfaction of others, to enable me to make sufficient answers upon a subject whose best evidence of truth seems to me to reside in itself, and to be altogether out of the region of logic.... Christ received the last and perfect revelation of moral truth, brought it into the world, preached it by his practice, and bore witness to it by his death; and since he came, every holy life and death, in those portions of the globe where his name is known, has been moulded upon his teaching and example; and those individuals least inclined to acknowledge it have unconsciously imbibed the influence of the inspiration which he breathed into the soul of humanity. He has saved, and is daily and hourly saving, the world: and so far from imagining the possibility of any end to the work he has begun, or any superseding of his revelation by any other, it appears to me that civilized societies and nations calling themselves Christian have hardly yet begun to comprehend, believe, or adopt his teaching; under the influence of which I look for the regeneration of the race through the coming ages: it will extend above and beyond all discoveries of science and developments of knowledge, and more and more approve itself the only moral and spiritual theory that will at once carry forward and keep pace with the progress of humanity....

THE DAILY
SAVING OF
THE
WORLD.

If, by telling you that my mind dwelt more upon religious subjects now than formerly, I have led you to suppose that I ever investigate or ponder creeds, theologies, dogmas, or systems of faith, I have given you a false impression. But I live alone—much alone bodily, more alone mentally; I have no intimates, no society, no intellectual intercourse whatever; and I give myself up, as I never did in my life before, to mere musing, reverie, and speculation—I cannot dignify the process by the title of thought or contemplation.

My mind is much less active than it was: I read less, write less, study little, plan no work, and accomplish none. It is curious how, immediately upon my return to England, my mind seemed to flow back into its former channels; how my thoughts were roused and awakened; and how my imagination revived, and with what ease and rapidity I wrote, almost *currente calamo*, the only thing worth anything that I ever have written, my "English Tragedy." Here, all things tend to check any utterance of my thoughts, spoken or written; and while in England I could not find time enough to write, I here have no desire to do so, and lament my inability to force myself to mental exertion as a mere occupation and fill-time: *I dare not say kill-time, "for that would be a sin."* ... I ride and walk, and pass my days alone; and lacking converse with others, have become much addicted to desultory thinking (almost as bad a thing as desultory reading), which is indeed no thinking at all. Real thinking is what Cleopatra calls "sweating labor," to which the hewing of wood and drawing of water is a joke; but this I carefully avoid, knowing my own incapacity for it; so I dawdle about my mind, and, naturally, arrive at few conclusions; and among those few, no doubt, many false ones....

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We are established here during the rest of the Session of the Convention, which is a gain to me, as here I get companionship. There is a recess of a couple of hours, too, in the middle of the day, which the members avail themselves of for their very early dinner, but which we employ, and I enjoy immensely, in riding about the neighboring country. It is not thought expedient that I should ride alone about this strange region, on a strange horse, so I am escorted, at which I rejoice for all sakes, as everybody's health here would be the better for more exercise than they take.

This place, which is the seat of Government of the State of Pennsylvania, is beautifully situated in a valley locked round by purple highlands, through which runs the Susquehanna; in some parts broad, bright, rapid, shallow, brawling, and broken by picturesque reefs of rock; in others, deep and placid, bearing on its bosom beautiful wood-crowned islands, whose autumnal foliage, through which the mellow sunshine is now pouring, gives them the appearance of fairyland planted with golden woods.

The beautiful river is bountifully provided, too, with a most admirable species of trout, weighing from two to four pounds, silvery white without, and pale pink within (just the complexion of a fresh mushroom), and very excellent to eat, as well as lovely to behold.

Many of the members of the Convention have been kind enough to come and see me, and I have attended one of their debates. They are for the most part uncultivated men, unlettered and ungrammared; and those among them who are the best educated, or rather the least ignorant, carry their small *lore* much as a school-boy carries his, stiffly, awkwardly, and ostentatiously: an Eton sixth-form lad would beat any one of them in classical scholarship. But though in point of intellectual acquirement, I do not find much here to excite my sympathy, there is abundant matter of interest, as well as much that is curious and amusing to me in their intercourse. The shrewdness, the sound sense, the original observations, and the experience of life of some of these men are striking and remarkable. Though not one of them can speak grammatically, they all speak fluently, boldly, readily, easily, without effort or hesitation. There is, of course, among them, the usual proportion of well, and less well, witted individuals; and perhaps the contrast is the more apparent because the education has here covered no natural deficiencies and developed no natural gifts; so that there is not the usual superficial, civilized level produced by a common intellectual training. The questions they discuss are often in themselves interesting, though I cannot say that they often treat them in the most interesting manner....

Ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

[The play which I have called an "English Tragedy," was suggested by an incident in the life of Lord de Ros, which my father heard at dinner at Lady Blessington's, and, on his return from Gore House, related it to us. I wrote the principal scene of the third act the same evening, under the impression of the story I had just heard; and afterwards sketched out and wrote the drama, of which I had intended, at first, to write only that one scene.

LORD DE
ROS.

The whole fashionable world of London had been thrown into consternation by the discovery that Lord de Ros, premier Baron of England, cheated at cards. He was, notoriously, one of the most worthless men of his day; which circumstance never prevented his being perfectly well received by the men and women of the best English society. That he was an unprincipled profligate made him none the less welcome to his male associates, or their wives, sisters, and daughters; but when Lord de Ros cheated his fellow-gamblers at the Club, no further toleration of his wickedness was, of course, possible; and then every infamous story, which, if believed, should have made him intolerable to decent people before, was told and re-told; and it seemed to me, that of all the evil deeds laid to his charge, his cheating at cards was quite the least evil.

Lady Ellesmere, from whom I heard a story of his cold-blooded profligacy far more dreadful than that on which I founded my "English Tragedy," told me that she thought Lord de Ros's influence had been exceedingly detrimental to her brother, Charles Greville, who was his most intimate friend; and who, she said, burst into tears in speaking to her of it, when the fact of his cheating was

discovered,—certainly a strong proof of affection from such a man to such a man; and I remember how eagerly and earnestly he endeavored to persuade me that the incident on which I had founded my "English Tragedy" had not been so profoundly base on Lord de Ros's part as I supposed.

Besides the revival of these tragical stories of his misdeeds, the poor man's disgrace gave rise to some bitter jokes among his friends of the club-house and gambling-table. An epitaph composed for him to this effect was circulated among his intimates:—

"Here lies Henry, twenty-sixth Baron de Ros, in joyful expectation of the last trump."

Of course he was cut by all his noble associates; and Lord Alvanley, being hailed one day by some of them with an inquiry as to whether it was true that he had called on De Ros, replied, "I left a card on Lord de Ros, and I marked it, that he might know it was an honor."]

HARRISBURG, Saturday, November 11th, 1837.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

It seems useless for me to wait any longer for the chance of giving you some definite idea of our plans, for day after day passes without their assuming anything like a decided form, and I am now as uncertain of what is to become of us when the Convention leaves this place, as I was when I saw you in New York.

From the date of your last, I perceive that you have taken your intended trip [to the Sault St. Marie, and some of the then little frequented Canadian Lake scenery]. I rejoice at this, as your health must, of course, be better than when you wrote to me before, and I think the scenery and people you are now amongst fit to renovate a sick body and soothe a sore mind. [Mrs. Jameson was staying at Stockbridge, with the Sedgwick family.] Catherine Sedgwick is my best friend in this country, but the whole family have bestowed more kindness upon me than I can ever sufficiently acknowledge.... They have all been exceedingly good to me, and the place of their dwelling combines for me the charms of great natural beauty with the associations that belong to the intellect and the affections.

MRS.
JAMESON.

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After your first letter from New York, I never rested till I got Mrs. Griffith's review of your book. The composition itself did not surprise me, but what did a little—only a little (for I am growing old, and have almost done with being surprised at anything), was that such a production should have gained admission into one of the principal magazines of this country; it is a sad specimen, truly, of the periodical literature it accepts.... Criticism in periodical journals is apt to be slightly malignant, ... and more often the result of personal sentiment than impartial literary or artistic judgment: so that I rather admired the article in question for its ignorance and vulgarity than the qualities which it exhibited in common with other criticisms to be met with in our own periodical literature, which, however unjust or partial in their censures and commendations, are decidedly inferior to Mrs. Griffith's composition in the two qualities I have specified....

My baby acquired a cough in coming from Philadelphia to this place in a railroad carriage (car, as they are called here), which held sixty-four persons in one compartment, and from which we were all obliged to alight, and walk a quarter of a mile through the woods, because the railroad, though traveled upon, is not finished.

We are here upon the banks of the Susquehanna, and surrounded by fine blue outlines of mountainous country. How thankful I am that God did not despise beauty! He is the sole provider of it here.

Believe me ever yours very truly,

F. A. B.

P. S.—"A change has come o'er the spirit of my dream" since yesterday; upon due deliberation, it is determined that when the Convention goes to Philadelphia we shall take possession of Butler Place; and therefore (however uncomfortably), I shall be able to receive you there after the first of next month. If a half-furnished house and half-

broken household do not deter you, you will find me the same you have ever known me, there, as elsewhere,

Yours most truly,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Thursday, November 20th, 1837.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I write in haste, for I find our garden-cart is just starting for town, and I wish this to be taken immediately to the post-office. I was beginning to be almost anxious about you, when your letter from Boston arrived, to remove the apprehension of your being again ill, which I feared must be the case.

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You tell me that you will let me know the day on which to expect you in Philadelphia, and bid me, if I cannot receive you in my house, seek out a shelter for you. The inconveniences, I fear, are yours, and not mine; though a residence of even a few days in an American boarding-house, must, I should think, make even the discomforts of my housekeeping seem tolerable. But that you are yourself likely to be a sufferer in so doing, I should not be sorry to show you the quite indescribable difference between an English and an American home and household; which, I assure you, nothing less than seeing is believing.

From your bidding me, if I intended to relinquish your visit (which I do not), seek you a lodging near me, I do not think that you understand that we live six miles from town, and see as little of Philadelphia as if that six were sixty. This circumstance, too, made me hesitate as to whether I ought to remove you from seeing what there is to be seen there—which is little enough, to be sure,—and withdraw you beyond the reach of those civilities which you would receive on all hands in the city. All this, though, is for yourself to determine on; bed, board, and welcome, we tender you freely; your room, and the inkstand you desire in it, shall be ready on the day you name; and we will joyfully meet you when and where you please to be met, and convey you to our abode, where I can positively promise you absolute quiet, which perhaps in itself may not be unacceptable, after all your mind and body have gone through during your stay in this country.

The Reform Convention is now sitting in Philadelphia, and is no mean curiosity of its kind, I assure you; I should like you to see and hear it.

Ever yours truly,

F. A. B.

[Mrs. Jameson paid us a short, sad visit, and returned to Europe with the bitter disappointment of her early life confirmed, to resume her honorable and laborious career of literary industry. Her private loss was the public gain. When next we met, it was in England.]

BRANCHTOWN, Friday, December 29th, 1837.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

Doubtless you have long ago accounted your kind letter lost, for I am sure you would not imagine that I could have received, and yet so long delayed to answer it: yet so it is; and I hardly know how to account for it, for the receipt of your letter gratified and touched me very much; the more so, probably, that my father and mother hardly ever write to any of us, and so a letter from any one much my senior always seems to me a condescension; and though I may have appeared so, believe me, I am not ungrateful for your kindness in making the effort of writing to me....

[Pg 77]

I wish it were in my power to give you a decent excuse for not having written sooner, but the more I reflect, the less I can think what I have been doing; yet I have been, and am, busy incessantly from morning to night, about nothing. My whole life passes in trifling activities, and small recurring avocations, which do not each seem to occupy an hour, and yet at last weigh down the balance of the twenty-four. I cannot name the thing

GOETHE ON
THINKING.

I do, and but that our thoughts are to be revealed at the Day of Judgment, I should on that occasion be in the knife-grinder's case: "Story! Lord bless you! I have none to tell, sir!" for except ordering my dinner (and eating it), and riding on horseback every day, I have no distinct idea of any one thing I accomplish. Mine is not a life of much excitement, yet the time goes, and all the more rapidly, perhaps, that it flows with uninterrupted monotony. I neither read, write, nor cast up accounts; and shall soon have to begin again with the first elements. Do you not think that an ignorance, unbroken even by the slightest tincture of these, would be rather a fine thing for one's original powers? If one did nothing but a "deal of thinking," perhaps one's thinking might be something worth. Is it not Goethe who says: "Thought expands and weakens the mind; action contracts and strengthens it"? If this be true, mine should be an intellect of vast extent, and too shallow to drown a fly....

Do you know that I consider pain and disease as inventions of our own; and every death *unnatural*, but that gradual decay of all the faculties, and cessation of all the functions, which is, as we manage matters now, the rarest termination of human existence? Therefore, besides pitying people when they are ill, I blame them too, unless their suffering be an inheritance, the visitation of God, even unto the third and fourth generation, for disobedience to His wise and beneficent laws. One would think, if this belief in hereditary retribution was *real*, instead of a mere profession, people would be thoughtful, if not for themselves, at least for those to whom they are to transmit a healthy or diseased nature; one sees so much sin and so much suffering, the manifest causes of which lie at our own doors....

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Thank you for your account of Lady Beecher; she always made a most pleasing impression upon me. I think, however you must be mistaken in saying that she and I excited our audiences *alike*: I should think that impossible in such very dissimilar actresses as we must have been. The quantity of effect produced, of course I cannot judge of; but it seems to me, from what I have seen and known of her off the stage, that the quality must have been essentially different. This theme, however, should not be begun in the corner of a letter already too long.

Your letter was brought to me into the Harrisburg Convention, whose sessions I once or twice attended. That Convention was very funny, and very strange, and very interesting too; I've a great mind to write Lord Dacre an account of it, because, you know, you disclaim being a "political lady," though I presume you admit that he is a "political lord." And that reminds me that no democrat would accept your three-legged stool and its inferences [Lady Dacre had compared the stability of our Government, by the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons, to a solid, three-legged stool, contrasting it disadvantageously with that of the United States], for nature scorns plurality of means where one suffices; and the broadest shadowing tree needs but one stem, if the root be deep and widespread enough. This is merely by the way, for I am as little "political" as you are.

Give my love to Lord Dacre, if that is respectful enough; and also to Mrs. Sullivan, whose intercourse, briefly as I was able to enjoy it, was very delightful to me.

Affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, January 8th, 1838.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I am not prone to that hungry longing for letters which you have so often expressed to me, yet I was getting heart-sick for some intelligence from some of my dear ones beyond the seas. My own people have not written to me since I left England, and it seemed to me an age since I had heard from you. The day before yesterday, however, brought me letters from you and Emily, and they were dearly welcome.

A poor woman, who of course had more children than she could well feed or honestly provide for, said to me the other day, alluding to my solitary blessing in that kind, that "Providence had spared me wonderfully." ... How fatal this notion, so prevalent among the poor and ignorant, and even the less ignorant and better-to-do classes, is!—this

MADAME DE
STAËL.

fathering of our progeny upon Providence, which produces so much misery, and so much crime to boot, in our swarming pauper populations. I have had it in my mind lately once or twice, to write an "Apology for," or "Defense of" Providence. I am sick of hearing so much misery, so much suffering, so much premature death, and so much unnecessary disease, laid to the charge of our best Friend, our Father who is in heaven. Moreover, it is the *good* (not the reasonable, though) who bring these railing accusations against Providence. Let what calamity soever visit them, they never bethink themselves of their own instrumentality in the business; but with a resignation quite more provoking than praiseworthy, turn up their eyes, and fold their hands, and miscall it a dispensation of Providence. The only application of that "technical" term that I ever heard with pleasure, was that of the delightfully *devout* old Scotch lady, who said, "Hech, sirs, I'm never weary of reflecting on the gracious dispensations of Providence towards myself, and its righteous judgments on my neighbors!" Doubtless, God has ordained that sin and folly shall produce suffering, that the consequences may warn us from the causes. Madame de Staël, whose brilliancy, I think, has rather thrown into the shade her very considerable common sense, has well said, "Le secret de l'existence, c'est le rapport de nos peines avec nos fautes." And to acknowledge the just and inevitable results of our own actions only as the inscrutable caprices of an inscrutable Will, is to forego one of the most impressive aspects of the great goodness and wisdom of the Providence by which we are governed. Death, and the decay which should be its only legitimate preparation, are not contrary to a right conception of either. But instead of sitting down meekly under what godly folks call "mysterious dispensations" of the Divinity, I think, if I took their view of such unaccountable inflictions, I should call them devilish rather than Divine, and certainly go mad, or *very bad*. Bearing the righteous result of our own actions, while we suffer, we can adore the mercy that warns us from evil by its unavoidable penalties, at the same time remembering that even our sins, duly acknowledged, and rightly used, may be our gain, through God's merciful provision, that our bitterest experience may become to us a source of virtue and a means of progress. The profound sense of the justice of our Maker renders all things enduring; but the idea of the arbitrary infliction of misery puts one's whole soul in revolt. Wretchedness poured upon us, we cannot conceive why or whence, may well be intolerable; suffering resulting from our own faults may be borne courageously, and with a certain *comfort*,—forgive the apparent paradox—the comfort is general, the discomfort individual; and if one is not too selfish, one may rejoice in a righteous law, even though one suffers by it. Moreover, if evil have its inevitable results, has not good its inseparable consequences? If the bad deeds of one involve many in their retribution, the well-doing of one spreads incalculable good in all directions. It is because we are by no means wholly selfish, that the consequences of our actions affect others as well as ourselves; so that we are warned a thousand ways to avoid evil and seek good, for the whole world's sake, as well as our own.

What a sermon I have written you! But it was my thought, and therefore, I take it, as good to you as anything else I could have said.

Of course, children cannot love their parents *understandingly* until they become parents themselves; then one thinks back upon all the pain, care, and anxiety which for the first time one becomes aware has been expended on one, when one begins in turn to experience them for others. But the debt is never paid *back*. Our children get what was given to us, and give to theirs what they got from us. Love descends, and does not ascend; the self-sacrifice of parents is its own reward; children can know nothing of it. In the relations of the old with the young, however, the tenderness and sympathy may well be on the elder side; for age has known youth, but youth has not known age.

You say you are surprised I did not express more admiration of Harriet Martineau's book about America. But I *do* admire it—the spirit of it—extremely. I admire her extremely; but I think the moral, even more than the intellectual, woman. I do not mean that she may not be quite as wise as she is good; but she has devoted her mind to subjects which I have not, and probably could not, have given mine to, and writes upon matters of which I am too ignorant to estimate her merit in treating of them. Some of her political theories appear to me open to objection; for instance, female suffrage and community of property; but I have never thought enough upon these questions to judge her mode of advocating them. The details of her book are sometimes mistaken; but that was to be expected, especially as she was often subjected to the abominable impositions of

persons who deceived her purposely in the information which she received from them with the perfect trust of a guileless nature. I do entire justice to her truth, her benevolence, and her fearlessness; and these are to me the chief merits of her book....

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When Sully, the artist who painted the picture of me now in your possession, found that it did not give entire satisfaction, he refused to receive any payment for it, saying that he wished to have it back, because, as a work of art, it was valuable to him, and that he would execute another likeness (what a good word *execute* is, so applied!) *upon* me, instead of that you have. We have never been able to alter this determination of his, and therefore, as he will not take his money, he should have his picture back. So, Harriet, dear, pack me up, and send me to Messrs. Harrison and Latham, Liverpool; and as soon as Sully returns from England, where he now is, you shall have another and, if possible, a better likeness of me; though I do not feel very sanguine about it, for Sully's characteristic is delicacy rather than power, and mine may not be power, but certainly is not delicacy....

Alas! my dear Harriet, the little stone-pine [a seedling planted by my friend from a pine-cone she brought from Italy], in one of our stormy nights at sea, was dislodged from its place of security and thrown out of the pot with all the mould. I watched its decay with extreme regret, and even fell into some morbid and superstitious fancies about it; but I could still cry to think that what would have been such a source of pleasure to dear Emily, and might have prospered so well with her, was thus unavailingly bestowed upon me. It made quite a sore place in my heart....

God bless you, dear.

I am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, February 6th, 1838.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

The box and two letters arrived safely about a week ago. I read over my old journal: this returning again into the midst of old events and feelings, affected my spirits at first a good deal.... Of course this passed off, and it afforded me much amusement to look over these archives, ancient as they now almost appear to me.... It surely is wisdom most difficult of attainment, to form a correct estimate of things or people while we are under their immediate influence: the just value of character, the precise importance of events, or the true estimate of joy and sorrow, while one is subject to their action and pressure. I suppose, with my quick and excitable feelings, I shall never attain even so much of this moral power of comparison and just appreciation as others may; but it cannot be easy to anybody.... Habitual accuracy of thought and moderation of feeling, of course, will help one to conjecture how our present will look when it has become past; but the mind that is able to do this must be naturally just, and habitually trained to justice. With the majority of people, their present must always preponderate in interest; and it is right that it should, since our work is in the present, though our hopes may be in the future, as our memories and examples must be in the past. There must be some of this intense, vivid feeling about what is immediate, to enable us to do the work of *now*—to bear the burden, surmount the impediment, and appreciate the blessing of *now*. St. Paul very wisely bade us "beget a temperance in all things" (I wish he had told us how to do it). He also said, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." ...

LOOKING
ON THE
PAST.

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The medical mode of treatment in this country appears to me frightfully severe, and I should think, with subjects as delicate as average American men and women, it might occasionally be fatal. I have a violent prejudice against bleeding, and would rather take ten doses of physic, and fast ten days, than lose two ounces of my blood. Of course, in extreme cases, extreme remedies must be resorted to; but this seems to be the usual system of treatment here, and I distrust medical systems, and cannot but think that it might be safer to reduce the quality rather than the quantity of the vital fluid. Abstinence, and vegetable and mineral matters of divers kinds, seem to me natural remedies enough; but the merciless effusion of blood, because it is inflamed, rather reminds me of my school-day cutting and gashing of my chilblains, in order to obtain immediate relief from their irritation....

S—'s scarlet fever has been followed by the enlargement of one of the tonsils, which grew to such a size as to threaten suffocation, and the physician decided that it must be removed. This was done by means of a small double-barreled silver tube, through the two pipes of which a wire is passed, coming out in a loop at the other end of the instrument. This wire being passed round the tonsil, is tightened, so as to destroy its vitality in the course of four and twenty hours, during which the tube remains projecting from the patient's mouth, causing some pain and extreme inconvenience. The mode usually resorted to with adults (for this, it seems, is a frequent operation here), is cutting the tonsil off at once; but as hemorrhage sometimes results from this, which can only be stopped by cauterizing the throat, that was not to be thought of with so young a patient.... At the end of the twenty-four hours, the instrument is removed, the diseased part being effectually killed by the previous tightening of the wire. It is then left to rot off in the mouth, which it does in the course of a few days, infecting the breath most horribly, and, I should think, injuring the health by that means.... At the same time, I was attacked with a violent sore throat, perhaps a small beginning of scarlet fever of my own, and which seized, one after another, upon all our household, and for which I had a hundred leeches at once applied to my throat, which, without reducing me very much, enraged me beyond expression. No less than seven of us were ill in the house. We are now, however, thank God, all well.... I cannot obtain from our physician any explanation whatever of the cause of this swelling of the tonsils, so common here; and when, demurring about the removal of my child's, I inquired into their functions, I received just as little satisfaction. He told me that they were not ascertained, and that all that was known was, that removing them did not affect the breathing, speaking, or swallowing—with which I had to be satisfied. This uncertainty seems to me a reason against the operation; cutting away a part of the body whose functions are not ascertained, seems to me rather venturesome; but of course the baby couldn't be allowed to choke, and so we submitted to the inevitable. The disease and the remedy are common here, and may be in England, though I never heard of them before. Pray, if you know anything about either, write me what, as I cannot rest satisfied without more information....

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God bless you, dear.

Always affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Wednesday, February 21st, 1838.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Although it was a considerable disappointment to me not to see you again, after the various rumors and last most authentic announcement of your coming to Philadelphia, yet, upon the whole, I think it is as well that we did not meet again, simply to renew that dismalest of ceremonies, leave-taking. I had not the hope which you expressed, that a second edition of our parting would have been less painful than the first.... I think I should have felt less gloomily on that occasion, if I had not had to leave you in such a dismal den of discomfort. External things always, even in moments of strong emotion, affect me powerfully; and that dreariest room, the door of which closed between us, left a most forlorn impression upon my memory.

LETTER TO
MRS.
JAMESON.

I have been of late myself living in an atmosphere darkened by distress.... Typhus fever has carried off our most intimate friend, Mr. B—, after but a fortnight's illness; and closed, almost at its opening, a career which, under all worldly aspects, was one of fair and goodly promise. He has left a young widow, to whom he had been married scarcely more than two years, and a boy-baby who loses in him such a preceptor as few sons in this country are trained under. I have lost in him one of the few persons who cheer and make endurable my residence here. Doubtless our loss is reckoned by Him who decrees it, and I pray that none of us, by impatience of suffering, may forfeit the precious uses of sorrow. Our friend and neighbor, W—, has just endured a most dreadful affliction in the death of his youngest child, his only daughter, one girl among six sons, the very darling of his heart, loved above all the others, who, while she was still a baby, not a year old, drew from him that ludicrously pathetic exclamation, "Oh, the man that marries one's daughter must be hateful!" She died of scarlet fever, which, after passing so lightly by our doorposts, has entered, like the destroying angel, our poor friend's

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dwelling. His brother has been at the point of death with it too, and I cannot but rejoice in trembling when I think how happily we escaped from this terrible plague. As you may suppose, my spirits have been a good deal affected by all the sorrow around me.

Mirabile dictu! I have read the volume of Scott's Life which you left here, also the volume of Miss Edgeworth, with which I was disappointed; also the volume of Milton: not the Treatise on Divorce, and the Areopagitica, alone; but Letters, Apologies for Smectymnuus, and Denunciations against Episcopacy, and all. Did you do as much? Moreover, I am just finishing Carlyle's "French Revolution"; so that you see, as my friend Mr. F— says, I am improving; and if I should ever happen to read another book, I will be sure to mention the circumstance in my letters.

Very truly yours,

F. A. B.

March 9th, 1838.

DEAREST EMILY,

I am almost ashamed to say I forgot the anniversary your letter recalls to me; but the artificial or conventional epochs which used to divide my time, and the particular days against which affection set its special marks, are, by degrees, losing their peculiar associations for me. Even the great division of all, death, which makes us miscall a portion of eternity Time (as if it were different from, or other than, it), seems less of an interruption to me than it did formerly. Is it not all one, let us parcel it out as we will into hours, days, months, years, or lifetimes? The boundary line exists in our narrow calculation alone. The greatest change of all the changes we know, to mortal senses implying almost cessation of being, to the believer in the immortality of spirit suggests not even the idea of change, in what relates to the soul, so much as uninterrupted progress, and the gradual lengthening of the chain of moral consequence, inseparable from one's conception of a responsible, rational agent, whose existence is to be eternal.

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No doubt there are properties of our minds which find delight in order, symmetry, recurring arrangement, and regular division; and the harmonious course of the material world, alternately visited by the sweet succession of day and night, the seasons, and all their lovely variety of gradation, naturally creates the idea of definite periods, to which we give definite names; but with God and with our souls there is no time, and this material world in which our material bodies are existing is but a shadow or reflection cast upon the surface of that uninterrupted stream on which our true and *very selves* are borne onward; the real, the existing is within us.

I think it probable that the general disregard of times and seasons formerly observed by me, in the community where I now live, may have tended to lessen my regard for them; but, besides this, in thinking of anniversaries connected with those I love—periods which used to appeal to my affectionate remembrance,—I have come in a measure to feel that to the very young alone, these marks we draw upon our life can appear other than as the fictitious lines with which science has divided the spheres of heaven and earth.

PHILADELPHIA, Saturday, March 18th, 1838.

Touching my picture, my dearest Harriet, I am desirous to say that your spirited defense of your right to it (whether you like it or not) is admirable; that it certainly shall not be taken from you by force, and that there was no intention whatever of infuriating you by the civil proposal that was made to relieve you of it by sending you a more satisfactory one, under the impression that you are not satisfied with what you have.

"TOUCHING
MY
PICTURE."

My dear, the first two pages of your letter might have been written with a turkey-cock's quill, they actually gobble in the pugnacity of their style, and as it lies by me, the very paper goes fr-fr-fr. But you shall keep that identical picture, my dearest, since you have grown to like it; so shake your feathers smooth again, funny woman that you are! and let your soul return into its rest.

Sully is now in England. I wish there were any chance of your seeing him, but after remaining there long enough to paint the queen, he intends visiting Paris for a short time and then returning home. He is a great friend of mine, and one of the few people here that I find pleasure in associating with. As his delicacy about being paid for the picture arose from the idea that, not being satisfied with the likeness, you probably did not care to keep it, I have no doubt that, the present state of your regard for it being made clear to him, he will not object any more to receiving the price of it.

I presume that the long chapter you have written me upon the inevitability of people's folly and the expediency of believing, first, that God makes us fools, and then that he punishes us for behaving like fools, is a result of your impeded circulation, under the effect of the east wind upon your cuticle. How I wish, without the bitter month's sea-sickness, you could be here beside me now, this 24th of March, between an open window and door, and with my fire dying out; to be sure, as I have just been taking two monstrous unruly dogs to a pond at some distance from the house, for a swim, and as S — was with me and I had to carry her (now a pretty heavy lump) through several mud passages, the agreeable glow in which I feel myself may not be altogether due to the warmth of the atmosphere, although it is really as hot as our last of May. How I wish you could spend the summer with me! How you would rejoice in the heat, to me so hateful and intolerable! To persons of your temperament, I suppose hell, instead of the popular idea of fire and brimstone, presents some such frigid horror as poor Claudio's: "thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice."

I was walking once with Trelawney, who is as chilly as an Italian greyhound, at Niagara, by a wall of rock, upon which the intense sun beat, and was reflected upon us till I felt as if I was being roasted alive, and exclaimed, "Oh, this is hell itself!" to which he replied with a grunt of dissatisfaction, "Oh, dear, I hope hell will be a great deal *warmer* than this!"

In my observation about the development of our filial affections after we become parents ourselves, I may have fallen into my usual error of generalizing from too narrow a basis, and taken it for granted that my own experience is necessarily that of others.... But after all, though *everybody* is not like me, *somebody* must be, and one's self is therefore a safe source from whence to draw conclusions with regard to others, up to a certain point. Made of the same element, however diversely fashioned and tempered by various influences, we still are all alike in the main ingredients of our humanity; and it must be quite as contrary to sound sense to imagine the processes of one's own mind singular, as to suppose them universal.

Profound truism! but truisms are profound—they lie at the foundations of existence—for they are truths.

My journal is fast disappearing behind the fire. How I wish I had spent the time I wasted in writing it, in making extracts from the books I read!...

I wrote my sister a long answer, by Mrs. Jameson, to her last letter, in which I entered at some length upon the various objections to a public life; not that I was then aware of the decision she has now adopted of going upon the stage—a decision, however, for which I have been entirely prepared ever since my visit to England and my return home.... I hope she may succeed to the fullest extent of her desires, for I do not think that hers is a nature that would be benefited by the bitter medicine of disappointment. Oh, how I wish she could once enter some charmed sphere of peace and happiness! The discipline of happiness, in which I have infinite faith, would I think be of infinite use to her, but—God knows best.... I am anxious, too, that her experiment of a life of excitement should be the most favorable possible, that, under its happiest aspect, she may learn how remote it is from happiness.... Had she remained in England, I should have rejoiced to think that Mrs. Somerville was her friend: such a friend would be God's minister to the heart and mind of any young woman. It is not a small source of regret to me, to think of how much inestimable human intercourse my residence in America deprives me.

MRS.
SOMERVILLE.

I think my father's selecting Paris for the first trial of my sister's abilities a mistake; and I am very, *very* anxious about the result.

Natural talent is sufficient for a certain degree of success in acting, but not in singing, where the expression of feeling, the dramatic portion of the performance, is so severely

trammled by mechanical difficulties: the execution of which is all but rendered impossible by the slightest trepidation, the tone of the voice itself being often fatally affected by the loss of self-possession.

Pasta and Malibran both failed *at first* in Paris, and I confess I shall be most painfully anxious till I hear the issue of this experiment....

I am in the garden from morning till night, but am too impatient for mortal roots and branches. I should have loved the sort of planting described in Tieck's "Elves," where they stamp a pine-cone into the earth, and presently a fir-tree springs up, and, rising towards the sky with the happy children who plant it, rocks them on its topmost branches, to and fro in the red sunset.

Good-bye, God bless you.

I am ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

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[Many years after these letters were written, in 1845, when I joined my sister in Rome, I found her living in the most cordial intimacy with the admirable woman whose acquaintance I had coveted for her and for myself.

My year's residence in Rome gave me frequent opportunities of familiar intercourse with Mrs. Somerville, whose European celebrity, the result of her successful devotion to the highest scientific studies, enhanced the charm of her domestic virtues, her tender womanly character, and perfect modesty and simplicity of manner.

During my last visit to Rome, in 1873, speaking to the old blind Duke of Sermoneta, of my desire to go to Naples to pay my respects to Mrs. Somerville, who was then residing there, at an extremely advanced age, he said, "Elle est si bonne, si savante, et si charmante, que la mort n'ose point la toucher." I was unable to carry out my plan of going to Naples, and Mrs. Somerville did not long survive the period at which I had hoped to have visited her.

Early in our acquaintance I had expressed some curiosity, not unmixed with dread, upon the subject of scorpions, never having seen one. Mrs. Somerville laughed, and said that a sojourn in Italy was sure to introduce them sooner or later to me. The next time that I spent the evening with her after this conversation, as I stood by the chimney talking to her, I suddenly perceived a most detestable-looking black creature on the mantelpiece. I started back in horror to my hostess's great delight, as she had been at the pains of cutting out in black paper an imitation scorpion, for my edification, and was highly satisfied with the impression it produced upon me.

Urania's reptile, however, was the conventional mythical scorpion of the Zodiac, and only vaguely represented the evil-looking, venomous beast with which I subsequently became, according to her prophecy, acquainted, in all its natural living repulsiveness.

Besides this sample scorpion, which I have carefully preserved, I have two drawings which Mrs. Somerville made for me; one, a delicate outline sketch of what is called Othello's House in Venice, and the other, a beautifully executed colored copy of his shield, surmounted by the Doge's cap, and bearing three mulberries for a device,—proving the truth of the assertion, that the *Otelli del Moro* were a noble Venetian folk, who came originally from the Morea, whose device was the mulberry, the growth of that country, and showing how curious a jumble Shakespeare has made, both of name and device, in calling him a *Moor* and embroidering his arms on his handkerchief as *strawberries*. In Cinthio's novel, from which Shakespeare probably took his story, the husband is a Moor, and I think called by no other name.]

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PHILADELPHIA, May 7th, 1838.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I fear this will scarce reach you before you leave England upon your German pilgrimage, but I presume it will follow you, and be welcome wherever it finds you.

Do you hear that the steamships have accomplished their crossing from England to America in perfect safety, the one in seventeen, the other in fifteen days! just half the usual time, thirty days being the average of the finest passages this way. Oh, if you knew what joy this intelligence gave me! It seemed at once to bring me again within reach of England and all those whom I love there.

STEAMSHIPS
ON THE
ATLANTIC.

And even though I should not therefore return thither the oftener, the speed and certainty with which letters will now pass between these two worlds, hitherto so far apart, is a thing to rejoice at exceedingly. Besides all personal considerations in the matter, the wonder and delight of seeing this great enterprise of man's ingenuity and courage thus successful is immense. One of the vessels took her departure for England the other day, filled with passengers, and sent from the wharf with a thousand acclamations and benedictions. The mere report of it overcame me with emotion; thus to see space annihilated, and the furthest corners of the earth drawn together, fills one with admiration for this amazing human nature, more potent than the whole material creation by which it is surrounded, even than the three thousand miles of that Atlantic abyss. These manifestations of the power of man's intellect seem to me to cry aloud to him to "stand in awe [of his own nature] and sin not." And yet these victories over matter are nothing compared to the achievements of human souls, with their powers of faith, of love, and of endurance. I will not, however, inflict further exclamations upon you....

Certainly mere details of personal being, doing, and suffering are of some value when one would almost give one's eyes for a moment's sight of the bodily presence of the soul one loves: so you shall have my present history; which is, that at this immediate writing, I am sitting in a species of verandah (or piazza, as they call it here), which runs along the front of the house. It has a low balustrade and columns of white-painted wood, supporting a similar verandah on the second or bedroom story of the house; the sitting-rooms are all on the ground floor. It is Sunday morning, but I am obliged to be content with such devotions and admonitions as I can enjoy here, from within and around me, as my plight does not admit of my leaving home....

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I am sorry to say that the fact of letters miscarrying between this country and England has been very disagreeably proved to me this morning by the receipt of one from dear William Harness, who mentions having written another to me five months ago, which other has never yet made its appearance, and I presume would hardly think it worth while to do so now.

We have had an uncommonly mild winter, without, I think, more than a fortnight of severe weather, and in March the sun was positively summer hot. I am out of doors almost all day. Our spring, however, has made up for the lenient winter, by being as cold and capricious as possible, and at this moment hardly a fruit-tree is in blossom or a lilac-tree in bud; and looking abroad over the landscape, 'tis only here and there that I can detect faint symptoms of that exquisite green haze which generally seems to hang like a halo over the distant woods at this season. I do not remember so backward a spring since I have been in this country. I do not complain of it, however, though everybody else does; for the longer the annihilating heat of the summer keeps off, the better the weather suits me. Will you not come over and spend the summer with me, now that the sea voyage is only half as long as it was? Come, and we will go to Niagara together, and you shall be half roasted alive for full five months, an effectual warming through, I should think, for the rest of the year. Dear Harriet, Niagara is the one thing of its kind for which no fellow has yet been found in the world, and to see it is certainly worth a fortnight's sea-sickness. I cannot say more in its praise.

You speak of the sufferings of your wretched Irish population; and because patience, fortitude, benevolence, charity, and many good fruits spring from that bitter root, you seem to be reconciled to the fact that ignorance and imprudence are the real causes from which the greater part of this frightful misery proceeds.

Though God's infinite mercy has permitted that even our very errors and sins may become, if we please, sources of virtue in, and therefore of good to, us, do you not think that our nature, such as He has seen fit to form it, with imperfection in its very essence,

and such a transition as death in its experience, furnishes us with a sufficient task in the mere ceaseless government and education which it requires, without our superadding to this difficult charge the culpability of infinite neglect, the absolute damage and injury and all the voluntary deterioration, sin, and sorrow which we inflict upon ourselves?

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Why are we to charge God with all these things, or conceive it possible that He ordained a state of existence in which mercy's supplication would be that sudden death might sweep a hundred sufferings of worse kind from the face of the earth?

God is unwearied in producing good; and we can so little frustrate His determinate and omnipotent goodness, that out of our most desperate follies and wickednesses the ultimate result is sure to be preponderating good; but does this excuse the sinners and fools who vainly attempt to thwart His purpose? or will they be permitted to say that they are "tempted of God"? Indeed, dear Harriet, I must abide in the conviction that we manufacture misery for ourselves which was never appointed for us; and because Mercy, unfailling and unbounded, out of these very miseries of our own making, draws blessed balsam for our use, I cannot believe that it ordained and inflicted all our sufferings.

I began this letter yesterday, and am again sitting under my piazza, with S—, in a buff coat, zigzagging like a yellow butterfly about the lawn, and Margery mounting guard over her, with such success as you may fancy a person taking care of a straw in a high wind likely to have.... I have just been enjoying the pleasure of a visit from one of the members of the Sedgwick family. They are all my friends, and I do think all and each in their peculiar way good and admirable. Catharine Sedgwick has been prevented from coming to me by the illness of the brother in whose family she generally spends the winter in New York.... Like most business men here, he has lived in the deplorable neglect of every physical law of health, taking no exercise, immuring himself for the greater part of the day in rooms or law courts where the atmosphere was absolute poison; and using his brains with intense application, without ever allowing himself proper or sufficient relaxation. Now, will you tell me that Providence *intended* that this man should so labor and so suffer? Why, the very awfulness of the consequence forbids such a supposition for a moment. Or will you, perhaps, say that this dire calamity was sent upon him in order to try the fortitude, patience, and resignation of his wife, within a month of her confinement; or of his sister, whose nervous sensibility of temperament was of an order to have been driven insane, had they not been mercifully relieved from the worst results of the fatal imprudence of poor R—?

AMERICAN
NEGLECT
OF HEALTH.

Whenever I see that human beings do act up as fully as they can to *all* the laws of their Maker, I shall be prepared to admire misery, agony, sickness, and all tortures of mind or body as excellent devices of the Deity, expressly appointed for our benefit; but while I see obvious and abundant natural causes for them in our *disobedience* to His laws, I shall scarce come to that conclusion, in spite of all the good which He makes for us out of our evil. I know we must sin, but we sin more than we *must*; and I know we must suffer, but we suffer more than we *must* too....

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God bless you, dear.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Sunday, May 27th.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I have received within the last few days your second letter from London; the date, however, is rather a puzzle, it being *August the 10th*, instead (I presume) of April. I hasten, while I am yet able, to send you word of R. S—'s rapid and almost complete recovery....

In spite of the admirable forethought which prompted the beginning of this letter, my dear Mrs. Jameson, it is now exactly a fortnight since I wrote the above lines; and here I am at my writing-table, in my drawing-room, having in the interim *perpetrated* another girl baby.... My new child was born on the same day of the month that her sister was, and within an hour of the same time, which I think shows an orderly, systematic, and

methodical mode of proceeding in such matters, which is creditable to me.... I should have been unhappy at the delay of my intelligence about R. S—, but that I feel sure Catharine must ere this have written to you herself. I am urging her might and main to come to us and recruit a little, but, like all other very good people, she thinks she can do something better than take care of herself; a lamentable fallacy, for which good people in particular, and the world in general, suffer.

As you may suppose, I do not yet indulge in the inditing of very long epistles, and shall therefore make no apology for this, which is almost brief enough to be witty. I am glad you like Sully, because I love him.

I am ever yours very truly,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, 1838.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

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This purposes to be an answer to a letter of yours dated the 10th of May; the last I have received from you.... I cannot for the life of me imagine why we envelope death in such hideous and mysterious dreadfulness, when, for aught we can tell, being born is to an infant quite as horrible and mysterious a process, perhaps (for we know nothing about it) of a not much different order. The main difference lies in the fact of our anticipation of the one event—*ma, chi' sa?*—but although some fear of death is wholesomely implanted in us, to make us shun danger and to prevent the numbers who, without it, would impatiently rush away from the evils of their present existence through that gate, yet certainly one-half of the King of Terror's paraphernalia we invest him with ourselves; since, really, being born is quite as wonderful, and, when we consider the involuntary obligations of existence thus thrust upon us, quite as awful a thing as dying can possibly be.

You retort upon me for having fallen from the observance of anniversaries, that I am still a devout worshiper of places, and in this sense, perhaps, an idolater.... My love for certain places is inexplicable to myself. They have, for some reasons which I have not detected, so powerfully affected my imagination, that it will thenceforth never let them go. I retain the strongest impression of some places where I have stayed the shortest time; thus there is a certain spot in the hill country of Massachusetts, called Lebanon, where I once spent two days....

LOVE OF
CERTAIN
PLACES.

I was going to tell you how like Paradise that place was to my memory, and with what curious yearning I have longed to visit it again, but I was interrupted; and in the intervening hours S— has sickened of the measles, and I am now sitting writing by her bedside, not a little disturbed by my own cogitations, and her multitudinous questions, the continuous stream of which is nothing slackened by an atmosphere of 91° in the shade, and the furious fever of her own attack....

As soon as S— is sufficiently recovered, we purpose going to the seaside to escape from the horrible heat. Our destination is a certain beach on the shore of Long Island, called Rockaway, where there is fine bathing, and a good six miles of hard sand for riding and driving. After that, I believe we shall go to the hill country of Berkshire, to visit our friends the Sedgwicks. I wonder whether your love for heat would have made agreeable to you a six-mile ride I took to-day, at about eleven o'clock, the thermometer standing at 94° in the shade. If this is not more *warmth* than even you can away with, you must be "bold and determined like any salamander, ma'am." ... My love for flowers is the same as ever. Last winter in London I almost ruined myself in my nosegays, and came near losing my character by them, as nobody would believe I was so gallant to myself *out of my own pocket*. My room is always full of them here, and in spite of recollecting (which I always do in the very act of sticking flowers in my hair) that I am upon the verge of *thirty*, they are still my favorite ornaments.

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Thank you for your constant affection, my dear friend. It makes my heart sink to think how much is lost to me in the distance that divides us. If death severs forever the ties of this world, and our intercourse with one another here is but a temporary agency, ceasing with our passage into another stage of existence, how strong a hold have you

and I laid upon each other's souls, to be sundered at the brief limit of this mortal life! It may possibly have accomplished its full purpose, this dear friendship of ours, even here; but it is almost impossible to think that its uses may not survive, or its duration extend beyond this life;—that is an awful thought overshadowing all our earthly loves, yet throwing us more completely upon Him, the Father, the Guardian of all; for on him alone can we surely rest always and forever. But how much must death change us if we can forget those who have been as dear to us here as you and I have been to each other!

A friend of mine asked me the other day if I thought we should have other senses hereafter, and if I could imagine any but those we now possess: I cannot, can you? To be sure I can imagine the possession of *common sense*, which would be a new one to me; but it is very funny, and impossible, to try to fancy a power, like seeing or hearing, of a different kind, though one can think of these with a higher degree of intensity, and wider scope.... Good-bye, dearest Harriet. God bless you.

I am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Monday, July 23d, 1838.

It is now high-summer mark, and such a summer as we are now dying under is scarcely remembered by the oldest human creature yet extant in these parts. And where are you, my dear Mrs. Jameson? Sojourning in Bohemian castles; or wandering among the ruins of old Athens? Which of your many plans, or dreams of plans have you put into execution? I am both curious and anxious to know something of your proceedings, and shall dispatch this at a hazard to your brother-in-law's, where I suppose your movements will always be known, and your whereabouts heard of.

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Your book is advertised I know, and if you have adhered to your former determination, you have withdrawn yourself from your own blaze, and left England to profit by its light. Of myself I can tell you little that is particularly cheerful....

The friends of good order, in this excellent city of brotherly love, have been burning down a large new building erected for *purposes of free discussion*, because Abolition meetings were being held in it; and the Southern steamer has been wrecked with dreadful loss of life, owing to the exceeding small esteem in which its officers appear to have held that "quintessence of dust, Man." The vessel was laden with Southerners, coming north for the summer; and I suppose there is scarcely a family from Virginia to Florida, that is not in some way touched by this dreadful and wanton waste of life.

Pray, when you have time, write me some word of your doing, being, and suffering, and

Believe me ever yours truly,

F. A. B.

[The above mention of shipwreck, refers to the disastrous loss of the *Pulaski*; an event, the horror of which was rendered more memorable to me by an episode of noble courage, of which our neighbor, Mr. James Cooper, of Georgia, was the hero, and of which I have spoken in the journal I kept during my residence on our plantation.]

ROCKAWAY, Friday, August 10th.

Where are you, my dearest Harriet; and what are you doing? Drinking of queer-tasting waters, and soaking in queer-smelling ones? Are you becoming saturated with sulphur, or penetrated with iron? Are you chilling your inside with draughts from some unfathomable well, or warming your outside with baths from some ready-boiled spring?

Oh! vainest quest of that torment, the love for the absent! Do you know, Harriet, that I have more than once seriously thought of never writing any more to any of my friends? the total cessation of intercourse would soon cause the acutest vividness of feeling to subside, and become blunt (for so are we made): the fruitless feeling after, the vain

LOVE FOR
THE
ABSENT.

eager pursuit in thought of those whose very existence may actually have ceased, is such a wearisome pain! This being linked by invisible chains to the remote ends of the earth, and constantly feeling the strain of the distance upon one's heart,—this sort of death in life, for you are all so far away that you are almost as *bad* as dead to me,—is a condition that I think makes intercourse (such intercourse as is possible) less of a pleasure than of a pain; and the thought that so many lives with which mine was mingled so closely are flowing away yonder, in vain for me here (and of hereafter who can guess!), prevents my contentedly embracing my own allotted existence, and keeps me still with eyes and thoughts averted towards the past, from the path of life I am appointed to tread. If I could believe it right or kind, or that those who love me would not be grieved by it, I really feel sometimes as if I could make up my mind to turn my thoughts once and for all away from them, as from the very dead, and never more by this disjointed communion revive, in all its acuteness, the bitter sense of loss and separation....

You see I discourse of my child's looks; for at present, indeed, I know of nothing else to discourse about in her. Of her experiences in her former states of existence she says nothing, though I try her as Shelley used to do the speechless babies that he met; and her observations upon the present she also keeps religiously to herself, so that I get no profit of either her wisdom or her knowledge....

The vast extent of this country offers every variety of climate which an invalid can require, and its mineral waters afford the same remedies which are sought after in the famous European baths. God has everywhere been bountiful, and doubtless no country is without its own special natural pharmacopœia, its medicines, vegetable and mineral, and healing influences for human disease and infirmity. The medicinal waters of this country are very powerful, and of every variety, and I believe there are some in Virginia which would precisely answer our purpose....

We are now staying for a short time on the Long Island shore, at a place called Rockaway. As I sit writing at my window here, the broad, smooth, blue expanse of the Atlantic stretches out before me, and ships go sailing by that are coming from, or returning to, the lands where you live.

You cannot conceive anything more strange, and to me more distasteful than the life which one leads here. The whole watering-place consists of a few detached cottages, the property of some individuals who are singular enough to comprehend the pleasure of privacy; and one enormous hotel, a huge wooden building, of which we are at present among the inmates.

How many *can* sleep under this mammoth roof, I know not; but upwards of *four hundred* have sat down at one time to feed in the boundless dining-hall. The number of persons now in the house does not, I believe, exceed eighty, and everybody is lamenting the smallness of the company, and the consequent dullness of the place; and I am perpetually called upon to sympathize with regrets which I am so far from sharing, that I wish, instead of eighty, we had only eight fellow-lodgers.... The general way of life is very disagreeable to me. I cannot, do what I will, find anything but constraint and discomfort in the perpetual presence of a crowd of strangers. The bedrooms are small, and furnished barely as well as a common servant's room in England. They are certainly not calculated for comfortable occupation or sitting alone in; but sitting alone any part of the day is a proceeding contemplated by no one here.

As for bathing, we are carried down to the beach, which is extremely deep and sandy, in an omnibus, by batches of a dozen at a time. There are two little stationary bathing-huts for the use of the whole population; and you dress, undress, dry yourself, and do all you have to do, in the closest proximity to persons you never saw in your life before.... This admitting absolute strangers to the intimacy of one's most private toilet operations is quite intolerable, and nothing but the benefit which I believe the children, as well as myself, derive from the bathing would induce me to endure it.

From this place we go up to Massachusetts—a delightful expedition to me—to our friends the Sedgwicks, who are very dear to me, and almost the only people among whom I have found mental companionship since I have been in this country.

I have not had one line from my sister since her return from Germany, whence she

wrote me one letter. I feel anxious about her plans—yet not very—I do not think her going into public life adds much to the anxiety I feel about her.... God bless you, dear. What would I give to be once more within reach of you, and to have one more of our old talks!

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

ROCKAWAY, LONG ISLAND, August 23d, 1838.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

... I forget whether you visited any of the watering-places of this New World; but if you did not, your estate was the more gracious. This is the second that I have visited, and I dislike it rather more than I did the first, inasmuch as the publicity here extends not only to one's meals, but to those ceremonies of one's toilet which in all civilized parts of the world human beings perform in the strictest seclusion.

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The beach is magnificent—ten good miles of hard, sparkling sand, and the broad, open Atlantic rolling its long waves and breaking in one white thunderous cloud along the level expanse. The bathing would be delightful but for the discomfort and positive indecency of the non-accommodation.

There are two small stationary dressing-huts on the beach, and here one is compelled to disrobe and attire one's self in the closest proximity to any other women who may wish to come out of the water or go into it at the same time that one does one's self. Moreover, the beach at bathing time is daily thronged with spectators, before whose admiring gaze one has to emerge all dripping, like Venus, from the waves, and nearly as naked; for one's bathing-dress clings to one's figure, and makes a perfect wet drapery study of one's various members, and so one has to wade slowly and in much confusion of face, thus impeded, under the public gaze, through heavy sand, about half a quarter of a mile, to the above convenient dressing-rooms, where, if one find only three or four persons, stripped or stripping, nude or semi-nude, one may consider one's self fortunate....

I have wished, as heartily as I might for any such thing, that I could have seen the glorification of our little Guelph Lady, the Queen, particularly as the coronation of another English sovereign is scarcely likely to occur during my life; but this unaccomplished desire of mine must go and keep company with many others, which often tend to the other side of the Atlantic. Thank you for your account of my sister.... Hereafter, the want of female sympathy and companionship may prove irksome to her, but at present she will scarcely miss it; she and my father are exceedingly good friends, and pleasant companions and fellow-travelers, and are likely to remain so, unless she should fall in love with, and insist upon marrying, a "fiddler."

Instead of being at Lenox, where I had hoped to be at this season, we are sweltering here in New York, for whatever good we may obtain from doctors, leeches, and medicine. I mean to send S— up into Berkshire to-morrow; she is well at present, but I fear may not continue so if confined to the city during this dreadfully hot weather.... For myself, I am keeping myself well as hard as I can by taking ice-cold baths, and trudging round the Battery every evening, to the edification of the exceedingly disreputable company who (beside myself) are the only haunters of that one lovely lung of New York.... It is not thought expedient that I should be stared at alone on horseback; being stared at alone on foot, apparently, is not equally pernicious; and so I lose my most necessary exercise; but I may comfort myself with the reflection that should I ever become a sickly, feeble, physically good-for-nothing, broken-down woman, I shall certainly not be singular in this free and enlightened republic, where (even more than anywhere else in the world) singularity appears to be dreaded and condemned above any or all other sins, crimes, and vices....

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Pray be kind enough to continue writing to me. Every letter from the other side is to me what the drop of water would have been to the rich man in Hades, whom I dare say you remember. What do you think I am reading? "The Triumphs of God's revenge against the crying and execrable *sinne* of wilful and premeditated *murther*"—that's something new,

So believe me ever very truly yours,

F. A. B.

NEW YORK, Friday, August 24th, 1838.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote to you (I believe) a short time ago, ... but I have since then received a letter from you, and will thank you at once for it, and especially for the details concerning my sister.... I rejoice in the change which must have taken place in her physical condition, which both you and dear Emily describe; indeed, the improvement had begun before I left England.... I believe I appreciate perfectly all the feelings which are prompting her to the choice of the stage for her profession; but I also think that she is unaware (which I am not) of the necessity for excitement, which her mode of life and the influences that have surrounded her from her childhood have created and fostered in her, and for which she is no more answerable than for the color of her hair. I do not even much regret her election, little as I admire the vocation of a public performer. To struggle is allotted to all, let them walk in what paths they will; and her peculiar gifts naturally incline her to the career she is choosing, though I think also that she has much higher intellectual capabilities than those which the vocation of a public singer will ever call into play.... We are always so greatly in the dark in our judgments of others, and so utterly incapable of rightly estimating the motives of their actions and springs of their conduct, that I think in the way of blame or praise, of vehement regret or excessive satisfaction, we need not do much until we know more. I pray God that she may endeavor to be true to herself, and to fulfill her own perception of what is right. Whether she does so or not, neither I, nor any one else, shall know; nor, indeed, is any one *really* concerned in the matter but herself. She possesses some of the intellectual qualities from which the most exquisite pleasures are derived.... But she will not be happy in this world; but, as nobody else is, she will not be singular in that respect: and in the exercise of her uncommon gifts she may find a profound pleasure, and an enjoyment of the highest kind apart from happiness and its far deeper and higher springs.

ADELAIDE
KEMBLE.

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Her voice haunts me like something precious that I have lost and go vainly seeking for; other people play and sing her songs, and then, though I seem to listen to them, I hear *her* again, and seem to see again that wonderful human soul which beamed from every part of her fine face as she uttered those powerful sweet spells of love, and pity, and terror. To me, her success seems almost a matter of certainty; for those who can make such appeals to the sympathy of their fellow-beings are pretty sure not to fail. Pasta is gone; Malibran is abroad; and Schroeder-Devrient is the only great dramatic singer left, and she remains but as the *remains* of what she was; and I see no reason why Adelaide should not be as eminent as the first, who certainly was a glorious artist, though her acting surpassed her singing, and her voice was not an exceptionally magnificent one....

This letter has suffered an interruption of several days, dear Harriet, ... and I and my baby have been sent after S—; and here I am on the top of a hill in the village of Lenox, in what its inhabitants tautologically call "*Berkshire county*," Massachusetts, with a view before my window which would not disgrace the Jura itself.

Immediately sloping before me, the green hillside, on the summit of which stands the house I am inhabiting, sinks softly down to a small valley, filled with thick, rich wood, in the centre of which a little jewel-like lake lies gleaming. Beyond this valley the hills rise one above another to the horizon, where they scoop the sky with a broken, irregular outline that the eye dwells on with ever new delight as its colors glow and vary with the ascending or descending sunlight, and all the shadowy procession of the clouds. In one direction this undulating line of distance is overtopped by a considerable mountain with a fine jagged crest, and ever since early morning, troops of clouds and wandering showers of rain and the all-prevailing sunbeams have chased each other over the wooded slopes, and down into the dark hollow where the lake lies sleeping, making a pageant far finer than the one Prospero raised for Ferdinand and Miranda on his desert island....

F. A. B.

It is not very long since I wrote to you, my dear Mrs. Jameson, and I have certainly nothing of very special interest to communicate to warrant my doing so now; but I am in your debt by letters, besides many other things; and having leisure to back my inclination just now, I will indite.

I am sitting "on top," as the Americans say, of the hill of Lenox, looking out at that prospect upon which your eyes have often rested, and making common cause in the eating and living way with Mary and Fanny A—, who have taken up their abode here for a week [Miss Mary and Fanny Appleton; the one afterwards married Robert, son of Sir James Mackintosh; the other, alas! the poet Longfellow]. Never was village hostelry so graced before, surely! There is a pretty daughter of Mr. Dewey's staying in the house besides, with a pretty cousin; and it strikes me that the old Red Inn is having a sort of blossoming season, with all these sweet, handsome young faces shining about it in every direction.

You know the sort of life that is lived here: the absence of all form, ceremony, or inconvenient conventionality whatever. We laugh, and we talk, sing, play, dance, and discuss; we ride, drive, walk, run, scramble, and saunter, and amuse ourselves extremely with little materials (as the generality of people would suppose) wherewith to do so....

ABSENCE
OF
CEREMONY.

The Sedgwicks are under a cloud of sorrow just now.... They are none of them, however, people who suffer themselves to be absorbed by their own personal interests, whether sad or gay; and as in their most prosperous and happy hours they would have sympathy to spare to the sufferings of others, so the sickness and sorrow of these members of their family circle, and the consequent depression they all labor under (for where was a family more united?), does not prevent our enjoying every day delightful seasons of intercourse with them....

Pray write me whatever you hear about my people. Lady Dacre wrote me a kind and very interesting account of my sister the other day. Poor thing! her ordeal is now drawing near, if anybody's ordeal can properly be said to be "drawing near," except before they are born; for surely from beginning to end life is nothing but one long ordeal.

I am glad you like Lady M—; she is a person whom I regard very dearly. It is many years since I first became acquainted with her, and the renewal of our early intimacy took place under circumstances of peculiar interest. Is not her face handsome; and her manner and deportment fine?... I must stop. I see my young ladies coming home from their afternoon drive, and am going with them to spend the hours between this and bedtime at Mrs. Charles Sedgwick's. Pray continue to write to me, and

Believe me ever yours very truly,

F. A. B.

Begun at LENOX, ended at PHILADELPHIA,
Sunday, October 29th, 1838.

DEAREST HARRIET,

... Since the receipt of your last letter, one from Emily has reached me, bringing me the intelligence of my mother's death!... There is something so deplorable in perceiving (what one only fully perceives as they are ceasing forever) all the blessed uses of which these mysterious human relations are capable, all their preciousness, all their sweetness, all their holiness, alas! alas!...

Cecilia and Mr. Combe arrived in this country by the *Great Western* about a fortnight ago. On their road from New York to Boston they passed a night within six miles of Lenox, and neither came to see nor sent me word that they were so near, which was being rather more phrenological and philosophically phlegmatical than I should have expected of them. For my heart had warmed to Cecilia in this pilgrimage of hers to a foreign land, where I alone was of kin to her; and I felt as if I both knew and loved her more than I really do....

I understand Mr. Combe has parceled out both his whereabouts and whatabouts, to the very inch and minute, for every day in the next two years to come, which he intends to devote to the phrenological regeneration of this country. I am afraid that he may meet with some disappointment in the result of his labors: not indeed in Boston, where considerable curiosity exists upon that subject, and a general proneness to intellectual exercises of every description....

Throughout New England, his book on the "Constitution of Man," and his brother's, on the treatment of that constitution, are read and valued, and their name is held in esteem by the whole reading community of the North. But I doubt his doing more than exciting a mere temporary curiosity in New York and Philadelphia; and further south I should think he would not be listened to at all, unless he comes prepared to demonstrate phrenologically that the colored population of the Southern States is (or are), by the conformation of their skulls, the legitimate slaves of the whites.

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Can anything be stranger than to think of Cecilia trotting over the length and breadth of North America at the heels of a lecturing philosopher? When I think of her in her mother's drawing-room in London, in the midst of surroundings and society so different, I find no end to my wonderment. She must have extraordinary adaptability to circumstances in her composition.

I have just finished the play of which you read the beginning in England—my "English Tragedy"—and am, as usual, in high delight just now with my own performance. I wish that agreeable sentiment could last; it is so pleasant while it does! I think I will send it over to Macready, to try if he will bring it out at Covent Garden. I think it might succeed, perhaps; unless, indeed, the story is too objectionable for anything—but *reality*.

Perhaps I have had my share of health. I am sure I have had enough to be most grateful for, if I should lie on a sick-bed for the rest of my days....

God bless you, dear.

I am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, November 13th, 1838.

... The sad news of my poor mother's death, my dear Mrs. Jameson, reached me while I was staying up at Lenox, among those whom my good fortune has raised up in this strange country to fill for me the place of the kindred and friends from whom I am so widely sundered....

That the winter in Georgia, whither we are going immediately, may be beneficial to the invalid member of our party, is the only pleasant anticipation with which I set my face towards a part of the country where the whole manner of existence is repugnant to my feelings, and where the common comforts of life are so little known, that we are obliged to ship a freight of necessary articles of food, for our use while we are on the plantation.

WINTER IN
GEORGIA.

Wheaten bread is unknown, meal made of the Indian corn being alone used there: and though the provision Nature has furnished, in the shape of game, abounds, the only meat, properly so called, which can be procured there, is shipped in barrels (salted, of course) from the North.

Society, or the shadow of it, is not to be dreamt of; and our residence, as far as I can learn, is to be a half-furnished house in the midst of rice-swamps, where our habitual company will be our slaves, and our occasional visitors an alligator or two from the Altamaha.

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Catharine Sedgwick is spending the winter in Lenox. She and Mr. and Mrs. R— and Kate are going to Europe in the spring; and if I should return alive from Slavery, perhaps I may go with them. Pray do not fail to let me know everything you may hear or see of my sister.... I was at Lenox when your parcel for Catharine Sedgwick arrived. We were all enchanted with the engraving from the German picture of the "Sick Counsellor."

F. A. B.

On Friday morning we started from Philadelphia, by railroad, for Baltimore. It is a curious fact enough, that half the routes that are traveled in America are either temporary or unfinished,—one reason, among several, for the multitudinous accidents which befall wayfarers. At the very outset of our journey, and within scarce a mile of Philadelphia, we crossed the Schuylkill, over a bridge, one of the principal piers of which is yet incomplete, and the whole building (a covered wooden one, of handsome dimensions) filled with workmen, yet occupied about its construction. But the Americans are impetuous in the way of improvement, and have all the impatience of children about the trying of a new thing, often greatly retarding their own progress by hurrying unduly the completion of their works, or using them in a perilous state of incompleteness. Our road lay for a considerable length of time through flat, low meadows that skirt the Delaware, which at this season of the year, covered with snow and bare of vegetation, presented a most dreary aspect. We passed through Wilmington (Delaware), and crossed a small stream called the Brandywine, the scenery along the banks of which is very beautiful. For its historical associations I refer you to the life of Washington. I cannot say that the aspect of the town of Wilmington, as viewed from the railroad cars, presented any very exquisite points of beauty; I shall therefore indulge in a few observations upon these same railroad cars just here.

And first, I cannot but think that it would be infinitely more consonant with comfort, convenience, and common sense, if persons obliged to travel during the intense cold of an American winter (in the Northern States), were to clothe themselves according to the exigency of the weather, and so do away with the present deleterious custom of warming close and crowded carriages with sheet-iron stoves, heated with anthracite coal. No words can describe the foulness of the atmosphere, thus robbed of all vitality by the vicious properties of that dreadful combustibile, and tainted besides with the poison emitted at every respiration from so many pairs of human lungs. These are facts which the merest tyro in physiological science knows, and the utter disregard of which on the part of the Americans renders them the amazement of every traveler from countries where the preservation of health is considered worth the care of a rational creature. I once traveled to Harrisburg in a railroad car, fitted up to carry sixty-four persons, in the midst of which glowed a large stove. The trip was certainly a delectable one. Nor is there any remedy for this: an attempt to open a window is met by a universal scowl and shudder; and indeed it is but incurring the risk of one's death of cold, instead of one's death of heat. The windows, in fact, form the walls on each side of the carriage, which looks like a long green-house upon wheels; the seats, which each contain two persons (a pretty tight fit too), are placed down the whole length of the vehicle, one behind the other, leaving a species of aisle in the middle for the uneasy (a large portion of the traveling community here) to fidget up and down, for the tobacco-chewers to spit in, and for a whole tribe of little itinerant fruit and cake-sellers to rush through, distributing their wares at every place where the train stops. Of course nobody can well sit immediately in the opening of a window when the thermometer is twelve degrees below zero; yet this, or suffocation in foul air, is the only alternative. I generally prefer being half frozen to death to the latter mode of martyrdom.

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Attached to the Baltimore cars was a separate apartment for women. It was of comfortable dimensions, and without a stove; and here I betook myself with my children, escaping from the pestilential atmosphere of the other compartment, and performing our journey with ease enough. My only trial here was one which I have to encounter in whatever direction I travel in America, and which, though apparently a trivial matter in itself, has caused me infinite trouble, and no little compassion for the rising generation of the United States—I allude to the ignorant and fatal practice of the women of stuffing their children from morning till night with every species of trash which comes to hand.... I once took the liberty of asking a young woman who was traveling in the same carriage with me, and stuffing her child incessantly with heavy cakes, which she also attempted to make mine eat, her reason for this system,—she replied, it was to "keep her baby good." I looked at her own sallow cheeks and rickety teeth, and could not forbear suggesting to her how much she was injuring her poor child's health. She stared in astonishment, and pursued the process, no doubt wondering what I meant, and how I could be so cruel as not to allow pound-cake to my child. Indeed, as may easily be supposed, it becomes a matter of no little difficulty to enforce my own rigid discipline in

the midst of the various offers of dainties which tempt my poor little girl at every turn; but I persevere, nevertheless, and am not seldom rewarded by the admiration which her appearance of health and strength excites wherever she goes.

I remember being excessively amused at the woeful condition of an unfortunate gentleman on board one of the Philadelphia boats, whose sickly-looking wife, exhausted with her vain attempts to quiet three sickly-looking children, had in despair given them into his charge. The miserable man furnished each of them with a lump of cake, and during the temporary lull caused by this diversion, took occasion to make acquaintance with my child, to whom he tendered the same indulgence. Upon my refusing it for her, he exclaimed in astonishment—

"Why, madam, don't you allow the little girl cake?"

"No, sir."

"What does she eat, pray?" (as if people lived upon cake generally).

"Bread and milk, and bread and meat."

"What! no butter? no tea or coffee?"

"None whatever."

"Ah!" sighed the poor man, as the chorus of woe arose again from his own progeny, the cake having disappeared down their throats, "I suppose that's why she looks so healthy."

I supposed so, too, but did not inquire whether the gentleman extended his inference.

We pursued our way from Wilmington to Havre de Grace on the railroad, and crossed one or two inlets from the Chesapeake, of considerable width, upon bridges of a most perilous construction, and which, indeed, have given way once or twice in various parts already. They consist merely of wooden piles driven into the river, across which the iron rails are laid, only just raising the train above the level of the water. To traverse with an immense train, at full steam-speed, one of these creeks, nearly a mile in width, is far from agreeable, let one be never so little nervous; and it was with infinite cordiality each time that I greeted the first bush that hung over the water, indicating our approach to *terra firma*. At Havre de Grace we crossed the Susquehanna in a steamboat, which cut its way through the ice an inch in thickness with marvelous ease and swiftness, and landed us on the other side, where we again entered the railroad carriages to pursue our road.

We arrived in Baltimore at about half-past two, and went immediately on board the Alabama steamboat, which was to convey us to Portsmouth, and which started about three-quarters of an hour after, carrying us down the Chesapeake Bay to the shores of Virginia. We obtained an unutterably hard beefsteak for our dinner, having had nothing on the road, but found ourselves but little fortified by the sight of what we really could not swallow. Between six and seven, however, occurred that most comprehensive repast, a steamboat tea; after which, and the ceremony of choosing our berths, I betook myself to the reading of "Oliver Twist" till half-past eleven at night. I wonder if Mr. Dickens had any sensible perception of the benedictions which flew to him from the bosom of the broad Chesapeake as I closed his book; I am afraid not. Helen says, "'tis pity well-wishing has no body," so it is that gratitude, admiration, and moral approbation have none, for the sake of such a writer, and yet he might, peradventure, be smothered. I had a comical squabble with the stewardess,—a dirty, funny, good-humored old negress, who was driven almost wild by my exorbitant demands for towels, of which she assured me one was a quite ample allowance. Mine, alas! were deep down in my trunk, beyond all possibility of getting at, even if I could have got at the trunk, which I very much doubt. Now I counted no less than *seven* handsome looking-glasses on board of this steamboat, where one towel was considered all that was requisite, not even for each individual, but for each washing-room. This addiction to ornament, and neglect of comfort and convenience, is a strong characteristic of Americans at present, luxuries often abounding where decencies cannot be procured. 'Tis the necessary result of a young civilization, and reminds me a little of Rosamond's purple jar, or Sir Joshua Reynolds's charming picture of the naked child, with a court cap full of flowers and feathers stuck on her head.

DISCOMFORTS
OF TRAVEL.

After a very wretched night on board the boat, we landed about nine o'clock, at Portsmouth, Virginia. I must not omit to mention that my morning ablutions were as much excepted to by the old negress as those of the preceding evening. Indeed, she seemed perfectly indignant at the forbearance of one lady, who withdrew from the dressing-room on finding me there, exclaiming—

"Go in, go in, I tell you; they always washes two at a time in them rooms."

At Portsmouth there is a fine dry dock and navy yard, as I was informed.... The appearance of the place in general was mean and unpicturesque. Here I encountered the first slaves I ever saw, and the sight of them in no way tended to alter my previous opinions upon this subject. They were poorly clothed; looked horribly dirty, and had a lazy recklessness in their air and manner as they sauntered along, which naturally belongs to creatures without one of the responsibilities which are the honorable burthen of rational humanity.

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Our next stopping-place was a small town called Suffolk. Here the negroes gathered in admiring crowds round the railroad carriages. They seem full of idle merriment and unmeaning glee, and regard with an intensity of curiosity perfectly ludicrous the appearance and proceedings of such whites as they easily perceive are strangers in their part of the country. As my child leaned from the carriage-window, her brilliant complexion drew forth sundry exclamations of delight from the sooty circle below, and one woman, grinning from ear to ear, and displaying a most dazzling set of grinders, drew forward a little mahogany-colored imp, her grandchild, and offered her to the little "Missis" for her waiting-maid. I told her the little missis waited upon herself; whereupon she set up a most incredulous giggle, and reiterated her proffers, in the midst of which our kettle started off, and we left her.

To describe to you the tract of country through which we now passed would be impossible, so forlorn a region it never entered my imagination to conceive. Dismal by nature, indeed, as well as by name, is that vast swamp, of which we now skirted the northern edge, looking into its endless pools of black water, where the melancholy cypress and juniper-trees alone overshadowed the thick-looking surface, their roots all globular, like huge bulbous plants, and their dark branches woven together with a hideous matting of giant creepers, which clung round their stems, and hung about the dreary forest like a drapery of withered snakes.

It looked like some blasted region lying under an enchanter's ban, such as one reads of in old stories. Nothing lived or moved throughout the loathsome solitude, and the sunbeams themselves seemed to sicken and grow pale as they glided like ghosts through these watery woods. Into this wilderness it seems impossible that the hand of human industry, or the foot of human wayfaring should ever penetrate; no wholesome growth can take root in its slimy depths; a wild jungle chokes up parts of it with a reedy, rattling covert for venomous reptiles; the rest is a succession of black ponds, sweltering under black cypress boughs,—a place forbid.

The wood which is cut upon its borders is obliged to be felled in winter, for the summer, which clothes other regions with flowers, makes this pestilential waste alive with rattlesnakes, so that none dare venture within its bounds, and I should even apprehend that, traveling as rapidly as one does on the railroad, and only skirting this district of dismay, one might not escape the fetid breathings it sends forth when the warm season has quickened its stagnant waters and poisonous vegetation.

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After passing this place, we entered upon a country little more cheerful in its aspect, though the absence of the dark swamp water was something in its favor,—apparently endless tracts of pine-forest, well called by the natives, Pine-Barrens. The soil is pure sand; and, though the holly, with its coral berries, and the wild myrtle grow in considerable abundance, mingled with the pines, these preponderate, and the whole land presents one wearisome extent of arid soil and gloomy vegetation. Not a single decent dwelling did we pass: here and there, at rare intervals, a few miserable negro huts squatting round a mean framed building, with brick chimneys built on the outside, the residence of the owner of the land and his squalid serfs, were the only evidences of human existence in this forlorn country.

Towards four o'clock, as we approached the Roanoke, the appearance of the land

improved; there was a good deal of fine soil well farmed, and the river, where we crossed it, although in all the naked unadornment of wintry banks, looked very picturesque and refreshing as it gushed along, broken by rocks and small islands into rapid reaches and currents. Immediately after crossing it, we stopped at a small knot of houses, which, although christened Weldon, and therefore pretending to be a place, was rather the place where a place was intended to be. Two or three rough-pine warerooms, or station-houses, belonging to the railroad; a few miserable dwellings, which might be either not half built up, or not quite fallen down, on the banks of a large mill-pond; one exceedingly dirty-looking old wooden house, whither we directed our steps as to the inn; but we did not take our ease in it, though we tried as much as we could.

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However, one thing I will say for North Carolina—it has the best material for fire, and the noblest liberality in the use of it, of any place in the world. Such a spectacle as one of those rousing pine-wood chimneyfuls is not to be described, nor the revivification it engenders even in the absence of every other comfort or necessary of life. They are enough to make one turn Gheber,—such noble piles of fire and flame, such hearty, brilliant life—full altars of light and warmth. These greeted us upon our entrance into this miserable inn, and seemed to rest and feed, as well as warm us. We (the women) were shown up a filthy flight of wooden stairs into a dilapidated room, the plastered walls of which were all smeared and discolored, the windows begrimed and darkened with dirt. Upon the three beds, which nearly filled up this wretched apartment, lay tattered articles of male and female apparel; and here we drew round the pine-wood fire, which blazed up the chimney, sending a ruddy glow of comfort and cheerfulness even through this disgusting den. We were to wait here for the arrival of the cars from a branch railroad, to continue our route; and in the mean time a so-called dinner was provided for us, to which we were presently summoned. Of the horrible dirt of everything at this meal, from the eatables themselves to the table-cloth, and the clothes of the negroes who waited upon us, it would be impossible to give any idea. The poultry, which formed here, as it does all through the South, the chief animal part of the repast (except the consumers, always understood), were so tough that I should think they must have been alive when we came into the house, and certainly died very hard. They were swimming in black grease, and stuffed with some black ingredient that was doubt and dismay to us uninitiated; but, however, knowledge would probably have been more terrible in this case than ignorance. We had no bread but lumps of hot dough, which reminded me forcibly of certain juvenile creations of my brothers, yclept dumps. I should think they would have eaten very much alike.

I was amused to observe that while our tea was poured out, and handed to us by a black girl of most disgustingly dirty appearance, no sooner did the engine drivers, and persons connected with the railroads and coaches, sit down to their meal, than the landlady herself, a portly dame, with a most dignified carriage, took the head of the table, and did the honors with all the grace of a most accomplished hostess. Our male fellow-travelers no sooner had dispatched their dinner than they withdrew in a body to the other end of the apartment, and large rattling folding-doors being drawn across the room, the separation of men and women, so rigidly observed by all traveling Americans, took place. This is a most peculiar and amusing custom, though sometimes I have been not a little inclined to quarrel with it, inasmuch as it effectually deprives one of the assistance of the men under whose protection one is traveling, as well as all the advantages or pleasure of their society. Twice during this southward trip of ours my companion has been most peremptorily ordered to withdraw from the apartment where he was conversing with me, by colored cabin-girls, who told him it was against the rules for any gentleman to come into the ladies' room. This making rules by which ladies and gentlemen are to observe the principles of decorum and good-breeding may be very necessary, for aught I can tell, but it seems rather sarcastical, I think, to have them enforced by servant-girls.

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The gentlemen, on their side, are intrenched in a similar manner; and if a woman has occasion to speak to the person with whom she is traveling, her entrance into the male den, if she has the courage to venture there, is the signal for a universal stare and whisper. But, for the most part, the convenient result of this arrangement is, that such men as have female companions with them pass their time in prowling about the precincts of the "ladies' apartment"; while their respective ladies pop their heads first out of one door and then out of another, watching in decorous discomfort the time when

IN NORTH
CAROLINA.

"their man" shall come to pass. Our sole resource on the present occasion was to retire again to the horrible hole above stairs, where we had at first taken refuge and here we remained until summoned down again by the arrival of the expected train. My poor little children, overcome with fatigue and sleep, were carried, and we walked from the *hotel* at Weldon to the railroad, and by good fortune obtained a compartment to ourselves.

It was now between eight and nine o'clock, and perfectly dark. The carriages were furnished with lamps, however, and, by the rapid glance they cast upon the objects which we passed, I endeavored in vain to guess at the nature of the country through which we were traveling; but, except the tall shafts of the everlasting pine trees, which still pursued us, I could descry nothing, and resigned myself to the amusing contemplation of the attitudes of my companions, who were all fast asleep. Between twelve and one o'clock the engine stopped, and it was announced to us that we had traveled as far upon the railroad as it was yet completed, and that we must transfer ourselves to stage-coaches; so in the dead middle of the night we crept out of the train, and taking our children in our arms, walked a few yards into an open space in the woods, where three four-horse coaches stood waiting to receive us. A crowd of men, principally negroes, were collected here round a huge fire of pine-wood, which, together with the pine-torches, whose resinous glare streamed brilliantly into the darkness of the woods, created a ruddy blaze, by the light of which we reached our vehicles in safety, and, while they were adjusting the luggage, had leisure to admire our jetty torch-bearers, who lounged round in a state of tattered undress, highly picturesque,—the staring whites of their eyes, and glittering ranges of dazzling teeth exhibited to perfection by the expression of grinning amusement in their countenances, shining in the darkness almost as brightly as the lights which they reflected. We had especially requested that we might have a coach to ourselves, and had been assured that there would be one for the use of our party. It appeared, however, that the outside seat of this had been appropriated by some one, for our coachman, who was traveling with us, was obliged to take a seat inside with us; and though it then contained five grown persons and two children, it seems that the coach was by no means considered full. The horrors of that night's journey I shall not easily forget. The road lay almost the whole way through swamps, and was frequently itself under water. It was made of logs of wood (a corduroy road), and so dreadfully rough and unequal, that the drawing a coach over it at all seemed perfectly miraculous. I expected every moment that we must be overturned into the marsh, through which we splashed, with hardly any intermission, the whole night long. Their drivers in this part of the country deserve infinite praise both for skill and care; but the road-makers, I think, are beyond all praise for their noble confidence in what skill and care can accomplish.

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You will readily imagine how thankfully I saw the first whitening of daylight in the sky. I do not know that any morning was ever more welcome to me than that which found us still surrounded by the pine-swamps of North Carolina, which, brightened by the morning sun, and breathed through by the morning air, lost something of their dreary desolateness to my senses....

Not long after daybreak we arrived at a place called Stantonsborough. I do not know whether that is the name of the district, or what; for I saw no village,—nothing but the one lonely house in the wood at which we stopped. I should have mentioned that the unfortunate individual who took our coachman's place outside, towards daybreak became so perished with cold, that an exchange was effected between them, and thus the privacy (if such it could be called) of our carriage was invaded, in spite of the promise which we had received to the contrary. As I am nursing my own baby, and have been compelled to travel all day and all night, of course this was a circumstance of no small annoyance; but as our company was again increased some time after, and subsequently I had to travel in a railroad carriage that held upwards of twenty people, I had to resign myself to this, among the other miseries of this most miserable journey.

As we alighted from our coach, we encountered the comical spectacle of the two coach-loads of gentlemen who had traveled the same route as ourselves, with wrist-bands and coat-cuffs turned back, performing their morning ablutions all together at a long wooden dresser in the open air, though the morning was piercing cold. Their toilet accommodations were quite of the most primitive order imaginable, as indeed were ours. We (the women) were all shown into one small room, the whole furniture of which

A PRIMITIVE
TOILET.

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consisted of a chair and wooden bench: upon the latter stood one basin, one ewer, and a relic of soap, apparently of great antiquity. Before, however, we could avail ourselves of these ample means of cleanliness, we were summoned down to breakfast; but as we had traveled all night, and all the previous day, and were to travel all the ensuing day and night, I preferred washing to eating, and determined, if I could not do both, at least to accomplish the first. There was neither towel, nor glass for one's teeth, nor hostess or chambermaid to appeal to. I ran through all the rooms on the floor, of which the doors were open; but though in one I found a magnificent veneered chest of drawers, and large looking-glass, neither of the above articles were discoverable. Again the savage passion for ornament occurred to me as I looked at this piece of furniture, which might have adorned the most luxurious bedroom of the wealthiest citizen in New York—here in this wilderness, in a house which seemed but just cut out of the trees, where a tin pan was brought to me for a basin, and where the only kitchen, of which the window of our room, to our sorrow, commanded an uninterrupted prospect, was an open shed, not fit to stable a well-kept horse in. As I found nothing that I could take possession of in the shape of towel or tumbler, I was obliged to wait on the stairs, and catch one of the dirty black girls who were running to and fro serving the breakfast-room. Upon asking one of these nymphs for a towel, she held up to me a horrible cloth, which, but for the evidence to the contrary which its filthy surface presented, I should have supposed had been used to clean the floors. Upon my objecting to this, she flounced away, disgusted, I presume, with my fastidiousness, and appeared no more. As I leaned over the bannisters in a state of considerable despondency, I espied a man who appeared to be the host himself and to him I ventured to prefer my humble petition for a clean towel. He immediately snatched from the dresser, where the gentlemen had been washing themselves, a wet and dirty towel, which lay by one of the basins, and offered it to me. Upon my suggesting that that was not a *clean* towel, he looked at me from head to foot with ineffable amazement, but at length desired one of the negroes to fetch me the unusual luxury.

Of the breakfast at this place no words can give any idea. There were plates full of unutterable-looking things, which made one feel as if one should never swallow food again. There were some eggs, all begrimed with smoke, and powdered with cinders; some unbaked dough, cut into little lumps, by way of bread; and a white, hard substance, calling itself butter, which had an infinitely nearer resemblance to tallow. The mixture presented to us by way of tea was absolutely undrinkable; and when I begged for a glass of milk, they brought a tumbler covered with dust and dirt, full of such sour stuff that I was obliged to put it aside, after endeavoring to taste it. Thus *refreshed*, we set forth again through the eternal pine-lands, on and on, the tall stems rising all round us for miles and miles in dreary monotony, like a spell-land of dismal enchantment, to which there seemed no end....

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North Carolina is, I believe, the poorest State in the Union: the part of it through which we traveled should seem to indicate as much. From Suffolk to Wilmington we did not pass a single town,—scarcely anything deserving the name of a village. The few detached houses on the road were mean and beggarly in their appearance; and the people whom we saw when the coach stopped had a squalid, and at the same time fierce air, which at once bore witness to the unfortunate influences of their existence. Not the least of these is the circumstance that their subsistence is derived in great measure from the spontaneous produce of the land, which, yielding without cultivation the timber and turpentine, by the sale of which they are mainly supported, denies to them all the blessings which flow from labor. How is it that the fable ever originated of God's having cursed man with the doom of toil? How is it that men have ever been blind to the exceeding profitableness of labor, even for its own sake, whose moral harvest alone—industry, economy, patience, foresight, knowledge—is in itself an exceeding great reward, to which add the physical blessings which wait on this universal law—health, strength, activity, cheerfulness, the content that springs from honest exertion, and the lawful pride that grows from conquered difficulty? How invariably have the inhabitants of southern countries, whose teeming soil produced, unurged, the means of life, been cursed with indolence, with recklessness, with the sleepy slothfulness which, while basking in the sunshine, and gathering the earth's spontaneous fruits, satisfied itself with this animal existence, forgetting all the nobler purposes of life in the mere ease of living? Therefore, too, southern lands have always been the prey of northern conquerors; and the bleak regions of Upper Europe and Asia have poured forth from

time to time the hungry hordes, whose iron sinews swept the nerveless children of the gardens of the earth from the face of their idle paradises: and, but for this stream of keener life and nobler energy, it would be difficult to imagine a more complete race of lotus-eaters than would now cumber the fairest regions of the earth.

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Doubtless it is to counteract the enervating effects of soil and climate that this northern tide of vigorous life flows forever towards the countries of the sun, that the races may be renewed, the earth reclaimed, and the world, and all its various tribes, rescued from disease and decay by the influence of the stern northern vitality, searching and strong, and purifying as the keen piercing winds that blow from that quarter of the heavens. To descend to rather a familiar illustration of this, it is really quite curious to observe how many New England adventurers come to the Southern States, and bringing their enterprising, active character to bear upon the means of wealth, which in the North they lack, but which abound in these more favored regions, return home after a short season of exertion, laden with the spoils of the indolent southerners. The southern people are growing poorer every day, in the midst of their slaves and their vast landed estates: whilst every day sees the arrival amongst them of some penniless Yankee, who presently turns the very ground he stands upon into wealth, and departs a lord of riches at the end of a few years, leaving the sleepy population, among whom he has amassed them, floated still farther down the tide of dwindling prosperity....

THE
SOUTHERN
PEOPLE.

At a small place called Waynesborough, ... I asked for a glass of milk, and they told me they had no such thing. Upon entering our new vehicle, we found another stranger added to our party, to my unspeakable annoyance. Complaint or remonstrance, I knew, however, would be of no avail, and I therefore submitted in silence to what I could not help. At a short distance beyond Waynesborough we were desired to alight, in order to walk over a bridge, which was in so rotten a condition as to render it very probable that it would give way under our weight. This same bridge, whose appearance was indeed most perilous, is built at a considerable height over a broad and rapid stream, called the Neuse, the color of whose water we had an excellent opportunity of admiring through the numerous holes in the plankage, over which we walked as lightly and rapidly as we could, stopping afterwards to see our coach come at a foot's pace after us. This may be called safe and pleasant traveling. The ten miles which followed were over heavy sandy roads, and it was near sunset when we reached the place where we were to take the railroad. The train, however, had not arrived, and we sat still in the coaches, there being neither town, village, nor even a road-side inn at hand, where we might take shelter from the bitter blast which swept through the pine-woods by which we were surrounded; and so we waited patiently, the day gradually drooping, the evening air becoming colder, and the howling wilderness around us more dismal every moment.

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In the mean time the coaches were surrounded by a troop of gazing boors, who had come from far and near to see the hot-water carriages come up for only the third time into the midst of their savage solitude. A more forlorn, fierce, poor, and wild-looking set of people, short of absolute savages, I never saw. They wandered round and round us, with a stupid kind of dismayed wonder. The men clothed in the coarsest manner, and the women also, of whom there were not a few, with the grotesque addition of pink and blue silk bonnets, with artificial flowers, and imitation-blonde veils. Here the gentlemen of our party informed us that they observed, for the first time, a custom prevalent in North Carolina, of which I had myself frequently heard before—the women chewing tobacco, and that, too, in a most disgusting and disagreeable way, if one way can be more disgusting than another. They carry habitually a small stick, like the implement for cleaning the teeth, usually known in England by the name of a root,—this they thrust away in their glove, or their garter-string, and, whenever occasion offers, plunge it into a snuff-box, and begin chewing it. The practice is so common that the proffer of the snuff-box, and its passing from hand to hand, is the usual civility of a morning visit among the country-people; and I was not a little amused at hearing the gentlemen who were with us describe the process as they witnessed it in their visit to a miserable farmhouse across the fields, whither they went to try to obtain something to eat.

It was now becoming dark, and the male members of our caravan held council round a pine fire as to what course had better be adopted for sheltering themselves and us during the night, which we seemed destined to pass in the woods. After some debate, it was recollected that one Colonel —, a man of some standing in that neighborhood, had

a farm about a mile distant, immediately upon the line of the railroad; and thither it was determined we should all repair, and ask quarters for the night. Fortunately, an empty truck stood at hand upon the iron road, and to this the luggage and the women and children of the party, were transferred. A number of negroes, who were loitering about, were pressed into the service, and pushed it along; and the gentlemen, walking, brought up the rear. I don't know that I ever in my life felt so completely desolate as during that half-hour's slow progress. We sat cowering among the trunks, my faithful Margery and I, each with a baby in our arms, sheltering ourselves and our poor little burthens from the bleak northern wind that whistled over us.

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The last embers of daylight were dying out in dusky red streaks along the horizon, and the dreary waste around us looked like the very shaggy edge of all creation. The men who pushed us along encouraged each other with wild shouts and yells, and every now and then their labor was one of no little danger, as well as difficulty,—for the road crossed one or two deep ravines and morasses at a considerable height, and, as it was not completed, and nothing but the iron rails were laid across piles driven into these places, it became a service of considerable risk to run along these narrow ledges, at the same time urging our car along. No accident happened, however, fortunately, and we presently beheld, with no small satisfaction, a cluster of houses in the fields at some little distance from the road. To the principal one I made my way, followed by the rest of the poor womankind, and, entering the house without further ceremony, ushered them into a large species of wooden room, where blazed a huge pine-wood fire. By this welcome light we descried, sitting in the corner of the vast chimney, an old, ruddy-faced man, with silver hair, and a good-humored countenance, who, welcoming us with ready hospitality, announced himself as Colonel —, and invited us to draw near the fire.

The worthy colonel seemed in no way dismayed at this sudden inbreak of distressed women, which was very soon followed by the arrival of the gentlemen, to whom he repeated the same courteous reception he had given us, replying to their rather hesitating demands for something to eat, by ordering to the right and left a tribe of staring negroes, who bustled about preparing supper, under the active superintendence of the hospitable colonel. His residence (considering his rank) was quite the most primitive imaginable,—a rough brick-and-plank chamber, of considerable dimensions, not even whitewashed, with the great beams and rafters by which it was supported displaying the skeleton of the building, to the complete satisfaction of any one who might be curious in architecture. The windows could close neither at the top, bottom, sides, nor middle, and were, besides, broken so as to admit several delightful currents of air, which might be received as purely accidental. In one corner of this primitive apartment stood a clean-looking bed, with coarse furniture; whilst in the opposite one, an old case-clock was ticking away its time and its master's with cheerful monotony. The rush-bottomed chairs were of as many different shapes and sizes as those in a modern fine lady's drawing-room, and the walls were hung all round with a curious miscellany, consisting principally of physic vials, turkey-feather fans, bunches of dried herbs, and the colonel's arsenal, in the shape of one or two old guns, etc.

COLONEL.

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According to the worthy man's hearty invitation, I proceeded to make myself and my companions at home, pinning, skewering, and otherwise suspending our cloaks and shawls across the various intentional and unintentional air-gaps, thereby increasing both the comfort and the grotesqueness of the apartment in no small degree. The babies had bowls of milk furnished them, and the elder portion of the caravan was regaled with a taste of the colonel's home-made wine, pending the supper to which he continued to entreat our stay. Meantime he entered into conversation with the gentlemen; and my veneration waxed deep, when the old man, unfolding his history, proclaimed himself one of the heroes of the revolution,—a fellow-fighter with Washington. I, who, comforted to a degree of high spirits by our sudden transition from the cold and darkness of the railroad to the light and shelter of this rude mansion, had been flippantly bandying jokes, and proceeded some way in a lively flirtation with this illustrious American, grew thrice respectful, and hardly ventured to raise either my eyes or my voice as I inquired if he lived alone in this remote place. Yes, alone now; his wife had been dead near upon two years.

Suddenly we were broken in upon by the arrival of the expected train. It was past eight o'clock. If we delayed we should have to travel all night; but then, the colonel pressed us

to stay and sup (the bereaved colonel, the last touching revelation of whose lonely existence had turned all my mirth into sympathizing sadness). The gentlemen were famished and well inclined to stay; the ladies were famished too, for we had eaten nothing all day. The bustle of preparation, urged by the warmhearted colonel, began afresh; the negro girls shambled in and out more vigorously than ever, and finally we were called to eat and refresh ourselves with—dirty water—I cannot call it tea,—old cheese, bad butter, and old dry biscuits. The gentlemen bethought them of the good supper they might have secured a few miles further and groaned; but the hospitable colonel merely asked them half a dollar apiece (there were about ten of them); paying which, we departed, with our enthusiasm a little damped for the warrior of the revolution; and a tinge of rather deeper misgiving as to some of his virtues stole over our minds, on learning that three of the sable damsels who trudged about at our supper service were the colonel's own progeny. I believe only three,—though the young negro girl, whose loquacity made us aware of the fact, added, with a burst of commendable pride and gratitude, "Indeed, he is a father to us all!" Whether she spoke figuratively, or literally, we could not determine. So much for a three hours' shelter in North Carolina....

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F. A. B.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I had been very much struck with the appearance of the horses we passed occasionally in enclosures, or gathered round some lonely roadside pine-wood shop, or post-office, fastened to trees in the surrounding forest, and waiting for their riders. I had been always led to expect a great improvement in the breed of horses as we went southward, and the appearance of those I saw on the road was certainly in favor of the claim. They were generally small, but in good condition, and remarkably well made. They seemed to be tolerably well cared for, too; and those which we saw caparisoned were ornamented with gay saddle-cloths, and rather a superfluity of trappings for *civil* animals.

At our dismal halt in the woods, while waiting for the railroad train, among our other spectators was a woman on horseback. Her steed was uncommonly pretty and well-limbed; but her costume was quite the most eccentric that can be imagined, accustomed as I am to the not over-rigid equipments of the northern villages. But the North Carolinian damsel beat all Yankee girls, I ever saw, hollow, in the glorious contempt she exhibited for the external fitness of things in her exceeding short skirts and huge sun-bonnet.

A NORTH
CAROLINIAN
DAMSEL.

After our departure from Colonel —'s, we traveled all night on the railroad. One of my children slept in my lap, the other on the narrow seat opposite to me, from which she was jolted off every quarter of an hour by the uneasy motion of the carriage, and the checks and stops of the engine, which was out of order. The carriage, though full of people, was heated with a stove, and every time this was replenished with coals we were almost suffocated with the clouds of bituminous smoke which filled it. Five hours, they said, was the usual time consumed in this part of the journey; but we were the whole mortal night upon that uneasy railroad, and it was five o'clock in the morning before we reached Wilmington, North Carolina. When the train stopped it was yet quite dark, and most bitterly cold; nevertheless, the distance from the railroad to the only inn where we could be accommodated was nothing less than a mile; and, weary and worn out, we trudged along, the poor little sleeping children carried by their still more unfortunate, sleepless nurses—and so by the cheerless winter starlight we walked along the brink of the Cape Fear River, to seek where we might lay our heads.

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We were shown into a room without window-curtains or shutters, the windows, as usual, not half shut, and wholly incapable of shutting. Here, when I asked if we could have some tea, (having fasted the whole previous day with the exception of Colonel —'s bountiful supper), the host pleasantly informed us that the "public breakfast would not be ready for some hours yet." I really could not help once again protesting against this abominable tyranny of the traveling many over the traveling few in this free country. It is supposed impossible that any individual can hunger, thirst, or desire sleep at any other than the "public hours." The consequence is, that let one arrive starved at an inn, one can obtain nothing till such hours as those who are not starving desire to eat;—and

A
WILMINGTON
HOTEL.

if one is foredone with travel, weary, and wanting rest, the pitiless alarum-bell, calling those who may have had twelve hours' sleep from their beds, must startle those who have only just closed their eyes for the first time, perhaps for three nights,—as if the whole traveling community were again at boarding-school, and as if a private summons by the boots or chambermaid to each apartment would not answer the same purpose.

We were, however, so utterly exhausted, that waiting for the public appetite was out of the question; and, by dint of much supplication, we at length obtained some breakfast. When, however, we stated that we had not been in bed for two successive nights, and asked to be shown to our rooms, the same gentleman, our host, an exceedingly pleasant person, informed us that *our* chamber was prepared,—adding, with the most facetious familiarity, when I exclaimed "Our chamber!" (we were three, and two children)—

"Oh! madam, I presume you will have no objection to sleeping with *your infant*" (he lumped the two into one); "and these two ladies" (Miss — and Margery) "will sleep together. I dare say they have done it a hundred times."

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This unheard-of proposition, and the man's cool impudence in making it, so astonished me that I could hardly speak. At last, however, I found words to inform him that none of our party were in the habit of sleeping with each other, and that the arrangement was such as we were not at all inclined to submit to. The gentleman, apparently very much surprised at our singular habits, said, "Oh! he didn't know that the ladies were not acquainted" (as if, forsooth, one went to bed with all one's acquaintance!) "but that he had but one room in the ladies' part of the house."

Miss — immediately professed her readiness to take one in the gentlemen's "part of the house," when it appeared that there was none vacant there which had a fireplace in it. As the morning was intensely cold, this could not be thought of. I could not take shelter in —'s room; for he, according to this decent and comfortable mode of lodging travelers, had another man to share it with him. To our common dormitory we therefore repaired, as it was impossible that we could any of us go any longer without rest. I established Margery and the two babies in the largest bed; poor Miss — betook herself to a sort of curtainless cot that stood in one corner; and I laid myself down on a mattress on the floor; and we soon all forgot the conveniences of a Wilmington hotel in the supreme convenience of sleep.

It was bright morning, and drawing towards one o'clock, when we rose, and were presently summoned to the "public dinner." The dirt and discomfort of everything was so intolerable that I could not eat; and having obtained some tea, we set forth to walk to the steamboat *Governor Dudley*, which was to convey us to Charleston. The midday sun took from Wilmington some of the desolateness which the wintry darkness of the morning gave it; yet it looked to me like a place I could sooner die than live in,—ruinous, yet not old,—poor, dirty, and mean, and unvenerable in its poverty and decay. The river that runs by it is called Cape Fear River; above, on the opposite shore, lies Mount Misery,—and heaven-forsaken enough seemed place and people to me. How good one should be to live in such places! How heavenly would one's thoughts and imaginations of hard necessity become, if one existed in Wilmington, North Carolina! The afternoon was beautiful, golden, mild, and bright,—the boat we were in extremely comfortable and clean, and the captain especially courteous. The whole furniture of this vessel was remarkably tasteful, as well as convenient,—not forgetting the fawn-colored and blue curtains to the berths.

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But what a deplorable mistake it is—be-draperying up these narrow nests, so as to impede the poor, meagre mouthfuls of air which their dimensions alone necessarily limit one to. These crimson and yellow, or even fawn-colored and blue silk suffocators, are a poor compensation for free ventilation; and I always look at these elaborate adornments of sea-beds as ingenious and elegant incentives to sea-sickness, graceful emetics in themselves, all provocation from the water set aside. The captain's wife and ourselves were the only passengers; and, after a most delightful walk on deck in the afternoon, and comfortable tea, we retired for the night, and did not wake till we bumped on the Charleston bar on the morning of Christmas-day.

The *William Seabrook*, the boat which is to convey us from hence to Savannah, only goes once a week.... This unfrequent communication between the principal cities of the great Southern States is rather a curious contrast to the almost unintermitting intercourse

which goes on between the northern towns. The boat itself, too, is a species of small monopoly, being built and chiefly used for the convenience of certain wealthy planters residing on Edisto Island, a small insulated tract between Charleston and Savannah, where the finest cotton that is raised in this country grows. This city is the oldest I have yet seen in America—I should think it must be the oldest in it. I cannot say that the first impression produced by the wharf at which we landed, or the streets we drove through in reaching our hotel, was particularly lively. Rickety, dark, dirty, tumble-down streets and warehouses, with every now and then a mansion of loftier pretensions, but equally neglected and ruinous in its appearance, would probably not have been objects of special admiration to many people on this side the water; but I belong to that infirm, decrepit, bedridden old country, England, and must acknowledge, with a blush for the stupidity of the prejudice, that it is so very long since I have seen anything old, that the lower streets of Charleston, in all their dinginess and decay, were a refreshment and a rest to my spirit.

I have had a perfect red-brick-and-white-board fever ever since I came to this country; and once more to see a house which looks as if it had stood long enough to get warmed through, is a balm to my senses, oppressed with newness. Boston had two or three fine old dwelling-houses, with antique gardens and old-fashioned court-yards; but they have come down to the dust before the improving spirit of the age. One would think, that after ten years a house gets weak in the knees. Perhaps these houses do; but I have lodged under roof-trees that have stood hundreds of years, and may stand hundreds more,—marry, they have good foundations.

In walking about Charleston, I was forcibly reminded of some of the older country towns in England—of Southampton a little. The appearance of the city is highly picturesque, a word which can apply to none other American towns; and although the place is certainly pervaded with an air of decay, 'tis a genteel infirmity, as might be that of a distressed elderly gentlewoman. It has none of the smug mercantile primness of the northern cities, but a look of state, as of quondam wealth and importance, a little gone down in the world, yet remembering still its former dignity. The northern towns, compared with it, are as the spruce citizen rattling by the faded splendors of an old family-coach in his newfangled chariot—they certainly have got on before it. Charleston has an air of eccentricity, too, and peculiarity, which formerly were not deemed unbecoming the well-born and well-bred gentlewoman, which her gentility itself sanctioned and warranted—none of the vulgar dread of vulgar opinion, forcing those who are possessed by it to conform to a general standard of manners, unable to conceive one peculiar to itself,—this "what-'ll-Mrs.-Grundy-say" devotion to conformity in small things and great, which pervades the American body-social from the matter of church-going to the trimming of women's petticoats,—this dread of singularity, which has eaten up all individuality amongst them, and makes their population like so many moral and mental lithographs, and their houses like so many thousand hideous brick-twins.

CHARLESTON.

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I believe I am getting excited; but the fact is, that being politically the most free people on earth, the Americans are socially the least so; and it seems as though, ever since that little affair of establishing their independence among nations, which they managed so successfully, every American mother's son of them has been doing his best to divest himself of his own private share of that great public blessing, liberty.

But to return to Charleston. It is in this respect a far more aristocratic (should I not say democratic?) city than any I have yet seen in America, inasmuch as every house seems built to the owner's particular taste; and in one street you seem to be in an old English town, and in another in some continental city of France or Italy. This variety is extremely pleasing to the eye; not less so is the intermixture of trees with the buildings, almost every house being adorned, and gracefully screened, by the beautiful foliage of evergreen shrubs. These, like ministering angels, cloak with nature's kindly ornaments the ruins and decays of the mansions they surround; and the latter, time-mellowed (I will not say stained, and a painter knows the difference), harmonize in their forms and coloring with the trees, in a manner most delightful to an eye that knows how to appreciate this species of beauty.

There are several public buildings of considerable architectural pretensions in Charleston, all of them apparently of some antiquity (for the New World), except a very large and handsome edifice which is not yet completed, and which, upon inquiry, we

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found was intended for a guard-house. Its very extensive dimensions excited our surprise; but a man who was at work about it, and who answered our questions with a good deal of intelligence, informed us that it was by no means larger than the necessities of the city required; for that they not unfrequently had between fifty and sixty persons (colored and white) brought in by the patrol in one night.

"But," objected we, "the colored people are not allowed to go out without passes after nine o'clock."

"Yes," replied our informant, "but they will do it, nevertheless; and every night numbers are brought in who have been caught endeavoring to evade the patrol."

This explained to me the meaning of a most ominous tolling of bells and beating of drums, which, on the first evening of my arrival in Charleston, made me almost fancy myself in one of the old fortified frontier towns of the Continent where the tocsin is sounded, and the evening drum beaten, and the guard set as regularly every night as if an invasion were expected. In Charleston, however, it is not the dread of foreign invasion, but of domestic insurrection, which occasions these nightly precautions; and, for the first time since my residence in this free country, the curfew (now obsolete in mine, except in some remote districts, where the ringing of an old church-bell at sunset is all that remains of the tyrannous custom) recalled the associations of early feudal times, and the oppressive insecurity of our Norman conquerors. But truly it seemed rather anomalous hereabouts, and nowadays; though, of course, it is very necessary where a large class of persons exists in the very bosom of a community whose interests are known to be at variance and incompatible with those of its other members. And no doubt these daily and nightly precautions are but trifling drawbacks upon the manifold blessings of slavery (for which, if you are stupid, and cannot conceive them, see the late Governor M'Duffy's speeches); still I should prefer going to sleep without the apprehension of my servants cutting my throat in my bed, even to having a guard provided to prevent their doing so. However, this peculiar prejudice of mine may spring from the fact of my having known many instances in which servants were the trusted and most trustworthy friends of their employers, and entertaining, besides, some odd notions of the reciprocal duties of *all* the members of families one towards the other.

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The extreme emptiness which I observed in the streets, and absence of anything like bustle or business, is chiefly owing to the season, which the inhabitants of Charleston, with something akin to old English feeling, generally spend in hospitable festivity upon their estates; a goodly custom, at least in my mind. It is so rare for any of the wealthier people to remain in town at Christmas, that poor Miss —, who had come on with us to pay a visit to some friends, was not a little relieved to find that they were (contrary to their custom) still in the city. I went to take my usual walk this morning, and found that the good citizens of Charleston were providing themselves with a most delightful promenade upon the river, a fine, broad, well-paved esplanade, of considerable length, open to the water on one side, and on the other overlooked by some very large and picturesque old houses, whose piazzas, arches, and sheltering evergreens reminded me of buildings in the vicinity of Naples. This delightful walk is not yet finished, and I fear, when it is, it will be little frequented; for the southern women, by their own account, are miserable pedestrians,—of which fact, indeed, I had one curious illustration to-day; for I received a visit from a young lady residing in the same street where we lodged, who came in her carriage, a distance of less than a quarter of a mile, to call upon me.

It is impossible to conceive anything funnier, and at the same time more provokingly stupid, dirty, and inefficient, than the tribe of black-faced heathen divinities and classicalities who make believe to wait upon us here,—the Dianas, Phillises, Floras, Cæsars, et cetera, who stand grinning in wonderment and delight round our table, and whom I find it impossible, by exhortation or entreaty, to banish from the room, so great is their amusement and curiosity at my outlandish modes of proceeding. This morning, upon my entreating them not to persist in waiting upon us at breakfast, they burst into an ungovernable titter, and withdrawing from our immediate vicinity, kept poking their woolly heads and white grinders in at the door every five minutes, keeping it conveniently open for that purpose.

A fine large new hotel was among the buildings which the late fire at Charleston destroyed, and the house where we now are is the best at present in the city. It is kept

by a very obliging and civil colored woman, who seems extremely desirous of accommodating us to our minds; but her servants (they are her slaves, in spite of her and their common complexion) would defy the orderly genius of the superintendent of the Astor House. Their laziness, their filthiness, their inconceivable stupidity, and unconquerable good humor, are enough to drive one stark, staring mad. The sitting-room we occupy is spacious, and not ill-furnished, and especially airy, having four windows and a door, none of which can or will shut. We are fortunately rid of that familiar fiend of the North, the anthracite coal, but do not enjoy the luxury of burning wood. Bituminous coal, such as is generally used in England, is the combustible preferred here; and all my national predilections cannot reconcile me to it, in preference to the brilliant, cheerful, wholesome, poetical warmth of a wood fire. Our bedrooms are dismal dens, open to "a' the airts the wind can blow," half furnished, and not by any means half clean. The furniture itself is old, and very infirm,—the tables all peach with one or other leg,—the chairs are most of them minus one or two bars,—the tongs cross their feet when you attempt to use them,—and one poker travels from room to room, that being our whole allowance for two fires.

We have had occasion to make only two trifling purchases since we have been here; but the prices (if these articles are any criterion) must be infinitely higher than those of the northern shopkeepers; but this we must expect as we go further south, for, of course, they have to pay double profits upon all the commonest necessaries of life, importing them, as they do, from distant districts. I must record a curious observation of Margery's, on her return from church Tuesday morning. She asked me if the people of this place were not very proud. I was struck with the question, as coinciding with a remark sometimes made upon the South, and supposed by some far-fetching cause-hunters to have its origin in some of their "domestic institutions." I told her that I knew no more of them than she did; and that I had had no opportunity of observing whether they were or not.

"Well," she replied, "I think they are, for I was in church early, and I observed the countenances and manner of the people as they came in, and they struck me as the haughtiest, proudest-looking people I ever saw!"

This very curious piece of observation of hers I note down without comment. I asked her if she had ever heard, or read, the remark as applied to the southern people? She said, "Never," and I was much amused at this result of her physiognomical church speculations.

Last Thursday evening we left our hotel in Charleston, for the steamboat which was to carry us to Savannah: it was not to start until two in the morning; but, of course, we preferred going on board rather earlier, and getting to bed. The ladies' cabin, however, was so crowded with women and children, and so inconveniently small, that sleeping was out of the question in such an atmosphere. I derived much amusement from the very empress-like airs of an uncommonly handsome mulatto woman, who officiated as stewardess, but whose discharge of her duties appeared to consist in telling the ladies what they ought, and what they ought not to do, and lounging about with an indolent dignity, which was irresistibly droll, and peculiarly Southern.

STEAM TO
SAVANNAH.

The boat in which we were, not being considered sea-worthy, as she is rather old, took the inner passage, by which we were two nights and a day accomplishing this most tedious navigation, creeping through cuts and small muddy rivers, where we stuck sometimes to the bottom, and sometimes to the banks, which presented a most dismal succession of dingy, low, yellow swamps, and reedy marshes, beyond expression wearisome to the eye. About the middle of the day on Friday, we touched at the island of Edisto, where some of the gentlemen-passengers had business, that being the seat of their plantations, and where the several families reside—after the eldest member of which, Mr. Seabrook, the boat we were in was named.

Edisto, as I have mentioned before, is famous for producing the finest cotton in America—therefore, I suppose, in the world. As we were to wait here some time, we went on shore to walk. The appearance of the cotton-fields at this season of the year was barren enough; but, as a compensation, I here, for the first time, saw the evergreen oak-trees (the ilex, I presume) of the South. They were not very fine specimens of their kind, and disappointed me a good deal. The advantage they have of being evergreen is

counterbalanced by the dark and almost dingy color of the foliage, and the leaf being minute in size, and not particularly graceful in form. These trees appeared to me far from comparable, either in size or beauty, to the European oak, when it has attained its full growth. We were walking on the estate of one of the Mr. Seabrooks, which lay unenclosed on each side of what appeared to be the public road through the island.

At a short distance from the landing we came to what is termed a ginning-house—a building appropriated to the process of freeing the cotton from the seed. It appeared to be open to inspection; and we walked through it. Here were about eight or ten stalls on either side, in each of which a man was employed at a machine, worked like a turner's or knife-grinder's wheel, by the foot, which, as fast as he fed it with cotton, parted the snowy flakes from the little black first cause, and gave them forth soft, silky, clean, and fit to be woven into the finest lace or muslin. This same process of ginning is performed in many places, and upon our own cotton-estate, by machinery; the objection to which however, is, that the staple of the cotton—in the length of which consists its chief excellence—is supposed by some planters to be injured, and the threads broken, by the substitution of an engine for the task performed by the human fingers in separating the cotton and presenting it to the gin.

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After walking through this building, we pursued our way past a large, rambling, white wood house, and down a road, bordered on each side with evergreen oaks. While we were walking, a young man on horseback passed us, whose light hair, in a very picturesque contempt of modern fashion, absolutely flowed upon the collar of his coat, and was blown back as he rode, like the disheveled tresses of a woman. On Edisto Island such a noble exhibition of individuality would probably find few censors.

As we returned towards the boat we stopped to examine an irregular scrambling hedge of the wild orange, another of the exquisite shrubs of this paradise of evergreens. The form and foliage of this plant are beautiful, and the leaf, being bruised, extremely fragrant; but, as its perfume indicates, it is a rank poison, containing a great portion of prussic acid. It grows from cuttings rapidly and freely, and might be formed into the most perfect hedge, being well adapted, by its close, bushy growth, to that purpose.

After leaving Edisto, we pursued the same tedious, meandering course, over turbid waters, and between low-lying swamps, till the evening closed in. The afternoon had been foggy and rainy and wretched. The cabin was darkened by the various outer protections against the weather, so that we could neither read nor work. Our party, on leaving the island, had received an addition of some young ladies, who were to go on shore again in the middle of the night, at a stopping-place called Hilton Head. As they did not intend to sleep, they seemed to have no idea of allowing any one else to do so; and the giggling and chattering with which they enlivened the dreary watches of the night, certainly rendered anything like repose impossible; so I lay, devoutly wishing for Hilton Head, where the boat stopped between one and two in the morning. I had just time to see our boarding-school angels leave us, and a monstrous awkward-looking woman, who at first struck me as a man in disguise, enter the cabin, before my eyes sealed themselves in sleep, which had been hovering over them, kept aloof only by the incessant conversational racket of my young fellow-travelers.

I was extremely amused at two little incidents which occurred the next morning before we were called to breakfast. The extraordinary-looking woman who came into the boat during the night, and who was the most masculine-looking lady I ever saw, came and stood by me, and, seeing me nursing my baby, abruptly addressed me with "Got a baby with you?" I replied in the affirmative, which trouble her eyes might have spared me. After a few minutes' silence, she pursued her unceremonious catechism with "Married woman?" This question was so exceedingly strange, though put in the most matter-of-course sort of way, that I suppose my surprise exhibited itself in my countenance, for the lady presently left me—not, however, appearing to imagine that she had said or done anything at all unusual. The other circumstance which amused me was to hear another lady observe to her neighbor, on seeing Margery bathing my children (a ceremony never omitted night and morning, where water can be procured); "How excessively ridiculous!" Which same worthy lady, on leaving the boat at Savannah, exclaimed, as she huddled on her cloak, that she never had felt so "*mean* in her life!" and, considering that she had gone to bed two nights with the greater part of her day clothes on her, and had abstained from any "ridiculous" ablutions, her *mean* sensations did not, I confess, much

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surprise me.

When the boat stopped at Savannah, it poured with rain; and in a perfect deluge, we drove up to the Pulaski House, thankful to escape from the tedious confinement of a *slow* steamboat,—an intolerable nuisance and anomaly in the nature of things. The hotel was, comparatively speaking, very comfortable; infinitely superior to the one where we had lodged at Charleston, as far as bed accommodations went. Here, too, we obtained the inestimable luxury of a warm bath; and the only disagreeable thing we had to encounter was that all but universal pest in this crowd-loving country, a public table. This is always a trial of the first water to me; and that day particularly I was fatigued, and out of spirits, and the din and confusion of a long *table d'hôte* was perfectly intolerable, in spite of the assiduous attentions of a tiresome worthy old gentleman, who sat by me and persisted in endeavoring to make me talk. Finding me impracticable, however, he turned, at length, in despair, to the hostess, who sat at the head of her table, and inquired in a most audible voice if it were true, as he had understood, that Mr. and Mrs. Butler were in the hotel? This, of course, occasioned some little amusement; and the good old gentleman being informed that I was sitting at his elbow, went off into perfect convulsions of apologies, and renewed his exertions to make me discourse, with more zeal than ever, asking me, among other things, when he had ascertained that I had never before been to the South, "How I liked the appearance of 'our blackies' (the negroes)?—no want of cheerfulness, no despondency, or misery in their appearance, eh, madam?" As I thought this was rather begging the question, I did not trouble the gentleman with my impressions. He was a Scotchman, and his adoption of "our blackies" was, by his own account, rather recent, to be so perfectly satisfactory; at least, so it seems to me, who have some small prejudices in favor of freedom and justice yet to overcome, before I can enter into all the merits of this beneficent system, so productive of cheerfulness and contentment in those whom it condemns to perpetual degradation.

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Our night-wanderings were not yet ended, for the steamer in which we were to proceed to Darien was to start at ten o'clock that evening, so that we had but a short interval of repose at this same Pulaski House, and I felt sorry to leave it, in proportion to the uncertainty of our meeting with better accommodation for a long time. The *Ocmulgee* (the Indian name of a river in Georgia, and the cognomen of our steamboat) was a tiny, tidy little vessel, the exceeding small ladies' cabin of which we, fortunately, had entirely to ourselves.

On Sunday morning the day broke most brilliantly over those southern waters, and as the sun rose, the atmosphere became clear and warm, as in the early northern summer. We crossed two or three sounds of the sea. The land in sight was a mere forest of reeds, and the fresh, sparkling, crisping waters had a thousand times more variety and beauty. At the mouth of the Altamaha is a small cluster of houses, scarce deserving the name of a village, called Doboy. At the wharf lay two trading-vessels; the one with the harp of Ireland waving on her flag; the other with the union-jack flying at her mast. I felt vehemently stirred to hail the beloved symbol; but, upon reflection, forbore outward demonstrations of the affectionate yearnings of my heart towards the flag of England, and so we boiled by them into this vast volume of turbid waters, whose noble width, and rapid rolling current, seem appropriately called by that most euphonious and sonorous of Indian names, the Alatomaha, which, in the common mode of speaking it, gains by the loss of the second syllable, and becomes more agreeable to the ear, as it is usually pronounced, the Altamaha.

On either side lay the low, reedy swamps, yellow, withered Lilliputian forests, rattling their brittle canes in the morning breeze.... Through these dreary banks we wound a most sinuous course for a long time; at length the irregular buildings of the little town of Darien appeared, and as we grazed the side of the wharf, it seemed to me as if we had touched the outer bound of civilized creation. As soon as we showed ourselves on the deck we were hailed by a shout from the men in two pretty boats, which had pulled alongside of us; and the vociferations of "Oh, massa! how you do, massa? Oh, missis! oh! lily missis! me too glad to see you!" accompanied with certain interjectional shrieks, whoops, whistles, and grunts, that could only be written down in negro language, made me aware of our vicinity to our journey's end. The strangeness of the whole scene, its wildness (for now beyond the broad river and the low swamp lands the savage-looking

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CHARACTER
OF THE
COUNTRY.

RECEPTION
AT DARIEN.

woods arose to meet the horizon), the rapid retrospect which my mind hurried through of the few past years of my life; the singular contrasts which they presented to my memory; the affectionate shouts of welcome of the poor people, who seemed to hail us as descending divinities, affected me so much that I burst into tears, and could hardly answer their demonstrations of delight. We were presently transferred into the larger boat, and the smaller one being freighted with our luggage, we pulled off from Darien, not, however, without a sage remark from Margery, that, though we seemed to have traveled to the very end of the world, here yet were people and houses, ships, and even steamboats; in which evidences that we were not to be plunged into the deepest abysses of savageness she seemed to take no small comfort.

We crossed the river, and entered a small arm of it, which presently became still narrower and more straight, assuming the appearance of an artificial cut or canal, which indeed it is, having been dug by General Oglethorpe's men (tradition says, in one night), and afforded him the only means of escape from the Spaniards and Indians, who had surrounded him on all sides, and felt secure against all possibility of his eluding them. The cut is neither very deep nor very long, and yet both sufficiently to render the general's exploit rather marvelous. General Oglethorpe was the first British governor of Georgia; Wesley's friend and disciple. The banks of this little canal were mere dykes, guarding rice-swamps, and presented no species of beauty; but in the little creek, or inlet, from which we entered it, I was charmed with the beauty and variety of the evergreens growing in thick and luxuriant underwood, beneath giant, straggling cypress trees, whose branches were almost covered with the pendant wreaths of gray moss peculiar to these southern woods. Of all parasitical plants (if, indeed, it properly belongs to that class) it assuredly is the most melancholy and dismal. All creepers, from the polished, dark-leaved ivy, to the delicate clematis, destroy some portion of the strength of the trees around which they cling, and from which they gradually suck the vital juices; but they, at least, adorn the forest-shafts round which they twine, and hide, with a false, smiling beauty, the gradual ruin and decay they make. Not so this dismal moss: it does not appear to grow, or to have root, or even clinging fibre of any sort, by which it attaches itself to the bark or stem. It hangs in dark gray, drooping masses from the boughs, swinging in every breeze like matted, grizzled hair. I have seen a naked cypress with its straggling arms all hung with this banner of death, looking like a gigantic tree of monstrous cobwebs,—the most funereal spectacle in all the vegetable kingdom.

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After emerging from the cut, we crossed another arm of the Altamaha (it has as many as Briareus)—I should rather, perhaps, call them mouths, for this is near its confluence with the sea, and these various branches are formed by a numerous sisterhood of small islands, which divide this noble river into three or four streams, each of them wider than England's widest, the Thames. We now approached the low, reedy banks of Butler's Island, and passed the rice-mill and buildings surrounding it, all of which, it being Sunday, were closed. As we neared the bank, the steersman took up a huge conch, and in the barbaric fashion of early times in the Highlands, sounded out our approach. A pretty schooner, which carries the produce of the estate to Charleston and Savannah, lay alongside the wharf, which began to be crowded with negroes, jumping, dancing, shouting, laughing, and clapping their hands (a usual expression of delight with savages and children), and using the most extravagant and ludicrous gesticulations to express their ecstasy at our arrival.

On our landing from the boat, the crowd thronged about us like a swarm of bees; we were seized, pulled, pushed, carried, dragged, and all but lifted in the air by the clamorous multitude. I was afraid my children would be smothered. Fortunately, Mr. O —, the overseer, and the captain of the little craft above-mentioned, came to our assistance, and by their good offices the babies and nurse were protected through the crowd. They seized our clothes, kissed them—then our hands, and almost wrung them off. One tall, gaunt negress flew to us, parting the throng on either side, and embraced us in her arms. I believe I was almost frightened; and it was not until we were safely housed, and the door shut upon our riotous escort, that we indulged in a fit of laughing, quite as full, on my part, of nervousness as of amusement. Later in the day I attempted to take some exercise, and thought I had escaped observation; but, before I had proceeded a quarter of a mile, I was again enveloped in a cloud of these dingy dependents, who gathered round me, clamoring welcome, staring at me, stroking my velvet pelisse, and exhibiting at once the wildest delight and the most savage curiosity. I

OUR
RECEPTION.

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was obliged to relinquish my proposed walk, and return home. Nor was the door of the room where I sat, and which was purposely left open, one moment free from crowds of eager faces, watching every movement of myself and the children, until evening caused our audience to disperse. This zeal in behalf of an utter stranger, merely because she stood to them in the relation of a mistress, caused me not a little speculation. These poor people, however, have a very distinct notion of the duties which ownership should entail upon their proprietors, however these latter may regard their obligation towards their dependents; and as to their vehement professions of regard and affection for me, they reminded me of the saying of the satirist, that "gratitude is a lively sense of benefits to come."

BUTLER'S ISLAND, GEORGIA, January 8th, 1839.

I have some doubt whether any exertion whatever of your imaginative faculties could help you to my whereabouts or whatabouts this day, dearest Emily; and therefore, for your enlightenment, will refer you to my date, and inform you that yesterday I paid my first visit to the Sick House, or infirmary, of our estate; and this morning spent three hours and a half there, cleaning with my own hands the filthy room where the sick lay, and washing and dressing poor little nearly new-born negro babies. My avocations the whole morning have been those of a sister of charity, and I doubt if the unwearied and unshrinking benevolence of those pious creatures ever led them, for their souls' sake, into more abominable receptacles of filth, degradation, and misery.

It is long enough since I first mentioned to you my intention of coming down to these plantations, if I was permitted to do so. As the time for setting forth on our journey drew near, I became not a little appalled at the details I heard of what were likely to be the difficulties of the mere journey: at the very end of December, with a baby at the breast, and a child as young as S—, to travel upwards of a thousand miles, in this half-civilized country, and through the least civilized part of it, was no joke. However, happily, it was accomplished safely, though not without considerable suffering and heart-achings on my part.... These and other befallings may serve for talking matter, if ever we should meet again. We all arrived here safely on Sunday last, and my thoughts are engrossed with the condition of these people, from whose labor we draw our subsistence; of which, now that I am here, I feel ashamed.

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The place itself is one of the wildest corners of creation—if, indeed, any part of this region can be considered as thoroughly *created* yet. It is not consolidated, but in mere process of formation,—a sort of hasty-pudding of amphibious elements, composed of a huge, rolling river, thick and turbid with mud, and stretches of mud banks, forming quaking swamps, scarcely reclaimed from the water. The river wants *straining* and the land draining, to make either of them properly wet or dry.

This island, which is only a portion of our Georgia estate, contains several thousand acres, and is about eight miles round, and formed of nothing but the deposits (leavings, in fact) of the Altamaha, whose brimming waters, all thick with alluvial matter, roll round it, and every now and then threaten to submerge it. The whole island is swamp, dyked like the Netherlands, and trenched and divided by ditches and a canal, by means of which the rice-fields are periodically overflowed, and the harvest transported to the threshing mills. A duck, an eel, or a frog might live here as in Paradise; but a creature of dry habits naturally pines for less wet. To mount a horse is, of course, impossible, and the only place where one can walk is the banks or dykes that surround the island, and the smaller ones that divide the rice-fields.

I mean to take to rowing, boats being plentiful, and "water, water everywhere"; indeed, in spring, the overseer tells me we may have to go from house to house in boats, the whole island being often flooded at that season.

There is neither shade nor shelter, tree nor herbage, round our residence, though there is no reason why there should not be; for the climate is delicious, and the swampy borders of the mainland are full of every kind of evergreen—magnolias, live oak (a species of *ilex*), orange-trees, etc., and trailing shrubs, with varnished leaves, that bind the tawny, rattling sedges together, and make summer bowers for the alligators and snakes which abound and disport themselves here in the hot season.

I am wrong in saying that there are no trees on the island, though there are as bad as none now. They formerly had a great number of magnificent orange-trees, that were all destroyed by an unusually severe winter; there are a few left, however, which bear most excellent oranges....

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BUTLER'S ISLAND, January 8th, 1839.

DEAREST HARRIET,

The stars are shining like one vast incrustation of diamonds; and though 'tis the 8th of January, I have been out with bare neck and arms, standing on the brink of the Altamaha, and seeking relief from the oppressive heat of the house. I am here, with the children, in the midst of our slaves; and it seems to me, as I look over these wild wastes and waters, as though I were standing on the outer edge of creation. That this is not absolutely the case, however, or that, if it is, civilization in some forms has preceded us hither, is abundantly proved by the sights and sounds of busy traffic, labor, and mechanical industry, which, encountered in this region (still really half a wilderness), produce an impression of the most curiously anomalous existence you can imagine.

A WILD
SPOT.

Right and left, as the eye follows the broad and brimming surface of this vast body of turbid water, it rests on nothing but low swamp lands, where the rattling sedges, like a tawny forest of reeds, make warm winter shelters for the snakes and alligators, which the summer sun will lure in scores from their lurking-places; or hoary woods, upon whose straggling upper boughs, all hung with gray mosses like disheveled hair, the bald-headed eagle stoops from the sky, and among whose undergrowth of varnished evergreens the mocking-birds, even at this season, keep a resounding jubilee. All this looks wild enough; and as the peculiar orange light of the southern sunset falls upon the scene, I almost expect to see the canoes of the red man shoot from the banks, which were so lately the possession of his race alone. Immediately opposite to me, however (only about a mile distant, the river and a swampy island intervening), lies the little town of Darien, whose white gable-ended warehouses, shining in the sun, recall the presence of the prevailing European race, and we can hear distinctly the sound of the steam which the steamboat at the wharf is letting off.

Upon this island of ours (I think I look a little like Sancho Panza) we enjoy the perpetual monotonous burden of two steam-engines working the rice mills, and instead of red men and canoes, my illustrious self and some prettily built and gaily painted boats, which I take great delight in rowing.

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The strangeness of this existence surprises me afresh every hour by its contrast with all my former experiences; and as I sat resting on my oars at the Darien wharf the other evening, watching a huge cotton-raft float down the broad Altamaha, my mind wandered back to my former life—the scenes, the people, the events, the feelings which made up all my former existence; and I felt like the little old woman whose petticoats were cut all round about. "O Lord a mercy! sure this is never I!" But, then, she had a resource in her dog, which I have not; and so I am not quite sure that it is I....

The climate is too warm for me, and I almost doubt its being as wholesome for the children as a colder one. We have now summer heat, tempered in some degree by breezes from the river and the sea, which is only fifteen miles off; but the people of the place complain of the cold, and apologize to me for the chilliness of the weather, which they assure me is quite unusual. I have come home more than once, however, after a walk round the rice banks, with a bad headache, in consequence of the fierce sunshine pouring down upon these swamps, and do not think that I should thrive in such a climate. It is impossible here to take exercise on horseback, which has become almost indispensable to me; and though I have adopted rowing as a substitute I find it both a fatiguing and an inadequate one.

We live here in a very strange manner. The house we inhabit, which was intended merely as the overseer's residence, is inferior in appearance and every decent accommodation to the poorest farm-house in any part of England. Neither cleanliness nor comfort enter into our daily arrangements at all. The little furniture there is in the rooms is of the coarsest and roughest description; and the household services are performed by negroes, who run in and out, generally barefooted, and always filthy both

in their clothes and person, to wait upon us at our meals. How I have wished for a decent, tidy, English servant of all work, instead of these begrimed, ignorant, incapable poor creatures, who stumble about round us in zealous hindrance of each other, which they intend for help to us. How thankful I should be if I could substitute for their unsavory proximity while I eat, that of a clean dumb waiter. This unlimited supply of untrained savages, (for that is what they really are) is anything but a luxury to me. Their ignorance, dirt, and stupidity seem to me as intolerable as the unjust laws which condemn them to be ignorant, filthy, and stupid.

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The value of this human property is, alas! enormous; and I grieve to think how great is the temptation to perpetuate the system to its owners. Of course I do not see, or at any rate have not yet seen, anything to shock me in the way of positive physical cruelty. The refractory negroes are flogged, I know, but I am told it is a case of rare occurrence; and it is the injustice, and the kind, rather than the severity, of the infliction that is the most odious part of it to me. The people are, I believe, regularly and sufficiently fed and clothed, and they have tolerably good habitations provided for them, nor are they without various small indulgences; but of their moral and intellectual wants no heed whatever is taken, nor are they even recognized as existing, though some of these poor people exhibit intelligence, industry, and activity, which seem to cry aloud for instruction and the means of progress and development. These are probably rare exceptions, though, for the majority of those I see appear to be sunk in the lowest slough of benighted ignorance, and lead a lazy, listless, absolutely animal existence, far more dirty and degraded (though more comfortable, on account of the climate) than that of *your* lowest and most miserable wild "bog trotters."

I had desired very earnestly to have the opportunity of judging of this matter of slavery for myself; not, of course, that I ever doubted that to keep human beings as slaves was in itself wrong, but I supposed that I might, upon a nearer observation of the system, discover at any rate circumstances of palliation in the condition of the negroes: hitherto, however, this has not been the case with me; the wrong strikes me more forcibly every hour I live here. The theory of human property is more revolting to every sentiment of humanity; and the evil effect of such a state of things *upon the whites*, who inflict the wrong, impresses me as I did not anticipate that it would, with still more force.

SLAVERY.

The habitual harsh tone of command towards these men and *women*, whose labor is extorted from them without remorse, from youth to age, and whose hopeless existence seems to me sadder than suffering itself, affects me with an intolerable sense of impotent pity for them.... Then, too, the disrepute in which honest and honorable labor is held, by being thus practiced only by a degraded class, is most pernicious.

The negroes here, who see me row and walk hard in the sun, lift heavy burthens, and make various exertions which are supposed to be their peculiar *privilege* in existence, frequently remonstrate with me, and desire me to call upon them for their services, with the remark, "What for you work, missus! You hab niggers enough to wait upon you!" You may suppose how agreeable such remonstrances are to me.

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When I remember, too, that here I see none of the worst features of this system: that the slaves on this estate are not bought and sold, nor let out to hire to other masters; that they are not cruelly starved or barbarously beaten, and that members of one family are not parted from each other for life, and sent to distant plantations in other States,—all which liabilities (besides others, and far worse ones) belong of right, or rather of wrong, to their condition as slaves, and are commonly practiced throughout the southern half of this free country,—I remain appalled at a state of things in which human beings are considered fortunate who are *only* condemned to dirt, ignorance, unrequited labor, and, what seems to me worst of all, a dead level of general degradation, which God and Nature, by endowing some above others, have manifestly forbidden.

Do you remember your admiration of philanthropy because I blew the dirty nose of a little vagabond in the street with my embroidered handkerchief? I wish you could see me cleansing and washing and poulticing the sick women and babies in the infirmary here; I think you would admit that I have what Beatrice commends Benedict for, "an excellent stomach."

God bless you, dear! I am not well; this slavish sunshine dries up my vitality. I have hardly any time for writing, but shall find it to write to you.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER'S ISLAND, January 20th, 1839.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

To you who have, besides "swimming in a gondola" (which many of the vulgar do nowadays), paddled in a canoe upon the wild waters of this wild western world, my present abode, savage as it seems to me, might appear comparatively civilized. Certain it is that we are within view of what calls itself a town, and, moreover, from that town I have received an invitation to what calls itself a *cotillon party*! and yet, right and left, stretch the swamps and forests of Georgia, where the red men have scarcely ceased to skulk, and where the rattlesnakes and alligators, who shared the wilderness with them, still lurk in undisturbed possession of the soil, if soil that may be called which is only either muddy water or watery mud, a hardly consolidated sponge of alluvial matter, receiving hourly additions from the turbid current of the Altamaha.

We are here on our plantation, and if you will take a map of North America, and a powerful magnifying-glass, you may perceive the small speck dignified by the title of "Butler's Island," the Barataria where I am now reigning.

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Before I say any more upon this subject, however, I wish to thank you for your kind information about my father and sister. I had a letter from her not long ago, but it was written during her tour in Germany, before our poor mother's death, and, of course, contained little of what must be her present thoughts and feelings, and even little indeed by which I could understand what their plans were for the winter; but a long and very interesting account of your friends, the Thuns, whom I should like to know....

How little pleasure you lost, in my opinion, in not proceeding further south in this country! for your perception of beauty would have been almost as much starved as your sense of justice would have been outraged; at least it is so with me. The sky, God's ever blessed storehouse of light and loveliness, is almost my only resource here: for though the wide, brimming waters of this Briareus of a river present a striking object, and the woods, with their curtains of gray moss waving like gigantic cobwebs from every tree, and these magical-looking thickets of varnished evergreens, have a charm, partly real, and partly borrowed from their mere strangeness; yet the absence of all cultivation but these swampy rice-fields, and of all population but these degraded and unfortunate slaves, render a residence here as depressing to the physical as the moral sense of loveliness.

In contemplating the condition of women generally (a favorite subject of speculation with you, I know), it is a pity that you have not an opportunity of seeing the situation of those who are recognized as slaves (all that are such don't wear the collar, you know, nor do all that wear it show it); it is a black chapter, and no *joke*, I can tell you.

You ask after the Sullys, and I am sorry to say that the little I saw or heard of them previous to my leaving Philadelphia was not pleasant. He had had some disagreeable contention with the St. George's Society about the exhibition of his picture of the queen. The dispute ended, I believe, in his painting two; the one for the society, and the other for his own purposes of exhibition, sale or engraving. He spoke with delight of having made your acquaintance, and of some evenings he spent at your house. I think it very probable that he will revisit Europe; and I hope for his sake that he will get to Italy....

F. A. B.

BUTLER'S ISLAND, Georgia, January 30th, 1839.

DEAREST EMILY,

I am told that a total change in my opinions upon slavery was anticipated from my residence on a plantation; a statement which only convinces me that one may live in the most intimate relations with one's fellow-creatures, and really know nothing about them after all. On what ground such an idea could be entertained I cannot conceive, or on

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THE LAND
OF
SLAVERY.

what part of my character it could be founded, to which (if I do not mistake myself, even more than I am misunderstood by others) injustice is the most revolting species of cruelty.

My dear friend, do not, do not repine, but rather rejoice for your brother's own sake, that wealth is cut off from him at such a source as slavery. [Mr. Fitzhugh had owned West Indian property, which his sister thought had been rendered worthless by the emancipation of the slaves.] It would be better in my mind to beg, and to see one's children beg, than to live by these means, thinking of them as I do....

It seems to me as if the worst result of this system, fraught as it is with bad ones, is the perversion of mind which it appears to engender in those who uphold it. I remember how hard our Saviour pronounced it to be for a rich man to enter into heaven, and as I look round upon these rice-fields, with their population of human beings, each one of whom is valued at so much silver and gold, and listen to the beat of that steam-mill, which I heard commended the other day as a "mint of money," and when I am told that every acre of this property is worth ten per cent. more than any free English land, however valuable, it seems almost impossible to expect that this terrible temptation to injustice should be resisted by any man; but with God all things are possible! and doubtless He weighs the difficulty more mercifully than I can....

Since this letter was begun, we have had a death on the plantation; a poor young fellow was taken off, after a few days' illness, yesterday. The attack was one to which the negroes are very subject, arising from cold and exposure.... We went to his burial, which was a scene I shall not soon forget. His coffin was brought out into the open air, and the negroes from over the whole island assembled around it. One of their preachers (a slave like the rest) gave out the words of a hymn, which they all sang in unison; after which he made an exhortation, and bade us pray, and we all kneeled down on the earth together, while this poor, ignorant slave prayed aloud and spoke incoherently, but fervently enough, of Life and Death and Immortality. We then walked to the grave, the negroes chanting a hymn by the light of pine torches and the uprising of a glorious moon. An old negro, who possessed the rare and forbidden accomplishment of letters, read part of the burial service; and another stood forward and told them the story of the raising of Lazarus. I have no room for comments, and could make none that could convey to you what I felt or how I prayed and cried for those I was praying with....

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You know, I did not think my former calling of the stage a very dignified one; I assure you it appears to me magnificent compared with my present avocation of living by the unpaid labor of others, and those others half of them women like myself. There is nothing in the details of the existence of the slaves which mitigates in my opinion the sin of slavery; and this is forced upon me every hour of the day—so painfully to my conscience, that I feel as if my happiness for life would be affected by my involuntary participation in it. Their condition seems to me accursed every way, and only more accursed to those who hold them in it, on whom the wrong they commit reacts frightfully.

Not a few of these slaves know and feel that they are wronged, deplore their condition, and are perfectly aware of its manifold hardships. Those who are not conscious of the robbery of their freedom and their consequent degradation, are sunk in a state of the most brutish ignorance and stupidity; and as for the pretense that their moral and mental losses are made up to them by the secure possession of food and clothing (a thing no moral and intellectual being should utter without a blush), it is utterly false. They are hard worked, poorly clothed, and poorly fed; and when they are sick, cared for only enough to fit them for work again; the only calculation in the mind of an overseer being to draw from their bones and sinews money to furnish his employer's income, and secure him a continuance of his agency.

THE
SLAVES'
SENSE OF
THEIR
CONDITION.

It is true that on this estate they are allowed some indulgence and some leisure, and are not starved or often ill-treated; but their indulgences and leisure are no more than just tend to keep them in a state of safe acquiescence in their lot, and it does not do that with the brighter and more intelligent among them. There is no attempt made to improve their condition; to teach them decency, order, cleanliness, self-respect; to open their minds or enlighten their understandings: on the contrary, there are express and very severe laws forbidding their education, and every precaution is taken to shut out

the light which sooner or later must break into their prison-house.

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Dear Emily, if you could imagine how miserable I feel surrounded by people by whose wrong I live! Some few of them are industrious, active, and intelligent; and in their leisure time work hard to procure themselves small comforts and luxuries, which they are allowed to buy. How pitiable it is to think that they are defrauded of the just price of their daily labor, and that stumbling-blocks are put in the way of their progress, instead of its being helped forward! My mind is inexpressibly troubled whenever I think of their minds, souls, or bodies. Their physical condition is far from what it should be, far from what their own exertions could make it, and there is no improving even that without calling in mental and moral influences, a sense of self-respect, a consciousness of responsibility, knowledge of rights to be possessed and duties discharged, advantages employed and trusts answered for; and how are slaves to have any of these? There is no planting even physical improvement but in a moral soil, and the use of the rational faculties is necessary for the fit discharge of the commonest labor. Alas, for our slaves! and alas, alas, for us! I feel half distracted about it, and it is well for you that I have no more space to write on this theme.

God bless you, my dear friend. Pray, as I do, for the end of this evil....

F. A. B.

BUTLER'S ISLAND, GEORGIA, February 8th, 1839.

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Your letter of the 10th of November, my dear Lady Dacre, fulfilled its kindly mission without the delay at Butler Place, the anticipation of which did not prevent your making the benevolent effort of writing it. It reached me in safety here, in the very hindermost skirts of civilization, recalling with so much vividness scenes and people so remote and so different from those that now surround me, that it would have been a sad letter to me, even had it not contained the news of Mrs. Sullivan's illness. At any time any suffering of yours would have excited my sincere sympathy; but that your anxiety and distress should spring from such a cause, I can the more readily deplore, from my knowledge of your daughter, which, though too slight for my own gratification, was sufficient to make me aware of her many excellent and admirable qualities. In those books of hers, too, "Tales of a Chaperon," and "Tales of the Peerage and the Peasantry," which since my return to America I have re-read with increased interest, her mind and character reveal themselves very charmingly; and I know those in this remote "other world," as doubtless there are many in England, who, without enjoying my privilege of personal acquaintance with her, would be fellow-mourners with you should any evil befall her. But I shall not admit this apprehension, and I entreat you, my dear Lady Dacre, to add one more to the many kindnesses you have bestowed on me, by letting me know how it fares with your daughter. In the mean time, if she is well enough to receive my greeting, pray remember me most kindly to her, and tell her that from the half-savage banks of the Altamaha, those earnest wishes, which are unspoken prayers, ascend to heaven for her recovery.

You ask after my children.... I am in no hurry to begin *educationeering*; indeed, as regards early instruction, I am a little behind the fervent zeal of the age, having considerably more regard for what may be found in, than what may be put into, a human head; and a more earnest desire that my child should think, even than that she should learn; and I want her to make her own wisdom, rather than take that of any one else (my own wise self not excepted). For fear, however, that you should imagine that I mean to let her grow up "savage," I beg to state that she does know her letters, a study which she prosecutes with me for about a quarter of an hour daily, out of "Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes." I have thought myself to blame, perhaps, for choosing a *work of imagination* for that elementary study; but the child, like a rational creature, abhors the whole thing most cordially, and when I think what wondrous revelations are flowing to her hourly through those five gates of knowledge, her senses, I am not surprised that she despises and detests the inanimate dead letter of mere bookish lore....

EDUCATION.

My poor mother's death, which roused me most painfully to the perception of the distance which divides me from all my early friends, has filled my mind with the gloomiest forebodings respecting my father, and my sister's unprotected situation,

should anything befall him. The passing away of my kindred, and those who are dear to me, while I, removed to an impassable distance, only hear of their death after a considerable lapse of time, without the consolation of being near them, or even the preparation of hearing they were ill, is a circumstance of inexpressible sadness....

If Macready would give me anything for my play, I would come over, if only for a month, and see my father, whose image in sickness and depression haunts me constantly....

F. A. B.

BUTLER'S ISLAND, February 10th, 1839.

It is only two days, I believe, dearest Harriet, since I finished a long letter to you, but I am yet in your debt by one dated the 30th of November, and being in the mind to pay my owings, I proceed to do so, as honestly as I may....

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I have just been hearing a long and painful discussion upon the subject of slavery; a frequent theme, as you will easily believe, of thought and conversation with us, now that we are living in the midst of it; and I am assured, by those who maintain the justice of the practice of holding slaves, that had it been otherwise than right, Christ would have forbidden it. It is vain that I say that Christ has done so by implication, forbidding us to do otherwise than we would be done by: I am told in reply, that neither Christ nor his disciples having ever denounced slavery by name as unjust, or wrong, is sufficient proof that it is just and right; and, alas! my dear Harriet, it requires more of the spirit of Christ than I possess to hear such assertions without ungovernable impatience. I do not believe the people who utter them are insincere or dishonest in stating such convictions; but I am shocked at the indignation with which such fallacious arguments occasionally inspires me....

I know that (this one unfortunate question excepted) some of the persons who take these views are just men, and have a keen perception of, and conscientious respect for, the rights of others; but the exception is one of those perplexing moral anomalies that call for the exercise of one's utmost forbearance in judging or condemning the opinions of others. It seems to me, that I could tolerate an absolute moral insensibility upon the subject better than the strange moral obliquity of justifying this horrible system by arguments drawn from Christ's teaching.

As for me, every day makes the injustice of the principle, and the cruelty of the practice, more intolerable to me; and but for the poor people's own sake (to whom my presence among them is of some little use and comfort), I would only too gladly turn my back upon the dreadful place, and never again set foot near it.... It would not surprise me if I was never allowed to return here, for these very conversations and discussions upon the subject of the slave system are considered dangerous, and justice and freedom cannot be mentioned safely here but with closed doors and whispering voices.... I pray with all the powers of my soul that God would enlighten these unfortunate slave-holders, and enable them to perceive better the spirit of Christ, who they say never denounced slavery as either an evil or sin; the evil consequences of it to themselves are by far the worst of all. So I go struggling on with this strange existence, and sometimes feel weary enough of it....

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God bless you, dear. I believe I am going with the children to the cotton-plantation, where I shall be able to ride again, and shall be better in mind, body, though not estate, for my long-accustomed exercise.

Ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

ST. SIMON'S, March 10th, 1839.

I wish, dear Emily, I could for an instant cause a vision to rise before you of the perfect paradise of evergreens through which I have been opening paths on our estate, in an island called St. Simon's, lying half in the sea and half in the Altamaha. Such noble growth of dark-leaved, wide-spreading oaks; such exquisite natural shrubberies of

BEAUTY OF
THE
SCENERY.

magnolia, wild myrtle, and bay, all glittering evergreens of various tints, bound together by trailing garlands of wild jessamine, whose yellow bells, like tiny golden cups, exhale a perfume like that of the heliotrope and fill the air with sweetness, and cover the woods with perfect curtains of bloom; while underneath all this, spread the spears and fans of the dwarf palmetto, and innumerable tufts of a little shrub whose delicate leaves are pale green underneath and a polished dark brown above, while close to the earth clings a perfect carpet of thick-growing green, almost like moss, bearing clusters of little white blossoms like enameled stars; I think it is a species of euphrasia. It is the exceeding beauty of the whole which I wish you could see, and to which the most exquisite arrangement of art is in no way superior. I know it is common with the lovers of nature to undervalue art; but for all that, there are exceedingly few scenes in nature (except those of pre-eminent wildness and sublimity) where the genius of man, and his perception of beauty, may not remove and supply some things with advantage. In these wild evergreen plantations this is not the case; and all I have had to do, in following the cattle-tracks through these lovely woods, has been to cut the lower branches of the oaks which impede my progress on horseback, and sever the loving links of the wild garlands of blossoms, which had bound the shrubs together and drawn their branches into a canopy too low to admit of my riding beneath it; and you would laugh to see me with my peculiar slave, a young lad named Jack, of great natural shrewdness and no little humor, who is my factotum, and follows me on horseback with a leathern bag slung round his shoulders, containing a small saw and hatchet, and thus, like Sir Walter and Tom Purdie, we prosecute our labor of embellishment.

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This Jack was out fishing with me the other day, and after about two hours' silent and unsuccessful watching of our floats, he gravely remarked, "Fishing bery good fun, when de fish him bite,"—an observation so ludicrous under the circumstances, that we both burst out laughing as soon as he uttered it.

St. SIMON'S ISLAND, Sunday, March 17th, 1839.

MY DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

I cannot conceive how you could do such a wicked thing as to throw a letter you had begun into the fire, or such a cruel one as to inform the person who was to have received it of your exploit.

You burned your account of my sister's first appearance because, forsooth, the "newspapers" or "Harriet S—" would be sure to afford me the intelligence! But it so happens that I never see a newspaper, and that that identical letter of Harriet's was cast away in one of those unfortunate New York packets blown ashore in the late tremendous gales. It has since reached me, however; but she, too, thinking fit to go upon some fallacious calculation of human probabilities, takes it for granted that Adelaide has written me a full, true, and particular account of the whole business, and sums up all details in the mere intelligence, which had already reached me, of her having made a successful first appearance at Venice. Pray, my dear Mrs. Jameson, do not be afraid of supplying me with twice-told tales of my own people, but whenever you are good enough to write to me, let me know all that you know about them....

I do not know why you should have associated the ill-fated *Pennsylvania* with any thought of me. I never crossed the Atlantic in a ship so named, but the *St. Andrew*, one of the wrecked vessels, was the one in which we returned to America two years ago, and probably you may have written the one name for the other by mistake.

Of the appearance of your book, and the attention it has excited, I hear from Catharine Sedgwick. As for me, the only new book I have seen since my sojourn in these outhouses of civilization, is that exquisite volume whose evergreen leaves, of every tint and texture, are rustling in the bright sunshine and fresh sea-breeze of this delicious winter climate.

Art never devised more perfect combinations of form and color than these wild woods present, with their gigantic growth of evergreen oak, their thickets of myrtle and magnolia, their fantastic undergrowth of spiked palmetto, and their hanging draperies of jessamine, whose gold-colored bells fill the air with fragrance long before one approaches the place where it grows.

You would laugh if I were to recount some of my manifold avocations here; my qualifications for my situation should be more various than those of a modern governess, for it appears to me there is nothing strange and unusual by way of female experience that I have not been called upon to perform since I have lived here, from marking out the proper joints on the carcass of a dead sheep, into which it should be divided for the table, to officiating as clergyman to a congregation of our own poor people, whose desire for religious instruction appears to be in exact proportion to the difficulty they have in obtaining it...

I am on horseback every day, clearing paths through the woods; and though the life I lead has but a very remote resemblance to that of a civilized creature, a quondam dweller in the two great cities of the world and frequenter of polished societies therein, it has some recommendations of its own. To be sure, so it should have; for I inhabit a house where the staircase is open to the roof, and the roof, unmitigated by ceiling, plaster, skylight, or any intermediate shelter, presents to my admiring gaze, as I ascend and descend, the seamy side of the tiles, or rather wooden shingles, with which the house is covered; with all the rude raftering, through which do shine the sun, moon, and stars, the winds do blow, and the rain of heaven does fall. Every door in the house is fastened with wooden latches and pack-thread; the identical device of Red Riding-hood antiquity, and the solitary bell of the establishment rings by means of a rope, suspended from the lintel, *outside* the room where I sit, and I expect to find myself hanging in it every time I go in and out, and which always inclines me to inquire what has been done with the body that was last cut down from it...

F. A. B.

ST. SIMON'S ISLAND, March 17th, 1839.

That letter of yours which I lamented as lost, my dear Harriet, has reached me all stained and defaced (yet not so but that it can be read), having evidently been steeped in the merciless waves of the Mersey. Your letter has suffered shipwreck, having of course been cast back towards you, in one of those unfortunate New York packets which were lost in those late tremendous gales; and if the poor pickled sheet of paper could speak anything beside what you have told it, how many sad horrors, unrecorded in the summary newspaper reports of the late disasters, it might reveal.

I have a dreadful dread, and a fearful fear, of drowning, and the sight of your letter, all sea-stained, conjures up as many terrible thoughts as poor Clarence had in the last dream that preceded his last sleep.

Almost the saddest to me of all the items of ruin and destruction enumerated in the newspaper records of the late storm, was the carrying away of the Menai Bridge, and that on your account. I thought of it as almost a personal loss and grief to you. You had so often described it to me, its beauty and its grandeur; and though I had never seen it, I had a distinct imagination of it, gathered far more from your descriptions, than from engravings or accounts of tourists: and it was so associated with you in my mind, that, reading of it being all blown to tatters, I felt dismayed to think of *your* beautiful bridge thus ruined, and of your distress at its destruction. You used to speak of that with the same species of delight that beautiful natural objects excite in me: and enjoyment so vivid, and at the same time so abiding, that I sometimes, under the influence of such impressions, feel as if I loved some places better than any people. Certainly the magical effect of certain beautiful scenes upon my mind is the most intense and lasting pleasure I have ever known....

I returned here yesterday to my children, whom I left with Margery, while I went up to Butler's Island to do duty, I am sorry to say, as sick-nurse....

The observations of children, which are quoted as indications of peculiar intelligence, very often only appear so, because the objects which call them forth, having become familiar to us, have ceased to impress us rightly, or perhaps at all. Every child who is not a fool will frequently make remarks about many things which are only striking because conventional uses and educated habits of thought have, on many points, blunted their effect upon us, and obscured our perceptions of their qualities, and left us with duller

senses, and a duller general sense in some respects, than those of a child or savage....

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I have been performing an office this morning, which, like sundry others I have been called upon to discharge here (marking on the carcass of a sheep, for instance, the proper joints into which it should be cut for the table), is new to me. I read prayers to between twenty and thirty of the slaves, who are here without church, pastor, or any means whatever of religious instruction. There was something so affecting to me in my involuntary relation to these poor people,—in the contrast, too, between the infirm old age of many of them, and the comparative youth of me, their instructress,—in my impotence to serve them and my passionate desire to do so,—that I could hardly command my voice. The composition of our service was about as liberal as was ever compounded by any preacher or teacher of any Christian sect, I verily believe: it was selected from the English book of Common Prayer, a Presbyterian collection of Prayers, the "Imitation of Jesus Christ," which excellent Roman Catholic book of devotion I borrowed from Margery, and the Blessed Bible—the fountain from which have flowed all these streams for the refreshment of human souls. From these I compiled a short service, dismissing my congregation without a sermon, having none with me fit for their comprehension, and lacking courage to extemporize one, though vehemently moved by the spirit to do so. I think on Sunday next I will write one especially for their edification.

After this I went with S— and Margery, and baby in her little wicker carriage, accompanied by a long procession of negro children, to explore the woods near the house: not without manifest misgivings on the part of my dusky escort, whose terror of rattlesnakes is greater even than my terrified imagination about them. My greatest anxiety was to keep S— from marching in the van and preceding us all in these reptiline discoveries.... *Way*, in the proper sense of the term, there was none; for the expedition was chiefly for the purpose of observing where paths could be cleared with best advantage through this charming wilderness. To crown the doings of the day, I have written you this long letter, the fifth I date to you from Georgia.

EXPLORING
THE
WOODS.

Ever most affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

NEW YORK, April 30th, 1839.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

How much I wish I could but look into your face, but hold your hand, or embrace you! How much I wish I were near you, that I might silently as alone benefits such occasions, express to you my sympathy for your sorrow....

[Pg 150]

The news of your loss was the greater shock to me that I had just written a letter, introducing to you a dear friend of mine, Miss Sedgwick, now about visiting England, and bespeaking your kindness and good-will for her. This lady will still be the bearer of this (a most different epistle from the one I had prepared) and a little fan made of the feathers of one of our Southern birds, which you will not look upon with indifference, because it is sent to you by one who loves you truly and gratefully, and who would gladly do anything to afford you one moment's relief from those sad thoughts which I fear must possess you wholly.

I had ventured with especial confidence to recommend my friend to your notice, because she possesses, in no small degree, some of those qualities which distinguished your excellent and accomplished daughter; the same talent, applied with profound conscientiousness to the improvement of the young and poor and ignorant; the same devotion to the good of all who come within her sphere; the same pervading sense of religious responsibility.

Dear Lady Dacre, for the sake of those who love you,—for the sake of him whom you love above all others, your admirable husband,—for the sake of the darlings your child has left, a precious legacy and trust to you, do not let this affliction bow down the noble courage of your nature, but raise yourself even under this heavy burden, that the world may not by her death lose the good influence of *two* bright spirits at once. Do not think me bold and impertinent that I venture thus to exhort *you*. It is my affection that speaks, and the fear I feel of the terrible effect this loss may have upon you. Once more, God

bless and support you, and give you that reliance upon Him which is our only strength in the hours of our earthly sorrows. She whom you mourn is blest, if ever goodness might secure blessing; and the recollection of her many virtues must take from her death those contemplations which alone can make death awful. Farewell, dear friend. My heart yearns towards you in your grief very tenderly, and I am always

Most affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, PHILADELPHIA, June 24th, 1839.

DEAREST HARRIET,

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I am afraid you will think my Northern residence less propitious to correspondence than the Georgia plantation, as I am again in your debt.... But what have I to tell you of myself, or anything belonging to me? Ever since I returned from New York, whither I went to see Catharine Sedgwick sail for England, I have been vegetating here, as much as in me lies to vegetate; but though my life has quite as few incidents as the existence of the lilies and the roses in the flower-beds, the inward nature makes another life of it, and the restless soul can never be made to *vegetate*, even though the body does little else.... My days roll on in a sort of dreamy, monotonous succession, with an imperceptible motion, like the ceaseless creeping of the glaciers. I teach S— to read. I order my household, I read Mrs. Jameson's book about Canada, I write to you, I copy out for Elizabeth Sedgwick the journal I kept on the plantation, I ride every day, and play on the piano just enough not to forget my notes, *et voila!* Once a week I go to town, to execute commissions, or return visits, and on Sundays I go to church; and so my life slides away from me. My head and heart, however, are neither as torpid nor as empty as my hours; and I often find, as others have done, that external stagnation does not necessarily produce internal repose. Occasionally, but seldom, people come from town to see us; and sometimes, but not often, small offices of courtesy and kindness are exchanged between me and my more immediate neighbors. And now my story is done.... I really live almost entirely alone....

I am beginning to fear that I shall not be taken to the Virginia springs this summer. If I go, I am told I must leave the children behind, the roads and accommodations being such as to render it perfectly impossible to take them with us. Indeed, the inconveniences of the journey and the discomforts of the residence there are represented to us as so great, that I am afraid I shall not be thought able to endure them. If it is settled that I cannot go thither, I shall go up to Massachusetts, where, though the material civilities of life are yet in their swaddling clothes, I have dear friends, and the country is lovely all around where I should be.

I have just seen some plans for a large hotel, which it is proposed to build on some property we own in the city, in a position extremely well adapted for such a purpose. I was very much pleased with them: they are upon the wholesale scale of lodging and entertainment, which travelers in this country require and desire; and combine as much comfort and elegance as are compatible with such a style of establishment. We, you know, in England, always like our public houses to be as like private ones as possible. The reverse is the case here, and the lodging-house or hotel recommends itself chiefly by being able to accommodate as many people as can well congregate at a *table d'hôte* or in a public drawing-room, that being a good deal the idea of society which appears to exist in many people's minds here....

AMERICAN
HOTELS.

F. A. B.

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BUTLER PLACE, Thursday, July 4th, 1839.

DEAREST HARRIET,

It is the 4th of July, the day on which the Declaration of American Independence was read to the assembled citizens of Philadelphia from the window of the City State House. The anniversary is celebrated from north to south and east to west of this vast country: by the many, with firing of guns, and spouting of speeches, drinking of drams, and

eating of dinners; by the few, with understanding prayer, praise and thankfulness for the past, and hope, not unalloyed with some misgiving, for the future.

In the gravel walk, at the back of our house, under a double row of tall trees that meet overhead, all our servants and the people employed on the place and their children, are congregated at dinner, to the tune of thirty-seven apparently well-satisfied souls, and as I went to see them just now, a farmer who is our tenant across the road, and has tenanted the place where he lives for the space of twenty years, assured me that I was a "real American!" He is an Irishman, and I might have returned his compliment by telling him he was half an Englishman, for a man who remains twenty years in one place in this country, and upon ground that he does not own, is a very uncommon personage.

You would scarcely believe how difficult it is to establish a pleasant footing with persons of this class here. Dependents they do not and ought not to consider themselves (for they are not such in any sense whatever); equals, their own perceptions show them they are not in any sense, but a political one; and they seem to me, in consequence, to be far less at their ease really in their intercourse with their employers or landlords than our own people, with their much more positive and definite sense of difference of condition and habits of life. Indeed, to establish a real feeling—a *true* one—of universal equality, warranted by the fact of its existence, would require a population, not of American Republicans, such as they are, but of Christian philosophers, such as do not exist at all anywhere yet, or, if at all, only by twos or threes scattered among millions....

You ask me how far Butler's Island was from St. Simon's [the rice and cotton plantations in Georgia]. Fifteen miles of water—great huge river mouth or mouths, and open sounds of the sea, with half-submerged salt marsh islands wallowing in the midst of them.... Over these waters—pretty rough surfaces, too, sometimes—we traveled to and fro between the plantations in open boats, generally in a long canoe that flew under its eight oars like an arrow. The men often sang, while they rowed, the whole way when I was in the boat, and some of their melodies are very wild and striking, and their natural gift of music remarkable. As the boat approached the landing, the steersman brayed forth our advent through a monstrous conch, when the whole shore would presently be crowded with our dusky dependents, the whole thing reminding one of former semi-barbaric times, and modes of life in the islands of the northwest of Scotland. Some of the airs the negroes sing have a strong affinity to Scotch melodies in their general character....

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It is near ten o'clock in the evening, and with you it is five hours earlier, so you are probably thinking of dressing for dinner; though, by-the-bye, you are not at home at Ardgillan, but wandering somewhere about in Germany—I know not where; neither may I by any means imagine how you are employed; and your image rises before me without one accompanying detail of familiar place, circumstance, or occupation, to give it a this-world's likeness. I see you as I might if you were dead—your simple apparition unframed by any setting that I can surround it with; and it is thus that I now see all my friends and kindred, all those I love in my own country; for the lapse of time and the space of distance between us render all thoughts of them, even of their very existence, vague and uncertain. Klopstock, who wrote letters to the dead, hardly corresponded more absolutely with the inhabitants of another world than I do....

I drove into town this morning by half-past ten o'clock to church, a six-miles' journey I take most Sundays. The weekday generally passes in reading "Nicholas Nickleby," walking about the garden, and devising alterations which I hope may turn out improvements, playing and singing half a dozen pieces of music half a century old, and writing to the "likes of you" (though, indeed, to me you are still a nonesuch). Farewell, dearest Harriet, *und schlafen sie recht wohl*. Is that the way you say it, whereabouts you are?

"NICHOLAS
NICKLEBY."

Ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, July 14th, 1839.

I wrote to you a short time ago, dearest Harriet; but I am still in your debt, and though I

have nothing to tell you (when should I write if I waited for that?), I have abundant leisure to tell it in, and the mind to talk with you. The last is never wanting, but now what a pity it is that I must make this miserable sheet of paper my voice, instead of having you here on this piazza, as we call our verandahs here, with the pomegranate and cape jessamine bushes in bloom in their large green boxes just before me, and a row of great fat hydrangeas (how is that spelled?) nodding their round, fat, foolish-looking pink and blue heads at me....

We are most strongly urged to try the effect of the natural hot sulphur baths of Virginia; their efficacy being very great in cases of rheumatic affections.... I am very much afraid, however, that I shall not be allowed to go thither; and in that case shall probably take my way up to my friends in Berkshire, Massachusetts, the Sedgwicks, who, though they have sent a detachment of six to perambulate Europe just now, still form with the remaining members of the family the chief part of the population of that district of New England.

Catharine, who is one of them that I love best, is one among the gone; but her brother and his wife, next door to whom I generally take up my abode during some part of the summer, are as excellent, and nearly as dear to me, as she is....

My occupations are nothing; my amusements less than nothing. Of what avail is it that I should tell you of lonely rides taken in places you never heard of, or books I have read, the titles of which (being American) you never saw; or that I am revolutionizing the gravel walks in my garden, opening up new and closing up old ones? There is no use in telling you any of this. As long as I live, that is to all eternity, you know that I shall love you; but it is decreed that in this portion of that eternity you can know little else about me, however it may be hereafter. I wonder if it will ever be for us again to interchange communion daily and hourly, as we once did; I do not see how it should come to pass in this our present life; but it may be one of the blessings of a better and happier existence to resume our free and full former intercourse with each other, without any of the alloy of human infirmity or untoward circumstance. Amen! so be it! God bless you, dear. I long to see you once more, and am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, July 21st, 1839.

I was looking over a letter of yours, dear Harriet, just now, which answered one of mine from Georgia, and find therein a perfect burst of eloquence upon the subject of *fishing*. Now, though I know destructiveness to be not only a *bump*, but a passion of yours, I still should not have imagined that you could take delight in that dreamy, lazy, lounging pursuit, if pursuit that may be called in which one stands stock-still by the hour. As for me, the catching of fish was always a subject of perfect ecstasy to me—so much so, indeed, that our little company of piscators at Weybridge used to entreat me to "go further off," or "get out of the boat," whenever I had a bite, because my cries of joy were enough to scare all the fish in the river down to Sheerness. It was the lingering, fidgeting, gasping, plunging agonies of the poor creatures, after they were caught, which I objected to so excessively, and which made me renounce the amusement in spite of my passion for it. When I resumed it in Georgia, it was with the full determination to find out some speedy mode of putting my finny captives to death—as you are to understand that I have not the slightest compunction about killing, though infinite about torturing,—so my "slave," Jack, had orders to knock them on the head the instant he took the hook from their gills; but he banged them horribly, till I longed to bang him against the boat's side, and even cut their throats from ear to ear, so that they looked like so many Banquos without the "gory locks"; and yet the indomitable life in the perverse creatures would make them leap up with a galvanic spring and gasp, that invariably communicated an electric shock to my nerves, and produced the fellow-spring and gasp from me. This was the one drawback to my fishing felicity; oh! yes—I forgot the worms or live bait, though! Harriet, it *is* a hideous diversion, and that is all that can be said for it; and I wonder at you for indulging in it.

AMERICAN
FISH.

I tried paste, most exquisitely compounded of rice, flour, peach brandy, and fine sugar; but the Altamaha fish were altogether too unsophisticated for any such allurement; it

would probably be safe to put a *paté de foie gras* or a pineapple before an Irish hedger and ditcher.

The white mullet, shad, and perch of the Altamaha are the most excellent animals that ever went in water. At St. Simon's the water is entirely salt, and often very rough, as it is but a mile and a half from the open sea, and the river there is in fact a mere arm of salt water. It is hardly possible ever to fish like a lady, with a float, in it; but the negroes bait a long rope with clams, shrimps, and oysters, and sinking their line with a heavy lead, catch very large mullet, fine whittings, and a species of marine monster, first cousin once removed to the great leviathan, called the drum, which, being stewed *long enough* (that is, nobody can tell how long) with a precious French sauce, might turn out a little softer than the nether millstone, and so perhaps edible: *mais avec cette sauce là on mangerait son père*, and perhaps without the family indigestion that lasted the Atridæ so long.

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One of these creatures was sent to me by one of our neighbors as a curiosity; it was upwards of four feet long, weighed over twenty pounds, and had an enormous head. I wouldn't have eaten a bit of it for the world!

The waters all round St. Simon's abound in capital fish; beds of oysters, that must be inexhaustible I should think, run all along the coast; shrimps and extraordinarily large prawns are taken in the greatest abundance, and good green turtle, it is said, is easily procured at a short distance from these shores.

You ask what sort of house we had down there. Why, truly, wretched enough. There were on the two plantations no fewer than *eight* dwelling houses, all in different states and stages of uninhabitableness, half of them not being quite built up, and the other half not quite fallen down.

The grandfather of the present proprietor built a good house on the island of St. Simon's, in a beautiful situation on a point of land where two rivers meet—rather, two large streams of salt water, fine, sparkling, billowy sea rivers. Before the house was a grove of large orange-trees, and behind it an extensive tract of down, covered with that peculiar close, short turf which creates South Down and Pré Salé mutton: and overshadowed by some magnificent live-oaks and white mulberry-trees. By degrees, however, the tide, which rises to a great height here, running very strongly up both these channels, has worn away the bank, till tree by tree the orange grove has been entirely washed away, and the water at high tide is now within six feet of the house itself; or rather, there are only six feet of distance between the building and the brink of the bank on which it stands, which is considerably above the river.

ST. SIMON'S
HOUSE.

The house has been uninhabited for a great many years, and is, of course, ruinously out of repair. It contains one very good room, and might be made a decently comfortable dwelling; but it has been ordered to be pulled down, because, if it is not, the materials will soon be swept away in the rapid demolition of the bank by the water. The house we resided in was the overseer's dwelling, situated on the point also, but further from the water, and having the extent of grass-land and trees in front of it, together with a beautiful water prospect; in fact, in a better situation than the other. As for the house itself, it would have done very well for our short residence if it had been either finished or furnished. The rooms were fairly well-sized, and there were five of them in all, besides two or three little closets. But although the primitive simplicity of whitewashed walls in our drawing and dining-room did not affect my happiness, the wainscoting and even the crevices of the floor admitted perfect gusts of air that rather did. The windows and doors, even when professing to be shut, could never be called closed; and on one or two gusty evenings, the carpet in the room where I was sitting heaved and undulated by means of a stream of air from under the door, like a theatrical representation of the ocean in extreme agitation. The staircase was of the roughest description, such as you would not find in the poorest English farm-house, covered only by the inside of the roof, rough shingles—that is, wooden tiles—and all the beams, rafters, etc., etc., of the roofing, admitting little starry twinklings of sun or moonlight, perfectly apparent to the naked eye of whoever ascended or descended. Such was my residence on the estate of Hampton on great St. Simon's Island; and it was infinitely superior in size, comfort, and everything else to my abode on Butler's Island, which was indeed a very miserable hole.

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The St. Simon's house being sufficiently roomy, I presently set about making it as far as possible convenient and comfortable. I had a fine large table, such as might have

become some august board of business men, made of plain white pine and covered in with sober-looking dark green merino. I next had a settee constructed—cushions, covers, etc., cut out and mainly stitched by my own fair fingers; we stuffed it with the native moss; and I had a pretty white *peignoir* made for it, with stuff which I got from that emporium of fashionable luxury, Darien; and this was quite an item of elegance, as well as comfort. Another table in my sitting-room was an old, rickety, rheumatic piece of furniture of the "old Major's," the infirmities of which I gayly concealed under a Macgregor plaid shawl, never burdening its elderly limbs with any greater weight than a vase of flowers; and by the help of plenty of this exquisite, ornamental furniture of nature's own providing, and a tolerable collection of books, which we had taken down to the South with us, my sitting-room did not look uncomfortable or uncheerful.

If, however, I am to winter there again this year, I shall endeavor to make it a little more like the dwelling of civilized human beings by the introduction of locks to the doors, instead of wooden latches pulled by pack-thread; and bells, of which at present there is but one in the whole house, and that is a noose, hanging just outside the sitting-room door, by which I expected to be caught and throttled every time I went in and out....

I am ever yours,

F. A. B.

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LENOX, August 9th, 1839.

I turn from interchange of thought and feeling with my friends here, dearest Harriet, to read again an unanswered letter of yours; and as I dwell upon your affectionate words, while my eyes wander over the beautiful landscape which my window commands, my mind is filled with the consideration of the great treasure of love that has been bestowed upon me out of so many hearts, and I wonder as I ponder. God knows how devoutly I thank Him for this blessing above all others, granted to me in a measure so far above my deserts, that my gratitude is mingled with surprise and a sense of my own unworthiness, which enhances my appreciation of my great good fortune in this respect.... In seasons of self-reproach and self-condemnation it is an encouragement and a consolation, and helps to lift one from the dust, to reflect that good and noble spirits have loved one—spirits too good and too noble, one would fain persuade one's self, to love what is utterly base and unworthy....

You ask me if I have kept any journal, or written anything lately. During my winter in the South I kept a daily journal of whatever occurred to interest me, and I am now busily engaged in copying it.... Since the perpetration of that "English Tragedy," now in your safe keeping, I have written nothing else; and probably, until I find myself again under the influence of some such stimulus as my mind received on returning to England, my intellectual faculties will remain stagnant, so far as any "worthy achievement," as Milton would say, is concerned. You see, I persist in considering that play in that light....

I am ashamed to say that I am exceedingly sleepy. I have been riding sixteen miles over these charming hills. The day is bright and breezy, and full of shifting lights and shadows, playing over a landscape that combines every variety of beauty,—valleys, in the hollows of which lie small lakes glittering like sapphires; uplands, clothed with grain-fields and orchards, and studded with farm-houses, each the centre of its own free domain; hills clothed from base to brow with every variety of forest tree; and woods, some wild, tangled, and all but impenetrable, others clear of underbrush, shady, moss-carpeted and sun-checked; noble masses of granite rock, great slabs of marble (of which there are fine quarries in the neighborhood), clear mountain brooks and a full, free-flowing, sparkling river;—all this, under a cloud-varied sky, such as generally canopies mountain districts, the sunset glories of which are often magnificent. I have good friends, and my precious children, an easy, cheerful, cultivated society, my capital horse, and, in short, most good things that I call mine—on this side of the water—with one heavy exception....

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My dearest Harriet, my drowsiness grows upon me, so that my eyelids are gradually drawing together as I look out at the sweet prospect, and the blue shimmer of the little lake and sunny waving of the trees are fading all away into a dream before me. Good-bye.

[When I was in London, some time after the date of this letter, I received an earnest request from one of the most devoted of the New England abolitionists, to allow the journal I kept while at the South to be published, and so give the authority of my experience to the aid of the cause of freedom. This application occasioned me great trouble and distress, as it was most painful to me to refuse my testimony on the subject on which I felt so deeply; but it was impossible for me then to feel at liberty to publish my journal.

When the address, drawn up at Stafford House, under the impulse of Mrs. Beecher Stowe's powerful novel, and the auspices of Lord Shaftesbury and the Duchess of Sutherland (by Thackeray denominated the "Womanifesto against Slavery"), was brought to me for my signature, I was obliged to decline putting my name to it, though I felt very sure no other signer of that document knew more of the facts of American slavery, or abhorred it more, than I did; but also, no other of its signers knew, as I did, the indignant sense of offense which it would be sure to excite in those to whom it was addressed; its absolute futility as to the accomplishment of any good purpose, and the bitter feeling it could not fail to arouse, even in the women of the Northern States, by the assumed moral superiority which it would be thought to imply.

MRS.
BEECHER
STOWE.

I would then gladly have published my journal, had I been at liberty to do so, and thus shown my sympathy with the spirit, though not the letter, of the Stafford House appeal to the women of America.

It was not, however, until after the War of Secession broke out, while residing in England, and hearing daily and hourly the condition of the slaves discussed, in a spirit of entire sympathy with their owners, that nothing but the most absolute ignorance could excuse, that I determined to publish my record of my own observations on a Southern plantation.

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At the time of my doing so, party feeling on the subject of the American war was extremely violent in England, and the people among whom I lived were all Southern sympathizers. I believe I was suspected of being *employed* to "advocate" the Northern cause (an honor of which I was as little worthy as their cause was in need of such an advocate); and my friend, Lady —, told me she had repeatedly heard it asserted that my journal was not a genuine record of my own experiences and observation, but "cooked up" (to use the expression applied to it) to serve the purpose of party special pleading. This, as she said, she was able to contradict upon her own authority, having heard me read the manuscripts many years before at her grandmother's, Lady Dacre's, at the Hoo.

This accusation of having "cooked up" my journal for a particular end may perhaps have originated from the fact that I refused to place the whole of it in the hands of the printers, giving out to be printed merely such portions as I chose to submit to their inspection, which, as the book was my personal diary, and contained matter of the most strictly private nature, was not perhaps unreasonable. The republication of this book in America had not been contemplated by me; my purpose and my desire being to make the facts it contained known in England. In the United States, by the year 1862, abundant miserable testimony of the same nature needed no confirmation of mine. My friend, Mr. John Forbes, of Boston, however, requested me to let him have it republished in America, and I very gladly consented to do so.⁴

An extremely interesting and clever book, called "A Fool's Errand," embodies under the form of a novel, an accurate picture of the social condition of the Southern States after the war—a condition so replete with elements of danger and difficulty, that the highest virtue and the deepest wisdom could hardly have coped successfully with them; and from a heart-breaking and perhaps unsuccessful struggle with which, Abraham Lincoln's murder delivered him, I believe, as a reward for his upright and noble career.]

⁴ I have omitted from the letters written on the plantation, at the same time as this diary, all details of the condition of the slaves among whom I was living; the painful effect of which upon myself however, together with my general strong feeling upon the subject of slavery, I have not entirely suppressed—because I do not think it well that all record should be obliterated of the nature of the terrible curse from which God in His mercy has delivered English America.

In countless thousands of lamentable graves the bitter wrong lies buried—atoned for by a four-years' fratricidal war: the beautiful Southern land is lifting its head from the disgrace of slavery and the agony of its defense. May its free future days surpass in prosperity (as they surely will a thousand-fold) those of its former perilous pride of privilege—of race supremacy and subjugation.

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LENOX, September 11th, 1839.

Thank you, my dear Lady Dacre, for your kindness in writing to me again. I would fain know if doing so may not have become a painful effort to you, or if my letters may not have become irksome to you. Pray have the real goodness to let me know, if not by your own hand, through our friends William Harness or Emily Fitzhugh, if you would rather not be disturbed by my writing to you, and trust that I shall be grateful for your sincerity.

You know I do not value very highly the artificial civilities which half strangle half the world with a sort of floss-silk insincerity; and the longer I live the more convinced I am that real tenderness to others is quite compatible with the truth that is due to them and one's self.

My regard for you does not maintain itself upon our scanty and infrequent correspondence, but on the recollection of your kindness to me, and the impression our former intercourse has left upon my memory; and though ceasing to receive your letters would be foregoing an enjoyment, it could not affect the grateful regard I entertain for you. Pray, therefore, my dear Lady Dacre, do not scruple to bid me hold my peace, if by taking up your time and attention in your present sad circumstances [the recent loss of her daughter] I disturb or distress you.

Your kind wishes for my health and happiness are as completely fulfilled as such benedictions may be in this world of imperfect bodies and minds. I ride every day before breakfast, some ten or twelve miles (yesterday it was five and twenty), and as this obliges me to be in my saddle at seven in the morning, I am apt to consider the performance meritorious as well as pleasurable. (Who says that early risers always have a Pharisaical sense of their own superiority?) I am staying in the beautiful hill-region of Massachusetts, where I generally spend part of my summer, in the neighborhood of my friends the Sedgwicks, who are a very numerous clan, and compose the chief part of the population of this portion of Berkshire, if not in quantity, certainly in quality.

PHARISAISM
OF EARLY
RISERS.

There was some talk, at one time, of my going to the hot sulphur springs of Virginia; but the difficulties of the journey thither, and miseries of a sojourn there, prevented my doing so, as I could not have taken my children with me. We shall soon begin to think of flying southward, for we are to winter in Georgia again....

My youngest child does not utter so much as a syllable, which circumstance has occasioned me once or twice seriously to consider whether by any possibility a child of mine could be *dumb*. "I cannot tell, but I think not," as Benedict says. It would have been clever of me to have had a dumb child.

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Have you read Charles Murray's book about America? and how do you like it? Do you ever see Lady Francis Egerton nowadays? How is she? What is she doing? Is she accomplishing a great deal with her life? She always seemed to me born to do so. My dear Lady Dacre, do not talk of not seeing me again. We hope to be in England next autumn, and one of the greatest pleasures I look forward to in that expectation is once more seeing you and Lord Dacre. You say my sister will marry a foreigner. She has my leave to marry a German, but the more southern blood does not mingle well with our Teutonic race....

I am sorry the only book of Catharine Sedgwick's which you have read is, "Live and Let Live," because it is essentially an American book, and some Americans think it a little

exaggerated in its views, even for this country. A little story, called "Home," and another called "The Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man," are, I think, better specimens of what she can do....

F. A. B.

LENOX, September 30th, 1839.

And so, dearest Harriet, Cecilia writes you that my head is enlarged, my *benevolence* and *causality* increased, and that Mr. Combe thinks me much improved. Truly, it were a pity if I were the reverse, for it was more than two years since he had seen me; but though I heartily wish this might be the case, I honestly confess to you that I do not feel as if my mental and moral progress, during the last two years, has been sufficient to push out any visible augmentation of the "bumps" of my skull in any direction.

Your saucy suggestion as to my having conciliated his good opinion by exhibiting a greater degree of faith in phrenology is, unluckily, not borne out by the facts; for, instead of more, I have a little less faith in it; and that, perversely enough, from the very circumstance of the more favorable opinion thus expressed with regard to my own "development."

In the first instance, both Mr. Combe and Cecilia expressed a good deal of surprise to some of my friends here, at their high estimate of my brain.... Having very evidently never themselves perceived any sufficient grounds for such an exalted esteem. Moreover, Mr. Combe wrote a letter to Lucretia Mott (the celebrated Quakeress, who is a good friend of mine), when he heard that she had made my acquaintance, cautioning her against falling into the mistake which *all my American friends* committed, of "exaggerating my reasoning powers." This was all well and good, and only amused me as rather funny; some of *my American friends* being tolerably shrewd folk, and upon the whole, no bad judges of brains. But then the next thing that happens is, that I see the Combes myself for a short, hurried, and most confused five minutes, during which, even if Mr. Combe's judgment were *entirely* in his eyes, he had no leisure for exercising it on me; and yet he now states (for Cecy is only his echo in this matter) that my disposition is much improved, and my reasoning powers much increased; and it is but two years since I was in his house, and this moral and mental progress, visible to the naked eye, on my thickly hair-roofed cranium, has taken place since then;—if so, so much the better for me, and I have made better use of my time than I imagined!

MR. COMBE.

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To tell you the truth, dear Harriet, I have not thought about phrenology, one way or the other, but I have thought this phrenological verdict about myself nonsense.

Mr. Combe has certainly not been influenced by any signs of conversion on my part; but I suppose he may have been influenced by the opinion held of me by my friends here, some of whom are sensible enough on all other subjects not to be suspected of idiocy, even though they do think me a rational, and, what is more, a reasoning creature.

It has been a real distress to me not to see more of Mr. Combe and Cecilia. I have always had the highest regard for him, for his kind, humane heart, and benevolent, liberal, enlightened mind. Cecy, too, during my short visit to her in Scotland, appeared to me a far more lovable person than during my previous intercourse with her: and as kinsfolk and countryfolk, without any consideration for personal liking, I feel annoyed at not being able to offer them any kindness or hospitality. But we literally seem to be running round each other; they are now at Hartford, in Connecticut, not fifty miles away from here, where they intend staying some weeks, and will probably not be in Philadelphia until we have departed for the South. When I saw them in New York, they were both looking extremely well; Cecilia fat, and cheerful, and apparently very happy, in spite of her "incidents of American travel." ...

The heat of the summer while we remained at Butler Place was something quite indescribable, and hardly varied at all for several weeks, either night or day, from between 90 and 100 degrees.

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People sat up all night at their windows in town; and as for me, more than once, in sheer desperation, after trying to sleep on a cane sofa under the piazza, I wandered about

more than half the night, on the gravel walks of the garden, bare-footed,—*et dans le simple appareil d'une beauté qu'on vient d'arracher au sommeil.*

We tried to sleep upon *everything* in vain,—Indian matting was as hot as woolen blankets. At last I laid a piece of oilcloth on my bed, without even as much as a sheet over it, and though I could not sleep, obtained as much relief from the heat as to be able to lie still. It was terrible!...

I have been for two months up here, not having been allowed to go to the Virginia springs, on account of the difficulty of carrying my children there; but I am promised that we shall all go there next summer, when there is to be something like a passable road, by which the health-giving region may be approached....

I have an earnest desire to return to Europe in the autumn—not to stay in England, unless my father should be there, but to go to him, wherever he may be, and to spend a little time with my sister.... All this, however, lies far ahead, and God knows what at present invisible prospects may reveal and develop themselves on the surface of the future, as a nearer light falls on it....

My youngest child's accomplishments are hitherto unaccompanied by a syllable of speech or utterance, and the idea sometimes occurs to me whether a child of mine could have enough genius to be dumb.

Good-bye, my dearest Harriet.

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, October 10th, 1839.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

Your interesting letter of 26th July reached me about ten days ago, at Lenox, where, according to my wont, I was passing the hot months. I had heard from dear Mr. Harness, a short time before, that you had suffered much annoyance from the withdrawal of your father's pension. Your own account of the disasters of your family excited my sincere sympathy; and yet, after reflecting a little, it appeared to me as if the exertions you felt yourself called upon to make in their behalf were happier in themselves than the general absence of any immediate object in life, which I know you sometimes feel very bitterly. At any rate, to be able to serve, effectually to save from distress, those so dear to you, must be in itself a real happiness; and to be blessed by your parents and sisters as their stay and support in such a crisis, is to have had such an opportunity of concentrating your talents as I think one might be thankful for. I cannot, consistently with my belief, say I am sorry you have thus suffered, but I pray God that your troubles may every way prove blessings to you.

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Your account of your "schoolmaster's party" interested me very much. [A gathering of teachers, promoted by Lady Byron, for purposes of enlightened benevolence.] Lady Byron must be a woman of a noble nature. I hope she is happy in her daughter's marriage. I heard a report a short time ago that Lady Lovelace was coming over to this country with her husband. I could not well understand for what purpose: that he should come from general interest and curiosity about the United States, I can well imagine; but that she should come from any motive, but to avoid being separated from her husband, is to me inconceivable....

I should like to have seen that play of Mr. Chorley's which you mention to me. He once talked about it to me. It is absurd to say, but for all its absurdity, I'll say it,—he does not *look* to me like a man who could write a good play: he speaks too softly, and his eyelashes are too white; in spite of all which, I take your word for it that it is good. You ask after mine: Harriet has got the only copy, on the other side of the water; if you think it worth while to ask her for it, you are very welcome to read it. I was not aware that I had read you any portion of it; and cannot help thinking that you have confounded in your recollection something which I did read you—and which, as I thought, appeared to distress you, or rather not to please you—with some portion of my play, of which I did not think that I had ever shown you any part. I have some thoughts of publishing it here,

HENRY
CHORLEY.

or rather in Boston. I have run out my yearly allowance of pin-money, and want a few dollars very badly, and if any bookseller will give me five pounds for it, he shall be welcome to it....

I beg you will not call this a scrap of a letter, because it is all written upon one sheet: if you do, I shall certainly call yours a letter of scraps, being written on several; and am ever,

Very truly yours,

F. A. B.

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BUTLER PLACE, October 19th, 1839.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I have just been reading over a letter of yours written from Schwalbach, in August; and in answer to some speculation of mine, which I have forgotten, you say, "Our birth truly is no less strange than our death. The beginning—and whence come we? The end—and whither go we?" Now, I presume that you did not intend that I should apply myself to answer these questions categorically. You must have thought you were speaking to me, dearest Harriet, and have only written down the vague cogitations that rose in the shape of queries to your lips, as you read my letter, which suggested them; opening at the same time, doubtless, a pair of most *intensely sightless* eyes, upon the gaming-table of the Cursaal, if it happened to be within range of vision.

For myself, the older I grow the less I feel strength or inclination to speculate. The daily and hourly duties of life are so indifferently fulfilled by me, that I feel almost rebuked if my mind wanders either to the far past or future while the present, wherein lies my salvation, is comparatively unthought of. To tell you the truth, I find in the daily obligations to do and to suffer which come to my hands, a refuge from the mystery and uncertainty which veil all before and after life.

For indeed, when the mind sinks bewildered under speculations as to our former fate or future destinies, the sense of things *to be done*, of duties to be fulfilled, even the most apparently trivial in the world, is an unspeakable relief; and though the whole of this existence of ours, material and spiritual, affords but this *one* foothold (and it sometimes seems so to me), it is enough that every hour brings work; and more than enough—*all*—if that work be but well done.

Thus the beginning and the end trouble me seldom; but the difficulty of dealing rightly with what is immediately before and around me does trouble me infinitely; but that trouble is neither uncertainty nor doubt.

Our possible separation hereafter from those we have loved here, is almost the only idea connected with these subjects which obtrudes itself sometimes upon my mind. Yet, though I cannot conceive how Heaven would not be Hell without those I love, I am willing to believe that my spirit will be fitted to its future sphere by Him with whom all things are possible.

It seems rationally consistent with all we believe, and the little we know, to entertain a strong hope that the affections we have cherished here will not be left behind us, or forgotten elsewhere; but I would give much to *believe* this as well as to *hope* it, and those are quite distinct things.

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Two conclusions spring from this wide waste of uncertainty; that the more we can serve and render happy those with whom our lives are bound up here, the better; for we may not elsewhere be allowed to minister to them: and the less we cling to these earthly affections, the less we grasp them as sources of personal happiness the better; as they may be withdrawn from us, and God, whose place they too often usurp in our souls, be the one Friend who shall supply the place of them all.

Conjecture as we may, however, upon these subjects, the general experience of humanity is that of struggle with the *present*, the *actual*; and could I but be satisfied with the mode in which I fulfill my daily duties, and govern my heart and mind in their discharge, I should feel at peace as regards all such speculations—"I'd jump the life to come."

You speak of the unhealthy life led by the members of the bar in Ireland, and their disregard of all the "natural laws," which yet, you say, does not appear to affect their constitutions materially. I presume, as far as the usual exercise of their profession goes, lawyers must lead pretty much the same sort of life everywhere; but in this country, everybody's habits are essentially unhealthy, and superadded to the special bad influences of a laborious and sedentary profession, make fearful havoc with life. The diet and the atmosphere to which most Americans accustom themselves, are alike destructive of anything like health. Even the men, compared with ours, are generally inactive, and have no idea of taking regular exercise as a salutary precaution. The absence of social enjoyment among the wealthier classes, and of cheerful recreation among the artisan and laboring part of the population, leaves them absorbed in a perpetual existence of care and exertion, varied only by occasional outbursts of political excitement; indeed, they appear to prefer a life of incessant toil to any other, and they seem to consider any species of amusement or recreation as a simple waste of time, taking no account of the renovation of health, strength, and spirits to be gained by diversion and leisure. All that travelers have said about their neglect of physical health is true; and you will have additional evidence furnished upon this subject, I believe, by Mr. Combe, who intends publishing his American experiences, and who will probably do full justice to the perpetual infraction of his ever-present and sacred rules of life, by the people of the United States....

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Expostulations with people with regard to their health are never wise—they who most need such admonition are least likely to accept it; and, indeed, how many of us learn anything but from personal suffering? which too often, alas, comes too late to teach. I suppose, it is only the *exceeding* wise who are taught anything even by their own experience; to expect the foolish to learn by that of others, is to be one of their number....

Experience is God's teaching; and I think the seldomer one interferes between children and that best of teachers, the better. I think it would be well if we oftener let them follow their wills to their consequences; for these are always *just*, but they are sometimes, according to our judgments, too severe; and so we not seldom, out of cowardice, interpose between our children and the teaching of experience; and substitute, because we will not see them suffer, our own authority for the inestimable instruction of consequences.

I do not think I agree with you about the very early cultivation of the reasoning powers, but have left myself no room for further *educational* disquisition.

Farewell, dear.

Believe me, ever yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, December, 1839.

MY DEAR T—,

The expression of one's sympathy can never, whatever its sincerity, be of the value it would have possessed if uttered when first excited. In this, above all things, "they give twice who give quickly." I feel this very much in writing to you now upon the events which have lately so deeply troubled the current of your life—your good father's death, and the birth of your second baby, together with the threatened calamity from which its mother's recovery has spared you. Tardy as are these words, my sympathy has been sincerely yours during this your season of trial; and though I have done myself injustice in not sooner writing to you, believe me I have felt more for you and yours than any letter could express, though I had written it the moment the news reached me....

That your father died as full of honor as of years, that his life was a task well fulfilled, and his death not unbecoming so worthy a life, is matter of consolation to you, and all who knew and loved him less than you. I scarce know how you could have wished any other close to his career; the pang of losing such a friend you could not expect to escape, but there was hardly a circumstance (as regarded your father himself) which it seems to me you can regret. Poor M— will be the bitterest sufferer [the lady was

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traveling in Europe at the time of her father's death], and for her, indeed, my compassion is great, strengthened as it is by my late experience, and constant apprehension of a similar affliction,—I mean my mother's death, and the dread of hearing, from across this terrible barrier, that I have lost my father. I pity her more than I can express; but trust that she will find strength adequate to her need.

Give my kindest love to your wife. I rejoice in her safety for your sake and that of her children, more even than for her own; for it always seems well to me with those who have gone to rest, but her loss would have been terrible for you, and her girl has yet to furnish her some work, and some compensation....

If Anne is with you, remember me very kindly to her, and

Believe me ever most truly yours,

F. A. B.

[The little daughter referred to in the above letter became Mrs. Charles Norton, one of the loveliest and most charming of young American women, snatched by an untimely death from the midst of an adoring family and friends.]

MRS.
CHARLES
NORTON.

PHILADELPHIA, Friday, December 14th, 1839.

DEAREST HARRIET,

... It is perhaps well for you that this letter has suffered an interruption here, as had this not been the case you might have been edified with a yet further "complaint." ...

We have shut up our house in the country, and are at present staying in Philadelphia, at my brother-in-law's; but we are expecting every day to start for the plantation in Georgia, where I hope we are to find what is yet lacking to us in health and strength.

I look forward with some dismay now to this expedition, in the middle of winter, with two young children, traveling by not very safe railroads and perhaps less safe steamboats, through that half-savage country, and along that coast only some months ago the scene of fearful shipwreck.... I have already written you word of our last residence there, of the small island in the Altamaha and below its level—the waters being only kept out by dykes, which protect the rice-marshes, of which the plantation is composed, from being submerged. The sole inhabitants, you know, are the negroes, who cultivate the place, and the overseer who manages them.... As early as March the heat becomes intense, and by the beginning of April it is no longer safe for white people to remain there, owing to the miasma which exhales from the rice-fields....

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We shall find, no doubt, our former animal friends, from the fleas up to the alligators: the first, swarming in the filthy negroes' huts; the last, expatiating in the muddy waters of the Altamaha. I trust they will none of them have forgotten us. Did I tell you before of those charming creatures, the moccasin snakes, which, I have just been informed, abound in every part of the southern plantations? Rattlesnakes I know by sight: but the moccasin creature, though I may have seen him, I do not feel acquainted, or at any rate familiar, with. Our nearest civilized town, you know, is Savannah, and that is sixty miles off. I cannot say that the expedition is in any way charming to me, but the alternative is remaining alone here; and, as it is possible to live on the plantation with the children, I am going. Margery, of course, comes with me....

Did I tell you, my dear Irishwoman, that we had no *potatoes* on the plantation, and that Indian meal holds the place of wheaten flour, bread baked of the latter being utterly unknown?... Do not be surprised if I dwell upon these small items of privation, even now that I am about to go among those people the amelioration of whose condition I have considered as one of my special duties. With regard to this, however, I have, alas! no longer the faintest shadow of hope....

Yours most truly,

F. A. B.

DEAREST HARRIET,

My last to you was dated the fourteenth of December, and it is now the tenth of January, a whole month; and you and Dorothy are, I presume, sundered, instead of together, and surrounded with ice and snow, and all wintry influences, instead of those gentle southern ones in which you had imagined you would pass the dismal season.

I can fancy Ardgillan comfortably poetical (if that is not a contradiction in terms) at this time of year, with its warm, bright, cheerful drawing-room looking out on the gloomy sea. But perhaps you are none of you there?—perhaps you are in Dublin?—on Mr. Taylor's new estate?—or where—where, dear Harriet—where are you? How sad it seems to wander thus in thought after those we love, and conjecture of their whereabouts almost as vaguely as of the dwelling of the dead!...

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I am annoyed by the interruption which all this ice and snow causes in my daily rides. My horse is rough-shod, and I persist in going out on him two or three times a week, but not without some peril, and severe inconvenience from the cold, which not only cuts my face to pieces, but chaps my skin from head to foot, through my riding-dress and all my warm under-clothing. I do not much regret our prolonged sojourn in the North, on my children's account, who, being both hearty and active creatures, thrive better in this bracing climate than in the relaxing temperature of the South....

Dear Harriet, I have nothing to tell you; my life externally is *nothing*; and who can tell the inward history of their bosom—that internal life, which is often so strangely unlike the other? Suppose I inform you that I have just come home from a ride of an hour and a half; that I went out of the city by Broad Street, and returned by Islington Lane and the Ridge Road—how much the wiser will you be? that the roads were frozen as hard as iron, and here and there so sheeted with ice that I had great difficulty in preventing my horse from slipping and falling down with me, and, being quite alone, without even a servant, I wondered what *I* should do if *he* did. I have a capital horse, whom I have christened Forester, after the hero of my play, and who grins with delight, like a dog, when I talk to him and pat him. He is a bright bay, with black legs and mane, tall and large, and built like a hunter, with high courage and good temper. I have had him four years, and do not like to think what would become of me if anything were to happen to him. It would be necessary that I should commit suicide, for his fellow is not to be found in "these United States." Dearest Harriet, we hope to come over to England next September; and if your sister will invite me, I will come and see you some time before I re-cross the Atlantic. I am very anxious about my father, and still more anxious about my sister, and feel heart-weary for the sight of some of my own people, places, and things; and so. Fate prospering, to speak heathen, I shall go *home* once more in the autumn of this present 1840: till when, dearest Harriet, God bless you! and after then, and always,

FORESTER.

I am ever your affectionate,

F. A. B.

[My dear horse, having been sold to a livery-stable keeper, I repurchased him by the publication of a small volume of poems, which thus proved themselves to *me* excellent verses. The gallant animal broke his hip-joint by slipping in a striding gallop over some wet planks, and I had to have him shot. His face—I mean the anguish in it after the accident—is among the tragical visions in my memory.]

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PHILADELPHIA, February 9th, 1840.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

... You ask me if I have read your book on Canada. With infinite interest and pleasure, and great sympathy and admiration, and much gratitude for the vindication of women's capabilities, both physical and mental, which all your books (but this perhaps more than all the others) furnish.

It has been, like all your previous works, extremely popular here; and if you have received no remuneration for it, you are not justly dealt by, as I am sure its sale has been very considerable, and very profitable. [Mrs. Jameson was, undoubtedly, one of the

greatest sufferers by the want of an author's copyright in America: her works were all republished there; and her laborious literary career, her careful research and painstaking industry, together with her restricted means and the many claims upon them, made it a peculiar hardship, in her case, to be deprived of the just reward of the toil by which she gave pleasure and instruction to so many readers in America, as well as in her own country.] Your latest publication, "Social Life in Germany," I have not seen, but have read numerous extracts from it, in the American literary periodicals.

You ask me if you can "do anything" about my play? I thought I must have told you of my offering it to Macready, who civilly declined having anything to do with it. Circumstances induced me to destroy my own copy of it: the one Macready had is in Harriet's custody, another copy I have given to Elizabeth Sedgwick, and I now neither know nor care anything more about it. Once upon a time I wrote it, and that is quite enough to have had to do with it. Prescott, the historian of Ferdinand and Isabella, is urgent with me to let him have it published in Boston; perhaps hereafter, if I should want a penny, and be able to turn an honest one by so doing, I may.

It is odd that I have not the remotest recollection of reading any of that play to you. You have mentioned it several times to me, and I have never been able to recall to my mind, either when I read it to you, or what portion of it I inflicted upon you. You were lucky, and I wonder that I let you off with a *portion* of it; for, for nearly a year after I finished it, I was in such ecstasies with my own performance, that I martyred every soul that had a grain of regard for me, with its perusal....

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J— B— and his brother have just started for Georgia, leaving his wife and myself in forlorn widowhood, which, (the providence of railroads and steamboats allowing) is not to last more than three months. I have been staying nearly three months in their house in town, expecting every day to depart for the plantation; but we have procrastinated to such good effect that the Chesapeake Bay is now unnavigable, being choked up with ice, and the other route involving seventy miles of night traveling *on the worst road in the United States* (think what that means!), it has been judged expedient that the children and myself should remain behind. I am about, therefore, to return with them to the Farm, where I shall pass the remainder of the winter,—how, think you? Why, reading Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," which I have never read yet, and which I now intend to study with classical atlas, Bayle's dictionary, the Encyclopædia, and all sorts of "aids to beginners." How quiet I shall be! I think perhaps I may die some day, without so much as being aware of it; and if so, beg to record myself in good season, before that imperceptible event,

Yours very truly,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, February 16th, 1840.

I have just been looking over a letter of yours, dearest Harriet, as old as the 19th of last September, describing your passage over the Splügen. About four days ago I was looking over some engravings of the passes of the Alps, in a work called "Switzerland Illustrated," by Bartlett, and lingered over those attempts of human art with the longing I have for those lands, which I always had, which has never died away entirely, but seems now reviving again in some of its earliest strength: I can compare it to nothing but the desire of thirst for water, and I must master it as I may, for of those mountain-streams I fear I never shall drink, or look upon their beauty, but in the study of my imagination.

In the hill-country of Berkshire, Massachusetts, where I generally spend some part of the summer among my friends the Sedgwicks, there is a line of scenery, forming part of the Green Mountain range, which runs up into the State of Vermont, and there becomes a noble brotherhood of mountains, though in the vicinity of Stockbridge and Lenox, where I summer, but few of them deserve a more exalted title than hill. They are clothed with a various forest of oak, beech, chestnut, maple, and fir; and down their sides run wild streams, and in the valleys between them lie exquisite lakes. Upon the whole, it is the most picturesque scenery I have ever seen; particularly in the neighborhood of a small town called Salisbury, thirty miles from Lenox. This is situated in a plain

SCENERY IN
AMERICA.

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surrounded by mountains, and upon the same level in its near neighborhood lie four beautiful small lakes; close above this valley rises Mount Washington, or, as some Swiss charcoal-burners, who have emigrated thither, have christened it, Mount Rhigi.

In a recess of this mountain lies a deep ravine and waterfall; and a precipice, where an arch of rock overhangs a basin, where, many hundred feet below, the water boils in a mad cauldron, and then plunges away, by leaps of forty, twenty, and twelve feet, with the intermediate runs necessary for such jumps, through a deep chasm in the rocks, to a narrow valley, the whole character of which, I suppose, may represent Swiss scenery in *very small*.

A week ago J— B— and — left Philadelphia for the South; and yesterday I received a letter giving a most deplorable account of their progress, if progress it could be called, which consisted in going *nine miles in four hours*, and then returning to Washington, whence they had started, the road being found utterly impassable. Streams swollen with the winter snows and spring rains, with their bridges all broken up by the ice or swept away by the water, intersect these delightful ways; and one of these, which could not admit of fording, turned them back, to try their fate in a steamboat, through the ice with which the Chesapeake is blocked up. This dismal account has in some measure reconciled me to having been left behind with the children; they have neither of them been as well as usual this winter, and the season is now so far advanced, our intended departure being delayed from day to day for three months, that, besides encountering a severe and perilous journey, we should have arrived in Georgia to find the weather almost oppressively hot, and, if we did wisely, to return again, at the end of a fortnight, to the North.

I have come back to Butler Place with the bairns, and have resumed the monotonous tenor of my life, which this temporary residence in town had interrupted, not altogether agreeably; and here I shall pass the rest of the winter, teaching S— to read, and sliding through my days in a state of external quietude, which is not always as nearly allied to content as it might seem to (*ought to*) be....

When the children's bed-time comes, and their little feet and voices are still, the spirit of the house seems to have fallen asleep. I send my servants to bed, for nobody here keeps late hours (ten o'clock being considered late), and, in spite of assiduous practicing, reading, and answering of letters, my evenings are sad in their absolute solitude, and I am glad when ten o'clock comes, the hour for my retiring, which I could often find in my heart to anticipate....

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I have taken vehemently to worsted-work this winter, and, *instead of a novel or two*, am going to read Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," which I have never read, and by means of Bayle, classical atlas, and the Encyclopædia, I mean to make a regular school-room business of it.

Good-bye, dear. Events are so lacking in my present existence, that I am longing for the spring as I never did before—for the sight of leaves and flowers, and the song of birds, and the daily development of the great natural pageant of the year. I am grateful to God for nothing more than the abundant beauty with which He has adorned His creation. The pleasure I derive from its contemplation has survived many others, and should I live long, will, I think, outlive all that I am now capable of....

Ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, February 17th, 1840.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

... I believe too implicitly in your interest in me and mine, ever to have *nothing* to say to you; but my sayings will be rather egotistical, for the monotony of my life affords me few interests but those which centre in my family, the head of which left me ten days ago, with his brother, for their southern estate. I have since had a letter, which, as it affords an accurate picture of winter traveling in this country, would, I flatter myself, make your sympathetic hair stand on end. Listen. On Sunday morning, before day, they set out, two post-coaches, with four horses, each carrying eight passengers. They got to Alexandria,

DANGEROUS
JOURNEY.

which is close to Washington, whence they started without difficulty, stopped a short time to gird up their loins and take breath, and at seven o'clock set off. It rained hard; the road was deep with mud, and very bad; several times the passengers were obliged to get out of the coach and walk through the rain and mud, the horses being unable to drag the load through such depths of mire. They floundered on, wading through mud and fording streams, until eleven o'clock, when they stopped to breakfast, having come but *eight miles* in *four hours*. They consulted whether to go on or turn back: the majority ruled to go on; so after breakfast they again took the road, but had proceeded but one mile when it became utterly impassable—the thaw and rain had so swelled a stream that barred the way that it was too deep to ford; and when it was quite apparent that they must either turn back or be drowned, they reluctantly adopted the former course, and got back to Washington late in the evening, having passed nearly all day in going *nine miles*. I think you will agree with me, my dear Lady Dacre, that my children and myself were well out of that party of pleasure; though the very day before the party set off it was still uncertain whether we should not accompany them.

The contrary having been determined, I am now very quietly spending the winter with my chickens at the Farm.... An imaginative nature makes, it is true, happiness as well as unhappiness for itself, but finds inevitable ready made disappointment in the mere realities of life.... I make no excuse for talking "nursery" to you, my dear Lady Dacre. These are my dearest occupations; indeed, I might say, my only ones.

Have you looked into Marryatt's books on this country? They are full of funny stories, some of them true stories enough, and some, little imitation Yankee stories of the captain's own.

Do explain to me what Sydney Smith means by disclaiming Peter Plymley's letters as he does? Surely he *did* write them.

This very youthful nation of the United States is "carrying on," to use their own favorite phrase, in a most unprecedented manner. Their mercantile and financial experiments have been the dearest of their kind certainly; and the confusion, embarrassment, and difficulty, in consequence of these experiments, are universal. Money is scarce, credit is scarcer, but, nevertheless, they will not lay the lesson to heart. The natural resources of the country are so prodigious, its wealth so enormous, so inexhaustible, that it will be presently up and on its feet again running faster than ever to the next stumbling-post. *Moral* bankruptcy is what they have to fear, much more than failure of material riches. It is a strange country, and a strange people; and though I have dear and good friends among them, I still feel a stranger here, and fear I shall continue to do so until I die, which God grant I may do at home! *i.e.*, in England.

Give my kindest remembrance to Lord Dacre. We hope to be in England in September, and I shall come and see you as soon as ever I can.

Believe me ever, my dear Lady Dacre,
Yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, March 1st, 1840.

Thank you, my dearest Harriet, for your extract from my sister's letter to you.... The strongest of us are insufficient to ourselves in this life, and if we will not stretch out our hands for help to our fellows, who, for the most part, are indeed broken reeds and quite as often pierce as support us, we needs must at last stretch them out to God; and doubtless these occasions, bitter as they may seem, should be accounted blest, which make the poor proud human soul discover its own weakness and God's all-sufficiency....

My winter—or rather, what remains of it—is like to pass in uninterrupted quiet and solitude; and you will probably have the satisfaction of receiving many *short* letters from me, for I know not where I shall find the material for long ones. To be sure, S—'s sayings and F—'s looks might furnish me with something to say, but I have a dread of beginning to talk about my children, for fear I should never leave off, for that is apt to be a "story without an end."

I hear they are going to bestow upon my father, on his return to England, a silver vase, valued at several hundred pounds. I am base-minded, dear Harriet, grovelling, and sordid; and were I he, would rather have a shilling's worth of honor, and the rest of the vase in hard cash: but he has lived his life upon this sort of thing, and I think with great pleasure of the great pleasure it will give him. I am very well, and always most affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, March 12th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

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It is only a few days since I received your letter with the news of Mr. F——'s attack, from which it is but natural to apprehend that he may not recover.... The combination of the loss of one's father, and of the home of one's whole life, is indeed a severe trial; though in this case, the one depending on the other, and Mr. F——'s age being so advanced, Emily with her steadfast mind has probably contemplated the possibility of this event, and prepared herself for it, as much as preparation may be made against affliction, which, however long looked for, when it comes always seems to bring with it some unforeseen element of harsh surprise. We never can imagine what will happen to us, precisely as it *does* happen to us; and overlook in anticipation, not only minute mitigations, but small stings of aggravation, quite incalculable till they are experienced.... I could cry to think that I shall never again see the flowerbeds and walks and shrubberies of Bannisters. I think there is something predominantly material in my nature, for the sights and sounds of outward things have always been my chiefest source of pleasure; and as I grow older this in nowise alters; so little so, that gathering the first violets of the spring the other morning, it seemed to me that they were things to *love* almost more than creatures of my own human kind. I do not believe I am a normal human being; and at my death, only *half a soul* will pass into a spiritual existence, the other half will go and mingle with the winds that blow, and the trees that grow, and the waters that flow, in this world of material elements....

Do I remember Widmore, you ask me. Yes, truly.... I remember the gay colors of the flowerbeds, and the fine picturesque trees in the garden, and the shady quietness of the ground-floor rooms....

You ask me how I have replaced Margery. Why, in many respects, if indeed not in all, very indifferently; but I could not help myself. Her leaving me was a matter of positive necessity, and some things tend to reconcile me to her loss. I believe she would have made S—— a Catholic. The child's imagination had certainly received a very strong impression from her; and soon after her departure, as I was hearing S—— her prayers, she begged me to let her repeat that prayer to "the blessed Virgin," which her nurse had taught her. I consider this a direct breach of faith on the part of Margery, who had once before undertaken similar instructions in spite of distinct directions to interfere in no way with the child's religious training.

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The proselytizing spirit of her religion was, I suppose, stronger than her conscience, or rather, was the predominant element in it, as it is in all very devout Catholics; and the opportunity of impressing my little girl with what she considered vital truth, not to be neglected; and upon this ground alone I am satisfied that it is better she should have left me, for though it would not mortally grieve me if hereafter my child were conscientiously to embrace Romanism, I have no desire that she should be educated in what I consider erroneous views upon the most momentous of all subjects.

I have been more than once assured, on good authority, that it is by no means an infrequent practice of the Roman Catholic Irish women employed as nurses in American families, to carry their employers' babies to their own churches and have them baptized, of course without consent or even knowledge of their parents. The secret baptism is duly registered, and the child thus smuggled into the pope's fold, never, if possible, entirely lost sight of by the priest who administered the regenerating sacrament to it. The saving of souls is an irresistible motive, especially when the saving of one's own is much facilitated by the process.

The woman I have in Margery's place is an Irish Protestant, a very good and conscientious girl, but most wofully ignorant, and one who murders our luckless mother-tongue after a fashion that almost maddens me. However, as with some cultivation, education, reading, reflection, and that desire to do what is best that a mother alone can feel for her own child, I cannot but be conscious of my own inability in all points to discharge this great duty, the inability of my nursery-maid does not astonish or dismay me. The remedy for the nurse's deficiencies must be in *me*, and the remedy for mine in God, to whose guidance I commit myself and my darlings.... Margery was very anxious to remain with me as my maid; but we have reduced our establishment, and I have no longer any maid of my own, therefore I could not keep her....

With regard to attempting to make "reason the guide of your child's actions," that, of course, must be a very gradual process, and may, in my opinion, be tried too early. Obedience is the first virtue of which a young child is capable, the first duty it can perform; and the authority of a parent is, I think, the first impression it should receive,—a strictly reasonable and just claim, inasmuch as, furnishing my child with all its means of existence, as well as all its amusements and enjoyments, regard for my requests is the proper and only return it can make in the absence of sufficient judgment, to decide upon their propriety, and the motives by which they are dictated.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet.

I am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

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BUTLER PLACE, March 16th, 1840.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

It was with infinite pain that I received your last letter [a very unfavorable report, almost a sentence of death, had been pronounced by the physicians upon my friend's dearest friend, Miss Dorothy Wilson], and yet I know not, except your sorrow, what there is so deplorable in the fact that Dorothy, who is one of the living best prepared for death, should have received a summons, which on first reading of it shocked me so terribly.

We calculate most blindly, for the most part, in what form the call to "change our life" may be least unwelcome; but to one whose eyes have long been steadily fixed upon that event, I do not believe the manner of their death signifies much.

Pain, our poor human bodies shrink from; and yet it has been endured, almost as if unfelt, not only in the triumphant death of the mob-hunted martyr, but in the still, lonely, and, by all but God, unseen agony of the poor and humble Christian, in those numerous cases where persecution indeed was not, but the sorrowful trial of the neglect and careless indifference of their fellow-beings, the total absence of all sympathy—a heavy desolation whether in life or death.

I have just lost a friend, Dr. Follen, a man to whose character no words of mine could do justice. He has been publicly mourned from more than one Christian pulpit; and Dr. Channing, in a discourse after his death, has spoken of him as one whom "many thought the most perfect man they ever knew." Among those many I was one. I have never seen any one whom I revered, loved, and admired more than I did Dr. Follen. He perished, with above a hundred others, in a burning steam-boat, on the Long Island Sound; at night, and in mid-winter, the freezing waters affording no chance of escape to the boldest swimmer or the most tenacious clinger to existence. He perished in the very flower of vigorous manhood, cut off in the midst of excellent usefulness, separated, *for the first time*, from a most dearly loved wife and child, who were prevented from accompanying him by sickness. In a scene of indescribable terror, confusion, and dismay, that noble and good man closed his life; and all who have spoken of him have said, "Could one have seen his countenance, doubtless it was to the last the mirror of his serene and steadfast spirit;" and for myself, after the first shock of hearing of that awful calamity, I could only think it mattered not how or where that man met his death. He was always near to God, and who can doubt that, in that scene of apparent horror and despair, God was very near to him?

DR.
FOLLEN.

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Even so, my dearest Harriet, do I now think of the impending fate of Dorothy; but oh, the difference between the sudden catastrophe in the one case, and the foreknowledge granted in the other! Time, whose awful uses our blind security so habitually forgets, is granted to her, with its inestimable value marked on it by the finger of death, undimmed by the busy hands of earthly pursuits and interests; she has, and will have, her dearest friends and lovers about her to the very end; and I know of no prayer that I should frame for her, but exemption from acute pain. For you, my dearest Harriet, if pain and woe and suffering are appointed you, it is to some good purpose, and you may make it answer its best ends.

These seem almost cold-hearted words, and yet God knows from how warm a heart, full of love and aching with sympathy, I write them! But sorrow is His angel, His minister, His messenger who does His will, waiting upon our souls with blessed influences. My only consolation, in thinking upon your affliction, is to remember that all events are ordered by our Father, and to reflect, as I often do—

I had written thus far, dearest Harriet, when a miserable letter from Georgia came to interrupt me. How earnestly, in the midst of the tears through which I read it, I had to recall those very thoughts, in my own behalf, which I was just urging upon you, you can imagine....

We may not choose our own discipline; but happy are they who are called to suffer themselves, rather than to see those they love do so!...

My head aches, and my eyes ache, and my heart aches, and I cannot muster courage to write any more. God bless you, my dearest Harriet. Remember me most affectionately to dear Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,

F. A. B.

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[Dr. Charles Follen, known in his own country as Carl Follenius, became an exile from it for the sake of his political convictions, which in his youth he had advocated with a passionate fervor that made him, even in his college days, obnoxious to its governing authorities. He wrote some fine spirited Volkslieder that the students approved of more than the masters; and was so conspicuous in the vanguard of liberal opinion, that the Vaterland became an unwholesome residence for him, and he emigrated to America, where all his aspirations towards enlightened freedom found "elbow-room."

He became an ordained Unitarian preacher; and it was a striking tribute to his spirit of humane tolerance as well as to his eloquent advocacy of his own high spiritual faith, that he was once earnestly and respectfully solicited to give a series of discourses upon Christianity, to a society of intelligent men who professed themselves dis-believers in it (atheists, materialists, for aught I know), inasmuch as from him they felt sure of a powerful, clear, and earnest exposition of his own opinions, unalloyed by uttered or implied condemnation of them for differing from him. I do not know whether Dr. Follen complied with this petition, but I remember his saying how much he had been touched by it, and how glad he should be to address such a body of mis- or dis-believers. He was a man of remarkable physical vigor, and excelled in all feats of strength and activity, having, when first he came to Boston, opened a gymnasium for the training of the young Harvard scholars in such exercises. He had the sensibility and gentleness of a woman, the imagination of a poet, and the courage of a hero; a genial kindly sense of humor, and buoyant elastic spirit of joyousness, that made him, with his fine intellectual and moral qualities, an incomparable friend and teacher to the young, for whose rejoicing vitality he had the sympathy of fellowship as well as the indulgence of mature age, and whose enthusiasm he naturally excited to the highest degree.

His countenance was the reflection of his noble nature. My intercourse with him influenced my life while it lasted, and long after his death the thought of what would have been approved or condemned by him affected my actions.

Many years after his death, I was speaking of him to Wæleker, the Nestor of

German professors, the most learned of German philologists, historians, archæologists, and antiquarians, and he broke out into enthusiastic praise of Follen, who had been his pupil at Jena, and to whose mental and moral worth he bore, with deep emotion, a glowing testimony.]

BUTLER PLACE, March 23rd, 1840.

I have just learned, dearest Harriet, that the Censorship [office of licenser of plays] has been transferred from my father to my brother John, which I am very glad to hear, as I imagine, though I do not know it, that the death of Mr. Beaumont must have put an end to the existence of the *British and Foreign Review*, for which he employed my brother as editor.

If the salary of licenser is an addition to the income attached to his editorship of the *Review*, my brother will be placed in comfortable circumstances; and I hope this may prove to be the case—though ladies are not apt to be so in love with abstract political principles as to risk certain thousands every year merely to promote their quarterly illustration in a *Review*, and I shall not be at all surprised to learn that Mrs. Beaumont declines doing so any longer.

[Mrs. Wentworth Beaumont, mother of my brother John's friend, must have been a woman of very decided political opinions, and very liberal views of the value of her convictions—in hard cash. Left the widowed mistress of a princely estate in Yorkshire, on the occasion when the most passionate contest recorded in modern electioneering made it doubtful whether the Government candidate or the one whose politics were more in accordance with her own would be returned to Parliament, she, then a very old lady, drove in her travelling-carriage with four horses to Downing Street, and demanding to see the Prime Minister, with whom she was well acquainted, accosted him thus: "Well, my lord, are you quite determined to make your man stand for *our* seat?" "Yes, Mrs. Beaumont, I think quite determined." "Very well," replied the lady; "I am on my way down to Yorkshire, with eighty thousand pounds in the carriage for my man. Try and do better than that."

I am afraid the *pros* and *cons* for Woman's Suffrage would alike have thought that very expensive female partisan politician hardly to be trusted with the franchise. Lord Dacre, who told me that anecdote, told me also that on one occasion forty thousand pounds, to his knowledge, had been spent by Government on a contested election—I think he said at Norwich.] ...

WOMAN'S
SUFFRAGE.

The longer I live, the less I think of the importance of any or all outward circumstances, and the more important I think the original powers and dispositions of people submitted to their influence. God has permitted no situation to be exempt from trial and temptation, and few, if any, to be entirely exempt from good influences and opportunities for using them. The tumult of the inward creature may exist in the midst of the calmest outward daily life, and the peace which passeth understanding subsist in the turmoil of the most adverse circumstances.... Our desires tending towards particular objects, we naturally seek the position most favorable for obtaining them; and, stand where we will, we are still, if we so choose, on the heavenward road. If we know how barely responsible for what they are many human beings necessarily must be, how much better does God know it! With many persons, whose position we regret and think unfortunate for their character, we might have to go far back, and retrace in the awful influence of inheritance the source of the evils we deplore in them. We need have much faith in the future to look hopefully at the present, and perfect faith in the mercy of our Father in heaven, who alone knows how much or how little of His blessed light has reached every soul of us through precept and example....

You ask me of Margery's successor: she is an honest, conscientious, and most ignorant Irish Protestant. You cannot conceive of what materials our households are composed here. The Americans, whose superior intelligence and education make them by far the most desirable servants we could have, detest the condition of domestic service so

utterly, that it is next to impossible to procure them, and absolutely impossible to retain them above a year. The lowest order of Irish are the only persons that can be obtained. They offer themselves, and are accepted of hard necessity, indiscriminately, for any situation in a house, from that of lady's-maid to that of cook; and, indeed, they are equally unfit for all, having probably never seen so much as the inside of a decent house till they came to this country. To illustrate—my housemaid is the sister of my present nursery-maid, and on the occasion of the latter taking her holiday in town, the other had the temporary charge of the children, and, when first she undertook it, had to be duly enlightened as to the toilet purposes of a wash-hand basin, a sponge, and a toothbrush, not one of which had she apparently been familiar with before; and this would have been the case with a large proportion of the Irish girls who present themselves here to be engaged as our servants.

Our household has been reduced for some time past, and I have no maid of my own; and when the nurse is in town I am obliged to forego the usual decency of changing my dress for dinner, from the utter incapacity of my housemaid to fasten it upon my back. Of course, except tolerably faithful washing, dressing, and bodily care, I can expect nothing for my children from my present nurse. She is a very good and pious girl, and though her language is nothing short of heathen Greek, her sentiments are very much those of a good Christian. This same service is a source of considerable daily tribulations, and I wish I only improved all my opportunities of practising patience and forbearance....

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, March 25th, 1840.

MY DEAR T—,

I have been reading with infinite interest the case of the *Amistad*; but understand, from Mrs. Charles Sedgwick, that there is to be an appeal upon the matter. As, however, the result will, I presume, be the same, the more publicity the affair obtains, the more it and all kindred subjects are discussed, spoken of, thought on, and written about, the better for us unfortunate slaveholders.

I am very much obliged to you for sending me that article on Mr. Jay's book. You know how earnestly I look to every sign of the approaching termination of this national disgrace and individual misfortune; and when men of ability and character conscientiously raise their voices against it, who can be so faint-hearted as not to have faith in its ultimate downfall?

MR. JAY.

Your very name pledges you in some sort to this cause, and, among your other important duties, let me (who am now involuntarily implicated in this terrible abuse) beg you to remember that this one is an inheritance; and for the sake of those, justly honored, who have bequeathed it to you, discharge it with the ability nature has so bountifully endowed you with, and you cannot fail to accomplish great good.

In reading your article, I was much reminded of Legget, whose place, it seems to me, there is none but you to fill.

I have just been interrupted by a letter from Elizabeth, confirming the news of your sister's return from Europe. I congratulate you heartily upon the termination of your anxieties about her. Remember me most kindly to her, and to your mother, if my message can be made acceptable to her in her present affliction, and believe me

Ever yours most truly,

F. A. B.

[The *Amistad* was a low raking schooner, conveying between fifty and sixty negroes, fresh from Africa, from Havannah to Guamapah, Port Principe, to the plantation of one of the passengers. The captain and three of the crew were murdered by the negroes. Two planters were spared to navigate the vessel back to Africa. Forced to steer east all day, these white men steered west and north all night; and after two months, coming near New London, the schooner was

captured by the United States schooner *Washington*, and carried into port, where a trial was held by the Circuit Court at Hertford, transferred to the District Court, and sent by appeal to the United States Supreme Court. The District Court decreed that one man, not of the recent importation, should, by the treaty of 1795 with Spain, be restored to his master; the rest, delivered to the President of the United States, to be by him transported to their homes in Africa.

Before the case could come before the United States Supreme Court, the President (Mr. Van Buren), upon the requisition of the Spanish minister, had the negroes conveyed, by the United States schooner *Grampus*, back to Havannah and to slavery, under the treaty of 1795.

The case created an immense excitement among the friends and foes of slavery. The point made by the counsel for the negroes being that they were not slaves, but free Africans, freshly brought to Cuba, contrary to the latest enacted laws of Spain. The schooner *Amistad* started on her voyage to Africa in June, 1839, reached New London in August, and was sent back in January, 1840.]

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BUTLER PLACE, April 5th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I have received both your letters concerning Dorothy's health. The one which you sent by the *British Queen* came before one you previously wrote me from Liverpool, and destroyed all the pleasure I should have received from the cheerful spirit in which the latter was written.

I was reading the other evening a sermon of Dr. Channing's, suggested by the miserable destruction of a steamboat with the loss of upwards of a hundred lives; among them, one precious to all who knew him perished, a man who, I think, had few equals, and to whose uncommon character all who ever knew him bear witness.

The fate of so excellent a human being, cut off in the flower of his age, in the midst of a career of uncommon worth and usefulness, inspired Dr. Channing, who was his dear friend, with one of the finest discourses in which Christian faith ever "justified the ways of God to Man."

In reading that eloquent sermon, so full of hope, of trust, of resignation, and rational acknowledgment of the great purposes of sorrow, my thoughts turned to you, dearest Harriet, and dwelt upon your present trial, and on the impending loss of your dear friend. I have not the sermon by me, or I could scarce resist transcribing passages from it; but if you can procure it, do. It was written on the occasion of the burning of the steamboat *Lexington*, and in memory of Dr. Charles Follen.

One of the views that impressed me most, of those urged by Channing, was that sorrow—however considered by us, individually, as a shocking accident,—in God's providence, was a large part of the appointed experience of existence: no blot, no jar, no sudden violent visitation of wrath; but part of the light, and harmony, and order, of our spiritual education; an essential and invaluable portion of our experience, of infinite importance in our moral training. To all it is decreed to suffer; through our bodies, through our minds, through our affections, through the noblest as well as the lowest of our attributes of being. This then, he argues, which enters so largely into the existence of every living soul, should never be regarded with an eye of terror, as an appalling liability or a fearful unaccountable disturbance in the course of our lives.

SORROW,
AN
APPOINTED
EXPERIENCE.

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I suppose it is the rarefied air our spirits breathe on great heights of achievement; as vital to our moral nature as the pure mountain element, which stimulates our lungs, is to our physical being. In sorrow, faithfully borne, the glory and the blessing of holiness become hourly more apparent to us; and it must be good for us to suffer, since our dear Father lays suffering upon us. If we believe one word of what we daily repeat, and profess to believe, of His mercy and goodness, we must needs believe that the pain and grief which enter so largely into His government of and provision for us are all part of His goodness and mercy.... I pray that you, and I, and all, may learn more and more to accept His will, even as His Son, our perfect pattern, accepted it....

J—— B—— has already returned home from the South, weary of the heat, and the oppressive *smell of the orange flowers* on Butler's Island....

The tranquillity of my outward circumstances has its counterweight in the excitability of my nature. I think upon the whole, the task and load of life is very equal, its labors and its burdens very equal: they only have real sorrow who make it for themselves, in their own hearts, by their own faults; and they only have real joy who make and keep it there by their own effort....

Katharine Sedgwick writes in great disappointment at your not being in Italy this winter, and so does her niece, my dear little Kate. Those are loving hearts, and most good Christians; they have been like sisters to me in this strange land; I am gratefully attached to them, and long for their return. God bless you, dear. Give my affectionate remembrance to Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, April 30th, 1840.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

[Pg 189] Of course I have begun to die already: which I believe people do as soon as they reach maturity; at any rate, the process begins, I am sure, much earlier, and is much more gradual and uninterrupted, than we suppose or are aware of. Most persons, I think, begin to die at about thirty; some take a longer, and some a shorter time in becoming quite entirely dead, but after that age I do not believe anybody is quite entirely alive.... Still, though somewhat dead (as I have most reason to know), to the eyes of most people I am even now an uncommonly lively woman; and while my soul is at peace, and my spirits cheerful, I am not myself painfully conscious that I am dying.... The treasure of health was mine in perfection, almost for five and twenty years, and I do not see that I should have any right to complain that I no longer possess it as fully as I once did....

You and I have changed places curiously enough, since first we began to hold arguments together; and it seems as strange that you should disparage reason to me, as the chief instrument of education, as that I should be upholding it against your disparagement. The longer I live, the more convinced my *reason* is of the goodness and wisdom of God; and from what my *reason* can perceive of these attributes of our Father my *faith* derives the surest foundation on which to build perfect trust and confidence, where my *reason* can no longer discern the meaning of my existence, the exact purpose of its several events, and significance of its circumstances. Entire faith in God seems to me entirely reasonable; but, indeed, I have yet had no experience of any dispensations of Divine Providence which at all tried or shook my reason, or disturbed my trust in their unfailing righteousness.

Our reason, above all our other faculties, shows us how little we can know; and it is the very function of reason to perceive how finite, vague, and feeble all our conceptions of the Almighty must be; how utterly futile all our attempts to fathom His purposes, whose ways are assuredly not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts.

[Pg 190] The spring has come; the mysterious resurrection which with its annually recurring miracle adorns the earth, and makes the heavens above it bright; and even on this uninteresting place, the flush of rosy bloom down in the apple-orchard, the tender green halo above, the golden green atmosphere beneath the trees of the avenue, the smell of the blossoms, the songs of the birds, awaken impressions of delight; and while the senses rejoice, the soul worships. Tulips, and hyacinths, and lilacs, and monthly roses shake about in the soft wind, and scatter their colored petals like jewels among the young vivid verdure. Delicate shadows of delicate leaves lie drawn in quivering tracery on the smooth emerald grass. My garden is a source of pleasure and perpetual occupation to me. Here, where ornamental cultivation is so little attended to, my small improvements of our small pleasure-ground are repaid, not only by my own enjoyment, but by the admiring commendation of all who knew the place before we came to it; and as within the last two years I have planted upwards of two hundred trees, I begin to feel as if I had really done something in my generation. Good-bye, dear.

THE SPRING
RESURRECTION

BUTLER PLACE, June 7th, 1840.

Thank you, my dear Mrs. Jameson, for your letter of April 4th. It was interesting and amusing enough to have been written by one whose thoughts and feelings were far otherwise free and cheerful than yours could have been when you indited it. I lament the protraction of your father's illness very much, for your mother's sake, and all your sakes. A serious illness at his period of life is not a circumstance to cause surprise; but its long continuance is to be deprecated, no less for the sufferer than those whose health and strength, expended in anxious watching, can leave them but little fortitude to meet the result should it prove fatal. I hope to hear in your next that your mother is relieved from her present painful position, and that your own spirits are more cheerful.

I have not seen even as much as an extract from Leigh Hunt's play [I think called a "Legend of Florence," and founded upon the incident that gave its name to the Via della Morte in the fair city]; but I am very glad he has written one, and hope he will write others: certain elements of his genius are essentially those of an effective dramatist, and surely, if the public can swallow a play of —'s, it might be brought to taste one of Leigh Hunt's. I dislike everything that — ever wrote, and think he ought to have been a Frenchman. Can one say worse of a man who is not?...

You ask me if writing plays is not pleasanter and more profitable than reading Gibbon. Certainly, if one only has the mind to do the one instead of the other, which at present I have not.

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I have sometimes fancied it was my duty to work out such talent of that kind as was in me; but I have hitherto not felt at all sure that I had any such gift which, you know, would be necessary before I could determine what was my duty with regard to it. I never write anything but upon impulse—all my compositions are *impromptus*; and the species of atmosphere I live in is not favorable to that order of inspiration. The outward sameness of my life; its uniformity of color, level surface, and monotonous tone; its unvaried tenor, alike devoid of pleasurable and painful excitement; its wholesome abundance of daily recurring trivial occupations, and absence of any great or varied interests; its entire isolation from all literary and intellectual society, which might strike the fire from the sleepy stone—all these influences prevail against my writing.

I once thought the material lay within me, but it will probably moulder away for want of use; and as long as I am neither the worse woman, wife, nor mother for its neglect, I take it it matters very little, and there is no harm done. My serious interest in life is the care of my children, and my principal recreation is my garden; and though I formerly sometimes imagined I had faculties whose exercise might demand a wider sphere, the consciousness that I discharge very imperfectly the obligations of that which I occupy, ought to satisfy me that its homely duties and modest tasks are more than sufficient for my abilities; and though I am not satisfied with myself, I should be with my existence, since, such as it is, it furnishes me with more work than I do as it should be done.

From the interest you express in Fanny Ellsler, you will be glad to hear that her success here has been triumphant. I believe the great mass of people always recognize and acknowledge excellence when they see it, though their stupid or ignorant toleration of what is mediocre, or even bad, would seem to indicate the contrary.... The general mind of man is capable of perceiving the most excellent in all things, and prompt to seize it, too, when it meets with it. Even in morals it does so theoretically, however the difficulty of adhering to high standards may make the actions of most people conform but little to their best conceptions of right. The idea of perfection is recognized by the spirit of creatures capable of and destined for perfection in all things, whether great or small; and so (since this is *à propos* of opera dancing) Fanny Ellsler's performances have been appreciated here to a degree that would astonish those who forget that education, though it develops, does not create our finer perceptions, and, moreover, that the finest are commoner than is commonly believed. The possession is almost universal: the cultivation in *any* degree worth anything comparatively rare, and in a *high* degree very rare indeed everywhere; and here—well! it does not exist.

FANNY
ELLSLER.

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I hope we shall see you in England in the autumn; I am using every endeavor not to be sent over alone.... I cannot bear to go to England again a "widow bewitched."

I am ever yours most truly,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, June 8th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

It is not to you that I apologize for talking over-much about my children, but to myself... For what said the witty Frenchman of a man's love for wife and child? "*Ah! bien c'est de l'égoïsme à trois.*" ... I hope you will see my children, both them and me, in a very few months; for I think we are coming to England in September, and I shall surely not leave it without borrowing some of your company from you, let you be where you may....

I must go and dress for dinner, hence the brevity of this letter, which pray accept for "the soul of wit."

Did you ever see a humming-bird? Have they them in Italy? We have a honeysuckle hedge here, where the little jewels of creatures stuff themselves incessantly, early and late, sabbaths and week-days, flickering over the sweet bushes of fragrance, like the diamonds of modern fashion set on elastic wires, to make them quiver and increase their sparkle and brilliancy. I should like to have written some more to you.

I am ever your affectionate

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, June 28th, 1840.

MY DEAR T—,

Your discoveries in the private character of Sir Samuel Romilly are none to me. I have known those who knew him intimately. My brother was school and college mate of his sons, one of whom I know very well; and their father's character, in all its most endearing aspects, was familiar to me. I think I was once told (not by them, however, of course) that the melancholy induced by the loss of his wife had been the chief cause of his destroying himself, for he was devotedly and passionately attached to her.

We go every night to see Fanny Ellsler; only think what an extraordinary effort of dissipation for me, who hardly ever stir abroad of an evening, and who had almost as much forgotten the inside of a theatre as Falstaff had the inside of a church! My admiration for her grows rather than diminishes, though she is a better actress even than dancer, which I think speaks in favor of her intellect. Did you ever see Taglioni? Who invented and who suggested the expression the "poetry of motion"? It should have been *made* for her. Her dancing is like nothing but poetic inspiration, and seems as if she was composing while she executed it. I wonder if it is the ballet-master who devises all the steps of these great dancers,—of course, not the national dances, but the inconceivably lovely things that Taglioni does, or whether she orders her own steps, and (given a certain dramatic situation and a certain strain of music) floats or flies, or glides, or gyrates at her own will and pleasure. Did you ever see her in the "Sylphide"? What an exquisite pathetic dream of supernatural sentiment that was! Other dances are as graceful as possible; that woman was grace itself.

I was saying once to my friend, Frederick Rackeman, that Chopin's music made me think of Taglioni's dancing, to which he replied, to my great surprise, that Chopin had said that he had more than once received his inspiration from Taglioni's dancing; a curious instance of influence so strong as to be recognized by one who was perfectly unaware of it. If I remember rightly, Gibson, the sculptor, said that he owed many suggestions to the vigorous and graceful dancing of Cerito; but those, of course, were a suggestion of form to a creator of form, and not an inspiration of exquisite sound gathered from exquisite motion, as in the instance of Taglioni and Chopin.

Certain music suggests the waving of trees, as in the Notturmo in Mendelssohn's

SUGGESTIONS
OF MUSIC.

"Midsummer Night's Dream" and Schubert's exquisite *beckoning* song of the linden tree.

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Certainly dancers deserve to be well paid when one thinks of the mechanical labor, the daily hours of *battements* and *changements de pieds*, and turning, and twisting, and torturing of the limbs before this apparently spontaneous result of mere movement can be obtained.

Ellsler has great dramatic power. Her Tarentelle and Wylie are really finely tragical in parts; but then she had a first-rate *head* as well as foot training.

She is a wonderful artist; but there is something unutterably sad to me in the contemplation of such a career. The blending in most unnatural union of the elements of degradation and moral misery with such exquisite perceptions of beauty, grace, and refinement, produces the impression of a sort of monstrosity, a deformity of the whole higher nature, which fills one with poignant compassion and regret. Poor, fair, admired, despised, flattered, forlorn souls!...

Pray come and see us when you can, and

Believe me very truly yours,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, June 26th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

Mr. Combe and Cecilia spent the day with us on their way to New York, and I did rejoice to think her pilgrimage was over. She has gone through what her former habits of life must have made a severe experience in travelling in this country. Her affection for her husband, and her devotion to his views, are unbounded, and have helped her to submit to her trial with a cheerfulness and good humor worthy of all praise; for the luxurious comfort of her life in her mother's house was certainly a bad preparation for roughing it, as she has been doing for some months past, for the sake of the phrenologist and his phrenology.... I never knew any one more improved by the blessed discipline of happiness than she appears to be. I am afraid my incapacity to accept the whole of their system would always prevent our being as good friends as we might otherwise with opportunity become. Perhaps, however, as the opportunity is not likely to offer often, it does not much matter....

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Saunders, the miniature-painter, of London celebrity, has come out here to look at the pretty faces on this side of the water.... He told me that he had once executed to order a miniature of me, partly from seeing me on the stage, and partly from memory. I knew nothing whatever of this, and think it is one among the many nuisances of being a "public character," or what the American Minister's wife said her position had made her, "*Une femme publique*," that one's likeness may thus be stolen, and sold or bought by anybody who chooses to traffic in such gear.

I remember my mother telling me of a painful circumstance which had occurred to her from the same cause. A young officer of some distinction, who died in India, left among his effects a miniature of her; and she was disagreeably surprised by receiving from his mother a heartbroken appeal to her, saying that the fact of her son's being in possession of this portrait led her to hope that perhaps my mother might possess one of him, and entreating her, if such were the case, to permit her (his mother) to have a copy of it, as she had no likeness of her son. My mother was obliged to reply that she had no such portrait, and had never known or even heard the name of the gentleman who was in possession of hers....

How many things make one feel as if one's whole life was only a confused dream! Wouldn't it be odd to wake at the end, and find one had not lived at all? Many perhaps will wake at the end, and find it so indeed in one sense,—which brings us back to the more serious aspect of things....

I had some time ago a joint-stock letter from my brother John and his wife, informing me of the birth of their son. I do not think they mentioned who was to be its godmother; but I quite agree with Mrs. Kemble (my Uncle John's widow), as to the inexpediency of undertaking such a sponsorship for any one's child. If it means anything, it means

something so serious that I should shrink from such a responsibility; and if it means (as it generally does) nothing, I think it would be better omitted altogether. When I was at home I dissuaded my sister from standing godmother to their little girl; but I do not think any of them understood my motive for doing so....

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You ask me whether the specimens of Irish order, neatness, and intelligence which came over here to fill our domestic ranks are beyond training. Truly, training is, for the most part, so far beyond *them*, that it is no easy matter to simplify even the first rudiments of the science of civilization sufficiently to render them intelligible to these fair countrywomen of yours. Patience is a fine thing, and might accomplish something, perhaps; but there are insuperable bars to any hope of their progress in the high wages which they can all command at once, whether they ever saw the inside of a decent house before they came to this country or not; the abundance of situations; and the absence of everything like superior competition. The extraordinary comparative prosperity to which these poor ignorant girls are suddenly introduced on their arrival here, the high pay, the profusely plentiful living, the *equality* treatment, which must seem almost *quality* treatment to them, presently make them impertinent and unsteady; and as they can all command a new situation the instant that, for any cause, they leave the one they are in (unfit for the commonest situation in a decent household as they are), it is hardly worth their while, out of a mere abstract love of perfection, to labor at any very great improvement of their powers. A residence of some years in this country generally develops their intelligence into a sort of sharp-sighted calculating shrewdness, which they do not bring with them, but no way improves their own quick native wit and natural national humor. Of course there are exceptions; but the majority of them, after a short stay in America, contrive to combine their own least desirable race qualities with the independent tone of pert familiarity, the careless extravagance, and the passion for dress of American girls of the lower class....

IRISH GIRLS
IN
AMERICA.

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, July 8th 1840.

Perhaps, dearest Harriet, it might be better for me not to come to England, inasmuch as my roots are beginning to spread in my present soil, and to transplant them, even for a short time, might check the process materially.... But while my father still lives, I shall hope to revisit England once in every few years: when he is gone, I will give up all the rest that I own on the other side of the water, and remain here until it might be thought desirable for us to visit, not England only, but Europe; and should that never appear desirable, why, then, remain here till I die.

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My father's health received a beneficial stimulus from the excitement of his temporary return to the stage; but before that, his condition was by all accounts very unsatisfactory; and I am afraid that when the effect of the impulse his physical powers received from the pleasurable exertion of acting subsides, he may again relapse into feebleness, dejection, and general disorder of the system, from which he appeared to be suffering before he made this last professional effort. I *must* see him once more, and he has written to me to say that as soon as he knows when we are coming to England, he will meet us there. He will, I am pretty sure, bring my sister with him, and this is an additional reason why I am very anxious to be in England this autumn.... I have no doubt that they will both come to England in September, to meet me, and I presume we should remain together until I am obliged to return to America.

I have not expressed to you, my dearest Harriet, my delight at your relief from immediate anxiety about Dorothy. Sorrow seems to me so peculiarly severe in its administration—or discipline, should I call it?—to your spirit, that I thank God that its heavy pressure is lifted from your heart for the present. Dorothy is one of those with whom I always feel sure that all is well, let their circumstances or situation be what they will; but I rejoice that she is spared physical suffering, and preserved to you, to whom she is so infinitely precious....

THE
DISCIPLINE
OF
SORROW.

F. A. B.

DEAREST HARRIET,

... You bid me tell you when I shall leave America to pay my promised visit to my father. I have been thrown into a state of complete uncertainty by receiving a letter from my brother John, which informs me of my sister's engagement at Naples and Palermo, and possible further engagements at Malta and *Constantinople*! Think of her going to sing to the Turks!... I am at present alone here, and of course cannot myself determine the question of my going alone all over the Continent to join my father and Adelaide.... It is possible that I may have to renounce my visit to Europe altogether for the present, and, but for my father, I could do so without a moment's hesitation, but I dread postponing seeing him again, and, while I do so, shall live in a perpetual apprehension that I shall *hear* of his death as I did of that of my poor mother. I consider the visit I contemplated making him our probable last season of reunion, and cannot banish the thought that if it is indefinitely postponed I may perhaps never see him again....

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An intense interest is felt by all good Democrats in the coming election, which determines whether Mr. Van Buren is to retain the Presidency or not; and no zealous member of his party would leave the country while that was undetermined. John writes me, too, that he expects my father and sister both in London after Easter next year, and I have no doubt it will be thought best that I should wait till then to join them in England. However, all my plans must remain for the present in utter uncertainty, and I shall surely not meet you and Emily at Bannisters, which I could well have liked to do....

What lots of umbrellas you must wear out at Grasmere! [Miss S— and Miss W— were passing the summer at the English lakes.] I am writing pretty late at night, but if the Sedgwicks, whom you know, and those who, through them, know you, were round me, I should have *showers* of love to send you from them: your rainy lake country suggested that image, but that would be a *warm* shower, which you don't get in Westmoreland. I am growing very fat, but at the present there is no fatty degeneracy of the heart, so that I still remain

Affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS, August 28th, 1840.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I have always considered your writing to me a very unmerited kindness towards one who had so little claim on your time and attention; and I need not tell you how much this feeling is increased by your present state of mind, and the effort I am sure it must be to you to remember one so far off, in the midst of your great sorrow [for the death of her daughter, Mrs. Sullivan].... I shall come alone to England; and this is the more dismal, that I have it in prospect to go down to Naples to join my father and sister, and stay with them till her engagements there and at Palermo are ended. This journey (once my vision by day and dream by night) will lose much of its delight by being a solitary pilgrimage to the long-desired Italy. I think of pressing one of my brothers into my service as escort; or if they are not able to go with me, shall write to my father to come to England, as he lately sent me word he would do, at any time that I would meet him there—of course, to return immediately with him to my sister. They will both, I believe, be in England after Easter next year; and then I shall hope to be allowed to see you, my dear Lady Dacre, and express to you how much I have sympathized with you in all you have suffered.

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I am not aware of having spoken unjustly or disparagingly of the dramatic profession. You say I am ungrateful to it: is it because I owe many of my friends (yourself among the number) to it that you say so? or do you think that I forget that circumstance? But to value it as an art, simply for the personal advantages or pleasures that it was the means of affording me, would be surely quite as absurd as to forget that it did procure such for me. Then, upon reflection, few things have ever puzzled me more than the fact of people liking *me* because I pretended to be a pack of Juliets and Belvideras, and creatures who were *not* me. Perhaps *I was jealous of my parts*; certainly, the good will my assumption of them obtained for me, always seemed to me quite as curious as flattering, or indeed rather more so. I did not think it an unbecoming comment on my father's acting again at

THE
DRAMATIC
PROFESSION.

the Queen's request, when I said that the excitement to which he had been habituated for so many years had still charms for him; it would be very strange indeed if it had not. It is chiefly from this point of view, and one or two others bearing on the moral health, that I deprecate for those I love the exercise of that profession; the claims of which to be considered as an art I cannot at all determine satisfactorily in my own mind. That we have Shakespeare's plays, written expressly for the interpretation of acting, is a strong argument for the existence of a positive art of acting: nevertheless— But, if you please, we will settle that point when I have the pleasure of seeing you. I suppose I shall steam for England in October, when I shall endeavor to see you before I go abroad. Give my kindest regards to Lord Dacre, and believe me always

Very affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

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Lenox, September 4th, 1840.

My dearest Harriet,

... First of all, let me congratulate you, and dear Dorothy, upon her improved health. Good as she is, I am sure she must value life; for those who use it best, best know its infinite worth; and for you, my dearest Harriet, this extension of the precious loan of her existence to you, I am persuaded, must be full of the greatest blessings. Give my affectionate love to her when you write to her or see her again; for, indeed, I suppose you are now at Bannisters, where I should like well to be with you, but I much fear that I shall not see you this winter, though I expect to sail for England next month....

You ask me of the distance between the Virginia Springs and Lenox, and I am ashamed to say I cannot answer; however, almost half the length of the United States, I think. This, my northern place of summer sojourn, is in the heart of the hill country of Massachusetts, in a district inhabited chiefly by Sedgwicks, and their belongings....

Our friends the Sedgwicks reached their homes about a fortnight ago, and the hills and valleys hereabouts rejoiced thereat.... Katharine's health and spirits are much revived by the atmosphere of love by which she is surrounded in her home. She bids me give her love to you. I wonder, with your miserable self-distrust, whether you have any idea of the affectionate regard all these people bear you. Katharine, a short time before leaving Europe, saw in a shop a dark gray stuff which resembled a dress you used to wear; she immediately bought it for herself, and carrying it home asked her brother who it reminded him of. He instantly kissed the stuff, exclaiming, "H— S—!" Young Kate's journal contains a most affectionate record of their short intimacy with you at Wiesbaden; and you have left a deep impression on these hearts, where as little that is bad or base abides as in any frail human hearts I ever knew....

I have regained so much of my former appearance that I trust when I do see you I shall not horrify you, as you seemed some time ago to anticipate, by an apparition altogether unlike your, ever *essentially* the same,

F. A. B.

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BUTLER PLACE, October 7th, 1840.

... Dearest Harriet, whatever may be the evils which may spring from the amazing facilities of intercourse daily developing between distant countries (and with so great good, how should there not be some evil?), think of those whose lots are cast far from their early homes and friends; think of the deathlike separation that going to America has been to thousands who left England, and friends there, but a few years ago; the uncertainty of intercourse by letter, the interminable intervals of suspense, the impossibility of making known or understood by hearts that yearned for such information the new and strange circumstances of the exile's existence; the gradual dying out of friendships, and cooling of warm regard, from the impossibility of sufficient intercourse to keep interest alive; and sympathy, after endeavoring in vain to picture the distant home and surroundings and daily occupations of the absent friend, dwindling and withering away for want of necessary aliment, in spite of all the efforts which

imagination could make to satisfy the affectionate desire and longing loving inquiries of the heart. Think of all that those two *existences* as you call them (existences no more—but mere ideas), Time and Space, have caused of misery and suspense and heart-wearing anxiety, and rejoice that so much has been done to make parting less bitter, and absence endurable, through hope that now amounts almost to certainty.

PLANS OF
LIFE.

My own plans, which I thought so thoroughly settled a short time ago, have again become extremely indefinite. It is now considered inexpedient that I should travel on the Continent, though there is no objection to my remaining in England until my father's return, which I understand is expected soon after Easter. As, however, my motive in leaving America is to be with my father and sister, I have no idea of going to London to remain there three months, without any expectation of seeing them. This consideration would incline me to put off my visit to England till the spring, but it is not yet determined who, or whether any of us, will go to Georgia for the winter. My being taken thither is entirely uncertain; but should the contrary be decided upon, I might perhaps come to England immediately, as I would rather pass the winter in London, among my friends, if I am to spend it alone, than here, where the severe weather suspends all out-of-door exercise, interests, and occupations, and where the absolute solitude is a terrible trial to my nerves and spirits.

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At present, however, I have not a notion what will be determined about it, but as soon as I have any positive idea upon the subject I will let you know.

We returned from Massachusetts a few days ago, and I find a profusion of flowers and almost summer heat here, though the golden showers that every now and then flicker from the trees, and the rustling sound of fallen leaves, and the autumnal smell of mignonette, and other "fall" flowers, whisper of the coming winter; still all here at present is bright and sweet, with that peculiar combination of softness and brilliancy which belongs to the autumn in this part of America. It is the pleasantest season of the year here, and indescribably beautiful....

Good-bye, dearest Harriet; I had hoped to have joined you and Emily at Bannisters, but that pretty plan is all rubbed out now, and I do not know when I shall see you; but, thanks to those blessed beings—the steam-ships, those Atlantic angels of speed and certainty, it now seems as if I could do so "at any moment." God bless you.

Yours ever,

F. A. B.

BUTLER PLACE, October 26th.

I beg you will not stop short, as in your last letter, received the day before yesterday, dearest Harriet, with "but I will not overwhelm you with questions:" it is particularly agreeable to me to have specific questions to answer in the letters I receive from you, and I hope you perceive that I do religiously reply to anything in the shape of a query. It is pleasant to me to know upon what particular points of my doing, being, and suffering you desire to be enlightened; because although I know everything I write to you interests you, I like to be able to satisfy even a few of those "I wonders" that are perpetually rising up in our imaginations with respect to those we love and who are absent from us.

You ask me if I ever write any journal, or anything else now. The time that I passed in the South was so crowded with daily and hourly occupations that, though I kept a regular journal, it was hastily written, and received constant additional notes of things that occurred, and that I wished to remember, inserted in a very irregular fashion in it.... I think I should like to carry this journal down to Georgia with me this winter; to revise, correct, and add whatever my second experience might furnish to the chronicle. It has been suggested to me that such an account of a Southern plantation might be worth publishing; but I think such a publication would be a breach of confidence, an advantage taken on my part of the situation of trust, which I held on the estate. As my condemnation of the whole system is unequivocal, and all my illustrations of its evils must be drawn from our own plantation, I do not think I have a right to exhibit the interior management and economy of that property to the world at large, as a sample of

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Southern slavery, especially as I did not go thither with any such purpose. This winter I think I shall mention my desire upon the subject before going to the South, and of course any such publication must then depend on the acquiescence of the owners of the estate. I am sure that no book of mine on the subject could be of as much use to the poor people on Butler's Island as my residence among them; and I should, therefore, be very unwilling to do anything that was likely to interfere with that: although I have sometimes been haunted with the idea that it was an imperative duty, knowing what I know, and having seen what I have seen, to do all that lies in my power to show the dangers and evils of this frightful institution. And the testimony of a planter's wife, whose experience has all been gathered from estates where the slaves are universally admitted to be well treated, should carry with it some authority. So I am occupying myself, from time to time, as my leisure allows, in making a fair copy of my Georgia Journal.

I occasionally make very copious extracts from what I read, and also write critical analyses of the books that please or displease me, in the language—French or Italian—in which they are written; but these are fragmentary, and do not, I think, entitle me to say that I am writing anything. No one here is interested in anything that I write, and I have too little serious habit of study, too little application, and too much vanity and desire for the encouragement of praise, to achieve much in my condition of absolute intellectual solitude....

METHOD OF
READING.

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Here are two of your questions answered; the third is—whether I let the slave question rest more than I did? Oh yes; for I have come to the conclusion that no words of mine could be powerful enough to dispel the clouds of prejudice which early habits of thought, and the general opinion of society upon this subject have gathered round the minds of the people I live among. I do not know whether they ever think or read about it, and my arguments, though founded in this case on pretty sound reason, are apt to degenerate into passionate appeals, the violence of which is not calculated to do much good in the way of producing convictions in the minds of others....

Even if the property were mine, I could exercise no power over it; nor could our children, after our death, do anything for those wretched slaves, under the present laws of Georgia. All that any one could do, would be to refrain from using the income derived from the estates, and return it to the rightful owners—that is, the earners of it. Had I such a property, I think I would put my slaves at once quietly upon the footing of free laborers, paying them wages, and making them pay me rent and take care of themselves. Of course I should be shot by my next neighbor (against whom no verdict would be found except "Serve her right!") in the first week of my experiment; but *if I wasn't*, I think, reckoning only the meanest profit to be derived from the measure, I should double the income of the estate in less than three years.... I am more than ever satisfied that God and Mammon would be equally propitiated by emancipation.

You ask me whether I take any interest in the Presidential election. Yes, though I have not room left for my reasons—and I have some, besides that best woman's reason, sympathy with the politics of the man I belong to. The party coming into power are, I believe, at heart less democratic than the other; and while the natural advantages of this wonderful country remain unexhausted (and they are apparently inexhaustible), I am sure the Republican Government is by far the best for the people themselves, besides thinking it the best in the abstract, as you know I do.

God bless you, my dearest Harriet.

I am ever yours most affectionately,

F. A. B.

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[The question of my spending the winter in Georgia was finally determined by Mr. J— B— 's decided opposition to my doing so. He was part proprietor of the plantation, and positively stipulated that I should not again be taken thither, considering my presence there as a mere source of distress to myself, annoyance to others, and danger to the property.

I question the validity of the latter objection, but not at all that of the two first; and am sure that, upon the whole, his opposition to my residence among his

slaves was not only justifiable but perfectly reasonable.

My Georgia journal was not published until thirty years after it was written, during the civil war in the United States. I was then passing some time in England, and the people among whom I lived were, like most well-educated members of the upper classes of English society, Southern sympathizers. The ignorant and mischievous nonsense I was continually compelled to hear upon the subject of slavery in the seceding States determined me to publish my own observation of it—not, certainly, that I had in those latter years of my life any fallacious expectation of making converts on the subject, but that I felt constrained at that juncture to bear my testimony to the miserable nature and results of the system, of which so many of my countrymen and women were becoming the sentimental apologists.

It being now settled that I was not to return to the plantation, my thoughts had hardly reverted to the prospect of a winter in England when I received the news of my father's return from the Continent, and dangerous illness in London; so that, I was told, unless I could go to him immediately, there was but little probability of my ever seeing him again. The misfortune I had so often anticipated now seemed to have overtaken me, and instant preparation for my leaving America being made, and an elderly lady, with whom I had become connected by my marriage, having exerted her influence in my behalf, I was not allowed, under such painful circumstances, again to cross the Atlantic alone, but returned with a very heavy heart to my own country, but with the comfort of being accompanied by my whole family.

ILLNESS OF
CHARLES
KEMBLE.

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The news that met me on my arrival was that my father was at the point of death, that he would not probably survive twenty-four hours, and that it was altogether inexpedient that he should see me, as, if he recognized me, which was doubtful, my unexpected appearance, it having been impossible to prepare him for it, might only be the means of causing him a violent and perhaps painful shock of nervous agitation. This terrible verdict, pronounced by three of the most eminent medical men of the day, Bright, Liston, and Wilson, was a dreadful close to all the anxious days and hours of the sea voyage, during which I had hoped and prayed to be again permitted to embrace my father. But in my deep distress, I could not help remembering that, after all, his physicians, able as they were, had not the keys of life and death. And so it proved: my father made an almost miraculous rally, recovered, and survived the sentence pronounced against him for many years.

Not many days after our arrival, his improved condition admitted of his being told of my return, and allowed to see me. Cadaverous is the only word that describes the appearance to which acute suffering and subsequent prostration had reduced him; he looked, indeed, like one returned from the dead, and, in his joy at seeing me again, declared that I had restored him to life, and that my arrival, though he had not known of it, had called him back to existence—a sympathetic theory of convalescence, to which I do not think his doctors gave in their adhesion.

We now took up our abode in London; first at the Clarendon Hotel, and afterwards in Clarges Street, Piccadilly, where my father, as soon as he could be moved, came to reside with us, and where my sister joined us on her return from Italy. My friend Miss S—, coming from Ireland to stay with me soon after my arrival in England, added to my happiness in finding myself once more with my own family, and in my own country.]

CLARGES STREET, March 21st.

You will, ere this, dearest H—, have received my answer to your first letter. You ask me, in your second, what we think about the chances of a war with America. Our wishes prompt us to the belief that a war between the two countries is *impossible*, though the tone of the newspapers, within the last few days, has been horribly pugnacious. A letter was received the day before yesterday, from our Liverpool factor, asking us what is to

be done about some cotton which had just come to them from the plantation, in the event of war breaking out: a supposition which he had treated as an utter impossibility when he was last in London, but which he confessed in this letter did not seem to him quite so impossible now. I do not, for my own part, see very well how either party is to get out of its present attitude towards the other peaceably and, at the same time, without some compromise of dignity. But I pray God that the hearts of the two nations may be inclined to peace, and then, doubtless, some cunning device will be found to save their *honor*. The virtuous "*if*" of Touchstone is, I am afraid, not as valid in national as individual quarrels.

Tell Mr. H— W—, with my love, that it is all a hoax about Niagara Falls having *fallen* down; and that they are still *falling* down, according to their custom; but if you should find this intelligence affect him with too painful a disappointment, you may comfort him by assuring him that they inevitably must and will fall down one of these days, and, what is more, stay fallen, and precisely in the manner they are now said to have begun their career—by the gradual wearing away of the rock between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

We were at the opera the Saturday after you left us; but it was a mediocre performance, both music and dancing, and gave me but little pleasure. I went last night again with my father, and was enchanted with the opera, which was an old favorite, "Tancredi," in which I heard Persiani, an admirable artist, with a mere golden wire of voice, of which she made most capital use, and Pauline Garcia, who possesses all the genius of her family; and between them it was a perfect performance. The latter is a sister of Malibran's, and will certainly be one of the finest dramatic singers of these times. But the proximity of people to me in the stalls is so intolerable that I think I shall give mine up; for I am in a state of nervous *crawling* the whole time, with being pushed and pressed and squeezed and leaned on and breathed on by my fellow-creatures. You remember my old theory, that we are all of us surrounded by an atmosphere proper to ourselves, emanating from each of us,—a separate, sensitive envelope, extending some little distance from our visible persons. I am persuaded that this is the case, and that when my *individual atmosphere* is invaded by any one, it affects my whole nervous system. The proximity of any *bodies* but those I love best is unendurable to my body.

My father is much in the same condition as when you went away, suffering a great deal, and complaining frequently; but by his desire we have a dinner-party here on Tuesday, and he has accepted two invitations to dine out himself. My chicks are pretty well....

May God bless you, dear.

I am ever your own

F. A. B.

CLARGES STREET.

This letter was begun three days ago, and it is now Thursday, March the 25th. Do not, I beseech you, ever make any appeals to my imagination, or my feelings. I have lost all I ever had of the first, and I never had any at all of the second....

You ask me if I have been riding. Only once or twice, for I may not do what I so fain would, give all the visiting to utter neglect, and ride every day. Yesterday I was on horseback for two hours with Henry, who, having sold his pretty mare, for £65, to the author of the new comedy at Covent Garden, was obliged to bestride one of Mr. Allen's screws, as he calls them. The day was dusty and windy, and very disagreeable, but I was all the better for my shaking, as I always am. I am never in health, looks, or spirits without daily hard exercise on horseback.

My first meeting with Mrs. Grote (I am answering your questions, dearest H—, though you have probably forgotten them) took place after all at Sydney Smith's, at a dinner the very next day after you left us. We did not say a great deal to each other, but upon my saying incidentally (I forget about what) "I, who have always preserved my liberty, at least the small crumb of it that a woman can own anywhere," she faced about, in a most emphatical manner, and said, "Then you've struggled for it." "No, I have not been obliged to do so." "Ah, then you must, or you'll lose it, you'll lose it, depend upon it." I smiled, but did not reply, because I saw that she was not taking into consideration the

PERSIANI
AND
PAULINE
GARCIA.

fact of my living in America; and this was the only truly *Grotesque* (as Sydney Smith says) passage between us. Since then we have again ineffectually exchanged cards, and yesterday I received an invitation to her house, so that I suppose we shall finally become acquainted with each other.

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[Mrs. Grote, wife of George Grote, the banker, member of Parliament, and historian of Greece, was one of the cleverest and most eccentric women in the London society of my time. No worse a judge than De Tocqueville pronounced her the cleverest woman of his acquaintance; and she was certainly a very remarkable member of the circle of remarkable men among whom she was living when I first knew her. At that time she was the female centre of the Radical party in politics—a sort of not-young-or-handsome feminine oracle among a set of very clever half-heathenish men, in whose drawing-room, Sydney Smith used to say, he always expected to find an altar to Zeus. At this time Mr. Grote was in the House of Commons, and as it was before the publication of his admirable history, his speeches, which were as remarkable for their sound sense and enlightened liberality as for their clear and forcible style, were not unfrequently attributed to his wife, whose considerable conversational powers, joined to a rather dictatorial style of exercising them, sometimes threw her refined and modest husband a little into the shade in general society. When first I made Mrs. Grote's acquaintance, the persons one most frequently met at her house in Eccleston Street were Roebuck, Leader, Byron's quondam associate Trelawney, and Sir William Molesworth; both the first and last mentioned gentlemen were then of an infinitely deeper shade of radicalism in their politics than they subsequently became. The other principal element of Mrs. Grote's society, at this time, consisted of musical composers and performers, who found in her a cordial and hospitable friend and hostess, and an amateur of unusual knowledge and discrimination, as well as much taste and feeling for their beautiful art. Her love of music, and courteous reception of all foreign artists, caused her to be generally sought by eminent professors coming to England; and Liszt, Madame Viardot, Dessauer, Thalberg, Mademoiselle Lind, and Mendelssohn were among the celebrated musicians one frequently met at her house. With the two latter she was very intimate, and it was in her drawing-room that my sister gave her first public concert in London. Mendelssohn used often to visit her at a small country-place she had in the neighborhood of Burnham Beeches.

MRS.
GROTE.

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It was a very small and modest residence, situated on the verge of the magnificent tract of woodland scenery known by that name; a dependence, I believe, of the Dropmore estate, which it adjoined. It was an unenclosed space of considerable extent, of wild, heathy moorland; short turfy strips of common; dingles full of foxglove, harebell, and gnarled old stunted hawthorn bushes; and knolls, covered with waving crests of powerful feathery fern. It was intersected with gravelly paths and roads, whose warm color contrasted and harmonized with the woodland hues of everything about them; and roofed in by dark green vaults of the most magnificent beech foliage I have ever seen anywhere. The trees were of great age and enormous size; and from some accidental influence affecting their growth, the huge trunks were many of them contorted so as to resemble absolutely the twisted Saxon pillars of some old cathedral. In many of them the powerful branches (as large themselves as trunks of common trees) spread out from the main tree, at a height of about six feet from the ground, into a sort of capacious leafy chamber, where eight or ten people could have sat embowered. A more perfectly English woodland scene it would be impossible to imagine, and here, as Mrs. Grote told me, Mendelssohn found the inspiration of much of the music of his "Midsummer Night's Dream." (The overture he had composed, and played to us one evening at my father's house, when first he came to England, before he was one-and-twenty.) At one time Mrs. Grote contemplated erecting some monument in the beautiful wood to his memory, and showed me a copy of verses, not devoid of merit, which she thought of inscribing on it to his honor; but she never carried out the suggestion of her affectionate admiration; and to those who knew and loved Mendelssohn (alas! the expressions are synonymous), the glorious wood itself, where he walked and

mused and held converse with the spirit of Shakespeare, forms a solemn sylvan temple, forever consecrated to tender memories of his bright genius and lovely character.

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When first I knew Mrs. Grote, however, her artistic sympathies were keenly excited in a very different direction; for she had undertaken, under some singular impulse of mistaken enthusiasm, to make what she called "an honest woman" of the celebrated dancer, Fanny Ellsler, and to introduce her into London society,—neither of them very attainable results, even for as valiant and enterprising a person as Mrs. Grote. When first I heard of this strange undertaking I was, in common with most of her friends, much surprised at it; nor was it until some years after the entire failure of this quixotic experiment, that I became aware that she had been actuated by any motive but the kindest and most mistaken enthusiasm.

Mademoiselle Ellsler was at this time at the height of her great and deserved popularity as a dancer, and whatever I may have thought of the expediency or possibility of making what Mrs. Grote called "an honest woman" of her, I was among the most enthusiastic admirers of her great excellence in her elegant art. She was the only intellectual dancer I have ever seen. Inferior to Taglioni (that embodied genius of rhythmical motion) in lightness, grace, and sentiment; to Carlotta Grisi in the two latter qualities; and with less mere vigor and elasticity than Cerito, she excelled them all in dramatic expression; and parts of her performance in the ballets of the "Tarantella" and the wild legend of "Gisele, the Willye," exhibited tragic power of a very high order, while the same strongly dramatic element was the cause of her pre-eminence in all national and characteristic dances, such as El Jaleo de Xeres, the Cracovienne, et cetera. This predominance of the intellectual element in her dancing may have been the result of original organization, or it may have been owing to the mental training which Ellsler received from Frederic von Genz, Gensius, the German writer and diplomatist, who educated her, and whose mistress she became while still quite a young girl. However that may be, Mrs. Grote always maintained that her genius lay full as much in her head as in her heels. I am not sure that the finest performance of hers that I ever witnessed was not a minuet in which she danced the man's part, in full court-suit of the time of Louis XVI., with most admirable grace and nobility of demeanor.

Mrs. Grote labored hard to procure her acceptance in society; her personal kindness to her was of the most generous description: but her great object of making "an honest woman" of her, I believe failed signally in every way.

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On one occasion I paid Mrs. Grote a visit at Burnham Beeches. Our party consisted only of my sister and myself; the Viennese composer, Dessauer; and Chorley, the musical critic of the *Athenæum*, who was very intimately acquainted with us all. The eccentricities of our hostess, with which some of us were already tolerably familiar, were a source of unfeigned amazement and awe to Dessauer, who, himself the most curious, quaint, and withal nervously excitable and irritable humorist, was thrown into alternate convulsions of laughter and spasms of terror at the portentous female figure, who, with a stick in her hand, a man's hat on her head, and a coachman's box-coat of drab cloth with manifold capes over her petticoats (English women had not yet then adopted a costume undistinguishable from that of the other sex), stalked about the house and grounds, alternately superintending various matters of the domestic economy, and discussing, with equal knowledge and discrimination, questions of musical criticism and taste.

One most ludicrous scene which took place on this occasion I shall never forget. She had left us to our own devices, and we were all in the garden. I was sitting in a swing, and my sister, Dessauer, and Chorley were lying on the lawn at my feet, when presently, striding towards us, appeared the extravagant figure of Mrs. Grote, who, as soon as she was within speaking-trumpet distance, hailed us with a stentorian challenge about some detail of dinner—I think it was whether the majority voted for bacon and peas or bacon and beans. Having duly settled this momentous question, as Mrs. Grote turned and marched away, Dessauer—

who had been sitting straight up, listening with his head first on one side and then on the other, like an eagerly intelligent terrier, taking no part in the culinary controversy (indeed, his entire ignorance of English necessarily disqualified him for even comprehending it), but staring intently, with open eyes and mouth, at Mrs. Grote—suddenly began, with his hands and lips, to imitate the rolling of a drum, and then broke out aloud with, "*Malbrook s'en vat' en guerre,*" etc.; whereupon the terrible lady faced right about, like a soldier, and, planting her stick in the ground, surveyed Dessauer with an awful countenance. The wretched little man grew red and then purple, and then black in the face with fear and shame; and exclaiming in his agony, "*Ah, bonté divine! elle m'a compris!*" rolled over and over on the lawn as if he had a fit. Mrs. Grote majestically waved her hand, and with magnanimous disdain of her small adversary turned and departed, and we remained horror-stricken at the effect of this involuntary tribute of Dessauer's to her martial air and deportment.

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When she returned, however, it was to enter into a most interesting and animated discussion upon the subject of Glück's music; and suddenly, some piece from the "Iphigenia" being mentioned, she shouted for her man-servant, to whom on his appearance she gave orders to bring her a chair and footstool, and "the big fiddle" (the violoncello) out of the hall; and taking it forthwith between her knees, proceeded to play, with excellent taste and expression, some of Glück's noble music upon the sonorous instrument, with which St. Cecilia is the only female I ever saw on terms of such familiar intimacy.

The second time Mrs. Grote invited me to the Beeches, it was to meet Mdlle. Ellsler. A conversation I had with my admirable and excellent friend Sydney Smith determined me to decline joining the party. He wound up his kind and friendly advice to me upon the subject by saying, "No, no, my child; that's all very well for Grota" (the name he always gave Mrs. Grote, whose good qualities and abilities he esteemed very highly, whatever he may have thought of her eccentricities); "but don't mix yourself up with that sort of thing." And I had reason to rejoice that I followed his good advice. Mrs. Grote told me, in the course of a conversation we once had on the subject of Mdlle. Ellsler, that when the latter went to America, she, Mrs. Grote, had undertaken most generously the entire care and charge of her child, a lovely little girl of about six years old. "All I said to her," said this strange, kind-hearted woman, "was 'Well, Fanny, send the brat to me; I don't ask you whose child it is, and I don't care, so long as it isn't that fool d'Orsay's'" (Mrs. Grote had small esteem for *the* dandy of his day), "and I'll take the best care of it I can." And she did take the kindest care of it during the whole period of Mdlle. Ellsler's absence from Europe.

MRS. GROTE
AND FANNY
ELLSLER.

The next time I visited the Beeches was after an interval of some years, when I went thither with my kind and constant friend Mr. Rogers. My circumstances had altered very painfully, and I was again laboring for my own support.

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I went down to Burnham with the old poet, and was sorry to find that, though he had consented to pay Mrs. Grote this visit, he was not in particularly harmonious tune for her society, which was always rather a trial to his fastidious nerves and refined taste. The drive of between three and four miles in a fly (very different from his own luxurious carriage), through intricate lanes and rural winding avenues, did not tend to soften his acerbities, and I perceived at once, on alighting from the carriage, that the aspect of the place did not find favor in his eyes.

Mrs. Grote had just put up an addition to her house, a sort of single wing, which added a good-sized drawing-room to the modest mansion I had before visited. Whatever accession of comfort the house received within from this addition to its size, its beauty, externally, was not improved by it, and Mr. Rogers stood before the offending edifice, surveying it with a sardonic sneer that I should think even brick and mortar must have found it hard to bear. He had hardly uttered his three first disparaging bitter sentences, of utter scorn and abhorrence of the architectural abortion, which, indeed it was, when Mrs. Grote herself made her appearance in her usual country costume, box-coat, hat on her head, and stick in her hand. Mr. Rogers turned to her with a verjuice smile, and

said, "I was just remarking that in whatever part of the world I had seen this building I should have guessed to whose taste I might attribute its erection." To which, without an instant's hesitation, she replied, "Ah, 'tis a beastly thing, to be sure. The confounded workmen played the devil with the place while I was away." Then, without any more words, she led the way to the interior of her habitation, and I could not but wonder whether her blunt straightforwardness did not disconcert and rebuke Mr. Rogers for his treacherous sneer.

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During this visit, much interesting conversation passed with reference to the letters of Sydney Smith, who was just dead; and the propriety of publishing all his correspondence, which, of course, contained strictures and remarks upon people with whom he had been living in habits of friendly social intimacy. I remember one morning a particularly lively discussion on the subject, between Mrs. Grote and Mr. Rogers. The former had a great many letters from Sydney Smith, and urged the impossibility of publishing them, with all their comments on members of the London world. Rogers, on the contrary, apparently delighted at the idea of the mischief such revelations would make, urged Mrs. Grote to give them ungarbled to the press. "Oh, but now," said the latter, "here, for instance, Mr. Rogers, such a letter as this, about —; do see how he cuts up the poor fellow. It really never would do to publish it." Rogers took the letter from her, and read it with a stony grin of diabolical delight on his countenance and occasional chuckling exclamations of "Publish it! publish it! Put an R, dash, or an R and four stars for the name. He'll never know it, though everybody else will." While Mr. Rogers was thus delecting himself, in anticipation, with R—'s execution, Mrs. Grote, by whose side I was sitting on a low stool, quietly unfolded another letter of Sydney Smith's, and silently held it before my eyes, and the very first words in it were a most ludicrous allusion to Rogers's cadaverous appearance. As I raised my eyes from this most absurd description of him, and saw him still absorbed in his evil delight, the whole struck me as so like a scene in a farce that I could not refrain from bursting out laughing.

In talking of Sydney Smith Mr. Rogers gave us many amusing details of various visits he paid him at his place in Somersetshire, Combe Flory, where, on one occasion, Jeffrey was also one of the party. It was to do honor to these illustrious guests that Sydney Smith had a pair of horns fastened on his donkey, who was turned into the paddock so adorned, in order, as he said, to give the place a more noble and park-like appearance; and it was on this same donkey that Jeffrey mounted when Sydney Smith exclaimed with such glee—

"As short, but not as stout, as Bacchus,
As witty as Horatius Flacchus,
As great a radical as Gracchus,
There he goes riding on my *jackuss*."

Rogers told us too, with great satisfaction, an anecdote of Sydney Smith's son, known in London society by the amiable nickname of the Assassin.... This gentleman, being rather addicted to horse-racing and the undesirable society of riders, trainers, jockeys, and semi-turf black-legs, meeting a friend of his father's on his arrival at Combe Flory, the visitor said, "So you have got Rogers here, I find." "Oh, yes," replied Sydney Smith's dissimilar son, with a rueful countenance, "but it isn't *the* Rogers, you know." *The* Rogers, according to him, being a famous horse-trainer and rider of that name.

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I have called him his father's dissimilar son, but feel inclined to withdraw that epithet, when I recollect his endeavor to find an appropriate subject of conversation for the Archbishop of York, by whom, on one occasion, he found himself seated at dinner: "Pray, my lord, how long do you think it took Nebuchadnezzar to get into condition again after his turn out at grass?"

The third time I went to Burnham Beeches, it was to meet a very clever Piedmontese gentleman, with whom Mr. Grote had become intimate, Mr. Senior, known and valued for his ability as a political economist, his clear and acute intelligence, his general information and agreeable powers of conversation. His universal acquaintance with all political and statistical details, and the whole contemporaneous history of European events, and the readiness and fulness of

THE
ASSASSIN.

his information on all matters of interest connected with public affairs used to make Mrs. Grote call him her "man of facts." The other member of our small party was Charles Greville, whose acquaintance Mrs. Grote had made through his intimacy with my sister and myself. This gentleman was one of the most agreeable members of our intimate society. His mother was the sister of the late Duke of Portland, and during the short administration of his uncle, Charles Greville, then quite a young man, had a sinecure office in the island of Jamaica bestowed upon him, and was made Clerk of the Privy Council; which appointment, by giving him an assured position and handsome income for life, effectually put a stop to his real advancement at the very outset, by rendering all effort of ambition on his part unnecessary, and inducing him, instead of distinguishing himself by an honorable public career, to adopt the life and pursuits of a mere man of pleasure, ... and to waste his talents in the petty intrigues of society, and the excitements of the turf. He was an influential member of the London great world of his day; his clear good sense, excellent judgment, knowledge of the world, and science of expediency, combined with his good temper and ready friendliness, made him a sort of universal referee in the society to which he belonged. Men consulted him about their difficulties with men; and women, about their squabbles with women; and men and women, about their troubles with the opposite sex. He was called into the confidence of all manner of people, and trusted with the adjustment of all sorts of affairs. He knew the secrets of everybody, which everybody seemed willing that he should know; and he was one of the principal lawgivers of the turf. The publication of Charles Greville's Memoirs, which shocked the whole of London society, surprised, as much as it grieved, his friends, the character they revealed being painfully at variance with their impression of him, and not a little, in some respects, at variance with that of a gentleman.... Our small party at the Beeches was broken up on the occasion of this, my third visit, by our hostess's indisposition. She was seized with a violent attack of neuralgia in the head, to which she was subject, and by which she was compelled to take to her bed, and remain there in darkness and almost intolerable suffering for hours, and sometimes days together. I have known her prostrated by a paroxysm of this sort when she had invited a large party to dinner, and obliged to leave her husband to do the honors to their guests, while she betook herself to solitary confinement in a darkened room.

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On the present occasion the gentlemen guests took their departure for London, and I should have done the same, but that Mrs. Grote entreated me to remain, for the chance of her being soon rid of her torment. Towards the middle of the day she begged me to come to her room, when, feeling, I presume, some temporary relief, she presently began talking vehemently to me about a French opera of "The Tempest," by Halévy, I believe, which had just been produced in Paris, with Madame Rossi Sontag as Miranda, and Lablache as Caliban. Mrs. Grote was violent in her abuse of the composition, deploring, as I joined her in doing, that Mendelssohn should not have taken "The Tempest" for the subject of an opera, and so prevented less worthy composers from laying hands upon it.

Towards this time Mrs. Grote became absorbed by a passionate enthusiasm for Mademoiselle Jenny Lind, of whom she was an idolatrous worshipper, and who frequently spent her days of leisure at the Beeches. Mrs. Grote engrossed Mademoiselle Jenny Lind in so curious a manner that, socially, the accomplished singer could hardly be approached but through her. She was kind enough to ask me twice to meet her, when Mendelssohn and herself were together at Burnham—an offer of a rare pleasure, of which I was unable to avail myself. I remember, about this time, a comical conversation I had with her, in which, after surveying and defining her social position and its various advantages, she exclaimed, "But I want some lords, Fanny. Can't you help me to some lords?" I told her, laughingly, that I thought the lady who held watch and ward over Mademoiselle Jenny Lind might have as many lords at her feet as she pleased....

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JENNY
LIND.

Besides her literary and artistic tastes, she took a keen interest in politics, and among other causes for the slight esteem in which she not unnaturally held my intellectual capacity was my ignorance of, and indifference to, anything

MRS. GROTE
AND MRS.
KEMBLE.

connected with party politics, especially as discussed in coterie and by coterie queens.

Great questions of European policy, and the important movements of foreign governments, or our own, in matters tending to affect the general welfare and progress of humanity, had a profound interest for me; but I talked so little on such subjects, as became the profundity of my ignorance, that Mrs. Grote supposed them altogether above my sympathy, and probably above my comprehension.

I remember very well, one evening at her own house, I was working at some embroidery (I never saw her with that feminine implement, a needle, in her fingers, and have a notion she despised those who employed it, and the results they achieved), and I was listening with perfect satisfaction to an able and animated discussion between Mr. Grote, Charles Greville, Mr. Senior, and a very intelligent Piedmontese then staying at the Beeches, on the aspect of European politics, and more especially of Italian affairs, when Mrs. Grote, evidently thinking the subject too much for me, drew her chair up to mine, and began a condescending conversation about matters which she probably judged more on a level with my comprehension; for she seemed both relieved and surprised when I stopped her kind effort to entertain me at once, thanking her, and assuring her that I was enjoying extremely what I was listening to.

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Some time after this, however, I must say I took a mischievous opportunity of purposely confirming her poor opinion of my brains; for on her return from Paris, where she had been during Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*, she offered to show me Mr. Senior's journal, kept there at the same time, and recording all the remarkable and striking incidents of that exciting period of French affairs. This was a temptation, but it was a greater one to me—being, as Madame de Sévigné says of herself, *méchante ma fille*—to make fun of Mrs. Grote; and so, comforting myself with thinking that this probably highly interesting and instructive record, kept by Mr. Senior, would be sure to be published, and was then in manuscript (a thing which I abhor), I quietly declined the offer, looking as like Audrey when she asks "What is poetical?" as I could: to which Mrs. Grote, with an indescribable look, accent, and gesture of good-humored contempt, replied, "Ah, well, it might not interest you; I dare say it wouldn't. It *is* political, to be sure; it is political."

This is the second very clever woman, to whom I know my intelligence had been vaunted, to whom I turned out completely "Paradise Lost," as my mother's comical old acquaintance, Lady Dashwood King, used to say to Adelaide of me: "Ah, yes, I know your sister is vastly clever, exceedingly intelligent, and all that kind of thing, but she is 'Paradise Lost' to me, my dear." I sometimes regretted having hidden my small light under a bushel as entirely as I did, in the little intercourse I had with the first Lady Ashburton, Lady Harriet Montague, with whom some of my friends desired that I should become acquainted, and who asked me to her house in London, and to the Grange, having been assured that there was something in me, and trying to find it out, without ever succeeding.

Mrs. Grote had generally a very contemptuous regard for the capacity of her female friends. She was extremely fond of my sister, but certainly had not the remotest appreciation of her great cleverness; and on one occasion betrayed the most whimsical surprise when Adelaide mentioned having received a letter from the great German scholar Waelcker. "Who? what? you? Waelcker, write to you!" exclaimed Grote, in amazement more apparent than courteous, it evidently being beyond the wildest stretch of her imagination that one of the most learned men in Europe, and profoundest scholars of Germany, could be a correspondent of my sister's, and a devoted admirer of her brilliant intelligence.

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Mrs. Grote's appearance was extremely singular; "striking" is, I think, the most appropriate word for it. She was very tall, square-built, and high-shouldered; her hands and arms, feet and legs (the latter she was by no means averse to displaying) were uncommonly handsome and well made. Her face was rather that of a clever man than a woman, and I used to think there was some

resemblance between herself and our piratical friend Trelawney.

Her familiar style of language among her intimates was something that could only be believed by those who heard it; it was technical to a degree that was amazing. I remember, at a dinner-party at her own table, her speaking of Audubon's work on ornithology, and saying that some of the incidents of his personal adventures, in the pursuit of his favorite science, had pleased her particularly; instancing, among other anecdotes, an occasion on which, as she said, "he was almost starving in the woods, you know, and found some kind of wild creature, which he immediately disembowelled and devoured." This, at dinner, at her own table, before a large party, was rather forcible. But little usual as her modes of expression were, she never seemed to be in the slightest degree aware of the startling effect they produced; she uttered them with the most straightforward unconsciousness and unconcern. Her taste in dress was, as might have been expected, slightly eccentric, but, for a person with so great a perception of harmony of sound, her passion for discordant colors was singular. The first time I ever saw her she was dressed in a bright brimstone-colored silk gown, made so short as to show her feet and ankles, having on her head a white satin hat, with a forest of white feathers; and I remember her standing, with her feet wide apart and her arms akimbo, in this costume before me, and challenging me upon some political question, by which, and her appearance, I was much astonished and a little frightened. One evening she came to my sister's house dressed entirely in black, but with scarlet shoes on, with which I suppose she was particularly pleased, for she lay on a sofa with her feet higher than her head, American fashion, the better to display or contemplate them. I remember, at a party, being seated by Sydney Smith, when Mrs. Grote entered with a rose-colored turban on her head, at which he suddenly exclaimed, "Now I know the meaning of the word grotesque!" The mischievous wit professed his cordial liking for both her and her husband, saying, "I like them, I like them; I like him, he is so ladylike; and I like her, she's such a perfect gentleman;" in which, however, he had been forestalled by a person who certainly *n'y entendait pas malice*, Mrs. Chorley, the meekest and gentlest of human beings, who one evening, at a party at her son's house, said to him, pointing out Mrs. Grote, who was dressed in white, "Henry, my dear, who is the gentleman in the white muslin gown?"]

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You ask me, dear H—, about Lady Francis's visit. She did not come, as she had proposed doing, on the Friday, for she caught the influenza, and was extremely unwell for a few days; she was here on Monday, coughing incessantly and looking ill. In the course of our conversation, she exclaimed, "Education! bless me, I think of nothing else but the education of the poor. Don't you find people have got to think and talk about nothing else? I protest, I don't." This made me laugh, and you will understand why; but she didn't, and pressed me very much to tell her what there was absurd in the matter to me: but I declined answering her, at least then and there, as I could not enter into a full discussion of the subject, down to the roots of it, just at that moment. But, as you will well comprehend, the circumstances that render this feverish zeal for education comical, in some of its fine-lady advocates, are peculiarly strong in her case, though she is in earnest enough, and thoroughly well-intentioned in whatever she does. Unwittingly, they are serving the poor, as they certainly do not contemplate doing; for by educating them, even as they are likely to do so, they will gradually prepare them, intelligently and therefore irresistibly, to demand such changes in their political and social conditions as they may now impotently desire, and will assuredly hereafter obtain; but not, I think, with the entirely cordial acquiescence of their Tory educators.

EDUCATION
OF THE
POOR.

We went to the opera the Saturday after you left us, but both the opera and the ballet were indifferent performances.... Do you not know that to misunderstand and be misunderstood is one of the inevitable conditions, and, I think, one of the especial purposes, of our existence? The principal use of the affection of human beings for each other is to supply the want of perfect comprehension, which is impossible. All the faith and love which we possess are barely sufficient to bridge over the abyss of individualism which separates one human being from another; and they would not or could not exist, if we really understood each other. God bless you, dear.

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Yours ever,

FANNY.

CLARGES STREET, March 28th, 1841.

DEAREST H—,

My Sunday's avocations being over, or rather—

Here a loud, double knock, and Emily's entrance cut short my sentence; and now that she is gone, it is close upon time to dress for dinner. She bids me tell you that I am going to-morrow to sit to the sun for my picture for you. I cannot easily conceive how you should desire a daguerreotype of me; you certainly have never seen one, or you would not do so; as it is, I think you will receive a severe shock from the real representation of the face you love so well and know so little....

Emily and I went with the children to the Zoological Gardens the other day, where a fine, intelligent-looking lioness appeared exceedingly struck with them, crouched, and made a spring at little Fan, which made Anne scream, and Emily, and Amelia Twiss, who was with us, catch hold of the child. The keeper assured us it was only play; but I was well pleased, nevertheless, that there was a grating between that very large cat and the little white mouse of a plaything she contemplated.

I have no news to give you, dear H—. A list of our dinner and evening engagements would be interminable, and not very profitable stuff for correspondence.

I breakfasted with Mr. Rogers the other morning, and met Lord Normanby, to whom I preferred a request that he would procure for Henry an unattached company, by which he would obtain a captain's rank and half-pay, and escape being sent to Canada, or, indeed, out of England at all—which, in my father's present condition of health, is very desirable....

We hear of my sister's great success in Italy, in "Norma," from sources which can leave us no doubt of it....

Good-bye, dearest H—. Here is a list of my immediately impending *occupations*—Monday, Emily spends the evening with me, till I go to a party at Miss Rogers's; Tuesday, we go to the opera; Wednesday, we dine with the M—s, and go in the evening to Mrs. Grote's; Thursday, dinner at Mrs. Norton's; Friday, dine with Mrs. C—, who has a ball in the evening; Saturday, the opera again: and so, pray don't say I am wasting my time, or neglecting my opportunities.

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Yours ever,

FANNY.

CLARGES STREET, Thursday, April 2nd.

DEAREST H—,

I wrote to you yesterday, but have half an hour of leisure, and will begin another letter to you now. If it suffers interruption, I shall at any rate have made a start, and the end will come in time, doubtless, if Heaven pleases....

My father is much in the same condition as when last I wrote to you.... You ask if he does not begin to count the days till Adelaide's return [my sister was daily expected from Italy, where she had just finished engagements at the Fenice, the San Carlo, and the Scala]: he speaks of that event occasionally, with fervent hope and expectation; but he is seldom roused by anything from the state of suffering self-absorption in which he lives for the most part....

ADELAIDE
KEMBLE.

I forget whether we have heard from Adelaide herself since you left us; but my father had a letter the other day from C—, who sent him a detailed account of her success in "Norma," which by all accounts has indeed been very great.

One of C—'s proofs of it amused me not a little. He said that one night, when she was singing it, although some of the royal family were in their box and appeared about to

applaud, the people could not restrain their acclamations, but broke out into vociferous bravos, contrary to etiquette on such occasions, when it is usual for royalty to give the signal to public enthusiasm.

Doubtless this was a very great proof of her power over her fellow-creatures, and of the irresistible human sympathies which are occasionally, even in such an atmosphere as that of a Neapolitan theatre, with Bourbon royalty present, stronger than social conventionalities....

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You ask if the new comedy ("London Assurance") is sufficiently successful to warrant the author's purchase of Henry's horse. I heard, but of course cannot vouch for the truth of the report, that his fixed remuneration was to be three hundred pounds for the piece; and when, as I also hear (but again will not vouch for the truth of my story), besides Henry's, that he has bought another horse, and, besides that other horse, a miraculous "Cab," and, besides that miraculous "Cab," ordered no fewer than seven new coats, I think you will agree with me that the author of "London Assurance," successful as his piece may be, ought to have found a deeper mine than that is likely to prove to serve so many ends. When I expressed my disapprobation of Henry's assisting by any means or in any way such boyish extravagance, he said that the lad had guardians; and therefore I suppose he has property besides what may come of play-writing—for men's persons, however pretty, are seldom put under guardianship of trustees; and Henry argued, in the proper manly fashion, that the youth, having property, had also a right to be as foolish in the abuse of it as he pleased, or as his guardians would let him.

We none of us went to see "Patter *versus* Clatter," after all, having all some previous engagement, so that, though it was literally given for our special amusement, we were none of us there.

I have received no less than four American letters by the last steamer, and this, though a welcome pleasure, is also a considerable addition to the things to be done. God bless you, dearest H——. This letter was begun about three days ago, and now it is the second of April.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

[The young author of the clever play called "London Assurance" had a special interest for me from having been my brother Henry's schoolfellow at Westminster.... His career as a dramatic author and actor has won him a high and well-deserved reputation in both capacities, both in England and America.]

CLARGES STREET, Friday, April 9th.

MY DEAREST H——,

My father is just now much better; he has regained his appetite, and talks again of going out....

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I can tell you nothing about my daguerreotype; for having gone, according to appointment, last Monday, and waited, which I could ill afford to do, nearly three quarters of an hour, and finally come away, there being apparently no chance of my turn arriving at all that day, I saw nothing of it; and I think it was very well that it saw nothing of me, for such another sulky thunder-cloud as my countenance presented under these circumstances seldom sat for its picture to Ph[oe]bus Apollo, or any of his artist sons. I am to go again on Wednesday, and shall be able to tell you something about it, I hope.

I have not seen Mr. T——'s sketch of the children. He is in high delight with it himself, I believe; and, moreover, has undertaken, in the plenitude of his artistical enthusiasm, to steal a likeness of me, putting me in a great arm-chair, with S—— standing on one side for tragedy, and F—— perched on the opposite arm of the chair for comedy.

Lane was to have come here to draw the children this very evening; but it is half-past ten and he has not been, and of course is not coming....

LANE THE
ARTIST.

Good-bye, dear.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

CLARGES STREET, Monday, May 3rd, 1841.

[Pg 226] Thank you, dearest H—, for your prompt compliance with my request about your travelling information.... About the daguerreotype, you know, I should have precisely the same objection to taking another person's appointed time that I have to mine being appropriated by somebody else; but Emily has made another appointment for me: she had made one for the day on which my sister arrived, which rather provoked me; but I was resigned, nevertheless, because I had told her I would go at any time she chose to name. She let me off, however; not, I believe, from any compassion for me, but because my father had set his heart upon my going with him to the private view of the new exhibition, just a quarter of an hour after the time I was to have been at the daguerreotypist's. So to the gallery I went, an hour after Adelaide had returned from Italy; as you know, I had not seen her for several years (indeed, not since my marriage). And so to the gallery I went, with buzzing in my ears and dizziness in my eyes, and an hysterical choking, which made me afraid to open my lips. Why my father was so anxious to go to this exhibition I hardly know; but I went to please him, and came back to please myself, without having an idea of a single picture in the whole collection. Emily has now made another appointment for me, or rather for you, early on Wednesday morning, and I hope we shall accomplish something at last.

Now you want to know something about Adelaide. There she sits in the next room at the piano, singing sample-singing, and giving a taste of her quality to Charles Greville, who, you know, is an influential person in all sorts of matters, and to whom Henry has written about her merits, and probable acceptability with the fashionable musical world. She is singing most beautifully, and the passionate words of love, longing, grief, and joy burst through that utterance of musical sound, and light up her whole countenance with a perfect blaze of emotion. As for me, the tears stream over my face all the time, and I can hardly prevent myself from sobbing aloud.... She has grown very large, I think almost as large as I remember my mother; she looks very well and very handsome, and has acquired something completely foreign in her tone and manner, and even accent.... She complains of the darkness of our skies and the dulness of our mode of life here as intolerable and oppressive to the last degree....

I cannot believe happiness to be the purpose of life, for when was anything ordained with an unattainable purpose?... But life, which, but for duty, seems always sad enough to me, appears sadder than usual when I try to look at it from the point of view of the happiness it contains.

The children are well; Lane has taken a charming likeness of them, of which I promise you a copy. God bless you, dearest H—. I do not lean on human love; I do not depend or reckon on it; nor have I ever MISTAKEN any human being for my *best friend*.

Affectionately yours,

FANNY.

CLARGES STREET, May 21st.

DEAREST H—,

[Pg 227] From the midst of this musical Maelstrom I send you a voice, which, if heard instead of read, would be lamentable enough. We are lifted off our feet by the perfect torrent of engagements, of visits, of going out and receiving; our house is full, from morning till night, of people coming to sing with or listen to my sister. How her strength is to resist the demands made upon it by the violent emotions she is perpetually expressing, or how any human throat is to continue pouring out such volumes of sound without rest or respite, passes my comprehension. Now, let me tell you how I am surrounded at this minute while I write to you. At my very table sit Trelawney and Charles Young, talking to

WHIRL OF
EXCITEMENT.

me and to each other; farther on, towards my father, Mr. G—— C——; and an Italian singer on one side of my sister; and on the other, an Italian painter, who has brought letters of introduction to us; then Mary Anne Thackeray; ... furthermore, the door has just closed upon an English youth of the name of B——, who sings almost as well as an Italian, and with whom my sister has been singing her soul out for the last two hours.... We dined yesterday with the Francis Egertons; to-morrow evening we have a gathering here, with, I beg you to believe, nothing under the rank of a viscount, Beauforts, Normanbys, Wiltons, *illustrissimi tutti quanti*. Friday, my sister sings at the Palace, and we are all enveloped in a golden cloud of fashionable hard work, which rather delights my father; which my sister lends herself to, complaining a little of the trouble, fatigue, and late hours; but thinking it for the interest of her future public career, and always becoming rapt and excited beyond all other considerations in her own capital musical performances.... As for me, I am rather bewildered by the whirl in which we live, which I find rather a trying contrast to my late solitary existence in America.... The incessant music wears upon my nerves a great deal; but chiefly, I think, because half the time I am not able to listen to it quietly, and it distracts me while I am obliged to attend to other things. But indeed, often, when I can give my undivided attention to it, my sister's singing excites me to such a degree that I am obliged, after crying my bosom full of tears, to run out of the room.

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My father continues in wonderful good looks and spirits.... Here, dear H——, a long interruption.... We are off to St. John's Wood, to dine with the Procters: —— is not ready; my sister is lying on the sofa, reading aloud an Italian letter to me; the children are rioting about the room like a couple of little maniacs, and I feel inclined to endorse Macbeth's opinion of life, that it is all sound and fury and signifying nothing.... Thus far, and another interruption; and now it is to-morrow, and Lady Grey and Lady G—— have just gone out of the room, and Chauncy Hare Townsend has just come in, followed by his mesmeric German patient, who is going to perform his magnetic magic for us. I think I will let him try what sort of a subject I should be.

I enclose a little note and silk chain, brought for you from America by Miss Fanny Appleton [afterwards Mrs. Longfellow], who has just arrived in London, to the great joy of her sister. I suppose these tokens come to you from the Sedgwicks. I have a little box which poor C—— S—— brought from Catherine for you—a delicate carved wooden casket, that I have not sent to you because I was afraid it would be broken, by any post or coach conveyance. Tell me about this, how I shall send it to you. I have obtained too for you that German book which I delight in so very much, Richter's "Fruit, Flower, and Thorn Pieces," and which, in the midst of much that is probably too German, in thought, feeling, and expression, to meet with your entire sympathy, will, I think, furnish you with sweet and pleasant thoughts for a while; I scarce know anything that I like much better.

I was going to see Rachel this evening, but my brother and his wife having come up to town for the day, I do not think we ought all to go out and leave them; so that —— is gone with Adelaide and Lady M——, and I shall seize this quiet chance for writing to Emily, to whom I have not yet contrived to send a word since she left town. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The young lad Alexis, to whom I have referred in this letter was, I think, one of the first of the long train of mesmerists, magnetizers, spiritualists, charlatans, cheats, and humbugs who subsequently appealed to the notice and practised on the credulity of London society. Mr. Chauncy Hare Townsend was an enthusiastic convert to the theory of animal magnetism, and took about with him, to various houses, this German boy, whose exhibition of mesmeric phenomena was the first I ever witnessed. Mr. Townsend had almost insisted upon our receiving this visit, and we accordingly assembled in the drawing-room, to witness the powers of Alexis. We were all of us sceptical, one of our party so incurably so that after each exhibition of clairvoyance given by Alexis, and each exclamation of Mr. Townsend's, "There now, you see that?" he merely replied, with the most imperturbable phlegm, "Yes, I see it, but I don't believe it." The clairvoyant power of the young man consisted principally in reading

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A
CLAIRVOYANT.

passages from books presented to him while under the influence of the mesmeric sleep, into which he had been thrown by Mr. Townsend, and with which he was previously unacquainted. The results were certainly sufficiently curious, though probably neither marvellous nor unaccountable. To make sure that his eyes were really effectually closed, cotton-wool was laid over them, and a broad, tight bandage placed upon them; during another trial the hands of our chief sceptic were placed upon his eyelids, so as effectually to keep them completely closed, in spite of which he undoubtedly read out of a book held up before him above his eyes, and rather on a level with his forehead; nor can I remember any instance in which he appeared to find any great difficulty in doing so, except when a book suddenly fetched from another room was opened before him, when he hesitated and expressed incapacity, and then said, "The book is French;" which it was.

Believing entirely in a sort of hitherto undefined, and possibly undefinable, physical influence, by which the nervous system of one person may be affected by that of another, by special exercise of will and effort, so as to produce an almost absolute temporary subserviency of the whole nature to the force by which it is acted upon, and therefore thinking it extremely possible, and not improbable, that many of the instances of mesmeric influence I have heard related had some foundation in truth, I have, nevertheless, kept entirely aloof from the whole subject, never voluntarily attended any exhibitions of such phenomena, and regarded the whole series of experiments and experiences and pretended marvels of the numerous adepts in mesmerism with contempt and disgust—contempt for the crass ignorance and glaring dishonesty involved in their practices; and disgust, because of the moral and physical mischief their absurd juggleries were likely to produce, and in many instances did produce, upon subjects as ignorant, but less dishonest, than the charlatans by whom they were duped.

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The thing having, in my opinion, a very probable existence, possibly a physical force of considerable effect, and not thoroughly ascertained or understood nature, the experiments people practised and lent themselves to appeared to me exactly as wise and as becoming as if they had drunk so much brandy or eaten so much opium or hasheesh, by way of trying the effect of these drugs upon their constitution; with this important difference that the magnetic experiments severely tested the nervous system of both patient and operator, and had, besides, an indefinite element of moral importance, in the attempted control of one human will by another, through physical means, which appeared to me to place all such experiments at once among things forbidden to rational and responsible agents.

I am now speaking only of the early developments of physical phenomena exhibited by the first magnetizers and mesmerizers—the conjurers by passes and somnolence and other purely physical processes; the crazy and idiotic performances of their successors, the so-called spiritualists, with their grotesque and disgusting pretence of intercourse with the spirits of the dead through the legs of their tables and chairs, seemed to me the most melancholy testimony to an utter want of faith in things spiritual, of belief in God and Christ's teaching, and a pitiful craving for such a faith, as well as to the absence of all rational common sense, in the vast numbers of persons deluded by such processes. In this aspect (the total absence of right reason and real religion demonstrated by these ludicrous and blasphemous juggleries in our Christian communities), that which was farcical in the lowest degree became tragical in the highest. I only witnessed this one mesmeric exhibition, on the occasion of this visit paid to us by Mr. Townsend and Alexis, until several years afterwards, in the house of my excellent friend Mr. Combe, in Edinburgh, when I was one of a party called upon to witness some experiments of the same kind. I was staying with Mr. Combe and my cousin Cecilia, when one evening their friend Mrs. Crow, authoress of more than one book, I believe, and of a collection of supernatural horrors, of stories of ghosts, apparitions, etc., etc., called "The Night Side of Nature" (the lady had an evident sympathy for the absurd and awful), came, bringing with her a Dr. Lewis, a negro gentleman, who was creating great excitement in

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Edinburgh by his advocacy of the theories of mesmerism, and his own powers of magnetizing. Mrs. Crow had threatened Mr. and Mrs. Combe with a visit from this *professor*, and though neither of them had the slightest tendency to belief in any such powers as those Dr. Lewis laid claim to, they received him with kindly courtesy, and consented, with the amused indifference of scepticism, to be spectators of his experiments. Under these circumstances, great as was my antipathy to the whole thing, I did not like to raise any objection to it or to leave the room, which would have been a still more marked expression of my feeling; so I sat down with the rest of the company round the drawing-room table, Mr. and Mrs. Combe, Dr. Lewis, Mrs. Crow, our friend Professor William Gregory, and Dr. Becker—the latter gentleman a man of science, brother, I think, to Prince Albert's private librarian—who was to be the subject of Dr. Lewis's experiments, having already lent himself for the same purpose to that gentleman, and been pronounced highly sensitive to the magnetic influence.

MAGNETIC
INFLUENCE.

I sat by Dr. Becker, and opposite to Dr. Lewis, with the width of the table between us. What ulterior processes were to be exhibited I do not know, but the first result to be obtained was to throw Dr. Becker into a mesmeric state of somnolence, under the influence of the operator. The latter presently began his experiment, and, drawing entirely from his coat and shirt sleeve a long, lithe, black hand, the finger-tips of which were of that pale livid tinge so common in the hands of negroes, he directed it across the table towards Dr. Becker, and began slowly making passes at him. We were all profoundly still and silent, and, in spite of my disgust, I watched the whole scene with considerable interest. By degrees the passes became more rapid, and the hand was stretched nearer and nearer towards its victim, waving and quivering like some black snake, while the face of the operator assumed an expression of the most concentrated powerful purpose, which, combined with his sable color and the vehement imperative gestures which he aimed at Dr. Becker, really produced a quasi-diabolical effect. The result, however, was not immediate. Dr. Becker was apparently less susceptible this evening than on previous occasions; but Dr. Lewis renewed and repeated his efforts, each time with a nearer approach and increased vehemence, and at length his patient's eyelids began to quiver, he gasped painfully for breath, and was evidently becoming overpowered by the influence to which he had subjected himself; when, after a few seconds of the most intense efforts on the part of Dr. Lewis, these symptoms passed off, and the mesmerizer, with much appearance of exhaustion, declared himself, for some reason or other, unable to produce the desired effect (necessary for the subsequent exhibition of his powers) of compelling Dr. Becker into a state of somnolency—a thing which he had not failed to accomplish on every previous occasion. The trial had to be given up, and much speculation and discussion followed as to the probable cause of the failure, for which neither the magnetizer nor his patient could account. Believing in this strange action of nervous power in one person over another, I am persuaded that I prevented Dr. Lewis's experiment from succeeding. The whole exhibition had from the very beginning aroused in me such a feeling of antagonism, such a mingled horror, disgust, and indignation, that, when my neighbor appeared about to succumb to the influence operating upon him, my whole nature was roused to such a state of active opposition to the process I was witnessing that I determined, if there was power in human will to make itself felt by mere silent concentrated effort of purpose, I would prevent Dr. Lewis from accomplishing his end; and it seemed to me, as I looked at him, as if my whole being had become absorbed in my determination to defeat his endeavor to set Dr. Becker to sleep. The nervous tension I experienced is hardly to be described, and I firmly believe that I accomplished my purpose. I was too much exhausted, after we left the table, to speak, and too disagreeably affected by the whole scene to wish to do so.

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The next day I told Mr. Combe of my counter-magnetizing, or rather neutralizing, experiment, by which he was greatly amused; but I do not think he cared to enter upon any investigation of the subject, feeling little interested in it, and having been rather surprised into this exhibition of it by Mrs. Crow's bringing Dr. Lewis to his house. That lady being undoubtedly an admirable

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subject for all such experiments, having what my dear Mr. Combe qualified as "a most preposterous organ of wonder," for which, poor woman, I suppose she paid the penalty in a terrible nervous seizure, a fit of temporary insanity, during which she imagined that she received a visit from the Virgin Mary and our Saviour, both of whom commanded her to go without any clothes on into the streets of Edinburgh, and walk a certain distance in that condition, in reward for which the sins and sufferings of the whole world would be immediately alleviated. Upon her demurring to fulfil this mandate, she received the further assurance that if she took her card-case in her right hand and her pocket-handkerchief in her left, her condition of nudity would be entirely unobserved by any one she met. Under the influence of her diseased fancy, Mrs. Crow accordingly went forth, with nothing on but a pair of boots, and being immediately rescued from the terrible condition of mad exposure, in which she had already made a few paces in the street where she lived, and carried back into her house, she exclaimed, "Oh, I must have taken my card-case and my handkerchief in the wrong hands, otherwise nobody would have seen me!" She recovered entirely from this curious attack of hallucination, and I met her in society afterwards, perfectly restored to her senses.

On one occasion I allowed myself to be persuaded into testing my own powers of mesmerizing, by throwing a young friend into a magnetic sleep. I succeeded with considerable difficulty, and the next day experienced great nervous exhaustion, which, I think, was the consequence of her having, as she assured me she had, resisted with the utmost effort of her will my endeavor to put her to sleep. As I disapproved, however, of all such experiments, this is the only one I ever tried.

MESMERISM.

My belief in the reality of the influence was a good deal derived from my own experience, which was that of an invariable tendency to sleep in the proximity of certain persons of whom I was particularly fond. I used to sit at Mrs. Harry Siddons's feet, and she had hardly laid her hand upon my head before it fell upon her knees, and I was in a profound slumber. My friend Miss ——'s neighborhood had the same effect upon me, and when we were not engaged in furious discussion, I was very apt to be fast asleep whenever I was near her. E —— S—— relieved me of an intense toothache once by putting me to sleep with a few mesmeric passes, and I have, moreover, more than once, immediately after violent nervous excitement, been so overcome with drowsiness as to be unable to move. I remember a most ludicrous instance of this occurring to me in the church of Stratford-upon-Avon, when, standing before Shakespeare's tomb, and looking intently at his monument, I became so overpowered with sleep that I could hardly rouse myself enough to leave the church, and I begged very hard to be allowed to sleep out my sleep, then and there, upon the stones under which he lay.

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After extreme distress of mind, I have sometimes slept a whole day and night without waking; and once, when overcome with anguish, slept, with hardly an hour's interval at a time, the greater part of a week. The drowsiness inspired in me by some of my friends I attribute entirely to physical sympathy; others, of whom I was nearly as fond, never affected me in this manner in the slightest degree. I have often congratulated myself upon the fact that I had by no means an equal tendency to physical antipathy, though, in common with most other people, I have had some experience of that also. My very dear and excellent friend —— always *m'agaçait les nerfs*, as French people say, though I was deeply attached to her and very fond of her society. Mrs. ——, of whose excellence I had the most profound conviction, and who was generally esteemed perfectly charming by her intimates, affected me with such a curious intuitive revulsion that the first time she came and sat down by me I was obliged to get up and leave the room—indeed, the house. Two men of our acquaintance, remarkable for their general attractiveness and powers of pleasing, —— and ——, were never in the same room ten minutes with me without my becoming perfectly chilled through, as though I had suddenly had the door of an ice-house opened upon me. They were entirely dissimilar men in every respect....

Of the spiritualistic performances of Messrs. Hume, Foster, etc., etc., I never was a witness. An intimate acquaintance of mine, who knew Hume well, assured me that she knew him to be an impostor, adding at the same time, "But I also know him to be clairvoyant," which seemed to me mere tautology.

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My sister and Charles Greville, having had their curiosity excited by some of the reports of Mr. Foster's performances, agreed to go together to visit him, and having received an appointment for a *séance*, went to his house. Certainly, if Mr. Foster had taken in either of those two customers of his, it would have gone near converting me. Charles Greville, who was deaf, and spoke rather loud in consequence of that infirmity, said, as he entered, to my sister, "I shall ask him about my mother." Adelaide, quite determined to test the magician's powers to the utmost, replied, with an air of concern, as if shocked at the idea, "Oh, no, don't do that; it is too dreadful." However, this suggestion of course not being thrown away upon Mr. Foster, Charles Greville desired to be put in communication with the spirit of his mother, which was accordingly duly done by the operator, and various messages were delivered, as purporting to come from the spirit of Lady Charlotte Greville to her son. After this farce had gone on for a little while, Charles Greville turned to my sister with perfect composure, and said, "Well, now perhaps you had better ask him to tell you something about your mother, because, you know, mine is not dead." The *séance* of course proceeded no further. At an earlier period of it, as they were sitting round a table, Mr. Foster desired that written names might be furnished him of the persons with whose spirits communication might be desired. Among the names written down for this purpose by my sister were several foreign, Italian and German, names, with which she felt very sure Mr. Foster could not possibly have any acquaintance; indeed, it was beyond all question that he never could have heard of them. Adelaide was sitting next to him, watching his operations with extreme attention, and presently observed him very dexterously convey several of these foreign names into his sleeve, and from thence to the ground under the table. After a little while, Mr. Foster observed that, singularly enough, several of the names he had received were now missing, and by some extraordinary means had disappeared entirely from among the rest. "Oh yes," said my sister very quietly, "but they are only under the table, just where you put them a little while ago." With such subjects of course Mr. Foster performed no miracles.

MR.
GREVILLE'S
TEST.

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Some years ago a new form of these objectionable practices came into vogue, and one summer, going up into Massachusetts, I found the two little mountain villages of Lenox and Stockbridge possessed, in the proper sense of the term, by a devil of their own making, called "Planchette." A little heart-shaped piece of wood, running upon castors, and that could almost be moved with a breath, and carrying along a sheet of paper, over which it was placed, a pencil was supposed to write, on its own inspiration, communications in reply to the person's thoughts whose finger-tips were to rest above, without giving any impulse to the board. Of course a hand held in this constrained attitude is presently compelled to rest itself by some slight pressure; the effort to steady it, and the nervous effort not to press upon the machine, producing inevitably in the wrist aching weariness, and in the fingers every conceivable tendency to nervous twitching. Add to this the intense conviction of the foolish folk, half of them hysterical women, that their concentrated effort of will was, in combination with a mysterious supernatural agency, to move the board; and the board naturally not only moved but, carrying the pencil along with it, wrote the answers required and desired by the credulous consulters of the wooden oracle.

PLANCHETTE.

The thing would have been indescribably ludicrous but for the terrible effect it was having upon the poor people who were practising upon themselves with it. Excitable young girls of fifteen and sixteen, half hysterical with their wonderment; ignorant, afflicted women, who had lost dear relations and friends by death; superstitious lads, and men too incapable of consecutive reasoning to perceive the necessary connection between cause and effect; the whole community, in short, seemed to me catching the credulous infection one from another, and to be in a state bordering upon insanity or idiocy.

A young lady-friend of mine, a miserable invalid, was so possessed with faith in this wooden demon that, after resisting repeated entreaties on her part to witness some of its performances, I at length, at her earnest request, saw her operate upon it. The writing was almost unintelligible, and undoubtedly produced by the vibrating impulse given to the machine by her nervous, feeble, diaphanous hands. Finding my scepticism invincible by these means, my friend implored me to think in my own mind a question, and see if Planchette would not answer it. I yielded at last to her all but hysterical importunity, and thought of an heraldic question concerning the crest on a ring which I wore, which I felt was quite beyond Planchette's penetration; but while we sat in quiet expectation of the reply, which of course did not come, my friend's mother—a sober, middle-aged lady, habitually behaving herself with perfect reasonableness, and, moreover, without a spark of imagination (but that, indeed, was rather of course; belief in such supernatural agencies betokening, in my opinion, an absence of poetical imagination, as well as of spiritual faith), practical, sensible, commonplace, without a touch of nonsense of any kind about her, as I had always supposed—sat opposite the *machine infernale*, over which her daughter's fingers hung suspended, and as the answer did not come, broke out for all the world like one of Baal's prophets of old: "Now, Planchette, now, Planchette, behave; do your duty. Now, Planchette, write at once," etc.; and I felt as if I were in Bedlam. One thing is certain, that if Planchette's answer had approached in the remotest degree the answer to the question of my thought, I would then and there have broken Planchette in half, and left my friends in the possession of their remaining brains until they had procured another.

The strangest experience, however, that I met with in connection with this absurd delusion occurred during a visit that I received from Mrs. B—— S——. That lady was staying with her daughter in Stockbridge, and did me the honor to call on me at Lenox with that young lady. Among other things spoken of I asked my distinguished visitor some questions about this superstitious folly, Planchette, nothing doubting that I should hear from her an eloquent condemnation of all the absurd proceedings going on in the two villages. The lady's face assumed a decided expression of grave disapprobation, certainly, and she spoke to this effect: "Planchette! Oh dear, yes, we are perfectly familiar with Planchette, and, indeed, have been in the habit of consulting it quite often." "Oh, indeed," quoth I, and I felt my own face growing longer with amazement as I spoke. "Yes," continued my celebrated visitor, with much deliberation, "we have; but I think it will no longer be possible for us to do so. No, we must certainly give up having anything to do with it." "Dear me!" said I, almost breathless, and with a queer quaver in my voice, that I could hardly command, "may I ask why, pray?" "The language it uses——" "It!—the language *it* uses!" ejaculated I. "Yes," she pursued, with increasing solemnity, "the language it uses is so reprehensible that it will be quite impossible for us to consult or have anything further to do with it." "Really," said I, hardly able to utter for suppressed laughter; "and may I ask, may I inquire what language it does use?" "Why," returned Mrs. S——, with some decorous hesitation and reluctance to utter the words that followed, "the last time we consulted it, it told us we were all a pack of damned fools." "Oh!" exploded I, "I believe in Planchette, I believe in Planchette!" Mrs. S—— drew herself up with an air of such offended surprise at my burst of irrepressible merriment that I suddenly stopped, and letting what was boiling below my laughter come to the surface, I exclaimed, in language far more shocking to ears polite than Planchette's own: "And do you really think that Satan, the great devil of hell, in whom you believe, is amusing himself with telling you such truths as those, through a bit of board on wheels?" "Really," replied the woman of genius, in a tone of lofty dignity, "I cannot pretend to say whether or not it is *the* devil; of one thing I am very certain, the influence by which it speaks is undoubtedly devilish." I turned in boundless amazement to the younger lady, whose mischievous countenance, with a broad grin upon it, at once settled all my doubts as to the devilish influence under which Planchette had spoken such home truths to her family circle, and I let the subject drop, remaining much astonished, as I often am, at the degree to which *les gens d'esprit sont bêtes*.

I once attended some young friends to a lecture, as it called itself, upon electro-biology. It was tedious, stupid, and ridiculous; the only thing that struck me was the curious condition of bewildered imbecility into which two or three young men, who presented themselves to be operated upon, fell, under the influence of the lecturer. I had reason to believe that there was no collusion in the case, and therefore was surprised at the evident state of stupor and mental confusion (even to the not being able to pronounce their own name) which they exhibited when, after looking intently and without moving at a coin placed in their hand for some time, their faculties appeared entirely bewildered, and though they were not asleep, they seemed hardly conscious, and opposed not the slightest resistance to the orders they received to sit down, stand up, to try to remember their names,—which they were assured they could not, and did not,—and their general submission, of course in very trifling matters, to the sort of bullying directions addressed to them in a loud peremptory tone; to which they replied with the sort of stupefied languor of persons half asleep or under the influence of opium. I did not quite understand how they were thrown into this curious condition by the mere assumption of an immovable attitude and fixed gazing at a piece of coin; an experience of my own, however, subsequently enlightened me as to the possible nervous effect of such immobility and strained attention.

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My friend Sir Frederick Leighton, despairing of finding a model to assume a sufficiently dramatic expression of wickedness for a picture he was painting of Jezebel, was deploring his difficulty one day, when Henry Greville, who was standing by, said to him, "Why don't you ask her"—pointing to me—"to do it for you?" Leighton expressed some kindly reluctance to put my countenance to such a use; but I had not the slightest objection to stand for Jezebel, if by so doing I could help him out of his dilemma. So to his studio I went, ascended his platform, and having been duly placed in the attitude required, and instructed on what precise point of the wall opposite to me to fix my eyes, I fell to thinking of the scene the picture represented, of the meeting between Ahab and his wicked queen with Elijah on the threshold of Naboth's vineyard, endeavoring, after my old stage fashion, to assume as thoroughly as possible the character which I was representing. Before I had retained the constrained attitude and fixed immovable gaze for more than a short time, my eyes grew dim, the wall I was glaring at seemed to waver about before me, I turned sick, a cold perspiration broke out on my forehead, my ears buzzed, my knees trembled, my heart throbbed, and I suppose I was not far from a fainting fit. I sat abruptly down on the platform, and called my friendly artist to my assistance, describing to him my sensations, and asking if he could explain what had occasioned them. He expressed remorseful distress at having subjected me to such annoyance, saying, however, that my condition was not an uncommon one for painters' models to be thrown into by the nervous strain of the fixed look and attention, and rigid immobility of position, required of them; that he had known men succumb to it on a first experiment, but had thought me so strong, and so little liable to any purely nervous affection, that it had never occurred to him for a moment that there was any danger of my being thus overcome.

STAND FOR
JEZEBEL.

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I recovered almost immediately, the nervous strain being taken off, and resumed my duty as a model, taking care to vary my expression and attitude whenever I felt at all weary, and resting myself by sitting down and lending another aspect of my face to my friend for his Elijah.

I found, after this experience, no difficulty in understanding the state of bewildered stupefaction into which the lecturer on electro-biology had thrown his patients by demanding of them a fixed attention of mind, look, and attitude to a given point of contemplation. I think, just before I quite broke down, I could neither have said where I was, nor who I was, nor contradicted Sir Frederick Leighton if he had assured me that my name was Polly and that I was putting the kettle on.]

DEAREST HARRIET,

I have not a morsel of letter-paper in my writing-book; do not, therefore, let your first glance take offence at the poor narrow note-paper, on which our dear friend Emily is forever writing to me, and which throws me into a small fury every time I get an affectionate communication from her on it. Our drawing-room has only this instant emptied itself of a throng of morning visitors, among whom my brother John and his wife, Mary Anne Thackeray, Dick Pigott, Sydney Smith, and A— C—....

My letter has suffered an interruption, dear Harriet; I had to go out and return all manner of visits, took a walk with Adelaide in Kensington Gardens, went and dined quietly with M— M—, and came back at half-past ten, to find Mr. C— very quietly established here with my father and sister....

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This is to-morrow, my dear Harriet, and we are all engaged sitting to Lane, who is making medallion likenesses of us all. John and his wife together in one sphere, their two little children in another, — and I in one eternity, and our chicks in another, their two little profiles looking so funny and so pretty, one just behind the other; my father, my sister, and Henry have each their world to themselves in single blessedness. The likenesses are all good, and charmingly executed. I should like to be able to send you mine and my children's, but as he will accept no remuneration for them, and as time and trouble are the daily bread of an artist—

Here I was interrupted again, and obliged to put by my letter, which was begun last Thursday, and it is now Sunday afternoon. Our drawing-room has just emptied itself of A — M— and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Grote, Mr. H—, young Mr. K— of Frankfort, and Chorley. Mrs. Grote brought with her Fanny Ellsler's little girl, a lovely child about seven years old....

I must tell you something of our event of yesterday. A concert was given for the benefit of the Poles, the Duchess of Sutherland condescending to lend Stafford House, provided the assemblage was quite select and limited to four hundred people; to accomplish which desirable point, and at the same time make the thing answer its charitable purpose, the tickets were sold at first at two guineas apiece, and on the morning itself of the concert at five guineas. Rachel was to recite, Liszt to play, and my sister was requested to sing, which she agreed to do, the occasion being semi-public and private, so to speak. A large assembly of our finest (and bluntest) people was not a bad audience, in a worldly sense, for her *début*. She sang beautifully, and looked beautiful, and was extremely admired and praised and petted.

CONCERT
AT
STAFFORD
HOUSE.

The whole scene was one of the gayest and most splendid possible, the entertainment and assembly taking place in the great hall and staircase of Stafford House, with its scarlet floor-cloths, and marble stairs and balustrades, and pillars of scagliola, and fretted roof of gold and white, and skylight surrounded and supported by gigantic gilt caryatides.

The wide noble flights of steps and long broad galleries, filled with brilliantly dressed groups; with the sunlight raining down in streams on the panels and pillars of the magnificent hall, on the beautiful faces of the women, and the soft sheen and brilliant varied coloring of their clothes, and on perfect masses of flowers, piled in great pyramids of every form and hue in every niche and corner, or single plants covered with an exquisite profusion of perfect bloom, standing here and there in great precious china vases stolen from the Arabian Nights; it really was one of the grandest and gayest shows you can imagine, more beautiful than Paul Veronese's most splendid pictures, which it reminded one of.

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My sister's singing overcame me dreadfully....

I must close this letter, my dear; my head is in such a state of confusion that I scarcely know what I write; and if I keep it longer, you will never get it.

Yours ever truly—

(I don't know what I am saying; I love you affectionately, but I am almost beside myself with—everything.)

Yours ever,

CLARGES STREET, Sunday, June 20th, 1841.

You know, dearest Harriet, my aversion to writing short letters; I have something of the same feeling about that hateful little note-paper on which I have lately written to you. The sight of these fair large squares laid on my table, and of at least six unanswered letters of yours, prompts me to use this quiet half-hour—quiet by comparison only, for —, Adelaide, and little F— are shouting all round me, and a distracting brass band, that I dote upon, is playing tunes to which I am literally writing in time; nevertheless, in this house, this may be called a moment of profoundest quiet.

I do not believe that you will have quarrelled much with the note-paper, because I certainly filled it as well as I could; but I always feel insulted when anybody that I really care for writes to me on those frivolous, insufficient-looking sheets. I suppose, if you have missed Emily's Boswellian records of our sayings and doings here, you have received from her instead epistles redolent of the sweetness of the country, whole nosegays of words, that have made me gasp again for the grass and trees, and the natural enjoyments of life. Her affectionate remembrance reaches me every day by penny post, a little envelope full of delicious orange-blossoms, with which my clothes and everything about me are perfumed for the rest of the day.

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You have not said much to me about the daguerreotype, nor did you ask me anything about the process; but that, I suppose, is because Emily furnished you with so many more details than I probably should, and with much more scientific knowledge to make her description clear. I found it better looking than I had expected, but altogether different, which surprised me, because I thought I knew my own face. It was less thick in the outlines than I had thought it would be, but also older looking than I fancied myself, and it gave me a heavy jaw, which I was not conscious of possessing. The process was wonderfully rapid; I think certainly not above two minutes. I have seen several of Charles Young, which are admirable, and do not appear to me exaggerated in any respect....

My father and Adelaide dined with the Macdonalds on Sunday; and Sir John, who, you know, is adjutant-general, made her a kind of half promise that he would give Henry leave to come over from Ireland and see her.

I believe the first time that S— heard her aunt sing was one night after she was in bed (she sleeps in my room, where one does not lose a note of the music below). When I went up, I found her wide awake, and she started up in her bed, exclaiming, "Well, how many angels have you got down there, I should like to know?"

I wrote thus much this morning, dear Harriet; this evening I have another quiet season in which to resume my pen.... I have been obliged to give up my dinner engagement for to-day, and I sat down by the failing light of half-past seven o'clock to eat a cold dinner alone, with a book in my hand: which combination of circumstances reminded me so forcibly of my American home, that I could hardly make out whether I was here or there.

So far yesterday, Thursday evening; it is now Friday morning. Adelaide has gone out with Mary Anne Thackeray to buy cheap gowns at a bankrupt shop in Regent Street; the piano is silent, and I can hear myself think, and have some consciousness of what I am writing about....

Dearest Harriet, it is now Sunday morning; there is a most stupendous row at the pianoforte, and, luckily, there is no more space in this paper for my addled brains to testify to the effect of this musical tempest. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

CLARGES STREET, Wednesday, June 23rd, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

You asked me some time ago some questions about Rachel, which I never answered, in the first place because I had not seen her then, and since I have seen her I have had other things I wanted to say. Everybody here is now raving about her. I have only seen her once on the stage, and heard her declaim at Stafford House, the morning of the concert for the Poles. Her appearance is very striking: she is of a very good height; too thin for beauty, but not for dignity or grace; her want of chest and breadth indeed almost suggest a tendency to pulmonary disease, coupled with her pallor and her youth (she is only just twenty). Her voice is the most remarkable of her natural qualifications for her vocation, being the deepest and most sonorous voice I ever heard from a woman's lips: it wants brilliancy, variety, and tenderness; but it is like a fine, deep-toned bell, and expresses admirably the passions in the delineation of which she excels—scorn, hatred, revenge, vitriolic irony, concentrated rage, seething jealousy, and a fierce love which seems in its excess allied to all the evil which sometimes springs from that bittersweet root. [I shall never forget the first time I ever heard Mademoiselle Rachel speak. I was acting my old part of Julia, in "The Hunchback," at Lady Ellesmere's, where the play was got up for an audience of her friends, and for her especial gratification. The room was darkened, with the exception of our stage, and I had no means of discriminating anybody among my audience, which was, as became an assembly of such distinguished persons, decorously quiet and undemonstrative. But in one of the scenes, where the foolish heroine, in the midst of her vulgar triumph at the Earl of Rochdale's proposal, is suddenly overcome by the remorseful recollection of her love for Clifford, and almost lets the earl's letter fall from her trembling hands, I heard a voice out of the darkness, and it appeared to me almost close to my feet, exclaiming, in a tone the vibrating depth of which I shall never forget, "*Ah, bien, bien, très bien!*"] Mademoiselle Rachel's face is very expressive and dramatically fine, though not absolutely beautiful. It is a long oval, with a head of classical and very graceful contour; the forehead rather narrow and not very high; the eyes small, dark, deep-set, and terribly powerful; the brow straight, noble, and fine in form, though not very flexible.

I was immensely struck and carried away with her performance of "Hermione," though I am not sure that some of the parts did not seem to me finer than the whole, as a whole conception. That in which she is unrivalled by any actor or actress I ever saw is the expression of a certain combined and concentrated hatred and scorn. Her reply to Andromaque's appeal to her, in that play, was one of the most perfect things I have ever seen on the stage: the cold, cruel, acrid enjoyment of her rival's humiliation,—the quiet, bitter, unmerciful exercise of the power of torture, was certainly, in its keen incisiveness, quite incomparable. It is singular that so young a woman should so especially excel in delineations and expressions of this order of emotion, while in the utterance of tenderness, whether in love or sorrow, she appears comparatively less successful; I am not, however, perhaps competent to pronounce upon this point, for Hermione and Emilie, in Corneille's "Cinna," are not characters abounding in tenderness. Lady M— saw her the other day in "Marie Stuart," and cried her eyes almost out, so she must have some pathetic power. — was so enchanted with her, both on and off the stage, that he took me to call upon her, on her arrival in London, and I was very much pleased with the quiet grace and dignity, the excellent *bon ton* of her manners and deportment. The other morning too, at Stafford House, I was extremely overcome at my sister's first public exhibition in England, and was endeavoring, while I screened myself behind a pillar, to hide my emotion and talk with some composure to Rachel; she saw, however, how it was with me, and with great kindness allowed me to go into a room that had been appropriated to her use between her declamations, and was very amiable and courteous to me.

She is completely the rage in London now; all the fine ladies and gentlemen crazy after her, the Queen throwing her roses on the stage out of her own bouquet, and viscountesses and marchionesses driving her about, *à l'envie l'une de l'autre*, to show her all the lions of the town. She is miserably supported on the stage, poor thing, the *corps dramatique* engaged to act with her being not only bad, but some of them (the principal hero, principally) irresistibly ludicrous.

By-the-by, I was assured, by a man who went to see the "Marie Stuart," that this worthy, who enacted the part of Leicester, carried his public familiarity with Queen Elizabeth to such lengths as to nudge her with his elbow on some particular occasion. Don't you think that was nice?

Mrs. Grote and I have had sundry small encounters, and I think I perceive that, had I leisure to cultivate her acquaintance more thoroughly, I should like her very much. The other evening, at her own house, she nearly killed me with laughing, by assuring me that she had always had a perfect passion for dancing, and that she had entirely missed her vocation, which ought to have been that of an opera-dancer; (now, Harriet, she looks like nothing but Trelawney in petticoats.) I suppose this is the secret of her great delight in Ellsler.

I find, in an old letter of yours that I was reading over this morning, this short question: "Does imagination make a fair balance, in heightening our pains and our pleasures?" That would depend, I suppose, upon whether we had as many pleasures as pains (real ones, I mean) to be colored by it; but as the mere possession of an imaginative temperament is in itself a more fertile source of unreal pains than pleasures, the answer may be short too; an imaginative mind has almost always a tendency to be a melancholy one. Shakespeare is the glorious exception to this, but then he is an exception to everything. I must bid you good-bye now....

God bless you, dear.

Ever your affectionate,

FANNY.

[After seeing Mademoiselle Rachel, as I subsequently did, in all her great parts, and as often as I had an opportunity of doing so, the impression she has left upon my mind is that of the greatest dramatic genius, except Kean, who was not greater, and the most incomparable dramatic artist I ever saw. The qualities I have mentioned as predominating in her performances still appear to me to have been their most striking ones; but her expressions of tenderness, though rare, were perfect—one instance of which was the profound pathos of the short exclamation, "*Oh, mon cher, Curiace!*" that precedes her fainting fit of agony in "Camille," and the whole of the last scene of "Marie Stuart," in which she excelled Madame Ristori as much in pathetic tenderness as she surpassed her in power, in the famous scene of defiance to Elizabeth. As for any comparison between her and that beautiful woman and charming actress, or her successor on the French stage of the present day, Mademoiselle Sarah Bernhardt, I do not admit any such for a moment.]

Bannisters, July 28th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

You certainly have not thought that I was never going to write to you again, but I dare say you have wondered when I should ever write to you again. This seems a very fitting place whence to address you, who are so affectionately associated with the recollection of the last happy days I spent here.

How vain is the impatience of despondency! How wise, as well as how pleasant, it is to hope! Not that all can who would; but I verily believe that the hopeful are the wisest as well as the happiest of this mortal congregation; for, in spite of the credulous distrust of the desponding, the accomplishment of our wishes awaits us in the future quite as often as their defeat, and the cheerful faithful spirit of those who can hope has the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come.

At the end of four years, here I am again with my dear friend Emily, even in this lovely home of hers, from which a doom, ever at hand, has threatened to expel her every day of these four years.... In spite of separation, distance, time, and the event which stands night and day at her door, threatening to drive her forth from this beloved home, here we are again together, enjoying each other's fellowship in these familiar beautiful scenes: walking, driving, riding, and living together, as we have twice been permitted to do before, as we are now allowed to do again, to the confusion of all the depressing doubts which have prevented this fair prospect from ever rising before my eyes with the light of hope upon it—so little chance did there seem of its ever being realized.

Emily and I rode to Netley Abbey yesterday, and looked at the pillar on which your name

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and ours were engraved with so many tears before my last return to America. If I had had a knife, I would have rewritten the record, at least deepened it; but, indeed, it seems of little use to do so while the soft, damp breath of the air suffices to efface it from the stone, and while every stone of the beautiful ruin is a memento to each one of us of the other two, and the place will be to all time haunted by our images, and by thoughts as vivid as bodily presences to the eyes of whichever of us may be there without the others....

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Our plans are assuming very definite shape, and you will probably be glad to hear that there is every prospect of our spending another year in England, inasmuch as we are at this moment in treaty for a house which we think of taking with my father for that time. My sister has concluded an extremely agreeable and advantageous engagement with Covent Garden, for a certain number of nights, at a very handsome salary. This is every way delightful to me; it keeps her in England, among her friends, and in the exercise of her profession; it places her where she will meet with respect and kindness, both from the public and the members of the profession with whom she will associate. Covent Garden is in some measure our vantage-ground, and I am glad that she should thence make her first appeal to an English audience.

Our new house (if we get it) is in Harley Street, close to Cavendish Square, and has a room for you, of course, dearest Harriet; and you will come and see my sister's first appearance, and stay with me next winter, as you did last. Our more immediate plans stand thus: we leave this sweet and dear place, to our great regret, to-morrow; to-morrow night and part of Thursday we spend at Addleston with my brother; then we remain in town till Monday, when we go to the Hoo (Lord Dacre's); then we return to town, and afterwards proceed to Mrs. Arkwright's at Sutton, and then to the Francis Egertons', at Worsley; and after that we set off for Germany, where we think of remaining till the end of September. Adelaide's engagement at Covent Garden begins in November, when you must come and assist in bringing her out properly. God bless you, dear. Give my love to Dorothy, and believe me

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

THE HOO, Wednesday, July 28th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

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I wrote you a long letter yesterday, which was no sooner finished than I tore it up.... We came down to this place yesterday. I obtained Lady Dacre's leave to bring my sister, and of course I have my children with me, so we are here in great force. Independently of my long regard for and gratitude to Lord and Lady Dacre, which made me glad to visit them, I like this old place, and find it pleasant, though it has no pretensions to be a fine one. Some part of the offices is Saxon, of an early date, old enough to be interesting. The house itself, however, is comparatively modern: it is a square building, and formerly enclosed a large courtyard, but in later days the open space has been filled up with a fine oak staircase (roofed in with a skylight), the carving of which is old and curious and picturesque. The park is not large, but has some noble trees, which you would delight in; the flower-garden, stolen from a charming old wood (some of the large trees of which are coaxed into its boundaries), is a lovely little strip of velvet lawn, dotted all over with flower-beds, like large nosegays dropped on the turf; and the rough, whitey-brown, weather-beaten stone of the house is covered nearly to the top windows with honeysuckle and jasmine. It is not at all like what is called a fine place; it is not even as pretty and cheerful as Bannisters: but it has an air of ancient stability and dignity, without pretension or ostentation, that is very agreeable....

We left my father tolerably well in health, but a good deal shaken in spirits.... I am expected downstairs, to read to them in the drawing-room something from Shakespeare; and our afternoon is promised to a cricket-match, for the edification of one of our party, who never saw one. I must therefore conclude.... Good-bye, dearest Harriet. As for me, to be once more in pure air, among flowers and under trees, is all-sufficient happiness. I do cordially hate all towns.

Give my dear love to Mrs. Harry Siddons, if she is near you, and tell her I shall surely

not leave Europe without seeing her again, let her be where she will. Remember me affectionately to Dorothy, and believe me.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

THE HOO, Thursday, July 29th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote to you yesterday, but an unanswered letter of yours lies on the top of my budget of "letters to answer," and I take it up to reply to it. The life I am leading does not afford much to say; yet that is not quite true, for to loving hearts or thinking minds the common events of every day, in the commonest of lives, have a meaning.... After breakfast yesterday we took up Lady Dacre's translations from Petrarch—a very admirable performance, in which she has contrived to bend our northern utterance into a most harmonious and yet conscientious interpretation of those perfect Italian compositions. My sister read the Italian, which, with her pure pronunciation and clear ringing voice, sounded enchanting; after which I echoed it with the English translation; all which went on very prosperously, till I came to that touching invocation written on Good Friday, when the poet, no longer offering incense to his mortal idol, but penitential supplications to his God, implores pardon for the waste of life and power his passion had betrayed him into, and seeks for help to follow higher aims and holier purposes; a pathetic and solemn composition, which vibrated so deeply upon kindred chords in my heart that my voice became choked, and I could not read any more. After this, Adelaide read us some Wordsworth, for which she has a special admiration; after which, having recovered my voice, I took up "Romeo and Juliet," for which we all have a special admiration; and so the morning passed. After lunch, we went, B—, Lord Dacre, and I on horseback, Lady Dacre, Adelaide, and G— S— in the open carriage, to a pretty village seven miles off, where a cricket-match was being played, into the mysteries of which some of us particularly wished to be initiated.

The village of Hitchin is full of Quakers, and I rather think the game was being played by them, for such a silent meeting I never saw, out of a Friends' place of worship. But the ride was beautiful, and the day exquisite; and I learned for the first time that clematis is called, in this part of England, "traveller's joy," which name returned upon my lips, like a strain of music, at every moment, so full of poetry and sweet and touching association does it seem to me. Do you know it by that name in Ireland? I never heard it before in England, though I have been familiar with another pretty nickname for it, which you probably know—virgin's-bower. This is all very well for its flowering season; I wish somebody would find a pretty name for it when it is all covered with blown glass or soap-bubbles, and looks at a little distance like smoke.

Returning home, after entering the park, Lord Dacre had left us to go and look at a turnip-field, and B— and I started for a gallop; when my horse, a powerful old hunter, not very well curbed, and extremely hard-mouthed, receiving some lively suggestion from the rhythmical sound of his own hoofs on the turf, put his head down between his legs and tore off with me at the top of his speed. I knew there was a tallish hedge in the direction in which we were going, and, as it is full seven years since I sat a leap, I also knew that there was a fair chance of my being chucked off, if he took it, which I thought I knew he would; so I lay back in my saddle and sawed at his mouth and pulled *de corps et a'âne*, but in vain. I lost my breath, I lost my hat, and shouted at the top of my voice to B— to stop, which I thought if she did, my steed, whose spirit had been roused by emulation, would probably do too. She did not hear me, but fortunately stopped her horse before we reached the hedge, when my quadruped halted of his own sweet will, with a bound on all fours, or off all fours, that sent me half up to the sky; but I came back into my saddle without leap, without tumble, and with only my ignoble fright for my pains.

We dine at half-past seven, after which we generally have music and purse-making and discussions, poetical and political, and wine and water and biscuits, and go to bed betimes, like wise folk....

This morning a bloodhound was brought me from the dog-kennel, the largest dog of his

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kind, and the handsomest of any kind, that I ever saw; his face and ears were exquisite, his form and color magnificent, his voice appalling, and the expression of his countenance the tenderest, sweetest, and saddest you can conceive; I cannot imagine a more beautiful brute. After admiring him we went to the stables, to see a new horse Lord Dacre has just bought, and I left him being put through his paces, to come and indite this letter to you....

We leave this place on Monday for London, at the thought of which I feel half choked with smoke already. The Friday after, however, we go into the country again, to the Arkwrights' and the Francis Egertons', and then to Germany; so that our lungs and nostrils will be tolerably free passages for vital air for some little time.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. I have filled my letter with such matter as I had—too much with myself, perhaps, for any one but you; but unless I write you an epic poem about King Charlemagne, I know not well what else to write about here.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

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THE HOO, Sunday, August 1st, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote you the day before yesterday, and gave you a sort of journal of that day's proceedings. I have nothing of any different interest to tell you, inasmuch as our daily proceedings here are much of a muchness.

We return to town to-morrow afternoon, to my great regret; and I must, immediately upon our doing so, remove the family to our new abode. I am rather anxious to see how my father is; we left him in very low spirits, ... and I am anxious to see whether he has recovered them at all. I think our visit to Sutton, where we go on Friday, will be of use to him; for though he cordially dislikes the country and everything belonging to its unexciting existence, he has always had a very great attachment for Mrs. Arkwright, and perhaps, for so short a time as a week, he may be able to resist the ennui of *l'innocence des champs*....

I am well, and have been enjoying myself extremely. I love the country for itself; and the species of life which combines, as these people lead it, the pleasures of the highest civilization with the wholesome enjoyments which nature abounds in seems to me the perfection of existence, and is always beneficial as well as delightful to me. I rode yesterday a fine new horse Lord Dacre has just bought, and who is to be christened Forester, in honor of my beloved American steed, whom he somewhat resembles....

Considering our weather down here in Hertfordshire, I am afraid you must have most dismal skies at Ambleside, where you are generally so misty and damp; I am sure I recollect no English summer like this. As for poor Adelaide, she is all but frozen to death, and creeps about, lamenting for the sun, in a most piteous fashion imaginable.

I have had a letter from Cecilia Combe within the last two days, anticipating meeting us on the Rhine, either at Godesberg, where she now is, or at Bonn, where she expects to pass some time soon. She complains of dulness, but accuses the weather, which she says is horrible. By-the-by, of Cecy and Mr. Combe I have now got the report containing the account of Laura Bridgman (the deaf, dumb, and blind girl of whom he speaks), and when you come to me you shall see it; it is marvellous—a perfect miracle of Christian love.

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Catherine Sedgwick's book (some notes of her visit to Europe) has just come out, and I am reading it again, having read the manuscript journal when first she returned home; a record, of course, of far more interest than the pruned and pared version of it which she gives to the public. I am also reading an excellent article in the last *Edinburgh*, on the society of Port Royal, which I find immensely interesting. I must now run out for a walk. It is Sunday, and the horses are not used, and I must acquire some exercise, through the agency of my own legs, before dinner. I have walked two miles this morning, to be sure; but that was to and from church, and should not count. God bless you, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

LIÈGE, Thursday, August 26th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

AT LIÈGE.

We have just returned from a lionizing drive about Liège, a city of which my liveliest impressions, before I saw it, were derived from Scott's novel of "Quentin Durward," and in which the part now remaining of what existed in his time is all that much interests me.

I do not know whether in your peregrinations you ever visited this place; if you did, I hope you duly admired the palace of the prince bishop (formerly), now the Palais de Justice, which is one of the most picturesque remnants of ancient architecture I have seen in this land of them.

Except this, and one fine old church, I have found nothing in the town to please or interest me much. I have seen one or two old dog-holes of houses, blackened and falling in with age, which seem as if they might be some of the cinders of Charles the Bold's burnings hereabouts. We left Brussels this morning, after spending a day and a half there. I was much pleased with the gay and cheerful appearance of that small imitation Paris, even to the degree of fancying that I should like to live there, in spite of the supercilious sentence of vulgarity, stupidity, and pretension which some of our friends, diplomatic residents there, passed upon the inhabitants.... We went to call upon the — s, and, with something of a shock on my part, found one of the ornaments of his sitting-room a large crucifix with the Saviour in his death-agony—a horrible image, which I would banish, if I could, from every artist's imagination; for the physical suffering is a revolting spectacle which art should not portray, and the spiritual triumph is a thing which the kindred soul of man may indeed conceive, but which art cannot delineate, for it is God, and not to be translated into matter, save indeed where it once was made manifest in that Face and Person every imaginary representation of which is to me more or less intolerable.

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The face of Christ is never painted or sculptured without being painfully offensive to me; yet I have seen looks—who has not?—that were His, momentarily, on mortal faces; but they were looks that could not have been copied, even there....

These steamship and railroad times will do away with that staple idea, both in real and literary romances, of "never meeting again," "parting forever," etc., etc.; and people will now meet over and over again, no matter by what circumstances parted, or to what distance thrown from each other; whence I draw the moral that our conduct in all the quarters of the globe had better be as decent as possible, for there is no such thing nowadays as losing sight of people or places—I mean, for any convenient length of time, for purposes of forgetfulness. I forget whether, when you left us in London, my father had come to the determination of not accompanying but following us, which he intends doing as soon as he feels well enough to travel.

Rubens's paintings have given us extreme delight.... I was much interested by the lace-works at Brussels and Mechlin, and very painfully so. It is beginning to be time, I think, in Christian countries, for manufactures of mere luxury to be done away with, when proficiency in the merest mechanical drudgery involved in them demands a lifetime, and the sight and health of women, who begin this twilight work at five and six years old, are often sacrificed long before their natural term to this costly and unhealthy industry.

I hope to see all such manufactures done away with, for they are bad things, and a whole moral and intelligent being, turned into ten fingers' ends for such purposes, is a sad spectacle. I (a lace-worshipper, if ever woman was) say this advisedly; I am sorry there is still Mechlin and Brussels lace made, and glad there is no more India muslin, and rejoice in the disuse of every minute manual labor which tends to make a mere machine of God's likeness. But oh, for all that, how incomparably inferior is the finest, faultless, machine-made lace and muslin to the exquisite irregularity of the human fabric!... Good-bye, my dearest Harriet. We start for Aix-la-Chapelle at eight to-morrow. I am not in very good strength; the fact is, I am now never in thoroughly good plight without exercise on horseback, and it is a long time since I have had any, and, of course,

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it is now quite out of the question. I beg, desire, entreat, and command that you will immediately get and read Balzac's "Eugénie Grandet," and tell me instantly what you think of it.

Your affectionate

FANNY.

WIESBADEN, Friday, September, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Walking along the little brook-side on the garden path under the trees towards the Sonnenberg, you may well imagine how vividly your image and that of Catherine Sedgwick were present to me. You took this walk together, and it was from her lively description of it that I knew, the moment I set my feet in the path, both where I was and where I was going. That walk is very pretty. I did not follow it to the end, because my children were with me, and it was too far for them; but yesterday I went to the ruin on horseback, and came home along the rough cart-road, on the hill on the other side of the valley, whence the views reminded me somewhat of the country round Lenox, in Massachusetts, though not perhaps of the prettiest part of the latter.

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I have not yet in my travels seen anything much more picturesque than the prettiest parts of the American Berkshire; and upon the whole (castles, of course, excepted) was rather disappointed in the Rhine, which is not, I think, as beautiful a river as the Hudson. Knowing the powerful charm of affectionate association, and the halo which happiness throws over any place where we attain to something approaching it, I have sometimes suspected that my admiration of and delight in that Lenox and Stockbridge scenery was derived in some measure from those sources, and that the country round them is not in reality as beautiful as it always appears in my eyes and to my memory. But, comparing it now with scenery admired by the travelling taste of all Europe, I am satisfied that the American scenery I am so fond of is intrinsically lovely, and compares very favorably with everything I have seen hitherto on the Continent.

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As for your friend Anne (my children's American nurse), coming up the Rhine she sat looking at the shores, her brown eyes growing rounder and rounder, and her handsome face full of as much good-humored contempt as it could express, every now and then exclaiming, "Well, to be sure, it's a pretty river, and it's well enough; but my! they hadn't need to make such a fuss about it." The fact is, that the noble breadth of the river forms one of its most striking features to a European, and this, you know, is no marvel to "us of the new world." Moreover, I suspect Anne does not consider the baronial castles "of much 'count," either; and, to confess the truth, I am rather disturbed at the little emotion produced in me by the romantic ruins and picturesque accompaniments of the Rhine. But it seems to me that I am losing much of my excitability; my imagination has become disgracefully tame, and I find myself here, where I have most desired to be, with a mind chiefly intent upon where, when, how, and on what my children can dine, and feelings principally occupied with the fact that I have no one with me to sympathize in any other thought or emotion if I should attempt to indulge in such.

We arrived at Coblenz one melting summer afternoon, and I walked up to the top of the fortress alone, and the setting of the sun over beyond the lands and rivers at my feet, and the uprising of the moon above, the bristling battlements behind me, filled me with delight; but I had no one to express it to.

This evening at Ehrenbreitstein, and the cathedral at Cologne, are my two events hitherto; the only two things that have stirred or affected me much. That cathedral is a whole liturgy in stone—eloquent, devout stone,—uttering so solemnly its great unfinished God-service of silent prayer and praise through all these centuries. I have seen many beautiful churches, but was never impressed by any as by this huge fragment of one.

My father, as I have written you, stayed behind, saying that he would follow us. He has not done so yet, and I do not expect that he will, for reasons which I will not repeat, as I gave them to you in a long letter which I wrote to you from Liège, which I heartily hope you have received.

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[On arriving at Coblenz on a brilliant afternoon, so much of lovely daylight yet remained that I was most desirous to cross the river and ascend the great fortress of the Broad Stone of Honor, to see the sunset from its walls. I could not inspire anybody else with the same zeal, however; and, under the combined influence of disappointment and eager curiosity, started alone, at a brisk walk, and, crossing the bridge, began the ascent, and, gradually quickening my pace as I neared the summit, arrived, on a full run, breathless before the sentinel who guarded the last gates and amiably shook his head at my attempt to enter. The gates were open, and I saw, across the wide parade-ground, or *place d'armes*, where groups of soldiers were standing and loitering about, the parapet wall of the fortress, whence I had hoped to see the day go down over the Rhine, the Moselle, and all the glorious region round their confluence. "Oh, *do* let me in," cried I in very emphatic English to the sentry, who gravely shook his head. "Where is your father?" quoth he in German, as I made imploring and impatient gestures, significant of my despair at the idea of having had that stupendous climb all for nothing. "I have none," cried I, in English and French all in a breath. Both were equally Greek to him. He gravely shook his head. "Where is your husband?" quoth he in German, to which I replied in German—oh, such German!—that "I had none, that I was a woman" (which he probably saw), "only a woman, an Englishwoman" (which he probably heard), "and that I could do no harm to his fortress; that I had come all alone, and run half the way up, and that I could not turn back, and he *must* let me in!" He still shook his head gravely. I had the tears in my eyes, and felt ready to cry with vexation. Just then an officer approaching the gates from within, I addressed my eager supplications in sputtering, stuttering fragments of German, French, and English to him; and he, laughing good-naturedly, gave the sentinel the order to admit me; when I made straight across the great parade-ground, surrounded with the masses of the huge fortification, to the low parapet wall, whence I beheld the glorious landscape I had hoped to see, bathed in the sunset—a vision of splendor, which surpassed even what I had expected, as I looked down from the dizzy height, over the magnificent river and its beautiful tributary, and all the near and distant landscape, melting far away into golden vapory indistinctness. I did not dare to stay long, having to return again alone; so, thanking my kind conductor, who had evidently enjoyed my ecstasy at the beauty of his *Vaterland*, I left the fortress, stopping again at the gate to ask the name of my friendly sentinel whose resistance to my impetuous storming of the fort had been as mild and gentle as was consistent with his resolute refusal to admit me. Having not a scrap of paper with me, I wrote his name with my pencil on my glove, determined, when I returned through Coblenz, to bring him some token of my gratitude for his patient forbearance; and so I ran all the way down and back to the hotel.

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On our return, some weeks after, we visited Ehrenbreitstein with all the decorous solemnity of decent sight-seeing travellers; and, one of a party of four, I drove in state, in an open carriage, up the formidable approach that I had scaled so vehemently before. Duly armed with admits and permits, and all proper justifications of our approach, we drove under the huge archway, where stood another sentinel, and were received with courteous ceremony by some military gentlemen, under whose escort I leisurely went over the scene of my first visit, standing again, in more dignified enthusiasm, at the parapet where I had panted before in the breathless excitement of my run up the hill, my fight with the sentry, and my victory over him. Now, having been duly led and conducted and ushered and escorted all round, as we were about to depart, I begged, as a favor of the commanding officer, to be allowed to see again my friendly sentinel, for whom I had brought up a meerschaum of a pretty pattern that I had bought for him. "What was his name?" "Schneider." "Oh, there are several so called among the men. Should you know him again?" "Oh yes, indeed." And now ensued a general cry for Schneiders to present themselves. One after another was marched up, but without any resemblance to my friendly foe. Presently a word of command was given, followed by a brisk rolling of drums, when all the men came pouring out of the surrounding buildings, and formed in ranks on the ground. "You have seen them all—all the Schneiders,"

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said the kindly commandant. "Ah, no! here is yet one;" and from the back ranks was pushed and pulled and thrust and shoved, perfectly crimson with shyness and suppressed laughter, one of the handsomest lads I ever saw. "Is this your man?" said the commanding officer, with a profound bow, and his face puckered up with laughing. "No," cried I (for it wasn't), quite overcome with confusion and the general laughter that followed the production of this last of the Schneiders. One of the officers then said that some of the troops had been sent elsewhere, not long after my first visit. "Ah, then," said the commandant, who had interested himself in my search with considerable amusement, "your Schneider, madame, has left Ehrenbreitstein." And so did we; I, not a little disappointed at not having seen again the worthy man who had not bayoneted me away from the gates, when I assailed them and him in such a frenzy.]

We overtook my sister at Mayence, or rather, I and the children remained there, while some of our party went on to Frankfort, where she was. They returned to Mayence in a body: —, Adelaide, Henry, Miss Cottin, Mary Anne Thackeray, our London friend Chorley, and the illustrious Liszt. Travelling leisurely, as we were compelled to do on account of the children, I missed, to my great regret, my sister's first two public performances—a concert, and a representation of Norma, which she gave at Frankfort, and of which everybody spoke with the greatest enthusiasm. On the evening of the day when she joined us at Mayence, she sang at a concert, and this was the first time that I really have heard her sing in public; for I did not consider the concert at Stafford House a fair test of her powers—the audience was too limited, in number and quality, to deserve the name of a public. The sweetness and freshness of her voice struck me more than ever, but it appears to me rather wanting in power; and the same impression was produced upon me when I heard her sing in the Kursaal here. If there should be deficiency of power in the voice, it will, I fear, affect her success in so large a theatre as Covent Garden.... She sings Norma again to-night at Mayence, and I am going—of course without any anxiety, for her success is already established here; and with great anticipations of pleasure—more even, if possible, from her acting than her singing; for the latter I am already familiar with, but of the former I have no experience, and have always entertained the greatest expectations of it, and I think I shall not be disappointed.

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We have obtained very pleasant apartments here, and I have established Anne and the children quite comfortably; they were beginning to suffer from the perpetual moving about, and I shall let them remain undisturbed here, during the rest of our stay in Germany, and shall either stay quietly with them, or accompany my sister, if it is determined that we are to do so, to the places of her various engagements.

Since writing the above, I have seen my sister act Norma, and her performance fully equalled my expectation; which is great praise, for I have always had the highest opinion of her dramatic powers, and was, as I believe you know, earnest with her at one time to leave the opera stage and become an actress in her own language, as I was very sure of her entire success, and thought it a better and higher order of thing than this mere uttering of sound, and perpetual representation of passion and emotion, comparatively unmixed with intellect. To be sure, that would be to sacrifice some of her fine natural endowments, and the art and science of music, in which she has, at so much cost of time and labor, so thoroughly perfected herself, and which is in itself so exquisite a thing.... Her carriage is good, easy, and unembarrassed; her gestures and use of her arms remarkably graceful and appropriate. There is very little too much action, and that which appears to me redundant may simply seem so because her conception of the character is, in some of its parts, impulsive, where it strikes me as concentrated, and would therefore be sterner and stiller in its effect than she occasionally makes it. But she has evidently thought over the whole most carefully, considered the effects she intends to produce, and the means of producing them; and it is a far more finished performance, without any of the special defects which I should have expected in so great a lyrical tragic part, given by so young an artist. I suspect, however, that the severely mechanical element in music renders certainty in the performer's intentions necessary beforehand, to a much greater degree than in a merely dramatic performance; and thus a singer can seldom do the things which an actor sometimes does, upon the sudden inspiration of the moment, occasionally producing thus extraordinary effects. Some of

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MEETING
AT
MAYENCE.

the things my sister did were perfect—I speak now of her acting: they were as fine as some of Pasta's great effects, and her whole performance reminded me forcibly of that finest artist. I cannot help thinking, however, that she is cramped by the music, and I confess I should like to see her act Bianca without singing it, as I am satisfied that she would represent most admirably all characters of power and passion, and find in the great dramatic compositions of our stage, and especially in Shakespeare's plays, scope for her capacity which Italian operas cannot afford.

Her voice is not as powerful as I expected, nor as I think it would have been if she had not striven to acquire artificial compass; that is, high notes which were not originally in her natural register,—the great aim of all singers being to sing the highest music, which is always that of the principal female character. The consequence of this is sometimes that the quality of the natural voice is in a measure sacrificed to the acquisition of notes not originally within its compass....

I have room for no more, dearest Harriet. Good-bye, and God bless you.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

I wrote you an interminable letter from Liège. Did you ever get it?

[The time we spent on the Rhine during this summer afforded me an opportunity of almost intimate acquaintance with the celebrated musician who had persuaded my sister to associate herself with him in the concerts he gave at the principal places on the Rhine where we stopped.

Our whole expedition partook more of the character of a party of pleasure than a business speculation; and though Liszt's and my sister's musical performances were professional exhibitions of the highest order, the relations of our whole party were those of the friendliest and merriest tourists and *compagnons de voyage*. Nothing could exceed the charm of our delightful travelling through that lovely scenery, and sojourning in those pleasant picturesque antique towns, where the fine concerts of our two artists enchanted us even more, from personal sympathy, than the most enthusiastic audiences who thronged to hear them.

LISZT.

Liszt was at this time a young man, in the very perfection of his extraordinary talent, and at the height of his great celebrity. He was extremely handsome; his features were finely chiselled, and the expression of his face, especially when under the inspiration of playing, strikingly grand and commanding.

Of all the pianists that I have ever heard, and I have heard all the most celebrated of my time, he was undoubtedly the first for fire, power, and brilliancy of execution. His style, which was strictly original, and an innovation upon all that had preceded it, may be called the "Sturm und Drang," or seven-leagued-boot style of playing on the piano; and in listening to him, it was difficult to believe that he had no more than the average number of fingers, or that they were of the average length,—but that, indeed, they were not; he had stretched his hands like a pair of kid gloves, and accomplished the most incredible distances, while executing, in the interval between them, inconceivable musical feats with his three middle fingers. None of his musical contemporaries, Moscheles, Mendelssohn, Chopin, nor his more immediate rival, Thalberg, ever produced anything like the volcanic sort of musical effect which he did, perfect eruptions, earthquakes, tornadoes of sound, such as I never heard any piano utter but under his touch. But though he was undoubtedly a more amazing performer than any I ever listened to, his peculiar eccentricities were so inextricably interwoven with the whole mode and manner of his performances that, in spite of the many imitators they have inspired, he could by no means be regarded as the founder of anything deserving the name of a school of piano-playing. M. Rubinstein, I presume, in our own day, represents Liszt's peculiar genius better than any one else.

The close, concise, crowded, and somewhat crabbed style of the great learned musical school of the Bachs, which may almost be called the algebra or

geometry of musical composition, at any rate its higher mathematics, had certainly challenged a spirit of the most daring contrast in the young Hungarian prodigy, who electrified Paris, and carried its severe body of classical critics by storm, with the triumphant audacity of his brilliant and powerful style. Liszt became, at the very opening of his career, so immediately a miracle, and then an oracle, in the artistic and the great world of Paris that he was allowed to impose his own terms upon its judgment; and suffering himself the worst consequences of that order of success, he achieved too early a fame for his permanent reputation. A want of sobriety, a fantastical seeking after strange effects—in short, the characteristics of artistic *charlatanerie*—mixed themselves up with all that he did, and, as is inevitably the case, deteriorated the fine original gifts of his genius. When I first heard him, he had already reached the furthest limit of his powers, because they were exerted in a mistaken direction; and the exaggeration and false taste which were covered by his marvellous facility and strength gradually became more and more predominant in his performances, and turned them almost into caricatures of the first wonderful specimens of ability with which he had amazed the musical world.

He could not go on being forever more astonishing than he had ever been before, and he paid the penalty of having made that his principal aim. His execution and composition alike became by degrees incoherent acrobatism, in which all that could call itself art was a mere combination of extraordinary and all but grotesque difficulties, devised for the sole purpose of overcoming them; musical convulsions and contortions, that forever recalled Dr. Johnson's epigram.

In the summer of 1842 Liszt was but on the edge of this descent; his genius, his youth, his personal beauty, and the vivid charm of his manner and conversation had made him the idol of society, as well as of the artistic world, and he was then radiant with the fire of his great natural gifts, and dazzling with the success that had crowned them; he was a brilliant creature....

After this I never saw Liszt again until the summer of 1870. I had gone to the theatre at Munich, where I was staying, to hear Wagner's opera of the "Rheingold," with my daughter and her husband. We had already taken our places, when S—— exclaimed to me, "There is Liszt." The increased age, the clerical dress, had effected but little change in the striking general appearance, which my daughter (who had never seen him since 1842, when she was quite a child) recognized immediately. I went round to his box, and, recalling myself to his memory, begged him to come to ours, and let me present my daughter to him; he very good-naturedly did so, and the next day called upon us at our hotel, and sat with us a long time....

His conversation on matters of art (Wagner's music, which he and we had listened to the evening before) and literature was curiously cautious and guarded, and every expression of opinion given with extreme reserve, instead of the uncompromising fearlessness of his earlier years; and the abbé was indeed quite another from the Liszt of our summer on the Rhine of 1842.

Liszt never composed any very good music; arrangement of the music of others was his specialty; and his versions of Schubert's, Weber's, and Mozart's finest melodies for the piano were the *ne plus ultra* of brilliant and powerful adaptation, but required his own rendering to produce their full effect; and by far the most extraordinary exhibition of skill I ever heard on the piano was his performance of the airs from the Don Giovanni, arranged by himself. His literary style had the same qualities and defects as his music: brilliancy and picturesqueness, and an absence of genuineness and simplicity. He wrote a great deal of musical criticism, and an interesting life of Chopin.

His conversation was sparkling and dazzling, and full of startling paradoxes; he had considerable power of sarcastic repartee, and once or twice is reported to have encountered the imperious queen of Austrian society, Madame de Metternich, with her own weapons, very successfully.

She patronized Thalberg, and affected to depreciate Liszt; but having invited

them both to her house on one occasion, thought proper to address the latter with some impertinent questions about a professional visit he had just been paying to Paris, winding up with, "Enfin, avez-vous fait de bonnes affaires là-bas?" To which he replied, "Pardon, Madame la Princesse, j'ai fait un peu de musique; je laisse les affaires aux banquiers et aux diplomates." Later in the evening, the lady, probably not well pleased with this rebuff, accosted him again, as he stood talking to Thalberg, with a sneering compliment on his apparent freedom from all jealousy of his musical rival; to which Liszt, who was very sallow, replied, "Mais, Madame la Princesse, au contraire, je suis furieusement jaloux de Thalberg; regardez donc les jolies couleurs qu'il a!" After which Madame la Princesse *le laissa en paix*.

Between Thalberg and Liszt I do not think there could be any comparison. The exquisite perfection of delicate accuracy, combined with extraordinary lightness and velocity of execution, of Thalberg was his one unapproachable excellence, and as near the unerring precision of mere mechanism as possible: it was absolutely faultless; but it paid the penalty for being what things human may not be—it wanted the human element of passion and pathos. His performance was a miracle of art, and left his admiring auditors pleasingly amazed, but untouched in any of the deeper chords of sympathetic emotion. He had not a spark of the original genius or fire of Liszt. Moscheles, whom I have only named with the other two because he was a highly popular performer at the same time, was a more solid musician than either of them, and infinitely inferior as an executant to both. He was the most excellent of teachers, for which valuable office Thalberg would have wanted some and Liszt all the necessary qualifications. Of Chopin it is useless to speak: exceptional in his artistic nature and in his circumstances, he played his own most poetical music as no one else could; though his friend Dessauer, who was not a professional player at all, gave a most curious and satisfactory imitation of his mode of rendering his own compositions. But between Chopin and any other musical composer or performer there was never anything in common; he was original and unique in both characters.

As for Mendelssohn, the organ was his real instrument, though he played very finely on the piano. He was not, however, a pre-eminent performer, but a composer of music; and I should no more think of comparing the quality of his genius with that of Liszt, than I should compare the Roman girandola with its sky-scaring fusees and myriads of sudden scintillations and dazzling coruscations, with the element that lights our homes and warms our hearths, or to the steadfast shining of the everlasting stars themselves.

Of all the pianoforte players by whom I have heard Beethoven's music more or less successfully rendered, Charles Hallé has always appeared to me the one who most perfectly communicated the mind and soul of the pre-eminent composer.

CHARLES
HALLÉ.

Our temporary fellowship with Liszt procured for us a delightful participation in a tribute of admiration from the citizen workmen of Coblenz, that was what the French call *saissant*. We were sitting all in our hotel drawing-room together, the *maestro* as usual smoking his long pipe, when a sudden burst of music made us throw open the window and go out on the balcony, when Liszt was greeted by a magnificent chorus of nearly two hundred men's voices; they sang to perfection, each with his small sheet of music and his sheltered light in his hand, and the performance, which was the only one of the sort I ever heard, gave a wonderful impression of the musical capacity of the only really musical nation in the world.]

WIESBADEN, Sunday, September.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have already written to you from this place: one letter I wrote almost immediately after taking a walk which you had taken with Catherine Sedgwick, the year that you were

here together, towards the Sonnenberg. You wrote me letters from here too, which I received up at Lenox, and read at a window looking out over a landscape very much resembling the neighborhood of this place. I remember your epistolary accounts of Wiesbaden were not very favorable: you did not like its watering-place aspect and fashions; and neither should I, if I was in any way mixed up with them. But we have hitherto none of us taken the waters; we have pretty and comfortable rooms, with the slight drawback of hearing our neighbors washing their hands and brushing their teeth, and drawing the natural conclusion as to the reciprocity of communications we make to them. We are at the Quatre Saisons, and with nothing but the Kursaal and its arcades between us and the gardens; so I am not oppressed with the feeling of a town, streets, houses, shops, etc., all which lie at my back and are never by any accident approached by me....

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I have gone into the baths merely by way of what the French call *propreté*, being too lazy to go and fetch a wash under the arcade, in *de l'eau naturelle*. The water which supplies the baths in the Quatre Saisons is not by any means as strong as the *Kochbrunnen*, yet I fancied that it affected me unpleasantly, causing me a sensation of fullness in the head, and nausea, which was very disagreeable, as well as making me stupidly sleepy through the day....

Last Thursday I went to Frankfort to hear Adelaide sing; she was to perform, *en costume*, an act from three different operas, a sort of hotchpotch which, as she cares for her profession, I am surprised at her condescending to. We were not in time for the first, which was the last scene of the "Lucia di Lammermoor," but heard her in the last scene of "Beatrice di Tenda," and in the first scene of the "Norma." ... What she does is very perfect, but I think she occasionally falls short of the amount of power that I expected.... And all the time, I cannot help wishing that she would leave the singing part of the business, and take to acting not set to music. I think the singing cramps her acting, and I cannot help having some misgiving as to the effect she will produce in so large a theatre as Covent Garden; although, as she has sung successfully in the two largest theatres in Europe, the Scala at Milan and the San Carlo at Naples, I suppose my nervousness about Covent Garden is unnecessary.... Her movements and gesture are all remarkably graceful and easy; she is perfectly self-possessed, and impresses me even more as an artist than a genius, which I did not expect.

I believe she will not sing to-morrow night, and, in that case, they will all come over and spend the day here, when Henry, Mary Anne Thackeray, and I purpose ascending Wiesbaden horses and riding to the duke's hunting-seat, which perhaps you drove to when you were here....

I confess to you, I cannot help sometimes feeling a little anxious about my sister's success in England, especially when I remember how formidable a predecessor she is to succeed—that wonderful Malibran, who added to such original genius and great dramatic power a voice of such uncommon force and brilliancy.

MALIBRAN.

Good-bye. This is the third long letter I have written to you since we came abroad.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, Monday, October 11th.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I begin to sniff the well-beloved fogs and coal-smoke of that best beloved little island to which I have the honor and glory of belonging, and my spirits are much revived thereby; for, to tell you the truth, England, bad as it is, is good enough for me, and I am grown old and stupid and sleepy and don't-care, and think more about bugs and greasy food in the way of woe than of vine-clad hills and ruined castles in the way of bliss. Not that I have been by any means dissatisfied with my *tower*, though rather disappointed in the one fact of the Rhine: but I am incurious and always was, and I do not think that fault mends with age; and knights, squires, and dames too, alas! are no longer to me the interesting folk that they once were.

"But it is past, the glory is congealing,

The fervor of the heart grows dead and dim;
I gaze all night upon a whitewashed ceiling,
And catch no glimpses of the Seraphim."

I think the ruins of the German hills especially excellent in that they are ruins, and can by no possibility ever again be made strongholds of debauchery, ferocity, and filth; and finally and to conclude, my dear Harriet, lights and shadows, the colors of the earth and sky, the beauty of God's creation, in short, alone now moves me very deeply, and this, I am thankful to say, is as powerful to do so as ever.

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I must tell you something pretty and poetical, and which I think has made more impression upon me than anything else in the course of my travels. The other evening at Cologne, by the sloping light of a watery autumnal sunset, the wind blowing loud and strong, the river rolling fast and free, and the great, violet-colored clouds drooping heavily down the sky, we suddenly heard the guns along each bank fire repeatedly, saluting the approach of some greatness or other down the stream. Whether it was king or kaiser, or only one of the merchant-princes to whom the navigation of this stream now belongs, and who receive these honors whenever they go up or down the river, nobody could tell; and still peal after peal was fired, and one echo rolled into another from shore to shore. At length a long low boat came in sight, sweeping down with the wide current towards the city walls. She was covered from stem to stern with bright flags and pennons, and was freighted with stone, which the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt was sending down from his quarries, to help the people of Cologne to finish their beautiful cathedral; and as this cargo came along their shores they were saluting it with royal honors. The crane which was to lift the blocks from the boat had its great iron arm all wreathed with flowers, and flags and streamers floating from its top, which peaceful half-religious jubilee pleased me greatly, and affected me too.

At Cologne, six weeks before, we had seen the King of Hanover, Ernest Augustus, the wicked Duke of Cumberland, received just in the same way, except that the cannonading was closed on that occasion, in an exceedingly appropriate manner to my mind, by a sudden fierce peal of derisive thunder.

We went, while at Cologne, to the Museum, and there saw another beautiful thing of another sort, Bendermann's picture of the Jews weeping by the waters of Babylon—a very striking picture, sad and harmonious in its coloring, and full of feeling and expression; I was greatly impressed by it. And thus, you see, from only one of the places I have visited, I have brought away two living recollections, perpetual sources of pleasant mental contemplation. Two such treasures in one's storehouse of memory would have been worth the whole journey; but I have had many more such, and I incline to think that it is very often in retrospect that travel is most agreeable—the little annoyances and hindrances, which often qualify one's pleasure a good deal at the time one receives it, seldom mix themselves with the recollection of it in the same vivid manner; and so, as the American widow said she thought it was a charming thing "to have been married *and be done with it*," I think it is a charming thing to have been up the Rhine and be back again.

BENDERMANNS
PICTURE.

I forget whether I wrote you word of my father's joining us for a single day at Frankfort, and then returning immediately to England.... He was not at all well, and the hurried journey was, I fear, a most imprudent one. My sister is at present at Liège with Henry, Liszt, and our friend Chorley....

Good-bye, my dearest H—.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

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[My friend Miss S— came to us in London, and witnessed with me my sister's coming out at Covent Garden, which took place on Tuesday, the 2nd of November, 1842, in Bellini's opera of "Norma," which she sang in English, retaining the whole of the recitative. My sister's success was triumphant, and the fortunes of the unfortunate theatre, which again were at the lowest ebb, revived under the influence of her great and immediate popularity, and the overflowing houses that, night after night, crowded to hear her. Her performances, which I seldom missed, were among my most delightful

pleasures, during a season in which I enjoyed the companionship of my dear friend, and a great deal of pleasant social intercourse with the most interesting and agreeable people of the great gay London world.]

BOWOOD, Sunday, December 19th.

To Theodore Sedgwick, Esq.

MY DEAR THEODORE,

I cannot conceive how it happens that a letter of yours, dated the 8th September, should have reached me only a fortnight ago in London. Either it must have been forgotten after written, and not sent for some time, or Messrs. Harnden and Co.'s *Express* is the slowest known conveyance in the world. However that may be, the letter and the Philadelphia Bank statement did arrive safe at last, and my father desires me to thank you particularly for your kindness in sending it to him. Not, indeed, that it is peculiarly consolatory in itself, inasmuch as it confirms our worst apprehensions about the fate of all moneys lodged in that disastrous institution. But perhaps it is better to have a term put to one's uncertainty, even by the positive conviction of misfortune not to be averted. My father's property in that bank—"The United States Bank"—was considerable for him, and had been hardly earned money. I understand from him that my share of our American earnings are in the New Orleans banks, which, though they pay no dividends, and have not done so for some time past, are still, I believe, supposed to be safe and solvent....

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We are staying just now with Lord and Lady Lansdowne, in this pleasant home of theirs—a home of terrestrial delights. Inside the house, all is tasteful and intellectual magnificence—such pictures! such statues! And outside, a charming English landscape, educated with consummate taste into the very perfection of apparently natural beauty.... They are amiable, good, pleasant, and every way distinguished people, and I like them very much. He, as you know, is one of our leading Whig statesmen, a munificent patron of the arts and literature, a man of the finest taste and cultivation, at whose house eminences of all sorts are cordially received. Lady Lansdowne is a specimen Englishwoman of her class, refined, intelligent, well-bred, and most charming. I believe Lord Lansdowne was kindly civil to your aunt Catherine when she was in London; I wish she could have seen this enchanting place of his.

VISITORS AT
BOWOOD.

Rogers, Moore, and a parcel of choice *beaux esprits* are staying here; but, to tell you a fact which probably accuses me of stupidity, they are so incessantly clever, witty, and brilliant that they every now and then give me a brain-ache.

I do not know the exact depth of your patience, but I have an idea that it has a bottom, therefore I think it expedient not to pursue *crossing* any further with you.

Give my kindest love to Sarah, and

Believe me ever, my dear Theodore,
Yours very truly,

FANNY BUTLER.

Please remember me very kindly to your mother. I sat by a man at dinner yesterday, a Dr. Fowler of Salisbury, who was talking to me of having known her friends Mrs. Jay and Mrs. Banian, when they were in England; and their names were pleasant to me on account of their association with her.

BOWOOD, Tuesday, December 21st, 1841.

Did you expect an immediate answer from me, dear Harriet, or did you think your letters would be put at the bottom of the budget, to wait their appointed time? You say your thought in parting from me was chiefly to preserve your tranquillity; and so was mine to preserve my own and yours.... There are many occasions on which I both feel much more than I show, and perceive in others much more feeling than I believe they think I am aware of. There are times when, for one's own sake, as well as for that of others, to be—or, if that is not possible, to seem—absorbed in outward things of the most

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indifferent description is highly desirable; and I am even conscious sometimes of a sort of hardness, which seems to come involuntarily to my aid, in seasons when I know myself or fear that others are about to be carried away by their feelings, or to break down under them....

I was glad enough to get your second letter, and to know you were safe in Dublin. It was calm the night you crossed, but it has blown once or twice fearfully since.

Our visit to the Francis Egertons, at Worsley, was prosperous and pleasant in the highest degree; and we are now paying our promised one at Bowood. I must tell you a trait of Anne [my children's American nurse], who, it is my belief, is nothing less than the Princess Pocahontas, who, having returned to earth, has condescended to take charge of my children.

You know that this place is celebrated; the house is not only fine in point of size, architecture, and costly furnishing, but is filled with precious works of art, painting and sculpture, modern and ancient, beautiful, rare, and costly. The first day that we arrived, ushered up the great staircase to our rooms, I followed the servant with wide-open eyes, gazing in delighted admiration at everything I saw. "Well," said I to Anne, "is not this a fine house, Anne?" "The staircase is well enough," was her imperturbable reply. Wouldn't one think she had had the Vatican for her second-best house, and St. Peter's for her private chapel, all the days of her life? She certainly must have, some Indian blood in her veins.

This morning I took a brisk walk along the sunny terrace, where, from under the shining shelter of holly, laurel, cedar, and all other evergreen shrubs and trees, one looks over a garden—that even now, with its graceful vases, its terraces, its ivy winter dressing, is gay and beautiful—to a lawn that slopes gently to a sheet of water, losing itself like a lake among irregular wooded banks, whose brown feathery outline borrows from the winter's sun a golden tinge of soft sad splendor. Upon this water swans and wild-fowl sail and sport about; and the whole scene this morning, tipped with sparkling frost, and shining under a brilliant sky, seemed very charming to me, and to S— too, who, running by my side, exclaimed, "Well, this is my idea of heaven! I do think this might be called Paradise, or that garden—I forget its name—that Adam and Eve were put into!" (Eden had escaped her memory, as, let us hope, in time it did theirs.) I was pleased to find that my Biblical teachings had suggested positive images, and that she had caught none of her nurse's stolid insensibility to beauty....

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We have a choice society here just now, and fortunately among them persons that we know and feel at our ease with: Rogers, Moore, Macaulay, Babbage, Westmacott, Charles Greville, and two or three charming, agreeable, unaffected women....

You ask if Lady Holland is at Bowood. No, she had returned home *by land*, as they say [at the beginning of railroad travelling, persons who still preferred the former method of posting on the high-road were said to go by land], not choosing to risk her precious body on the railway without Brunel's personal escort to keep it in order and prevent it from doing her any accident. He having had the happiness of travelling down to Bowood with her, which she insisted upon, naturally enough declined coming all the way down again from London to see her safe home; so not being able to accomplish his fetching her back to town, she contrived to extort from him a letter stating that, owing to the late heavy rains, her journey back to London upon the railroad would probably be both tedious and uncomfortable, and advising her by all means to go home "by land," which, considering that the Great Western is his own road—his iron child, so to speak,—by which he is bound to swear under all circumstances, is, I think, a pretty good specimen of her omnipotence.

HOME BY
LAND.

She did post home accordingly, but not without dismal misgivings as to what might befall her while crossing a wood of Lord Salisbury's, where she was to be, for a short space of time, seven miles off from any village or town. I never knew such a terrified, terrible, foolish old woman in my life.

After all, she is right: life is worth more to very good and to very good-for-nothing people than to others. My father dined with her in town while we were away, and in her note of invitation she included us, if we had returned, saying all manner of civil fine things about me; but, as far as I am concerned, it won't do, and she cannot put salt upon my

tail....

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We returned to town on Friday. Charles Greville saw my father on Saturday, and says he is, and is looking, very well. Adelaide was gone down to Addlestone, to see John and his wife. My children—bless them!—are making such a riot here at my table that I scarcely know what I am writing.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I will write to you again to-morrow.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bowood, Wednesday, December 22nd, 1841.

Dearest Harriet,

I was a "happy woman" at Worsley [a "happy woman" was the term used by me from my childhood to describe a woman on horseback], and, as sometimes happens, had even too much of my happiness. My friend Lady Francis is made of whalebone and india-rubber in equal proportions, very neatly and elegantly fastened together with the finest steel springs, and is incapable of fatigue from exertion, or injury from exposure.

Having an exalted idea of my capabilities in the way of horse exercise (which, indeed, when I am in my usual condition, are pretty good), she started off with me to H—, a distance of about eight miles, and we did the whole way there and back (besides an episodic gallop, three times full tear round a field, to tame our horses, which were wild) either at a hard gallop or a harder trot. I, who have grown fat and soft, and have hardly ridden since I left America, came home bruised and beaten, and aching in every limb to that degree that I was glad to lie down—conceive the humiliation!—and was much put to it to get up again to dress for dinner; having, moreover, the consolation of being assured by Lady Francis that she had ridden thus hard out of pure consideration for me; supposing that the faster I went, the better I should be pleased. I was, besides, mounted upon a fiery little fiend of a pony, who pulled my arms out of their sockets and would not walk. However, by repeating the dose every day, I suffered less and less, and am now once more in excellent riding condition.

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I remember a ludicrous circumstance of the same kind happening to me in America, on the occasion of the first ride I ever took with my brother-in-law, who was then comparatively a stranger to me. He was a cavalry officer, a capital horseman, and hard rider; which qualities he exhibited the first time I ever went out with him, by riding at such a pace and for such a length of time that, perceiving he did not kill himself, I asked if he was in the habit of killing his horse every time he rode out; when he burst out laughing, and assured me that he thought he was only conforming to my habitual pace.

Yesterday I varied my exercise, for I went out on horseback with Lord Lansdowne, and finding the roads dangerously slippery for our horses, which were not shod, when we were at some distance from Bowood we dismounted, and gave them to the groom, and came home on foot, a distance of three miles, which, carrying one's habit [riding-skirts in those days were very long], I think was as good as four.

You cannot conceive anything more melancholy than the aspect of H—.... It was a miserable day, dark, dismal, and foggy; the Manchester smoke came down, together with a penetrating cold drizzle, like the defilement and weeping of irretrievable shame, and sin, and sorrow; and the whole aspect of the place struck me with dismay. The house was shut up, and looked absolutely deserted, not a soul stirring about it; the garden dismantled and out of order. Altogether, the contrast of the whole scene to that which I remembered so bright, cheerful, gay, and lovely, combined with the cause of its present condition, struck me as beyond measure mournful....

You ask after the welfare of my children's nurse, Anne; and I will tell you something comically characteristic both of the individual and her nation. Here at Bowood she eats alone with the children, as she has been in the habit of doing at home; but at Worsley the little ones dined with us at our luncheon-table, and she ate in the housekeeper's room. Not knowing myself exactly what would be the place assigned to an American nursery-maid in the society of the servants' hall at Worsley, I inquired of her whether

THE NURSE,
ANNE.

she was comfortable and well-treated. She said, "Oh, yes, perfectly well;" but there seemed to me by her manner to be something or other amiss, and upon my inquiring further, she said, "Well, then, Mrs. Butler, I'll tell you what it is: I do wish they'd let me dine at the lower table. Everything is very good and very fine, to be sure, and the people are very kind and civil to me, but I cannot bear to have men in livery and maid-servants standing up behind my chair waiting on me, and that's the truth of it." She said this with an air of such sincere discomfort that it was quite evident to me that if, in common with her countrymen, she thought herself "as good as anybody," she certainly was not seduced by the glories of the upper table into forgetting that any one was as good as she.

I was spared the discomfort of having the children in another house; for either Lady Francis has fewer guests than she expected, or she had contrived to manage better than she had supposed she could, for they were lodged under the same roof with me, and quite near enough for comfort or convenience....

Thank you for your kindness in copying that account of Cavanagh for me; thank you, too, for Archbishop Whately's book, which I read immediately. There is nothing in it that I have not read before, nor certainly anything whatever to alter my opinion that the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of individuals who transmit it to their eldest sons, who inherit it without either mental or physical exertion of theirs, is an inevitable source of moral evil. There was nothing in that book to shake my opinion that hereditary idleness and luxury are not good for the country where they exist. An opinion was expressed in general conversation by almost everybody at Worsley which suggested a conclusion to my mind that did not appear to occur to any one else. In speaking of the education of young English boys at our great public schools, the whole system pursued in those institutions was condemned as bad; but on all sides, nevertheless, admitted to be better (at any rate, for the sons of noblemen) than the incessant, base, excessive complaisance and flattery of their servants and dependents, from which they all said that it was impossible to screen them in their own homes, and equally impossible that they should not suffer serious moral evil. Lord Francis said that for a lad like his nephew, the Marquis of Stafford, there was but one thing worse than being educated at Eton, and that was being educated at home; therefore, concluded they all in chorus, we send our boys to our public schools. So the children are sent away lest they should be corrupted by the obsequious servants and luxurious habits and general mode of life of their parents. And this, of course, is one of the inevitable results of distinctions of classes and hereditary wealth and influence; it is not one of the good ones, but there are better.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. I wrote to you yesterday, and shall probably do so again to-morrow.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, LONDON, Sunday, December 26th, 1841.

DEAR HARRIET,

I must tell you a droll little incident that occurred the day of our leaving Bowood. As I was crossing the great hall, holding little F— by the hand, Lord Lansdowne and Moore, who were talking at the other end, came towards me, and, while the former expressed kind regrets at our departure, Moore took up the child and kissed her, and set her down again; when she clutched hold of my gown, and trotted silently out of the hall by my side. As the great red door closed behind us, on our way to my rooms, she said, in a tone that I thought indicated some stifled sense of offended dignity, "Pray, mamma, who was dat little dentleman?" Now, Harriet, though Moore's fame is great, his stature is little, and my belief is that my three-year-old daughter was suffering under an impression that she had been taken a liberty with by some enterprising schoolboy. Oh, Harriet! think if one of his own Irish rosebuds of sixteen had received that poet's kiss, how long it would have been before she would have washed that side of her face! I believe if he had bestowed it upon me, I would have kept mine from water for its sake, till—bed-time. Indeed, when first "Lalla Rookh" came out, I think I might have made a

THOMAS
MOORE.

little circle on that cheek, and dedicated it to Tom Moore and dirt forever; that is—till I forgot all about it, and my habit of plunging my face into water whenever I dress got the better of my finer feelings. But, you see, he didn't kiss my stupid little child's intelligent mother, and this is the way that fool Fortune misbestows her favors. She is spiteful, too, that whirligig woman with the wheel. I am not an autograph collector, of course; if I was, I shouldn't have got the prize I received yesterday, when Rogers, after mending a pen for me, and tenderly caressing the nib of it with a knife as sharp as his own tongue, wrote, in his beautiful, delicate, fine hand, by way of trying it—

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

Is that a quotation from himself or some one else? or was it an impromptu?—a seer's vision, and friend's warning? Chi sa?

I cannot help being a little surprised at the earnestness with which you implore me to read Archbishop Whately's treatise. My objection to reading of books never extends to any book either given or lent, or strongly recommended to me. I am so fond of reading that I care very little what I read, so well satisfied am I with the movement and activity which even the stupidest, shallowest book rouses in my mind. With regard to the little work in question, you probably thought the subject might not interest me, and therefore I should neglect it. The subject, *i.e.*, political economy, interests me so little that, though I have read at various times and in sundry places publications of the same nature with much attention, they, in common with other books on other subjects for which I do not care, have left not the slightest trace upon my memory; at least, until I come to read the matter all over again, when my knowledge of it reappears, as it were, on the surface of my mind, though it had seemed to me to run through my brain like water through a sieve.

I have no doubt that from my mode of talking of different peoples, under various systems of government, you would not suspect me of having ever looked into the simplest treatise on political economy and similar subjects; but I have read most of the popular expositions of those grave matters that the press now daily puts forth; but as they, for the most part, deal with things as they *are*, and my cogitations are chiefly as to things as they *should be*, I do not find my studies avail me much. I believe I wrote you word after reading the book you sent me, and thinking it a very excellent abridged exposition of such subjects; I still could not understand what it had to do with the theory of laws for the division of property, or the expediency of the law of primogeniture, and the advantages of the distinctions of rank, to the societies where they exist. The question seems to me rather whether these remains of feudalism have or have not outlived their uses.

By-the-by, in taking off the cover in which you had wrapped the book, I did not perceive that you had written upon it until I had thrown it into the fire. I assure you that at the moment I was a great deal sorrier than if the worthy little volume itself had been grilling on the top of the coals.

We returned here on Friday, and found my father and Adelaide going on much as usual. Half a score of invitations, of one sort and another, waiting for us, and London, with its grim visage, looking less lovely than ever after the sweet, tender, wintry beauty of Bowood; where one walked, for a whole morning at a time, among hollies and laurels and glittering evergreens, which, by the help of the sunshine we enjoyed while we were there, gave the lie triumphant to the dead season.

I have been nurse almost all the day. Anne, who, poor girl! has had a long fast from her devotional privileges, went to church, and I walked with the children to the broad gravel walk in the Regent's Park, where I took that "exercise of agony" with you one afternoon; the day was much the same too, bright and sunny above, and exceedingly muddy and hateful under foot. The servants having their Christmas dinner to-day, I offered to take entire charge of the children, if Anne liked to join the party downstairs. She affably condescended, and they prolonged the social meal, or their after-dinner converse, for considerably more than two hours. Since that, I have been reading to S—, and it is now time for me to dress for dinner.

Adelaide and I dined *tête-à-tête* to-day; my father dined with Miss Cottin. I have refused,

because it is Sunday; Adelaide, because she is lazy; but she means to make the effort to go in the evening, and I shall go to bed early, and very glad I shall be to shut up shop, for this has been a very heavy day. How well nurses ought to be paid!

God bless you, dear Harriet.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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HARLEY STREET, Tuesday, December 28th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote you two long letters from Bowood, and one crossed note since I came back to town; yet in a letter I get from you this morning you ask me when your letters are "coming to the top" [of my packet of "my letters to be answered," to which I always replied in the succession in which they reached me]; at which, I confess, I feel not a little dismayed. However, it is to be hoped that you will get them sooner or later, and that, in this world or the next, you will discover that I wrote to you two such letters, at such a time....

How can you ask me if I *play fair* with my letters? Are you not sure that I do? and, whatever may be the case with my better qualities, are not my follies substantial, reliable, consistent, constant follies, that are pretty sure to be found where you left them?

Good-bye, my dearest Harriet. I am terribly out of spirits, but it is near bed-time, and the day will soon be done....

God bless you, dear. Give my kindest love to Dorothy. I am thinking of your return with earnest longing.... As we passed the evening at the Hen and Chickens, in the same room where I began reading you "Les Maîtres Mosaistes," on our return through Birmingham from the lately formed association, your image was naturally very vivid in our memories.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, December 28th, 1841.

DEAREST GRANNY,

[This was an affectionate nickname that my friend Lady Dacre assumed towards me, and by which I frequently addressed her], I do not mean this time to tax your forgiveness of injuries quite so severely as before, though you really have such a pretty knack of generosity that it's a pity not to give you an opportunity of exercising it.

Here we are again in our Harley Street abode, which, by favor of the fogs, smokes, and various lovely December complexions of London, looks but grimly after the evergreen shrubberies and bowers of Bowood, which I saw the evening before I came away to peculiar advantage, under the light of an unclouded moon. I left there the goodliest company conceivable: Rogers, Moore, Macaulay, Charles Austen, Mr. Dundas, Charles Greville, and Westmacott: so much for the mankind. Then there was dear old Miss Fox [Lord Holland's sister], whom I love, and Lady Harriet Baring [afterwards Lady Ashburton], whom I do not love, which does not prevent her being a very clever woman; and that exceedingly pretty and intelligent Baroness Louis Rothschild, et cetera. It was a brilliant party, but they were all so preternaturally witty and wise that, to tell you the truth, dear Granny, they occasionally gave me the mind-ache.

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As for Macaulay, he is like nothing in the world but Bayle's Dictionary, continued down to the present time, and purified from all objectionable matter. Such a Niagara of information did surely never pour from the lips of mortal man!

MACAULAY.

I think our pilgrimages are pretty well over for the present, unless the Duke of Rutland should remember a particularly courteous invitation he gave us to go to Belvoir some time about Christmas—a summons which we should very gladly obey, as I suppose there

are not many finer places in England or out of it.

I am sorry you have parted with Forrester [a horse Lady Dacre had named after a favorite horse of mine]; I liked to fancy my dear old horse's namesake at the Hoo.

Give my love to Lord Dacre, and my well-beloved B— and G— [Lady Dacre's granddaughters]. I am glad the former is dancing, because I like it so much myself. I look forward to seeing you all in the spring, and in the mean time remain, dear Granny,

Yours most affectionately,

FANNY.

[I became subsequently well acquainted with Lord Macaulay, but no familiarity ever diminished my admiration of his vast stores of knowledge, or my amazement at his abundant power of communicating them.

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In my visits to the houses of my friends, alike those with whom I was most and least intimate, I always passed a great deal of my time in my own room, and never remained in the drawing-room until after dinner, having a decided inclination for solitude in the morning and society in the evening. I used, however, to look in during the course of the day, upon whatever circle might be gathered in the drawing or morning rooms, for a few minutes at a time, and remember, on this occasion of my meeting Macaulay at Bowood, my amazement at finding him always in the same position on the hearth-rug, always talking, always answering everybody's questions about everything, always pouring forth eloquent knowledge; and I used to listen to him till I was breathless with what I thought ought to have been *his* exhaustion.

As one approached the room, the loud, even, declamatory sound of his voice made itself heard like the uninterrupted flow of a fountain. He stood there from morning till evening, like a knight in the lists, challenging and accepting the challenge of all comers. There never was such a speech-"power," and as the volume of his voice was full and sonorous, he had immense advantages in sound as well as sense over his adversaries. Sydney Smith's humorous and good-humored rage at his prolific talk was very funny. Rogers's, of course, was not good-humored; and on this very occasion, one day at breakfast, having two or three times uplifted his thread of voice and fine incisive speech against the torrent of Macaulay's holding forth, Lord Lansdowne, the most courteous of hosts, endeavored to make way for him with a "You were saying, Mr. Rogers?" when Rogers hissed out, "Oh, what I was saying will keep!"

I have spoken of Macaulay's discourse as a torrent; it was rather like the smooth and copious stream of the Aqua Paola, a comparison which it constantly suggested to me; the resonant, ceaseless, noble volume of water, the great fountain perpetually poured forth, was like the sonorous sound and affluent flow of his abundant speech, and the wide, eventful Roman plain, with all its thronging memories of past centuries, seen from the Janiculum, was like the vast and varied horizon of his knowledge, forever swept by his prodigious memory.]

HARLEY STREET, Wednesday, December 29th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Just imagine my ecstasy in answering your last letter, dated the 24th! I actually *do up* the whole of that everlasting bundle of letters, which is a sort of waking nightmare to me.

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I have been within two or three of the last for the last week, and having seldom seen myself so very near the end, I had a perfect fever of desire to exist, if only for a day, without having a single letter to answer. And now that I have tossed into the fire a note of Charles Greville's, which I have just replied to, and have unfolded your last and do the same by it, *i.e.* answer and burn it, the yellow silk cord that bound that ominous bundle of obligations lies empty on the inkstand, and I feel like Charles Lamb escaping from his India House clerkship, a perfect lord, or rather lady, of unlimited leisure.

You ask me if I think letters will go on to be answered in eternity? That supposition, my dear, involves the ideas of absence and epistolary labor, both of which may be included in the torments of the damned, but, according to my notions of heaven, there will be no letter-writing there. As, however, the receiving of letters is, in my judgment, a pleasure extremely worthy to be numbered among the enjoyments of the blessed, I conclude that letters will occasionally come to heaven, and always be written in—the other place; so perhaps our correspondence may continue hereafter. Who the writer and who the receiver shall be remains to be proved (it's my belief that the use of pen and ink would have made any one of the circles of the Inferno tolerable to you); and in any case, those are epistles that it is not necessary to antedate. Klopstock wrote and published—did he not?—letters which he wrote to his wife Meta in heaven. The answers are not extant; perhaps they were in an inferior style, humanly speaking, and he considerably suppressed them.

But to speak seriously, you forget in your query one of the principal doubts that exercise my mind, *i.e.*, whether there will be any continuation of communion at all hereafter between those who have been friends on earth; whether the relations of human beings to each other here are not merely a part of our spiritual experience, that portion of the education and progress of our souls that will terminate with this phase of our existence and be succeeded by other influences, new ones, fitted as these former have been to our (new) needs and conditions, by the Great Governor of our being. He alone knows; He will provide for them....

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The Coutts and Lord Strangford business (a dirty piece of money-scandal) is nice enough, but I heard a still *nicer* sequel to it at Bowood the other day. The gentlemen of the party were discussing the matter, and seemed all agreed upon the subject of Lord Strangford's innocence; but while declaring unanimously that the accusation was unfounded and unwarrantable, they added it was not half as bad as an attack of the same sort made by one of the papers upon Lords Normanby and Canterbury, which, after much discussion, was supposed to have been dictated entirely by political animosity; the sole motive assigned for the selection of those two men as the objects of such an odious accusation being the fact of their personal want of popularity, and also that they were known to be needy men, whose fortunes were considerably crippled by their extravagance.

COUTTS
AND LORD
STRANGFORD.

Of course, lie-makers must make plausibility one element of their craft; but this did seem a pleasant specimen of the manufacture. To be sure, I am bound to add that this account came from Whigs, and the attack was made by a Tory paper upon two members of the ex-Government; so you may believe it or not, according as you are Whig or Tory inclined to-day (that is to say, the motives assigned); the attack itself is not matter of doubt, having been visibly printed in one or more of the Tory papers. Both parties, however, have, I suppose, their staff of appointed technical and professional liars.

Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, Thursday, December 30th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

... I am a little surprised at your writing to me about my rule of correspondence as you do, because in several instances when you have particularly desired me to answer you immediately, I have done so; and should always do so, not by you alone, but by any one who requested an immediate reply to a letter. If it were in my power to answer such a communication on the same day, I should certainly do it, and, under such circumstances, always have done so. As for my *rule* of letter-writing, absurd as some of its manifestations undoubtedly are, it is not, I think, absurd *per se*; and I adopted it as more likely to result in justice to *all* my correspondents than any other I could follow. I have a great dislike to letter-writing, and, were I to consult my own disinclination, instead of answering letter for letter with the most scrupulous conscientiousness as I do, even the persons I love best would be very apt to hear from me once or twice a year, and perhaps, indulgence increasing the incapacity and disinclination to write (as the

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example of every member of my own family shows it must), I should probably end by never writing at all.

I have always thought it most desirable to answer letters on the same day that I received them; but, of course, this is not always possible; and my rather numerous correspondence causing often a rapid accumulation of letters, I have thought, when such an *arrearage* took place, the fittest thing to do was to answer first those received first, and so discharge my debts justly in point of time. With regard to replying to questions contained in letters received some time back, my scrupulousness has to do with my own convenience, as well as my correspondents' gratification. Writing as much as I do, I am, as Rosalind calls it, "gravelled for matter" occasionally, and in that emergency a specific question to answer becomes a real godsend; and, my cue once given me, I can generally contrive to fill my paper. I do not think you know how much I dislike letter-writing, and what an effort it sometimes costs me, when my spirits are at the lowest ebb, and my mind so engrossed with disheartening contemplations, that any exertions (but violent physical ones, which are my salvation for the most part) appear intolerable.

But I ought to tell you about our journey from Bowood, which threatened to be more adventurous than agreeable. We did, as you suppose, come down the railroad only a few hours after the occurrence of the accident. When we started from Chippenham, some surprise was expressed by the guards and railroad officials that the early train from London had not yet come up. Farther on, coming to a place where there was but one track, we were detained half an hour, from the apprehension that, as the other train had not yet come up, we might, by going upon the single line, encounter it, and the collision occasion some terrible accident. After waiting about half an hour, and ascertaining (I suppose) that the other train was not coming, we proceeded, and soon learned what had retarded it. On the spot where the accident took place the bank had made a tremendous slide; numbers of workmen were busy in removing the earth from the track; the engine, which had been arrested in its course by this impediment, was standing half on the line, half on the bank; planks and wheels and fragments of wood were strewed all round; and a crowd of people, with terrified eager faces, were gazing about in that vague love of excitement which makes sights and places of catastrophes, to a certain degree, delectable to human beings.

RAILWAY
ACCIDENT.

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I cannot help thinking, dear Harriet, that this sad accident, sad enough as I admit it to be for the relations and friends of the dead, was not so particularly terrible as far as the individuals themselves were concerned. God only knows how I may feel when I am struck, either in my own life or that of any one I love; but hitherto death has not appeared to me the awful calamity that people generally seem to consider it. The purpose of life alone, time wherein to do God's will, makes it sacred. I do not think it *pleasant* enough to wish to keep it for a single instant, without the idea of the *duty* of living, since God has bid us live. The only thought which makes me shrink from the notion of suicide is the apprehension that to this life another *might* succeed, as full of storm, of strife, of disappointment, difficulty, and unrest as this; and with that uncertainty overshadowing it, death has not much to recommend it. It is poor Hamlet's "perchance" that is the knot of the whole question, never here to be untied.

Involuntarily, we certainly hope for better things, for respite, for rest, for enfranchisement from the thralldom of some of our passions and affections, the goods and bonds that spur us through this life and fasten us to it. We—perhaps I ought to say I—involuntarily connect the idea of death with that of peace and repose; delivery, at any rate, from some subjugation to sin, and from some subjection to "the ills we know" (though it may be none of this), so that my first feeling about it is generally that it is a happy rather than a deplorable event for the principals concerned; but then comes the loss of the living, and I perceive very well how my heart would bleed if those I love were taken from me. I see my own desolation and agony in that case, but still feel as if I could rejoice for them; for, after all, life is a heavy burden on a weary way, and I never saw the human being whose existence was what I should call happy. I have seen some whose lives were so *good* that they justified their own existence, and one could conceive both why they lived and that they found it good to live.

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Of course, this is instinctive feeling; reflection compels one to acknowledge the infinite value of existence, for the purposes of spiritual progress and improvement; the

education of the soul; but my nature, impatient of restraint and pain and trial (and therefore most in need of the discipline of life), always rejoices at the first aspect of death, as at that of the Deliverer. Sudden death I certainly pray *for*, rather than *against*, and I think my father and sister were horrified and indignant at my saying that I could not conceive a better way of dying than being smashed, as we were all together, on that railway, dashed to pieces in a moment, like those eight men who perished there the other day.... This drew forth a suggestion that, if such were my sentiments, we had better hire a carriage on the Brighton railroad, and keep incessantly running up and down the line, by which means there would be every probability of my dying in the way I thought most desirable.

I wish you would just step over from Ireland and spend the evening with me; Adelaide and my father will be at the theatre....

God bless you, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Some years after writing this letter, having returned to the stage, I was fulfilling an engagement at the Hull theatre, and as I stood at the side scene, waiting to go on, two poor young girls were standing near me, of that miserable class from which the temporarily employed supernumeraries of country theatres are recruited. One of them, who looked as if she was dying of consumption, and coughed incessantly, said to her companion, who remarked upon it, "Yes, I go on so pretty much all the time, and I have a mind sometimes to kill myself." "That's running away from school, my child," said I. "Don't do it, for you can't tell whether you mayn't be put to just as hard or even a harder life to finish your lesson in another world." "O Lord, ma'am!" said the girl, "I never thought of that." "But I have very often," said I to her, as I went on the stage to finish my mumming.

THEATRICAL
SUPERNUMERA

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The strange ignorance of all the conditions of life (except their own most wretched ones), even those but a few degrees removed from their own, of these poor creatures, betrayed itself in their awestruck admiration of my stage ornaments, which they took for real jewels. "Oh, but," said I, as they gazed at them with wonder, "if they were real jewels, you know, I should sell them to live, and not come to the theatre to act for my bread every night." "Oh, wouldn't you, ma'am?" exclaimed they, amazed that so blissful an occupation as that of a stage star, radiant with "such diamonds," should not be all that heart of woman could desire. Poor things—all of us!]

HARLEY STREET, January 1st, 1842.

It is New Year's Day, my dearest Harriet. May God bless you. You will, I hope, receive to-day my account of my journey home from Bowood. Any anxiety you might have felt about us was certain to be dispelled by the note I despatched to you after our arrival, and as to the accident which took place on the railroad, I have nothing to tell you about it more than you would see in the newspapers, and it did not occur to me to mention it.

I read with attention the newspaper article you sent me about the corn laws and the currency, and, though I did not quite understand all the details given on the latter subject, yet the main question is one that I have been so familiar with lately as to have comprehended, I believe, the general sense of it. But I read it at Bowood, and though, as I assure you, with the greatest attention, I do not remember a single word of it now (the invariable practice of my memory with any subject that is entirely uncongenial to me).

The mischievous influence of the undue extension of the credit system is matter of daily discussion and daily illustration, I am sorry to say, in the United States, where, in spite of their easy institutions, boundless space, and inexhaustible real sources of credit (the wealth of the soil and its agricultural and universal products), and all the commercial advantages which their comparatively untrammelled conditions afford them, they are all but bankrupt now; distressed at home and disgraced abroad by the excess to which this

THE CREDIT
SYSTEM.

pernicious system of trading upon fictitious capital has been carried by eager, grasping, hastening-to-be-rich people. Of course, the same causes must tend to produce the same effects everywhere, though different circumstances may partially modify the results; and in proportion as this vicious system has prevailed with us in England, its consequences must, at some time or other, culminate in sudden severe pressure upon the trading and manufacturing interests, and I suppose, of course, upon all classes of the industrial population of the country. The difficult details of finance, and their practical application to the currency question, have not often been understood, and therefore not often relished by me whenever I have attempted to master them; but I have heard them frequently and vehemently discussed by the advocates of both paper money and coin currency; I have read all the manifestoes upon the subject put forth by Mr. Nicholas Biddle, late President of the United States Bank, who is supposed to have understood finance well, though the unfortunate funds committed to his charge do not appear to have been the safer for that circumstance.... The failure of the United States Bank has been sometimes considered as a political catastrophe, the result of party animosity and personal enmity towards Mr. Biddle on the part of General Jackson, who, being then President of the United States, gave a fatal blow to the credit of the bank (which, though calling itself the United States Bank, was not a Government institution) by removing from its custody the Government deposits. My impression upon the subject (simple, as I have no doubt you would expect to find the result of any mental process of mine) is that paper money is a financial expedient, the substitution of an appearance or makeshift for a real thing, and likely, like all other such substitutes of whatever kind, to become a source of shame, trouble, and ruin whenever, after the appointed time of circulation, which every expedient has, there should be a demand for the real article; more especially if the shadow has imposed upon the world by being twice as big as the substance.

The papers and pamphlets you have sent me, dear Harriet, seem to me only to prove that excessive and unjust taxation, partial and unjust corn laws, and unwise financial ones (together with other causes, which seem to me ominous of evil results), have produced the distress, embarrassment, and discontent existing in this, the richest and most enlightened country in the world....

I have been interrupted half a dozen times while writing this letter, once by a long visit from Mrs. Jameson.... Lady M—— called too, with a pretty little widow, a Mrs. M——, a great friend of Adelaide's. Dearest Harriet, here my letter was broken off yesterday morning, Friday; it is now Saturday evening, and this morning arrived two long ones from America. Now, if I should get one to-morrow or the next day, from you, will it be very unjust to put yours under these, and answer them before I write any more to you? I think not, but I must make an end of this....

Good-bye, and God bless you.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, Tuesday, January 4th, 1842.

DEAREST HARRIET,

... You say you wonder that those who love and worship Christ should be wanting in patience and the spirit of endurance. Do you not wonder, too, that they should fail in self-denial, charity, mercy, all the virtues of their Divine Model? But this is a terrible chapter, and sad subject of speculation for all of us, and I can't bear to speak upon it.

In talking once with my sister of self-condemnation, and our condemnation of others, I used an expression which she took up as eminently ridiculous; but I think she did not quite understand me. I said that there was a feeling of *modesty* which prevented one's uttering the extent of one's own self-accusations, at which she laughed very much, and said she thought that modesty ought to interfere in behalf of others as well as one's self; but there are some reasons why it does not. Severely as one may judge and blame others, it is always, of course, with the perception that one cannot know the *whole* of the case for or against them; nevertheless, even with this conviction, there are certain words and deeds of others which one condemns unhesitatingly. Such sentences as these

I pronounce often and without scruple (harshly, perhaps, and therein committing most mischievous, foul sin in chiding sin), but one does not utter that which one feels more rarely (however strongly, in particular instances), one's impression of the evil tendency of a whole character, the weakness or wickedness, the disease which pervades the whole moral constitution, and which seems to denote certain inevitable results; on these one hesitates to pronounce opinion, not so much, I think, because of the uncertainty one feels, as in the case of a special motive, or temptation to any special act, and the liability to mistake, both in the quality of motive and quality of temptation; as because so much deeper a condemnation is involved in such judgments. It is the difference between a physician's opinion on an acute attack of illness or a radical and fatal constitutional tendency. This sort of condemnation requires such intimate knowledge that one can hardly pass it upon any but one's self. One cannot tear off all coverings from the hearts and minds of others, whereas one could strip one's own moral deformities naked, and that species of self-accusation does seem to me a kind of immodesty. One naturally shrinks, too, from speaking of deep and awful things, and then there is the all but insuperable difficulty of putting one's most intimate convictions, *the realities of one's soul*, into words at all....

Oh, my dear Harriet, I have told you nothing of John and Natalia's mesmeric practices [my brother and his German wife]. If you could have seen them, you would have split your lean sides more than you did at my aspect and demeanor while listening to A—— reading her favorite French novels to me.

By-the-by, do you know that that very book, "Mathilde," which I could not listen to for a quarter of an hour with common patience, is cried up everywhere and by everybody as a most extraordinary production? At Bowood everybody was raving about it; Mrs. Jameson tells me that Carlyle excepted it from a general anathema on French novels. Sometimes I think I will try again to get through it, and then I think, as little F—— says when she is requested to do something that she ought, "*Elly*, now, me *tan not*."

"MATHILDE."

I am finishing George Sand's "Lettres d'un Voyageur," because in an evil hour I began them. Her style is really admirable, and in this book one escapes the moral (or immoral) complications of her stories.

God bless you, dear Harriet. Good-bye. Time and opportunity serving, you surely see that I am not only faithful, but prompt, in the discharge of my debts.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

I forgot to tell you that my poor Margery [my children's former nurse] has at length applied to the tribunals of Pennsylvania for a separation from her cruel and worthless husband. Poor thing! I hope she will obtain it.

[The tribunals of Pennsylvania followed, in the law of divorce, the German and not the English precedent and process. Divorce was granted by them, as well as mere separation, on plea of incompatibility of temper, and also for cause of non-cohabitation during a space of two years. In regard to the laws of marriage and divorce, as well as most other matters, each state in the Union had its own peculiar code, agreeing or differing from the rest. The Massachusetts laws of marriage and divorce were, I believe, the same as the English. In Pennsylvania a much greater facility for obtaining divorce—adopted, I suppose, from German modes of thought and feeling, and perhaps German legislature—prevailed, while in some of the western states, more exclusively occupied by a German population, the facility with which the bond of marriage was dissolved was greater than in any civilized Christian community in the world, I think.]

HARLEY STREET, January 16th, 1842.

At the end of a long, kind letter I received from you this morning, dearest Harriet, there is a most sudden and incomprehensible sentence, an incoherent, combined malediction upon yourself and your dog Bevis, which I found it difficult to connect in any way with the matter which preceded it, which was very good advice to me, abruptly terminating

in a declaration that you were a fool and your dog Bevis a brute, and leaving me to conclude either that he had overturned your inkstand or that you had gone mad, though indeed your two propositions are sane enough: for the first I would contradict if I could; the second I could not if I would; and so, as the Italians say, "Sono rimasta." ...

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With regard to the likeness between my sister and myself, it is as great as our unlikeness.... Our mode of perceiving and being affected by things and people is often identical, and our impressions frequently so similar and so simultaneous that we both often utter precisely the same words upon a subject, so that it might seem as if one of us might save the other the trouble of speaking.... She is a thousand times quicker, keener, finer, shrewder, and sweeter than I am, and all my mental processes, compared with hers, are slow, coarse, and clumsy.

Here my letter broke off yesterday morning, and yesterday evening I went to see the new opera, so that I shall have realities instead of speculations to treat you to. [The opera was an English version of the "Elena da Feltre," by Mercadante, whose dramatic compositions, "La Vestale," "Le Due Illustre Rivale," the "Elena da Feltre," and others, obtained a very considerable temporary popularity in Italy, but were, I think, little known elsewhere. They were not first-rate musical productions, but had a good deal of agreeable, though not very original, melody, and were favorable to a declamatory, passionate style of singing, having a great deal of dramatic power and pathos. My sister was fond of them, and gave them with great effect, and the celebrated *prima donna*, Madame Ungher, achieved great popularity and excited immense enthusiasm in some of them.]

MERCADANTE'S
OPERA.

The opera was entirely successful, owing certainly to Adelaide, for the music is not agreeable, or of an order to become popular; the story is rather involved, which, however, as people have books to help them to it, does not so much matter. She was beautifully and becomingly dressed in mediæval Italian costume, and looked very handsome. Her voice was, as usual, very much affected by her nervousness, and comparatively feeble; this, however, signifies little, as it is only on the first night that it occurs, and every succeeding representation, her anxiety being less, she recovers more power of voice.

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She acted extremely well, so as again to excite in me the strongest desire to see her in an *acting* part; a desire which is only qualified by the consideration that she makes more money at present as a singer than she probably could as an actress. At the end of the piece she *died*, with one of those expressions of feeling the effect of which may, without exaggeration, be called electrifying: it made me spring on my seat, and the whole audience responded with that voice of human sympathy that any true representation of feeling elicits instantaneously. Having renounced her lover, and married a man she hated, to save her father's life, after seeing her lover go to church and be married to another woman, her father being nevertheless executed (an old story, no doubt, but that's no matter), she loses her senses and stabs herself, and as she falls into the arms of her husband (the man she hated) she sees her lover, who just arrives at this moment, and the dying spring which she made, with her arms stretched towards him, falling, before she reached him, dead on the ground, was one of those terrible and touching things which the stage only can reproduce from nature—I mean, out of reality itself—a thing that of course neither painting nor sculpture could attempt, and that would have been comparatively cold and ineffective even in poetry, but which "in action" was indescribably pathetic. It had been, like many happy dramatic effects, a sudden thought with her, for it had only occurred to her yesterday morning; but the grace of the action, its beauty, truth, and expressiveness, are not to be conveyed by words. You will see it; not that, indeed, it may ever again be so very happy a thing in its effect....

God bless you, dear Harriet. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, January 31st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Why do you ask me if I would not write to you unless you wrote to me? Do you not know perfectly well that I *would not*—unless, indeed, I thought you were ill or something was the matter with you; and then I would write just enough to find out if such was the case. Why should I write to you, when I hate writing, and yet nevertheless *always* answer letters? Surely the spontaneous, or promiscuous (which did you call it, you Irishwoman?) epistle should come from the person who does not profess to labor under an *inkophobia*. And what can you righteously complain of, when I not only never fail scrupulously to answer your letters, but, be they long or short, invariably answer them *abundantly*, having as great an objection to writing a short letter almost as I have to writing any? Basta! never doubt any more about the matter, my dear Harriet. I never (I think) shall write to you, but I also (I think) shall never fail to answer you. If you are not satisfied with that, I can't help it.... We have a lull in our engagements just now—comparative quiet. We gave a family dinner on Friday.... My father, I am sorry to say, gets no rent from the theatre. The nights on which my sister does not sing the house is literally empty. Alas! it is the old story over again: that whole ruinous concern is propped only by her. That property is like some fate to which our whole family are subject, by which we are every one of us destined to be borne down by turn, after vainly dedicating ourselves to its rescue.

On Saturday I spent the evening at Lady Charlotte Lindsay's, who has a very kind regard for you, and spoke of your brother Barry with great affection. To-morrow, after going to the opera, I shall go to Miss Berry's. My sister and father go to Apsley House, where the Duke of Wellington gives a grand entertainment to the King of Prussia. We were asked too, but, though rather tempted by the fine show, it was finally concluded that we should not go, so we shall only have it at second hand. This is all my news for the present, dear Harriet. God bless you. Good-bye. If you ever wish to hear from me, drop me a line to that effect.

Ever yours (and the same),

FANNY.

[Circumstances occurred which induced us to change our plans, and I did go to the *fête* at Apsley House, which was very beautiful and magnificent. A pleasant incident of the evening was a special introduction to and a few minutes' conversation with our illustrious host; and the pleasantest of all, I am almost ashamed to say, was the memorable appearance of Lady Douro and Mademoiselle d'Este, who, coming into the room together, produced a most striking effect by their great beauty and their exquisite dress. They both wore magnificent dresses of white lace over white satin, ornamented with large cactus flowers, those of the blonde marchioness being of the sea-shell rose color, and the dark Mademoiselle d'Este's of the deep scarlet; and in the bottom of each of these large, vivid blossoms lay, like a great drop of dew, a single splendid diamond. The women were noble samples of fair and dark beauty, and their whole appearance, coming in together, attired with such elegant and becoming magnificent simplicity, produced an effect of surprise and admiration on the whole brilliant assembly.]

FÊTE AT
APSLEY
HOUSE.

HARLEY STREET, February 4th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

At twelve o'clock to-day I rang for candles, in order that the fog might not prevent my answering your letter. I was obliged to go out, however, and the skies in the interim have cleared; and where do you think I have been? Why, like a fool as I am, to *see a sight*, and I am well paid by feeling so tired, and having such a headache, and having had such a fright, that—it serves me right.

Our dear friend Harness has, as perhaps you know, an office which Lord Lansdowne gave him, by virtue of which he occupies a very pleasant apartment in the Council Office Building, the windows of which look out on Whitehall. Here he begged me to come and bring the children, that we might see the Queen, and the King of Prussia, and all the great folks, go to the opening of Parliament, and in an evil hour I consented, Harness

informing me at what hour to come, and what way to take to avoid the crowd. But the carriage was ordered half an hour later than we ought to have started, and the coachman was ordered to take us down Whitehall (though Harness had warned me that we could not come that way, and that we must leave our carriage at the Carlton Terrace steps, and walk across the park to the little passage which leads straight into Downing Street). Down Whitehall, however, we attempted to go, and were of course turned back by the police. We then retraced our route to the Carlton steps, and here, with the two children, Anne, and the footman, I made my way through the crowd; but oh, what a way! and what a crowd! When we got down into the park, the only clear space was the narrow line left open for the carriages, and some of them were passing at a rapid trot, just as we found our way into their road, and the dense wall of human beings we had squeezed through closed behind us. I assure you, Harriet, the children were not half a foot from one of those huge carriage-horses, nor was there any means of retreat; the living mass behind us was as compact as brick and mortar. We took a favorable moment, and, rushing across the road into the protecting arms of some blessed, benevolent policemen, who were keeping the line, were seized, and dragged, and pushed, and pulled, and finally made way for, through the crowd on the other side, and then ran, without stopping, till we reached our destination; but the peril of the children, and the exertion of extricating them and ourselves from such a situation, had been such that, on reaching Harness's rooms, I shook so that I could hardly stand, and the imperturbable Anne actually burst into tears. So much for the delights of sight-seeing.

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As for me, you know I would not go to the end of the street to see the finest thing in the universe; but, in the first place, I had promised, and in the next, I was so miserably out of spirits that, though I could not bear to go out, I could not bear to stay at home; but certainly, my detestation of running after a sight was never more heartily confirmed.

The concourse was immense, but I was much surprised at the entire want of excitement and enthusiasm in the vast multitude who thronged and all but choked up the Queen's way. All hats were lifted, but there was not a hatful of cheers, and the whole thing produced a disagreeable effect of coldness, indifference, or constraint.

Harness said it was nineteenth-century breeding, which was too exquisite to allow even of the mob's shouting. He is a Tory. T— M—, who is a very warm Whig, thought the silence spoke of Paisley starvation and Windsor banquets. I thought these and other things besides might have to do with the people's not cheering.

REV. W.
HARNES.

E— (who, bless her soul! has just been here, talking such gigantic nonsense) must have misunderstood me, or you must have misunderstood her, in supposing that I made a distinct *promise* to answer four crossed sheets of paper to four lines of yours. I said it was my usual practice to do so, and one from which I was not likely to depart, because I hate writing a short letter as much as I hate writing any letter at all....

Have you received one letter from me since you have been in Mountjoy Square? I have written one to you there, but, owing to the habit of my hand, which is to write "Ardgillan Castle," the direction was so scratched and blurred that I had some doubts whether the letter would reach you. Let me know, dear Harriet, if it does....

E— must have made another blunder about Lady Westmoreland and my sister. It is not the Duke of Wellington's money, in particular, that she objects to receiving; she does not intend to sing in private *for money* at all, anywhere, or on any occasion; which I am very glad of, as, if she did, I think social embarrassments and professional complications of every sort, and all disagreeable ones, would arise from it.

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We were all very cordially invited to Apsley House by Lady Westmoreland, before my sister stated that she did not intend to sing there for money.... Besides this, there came a formal bidding in the Duke of Wellington's own hand [or Algernon Greville's, who used to forge his illustrious chief's signature on all common occasions], with which we were very well pleased to comply....

A— has been trying to inoculate me with Paul de Kock, who, she assures me, is a *moral* writer, and with whose books our tables, chairs, sofas, and beds are covered, as with the unclean plagues of Egypt. I read one of the novels and began another. They are very clever, very funny, very dirty, abominably immoral, and I do not think I *can* read any more of them; for though I confess to having laughed till my sides ached over some

parts of what I read, I was, upon reflection and upon the whole, disgusted and displeased....

I have *precisely* your feeling about Mrs. F— in every particular; I think her the funniest and the kindest old maniac I am acquainted with, and my intercourse with her is according to that opinion. Good-bye, my dearest Harriet; God bless you. I wish I was where I could see green fields. I am in miserable spirits, and would give "my kingdom for a horse," and the world for an hour's gallop in the country.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[My dear and excellent friend the Rev. William Harness refused from conscientious motives to hold more than one Church benefice, though repeated offers of livings were made to him by various of his influential friends. Lord Lansdowne, who had a very affectionate esteem for him, gave him the civil office I have alluded to in this letter, and this not being open to Mr. Harness's scruples with regard to sacred sinecures, he accepted. His means were always small, his charities great, and his genial hospitality unfailing. He was one of the simplest, most modest, unpretending, honorable, high-minded, warm hearted human beings I have ever known. Goodness appeared easy to him—the best proof how good he was.]

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HARLEY STREET, February 5th, 1842.

DEAR HARRIET,

I did not care very much about the *fête* itself at Apsley House, but I was very glad to go to it upon the Duke of Wellington's invitation, and felt as much honored and gratified by that as I could be by any such sort of thing. My sister did sing for them, though, poor thing! not very well. She had just gone through the new opera, and was besides laboring under a terrible cough and cold, through which, I am sorry to say, she has been singing for the last week. There was no particular reason for her not taking money at *that* concert. She does not intend to be paid for singing in society at all.... Of course, her declining such engagements will greatly diminish her income, popular singers making nearly half their earnings by such means; but I am sure that, situated as we all are, she is right, and will avoid a good many annoyances by this determination, though her pocket will suffer for it....

APSLEY
HOUSE.

I know nothing whatever, of course, about the statements in the papers, which I never look at, about the financial disgraces and embarrassments in America. The United States Bank (in which my father had put four thousand pounds, which he could ill spare) is swept from the face of the earth, and everybody's money put into it has been like something thrust down a gaping mouth that had no stomach; it has disappeared in void space, and is irredeemably lost. I have seven thousand pounds in the New Orleans banks, which I have given my father for his life. Those banks, it is said, are sound, and will ere long resume specie payments, and give dividends to their stockholders. Amen, so be it. It is affirmed that Mr. Biddle's prosecution will lead to nothing, but that the state of Pennsylvania will pay its debts, means to do so, and will be able to do so without any difficulty.... God bless you, dear Harriet. Write to me soon again, for, though I do hate answering you, I hate worse not hearing from you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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I am glad you liked "Les Maîtres Mosaïstes;" I think it charming. Thank you for your "Enfant du Peuple." I have been trying some Paul de Kock, but *cannot* get on with it.

[Of Madame George Sand's few unobjectionable books, "Les Maîtres Mosaïstes" seems to me the best. As an historical picture of Venice and its glorious period of supremacy in art, it is admirable. As a pathetic human history, it is excellent; with this drawback, however, that in it the author has avoided the subject of the relations between the sexes—her invariable rock ahead, both morally and

artistically; and it is by the entire omission of the important element of love that this work of hers is free from the reproach the author never escapes when she treats of it. It is a great pity her fine genius has so deep a flaw.]

HARLEY STREET, February 11th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

... I want to know if you can come to us on the 20th of this month, instead of the 1st of March, as I expected you. I believe I told you that the Duke of Rutland, when we met him at the Arkwrights', at Sutton, gave us all a very kind invitation to Belvoir, which we accepted, and have been expecting since that some more definite intimation when the time of our visit would be convenient. He called here the other day, but we were none of us at home, and this morning we and my father heard from him, recalling our promise to go to Belvoir, and begging us to fix any time between this and the month of April. Now, the only time when my sister can go, poor child! is during Passion Week; and as I am very anxious that she should have the refreshment of a week in the country, and her being with us will be a great addition to my own enjoyment, I want to appoint that time for our visit to the Duke of Rutland. That, however, happens about the 20th of March, when I expected you to be with us; but if, by coming earlier, you can give me as long a visit as you had promised me, without inconveniencing yourself, I shall be glad, dear Harriet; for though *we* can go to Belvoir at any time before or after March, I wish my sister not to lose a pleasant visit to a beautiful place.

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To tell you the truth, it would be a great pleasure to me that you should come so much sooner than I had reckoned upon having you; and as Emily and I trotted round Portman Square together to-day, we both made out that, if you come into this arrangement, you will be here on Tuesday week, which appears to me in itself delightful. Let me know, dear, what you decide, as I shall not answer the Duke of Rutland until I have heard from you.

I promise myself much pleasure from seeing Belvoir. The place, with which I am familiar through engravings and descriptions, is a fine house in one of the finest situations in England; and the idea of being out of London once more, in the country and on horseback, is superlatively agreeable to me.

And now, my dearest, to answer your letter, which I got this morning. For pity's sake, let Lady Westmoreland rest, for the present; we will take her up again, if expedient, when we meet.... The Duke of Wellington called here the other day, and brought an exceedingly pretty bracelet and amiable note to my sister; both which, as you may suppose, she values highly, as she ought to do.

About the cheering of the Queen on her way to Parliament the other day, I incline to think the silence was universal, for everybody with whom I was observed it, except Charles Greville, who swore she was applauded; but then he is deaf, and therefore hears what no one else can. Moreover, the majority of spectators were by no means well-dressed people; the streets were thronged with pure mobocracy, to a degree unprecedented on any previous occasion of the sort, and, though there was no exhibition of ill-feeling towards the Queen or any of the ministers, there was no demonstration of good will beyond the usual civility of lifting the hats as she passed. Indeed, Horace Wilson told me that, when he was crossing the park at the time of her driving through it, there was some—though not much—decided hissing.

THE
QUEEN'S
RECEPTION.

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Your lamentation over my want of curiosity reminds me that on this very occasion Charles Greville offered to take me all over the Coldbath Fields Prison, and show me the delights of the treadmill, etc., and expressed great astonishment that I did not enthusiastically accept this opportunity of seeing such a cheerful spectacle, and still more amazement at my general want of enlightened curiosity, which he appeared to consider quite unworthy of so intelligent a person.

I have not read Stephens's book on Central America, but only certain extracts from it in the last *Quarterly*, with which I was particularly charmed; but I admire your asking me why I did not send for his book from the circulating library instead of Paul de Kock. Do you suppose *I* sent for Paul de Kock? Don't you know I never send for any book, and

never *read* any book, but such as I am desired, required, lent, or given to read by somebody? being, for the most part, very indifferent what I read, and having the obliging faculty of forgetting immediately what I have read, which is an additional reason for my not caring much what my books are. Still, there is a point at which my indifference will give way to disgust.... — recommended Paul de Kock's books strongly to me, therefore I read one of them, but found it so very little to my taste that I was obliged, against my usual rule of compliance with my friend's recommendations in these matters, to decline the rest of the author's works. I have begun your "Enfant du Peuple," and many are the heartaches I have had already, though I have read but little of it, over that poor Jean Baptiste's tender and touching love, which reminds one of Jacob's serving seven years for the sake of Rachel, and hardly counting them a day....

Dearest Harriet, if in the matter of your visit to us you cannot alter your plans, which have already been turned topsy-turvy once to suit ours, we will go at some other time to Belvoir, and my sister must e'en give it up, as in my professional days I had to forego Stoke, Chatsworth, and, hardest by far of all, Abbotsford.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. Give my kind love to M——. I rejoice to hear of her convalescence. Remember me affectionately to Dorothy, and believe me,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

GRIMSTHORPE, March 27th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Thank God and O'Connell for your smooth passage. I really dreaded the effects of sea-sickness for you, combined with that racking cough....

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We left Belvoir yesterday, and came on here, having promised Lady Willoughby to visit them on our way back to London.

I do not know whether you ever saw Belvoir. It is a beautiful place; the situation is noble, and the views from the windows of the castle, and the terraces and gardens hanging on the steep hill crowned by it, are charming. The whole vale of Belvoir, and miles of meadow and woodland, lie stretched below it like a map unrolled to the distant horizon, presenting extensive and varied prospects in every direction, while from the glen which surrounds the castle hill like a deep moat filled with a forest, the spring winds swell up as from a sea of woodland, and the snatches of bird-carolling and cawing rook-discourse float up to one from nests in the topmost branches of tall trees, far below one's feet, as one stands on the battlemented terraces.

WAY OF
LIFE AT
BELVOIR.

The interior of the house is handsome, and in good taste; and the whole mode of life stately and splendid, as well as extremely pleasant and comfortable. The people—I mean the Duke and his family—kind and courteous hosts, and the society very easy and free from stiffness or constraint of any sort; and I have enjoyed my visit very much....

We had a large party at Belvoir. The gentlemen of the hunt were all at the castle; and besides the ladies of the family (one unmarried and two married daughters), we had the Duchess of Richmond and her granddaughter, the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, Lord and Lady Winchelsea, Mademoiselle d'Este, and a whole tribe of others whose names I forget, but which are all duly down in the butler's book.

Every morning the duke's band marched round the castle, playing all sorts of sprightly music, to summon us to breakfast, and we had the same agreeable warning that dinner was ready. As soon as the dessert was placed on the table, singers came in, and performed four pieces of music; two by a very sweet single voice, and two by three or more voices. This, with intervals for conversation, filled up the allotted time before the ladies left the table. In the evening we had music, of course, and one evening we adjourned to the ball-room, where we danced all night, the duke leading down a country-dance, in which his house-maids and men-cooks were vigorously figuring at the same time.

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Whenever my sister sang, the servants used all to assemble on a large staircase at one end of the ball-room, where, for the sake of the sound, the piano was placed, and

appeared among her most enthusiastic hearers.... The whole family were extremely cordial and kind to us; and when we drove away, they all assembled at an upper window, waving hats and handkerchiefs as long as we could see them. I have no room to tell you anything of Grimsthorpe. God bless you. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

Fanny.

[My first introduction to "afternoon tea" took place during this visit to Belvoir, when I received on several occasions private and rather mysterious invitations to the Duchess of Bedford's room, and found her with a "small and select" circle of female guests of the castle, busily employed in brewing and drinking tea, with her grace's own private tea-kettle. I do not believe that now universally honored and observed institution of "five-o'clock tea" dates farther back in the annals of English civilization than this very private and, I think, rather shamefaced practice of it.

Our visit to Grimsthorpe has left but three distinct images on my memory: that of my bedroom, with its furniture of green velvet and regal bed-hangings of white satin and point lace; that of the collection of thrones in the dining-room, the Lords Willoughby de Eresby being hereditary Lord Grand Chamberlains of England, whose perquisite of office was the throne or chair of state used by each sovereign at his or her coronation; and my intercourse with Mademoiselle d'Este, who, like ourselves, came from Belvoir to Grimsthorpe, and with whom I here began an acquaintance that grew into intimacy, and interested me a good deal from her peculiar character and circumstances.]

HARLEY STREET, London, March 31st, 1842.

MY DEAR T—,

... My father is in wonderful health, looks, and spirits, considering that in all these items this time last year he was very little better than dead. My sister is working very hard and very successfully, and proposing to herself, after two more years of assiduous labor, to retire on a moderate income to Italy, where she would rather live than anywhere else. But, oh dear me! how well I remember the day when that was my own vision of the future, and only see what a very different thing it has turned out! I think it not at all improbable that she will visit the United States next year, and that we shall find that moment propitious for returning; that is to say, about a twelvemonth from next month.... So much for private interests. As to the public ones: alas! Sir Robert Peel is losing both his health and his temper, they say; and no wonder at it! His modification of the corn laws and new tariff are abominations to his own party, and his income tax an abomination to the nation at large. I cannot conceive a more detestable position than his, except, perhaps indeed, that of the country itself just now. Poverty and discontent in great masses of the people; a pitiless Opposition, snapping up and worrying to pieces every measure proposed by the Ministry, merely for malignant *mischeevousness*, as the nursemaids say, for I don't believe they—the Whigs—will be trusted again by the people for at least a century to come; a determined, troublesome, and increasing Radical party, whose private and personal views are fairly and dangerously masked by the public grievances of which they advocate the redress; a minister, hated personally by his own party, with hardly an individual of his own political persuasion in either House who follows him cordially, or, rather, who does not feel himself personally aggrieved by one or other of the measures of reform he has proposed,—yet that minister the only man in England at this moment able to stand up at the head of public affairs, and the defeat of whose measures (distasteful as they are to his own party, and little satisfactory to the people in general) would produce instantaneously, I believe, such confusion, disorder, and dismay as England has not seen for many a year, not indeed since the last great Reform crisis;—all this is not pleasant, and makes me pity everybody connected with the present Government, and Sir Robert Peel more than anybody else. I wonder how long he'll be able to stand it.

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What have you done with Lord Morpeth? And what are you doing with "Boz"? The first

LORD
MORPETH.

has a most tenderly attached mother and sisters, and really should not, on their account, be killed with kindness; and the latter has several small children, I believe, who, I suppose, will naturally desire that your national admiration should not annihilate their papa.... I wish we were to come back to America soon, but wishes are nonsensical things.... Give my dear love to Catherine and Kate [Miss Sedgwick and her niece], if they are in New York when this reaches you.

Good-bye, my dear T—-. I would not have troubled you with this if I had known Mrs. Robert's address; but "Wall Street" will find you, though "Warren Street" knows her no longer.

We have been spending ten days at Belvoir Castle, with all sorts of dukes and duchesses. Don't you perceive it in the nobility of my style? It is well for a foreigner to see these things; they are pretty, pleasant, gay, grand, and, in some of their aspects, good; but I think that who would see them even as they still subsist now had better lose no time about it.

HARLEY STREET, Tuesday, April 12th, 1842.

Did anyone ever say there was not a "soul of good even in things evil"? From your mode of replying to my first letter, dearest Harriet—the one from Belvoir, in which I told you I had been strongly minded to write to you *first*—you do not seem to me quite to believe in the existence of such an intention. Nor was it a "weak thought," but a very decided purpose, which was frustrated by circumstances for one day, and the next prevented entirely by the arrival of your letter. However, no matter for all that now; hear other things.

You ask after "Figaro" [Mozart's opera of "Le Nozze di Figaro," then being given at Covent Garden, my sister singing the part of Susanna]. It draws very fine houses, and Adelaide's acting in it is very much liked and praised, as it highly deserves to be, for it is capital, very funny, and *fine* in its fun, which makes good comedy—a charming thing, and a vastly more difficult one, in my opinion, than any tragic acting whatever....

Your boots have been sent safe and sound, my dear, and are in the custody of a person who, I verily believe, thinks me incapable of taking care of anything in the world, and has the same amount of confidence in my understanding that a friend of mine (a clergyman of the Church of England) expressed in his mother's honesty, "I wouldn't trust her with a bad sixpence round the corner." However, your boots, as I said, are safe, and will reach your hands (or feet, I should rather say) in due course of time, I have no doubt.

I have had two letters from America lately, the last of them containing much news about the movements of the abolitionists, in which its writer takes great interest. Among other things, she mentions that an address had been published to the slaves, by Gerrit Smith, exhorting them to run away, to use all means to do so, to do so at any risk, and also by all means and at any risk to learn to read. By all means, he advises them, in no case to use violence, or carry off property of their masters' (except indeed themselves, whom their masters account very valuable property). I should have told you that Gerrit Smith himself was a large slave-holder, that he has given up all his property, renounced his home in the South (where, indeed, if he was to venture to set foot, he would be murdered in less than an hour). He lives at the North, in comparative poverty and privation, having given up his wealth for conscience' sake. I saw him once at Lucretia Mott's. He was a man of remarkable appearance, with an extremely sweet and noble countenance. He is one of the "confessors" in the martyr-age of America.

GARRETT
SMITH.

I am much concerned at your account of E—-, for though sprains and twists and wrenches are not uncommon accidents, I have always much more dread of them than of a *bonâ* (bony) *fide* fracture. I always fear some injury may be lodged in the system by such apparently lesser casualties, that may not reveal itself till long after the real cause is forgotten....

I must end this letter, for I have delayed it too shamefully long, and you must think me more abominable than ever, in spite of which I am still

CRANFORD HOUSE, April 17th, 1842.

I put a letter into the post for you, my dearest Harriet, this afternoon. This is all I was able to write to you yesterday—Wednesday; and now it is Thursday evening, and there is every prospect of my having leisure to finish my letter.

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Emily has asked me several times to come and spend the evening with her mother, and I have promised her each time that the first evening....

Thus far last night, my dear—that is to say, Thursday evening. It is now Friday evening, and the long and the short of the story was that Emily dined out, Mrs. FitzHugh *teaed* with the Miss Hamiltons, my party went to Drury Lane, and I passed the evening alone; and the reason why this letter was not finished during that lonely evening, my dear, was that I was sitting working worsted-work for Emily in the parlor downstairs when my people all went away, and after they were gone I was seized with a perfect nervous panic, a "Good" fever, and could not bring myself to stir from the chair where they had left me. As to going up into the drawing-room, it was out of the question; I fancied every step of the stairs would have morsels of flesh lying on it, and the banisters would be all smeared with blood and hairs. In short, I had a fit of the horrors, and sat the whole blessed evening working heart's ease into Emily's canvas, in a perfect nightmare of horrible fancies. At one moment I had the greatest mind in the world to send for a cab, and go to Covent Garden Theatre, and sit in Adelaide's dressing-room; but I was ashamed to give way to my nerves in that cowardly fashion, and certainly passed a most miserable evening.... However, let me leave last night and its horrors, and make haste to answer your questions....

Another pause, dear Harriet, and here I am at this picturesque old place, Cranford House, paying another visit to —'s *venerable* friend, old Lady Berkeley. I have been taking a long walk this morning with Lady —, whose London fine-ladyism gave way completely in these old walks of her early home, to which all the family appear extremely attached. Her unfeigned delight at the primroses, oxlips, wild cherry bloom, and varying greens of the spring season made me think that her lament was not applicable to herself, just then, at any rate. "What a pity," cried she, "it is that one cannot be regenerated as the earth is every spring!" *She* seemed to me to be undergoing a very pretty process of regeneration even while she spoke. It is touching to observe natural character and the lingering traces of early impressions surviving under the overlaying of the artificial soil and growth of after years of society and conventional worldly habits. She pointed out to me a picturesque, pretty object in the grounds, over which she moralized with a good deal of enthusiasm and feeling—an old, old fir-tree, one of the cedar tribe, a tree certainly many more than a hundred years old, whose drooping lower branches absolutely lie upon the lawn for yards all round it. One of these boughs has struck into the ground, and grown up into a beautiful young tree, already twelve or fourteen feet high, and the contrast between the vivid coloring and erect foliage of this young thing, and the rusty, dusky green, drooping branches of the enormous tree, which seems to hang over and all round it, with parental tenderness, is quite exquisite. One of them, however, must, nevertheless, destroy or be destroyed by the other; a very pretty vegetable version of the ancient classical, family fate, superstitions....

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Pray, if you know how flowers propagate, write me word. In gathering primroses this morning, Lady — and I exercised our ignorance in all sorts of conjectures upon the subject, neither of us being botanists, though she knew, which I did not, the male from the female flowers.

I get a good deal of sleep since you have gone away, as I certainly do not sit up talking half the night with anybody else. But as for enough, is there such a thing as enough sleep? and was anybody ever known to have had it? and who was he or she?

I have had two long letters from Elizabeth Sedgwick, containing much matter about the abolitionists, in whose movements, you know, she is deeply interested; also more urgent entreaties that I will "use my influence" to secure our return home in the autumn!...

My father appears to be quite well, and in a state of great pleasurable excitement and activity of mind, having (alas! I regret to say) accepted once more the management of Covent Garden, which is too long a story to begin just at the end of my paper; but he is in the theatre from morning till night, as happy as the gods, and apparently, just now, as free from all mortal infirmity. It is amazing, to be sure, what the revival of the one interest of his life has done for his health.

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I went to the Portland Street Chapel last Sunday, and heard a sermon upon my peculiar virtue, *humility*, not from the same clergyman we heard together; and S—, who is too funny, sang the Psalms so loud that I had to remonstrate with her.

SERMON ON
HUMILITY.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[A horrible murder had just been committed by a miserable man of the name of Good, who endeavored to conceal his crime by cutting to pieces and scattering in different directions the mangled remains of his victim—a woman. The details of these horrors filled the public papers, and were the incessant subject of discussion in society, and were calculated to produce an impression of terror difficult to shake off even by so little nervous a person as myself.

The Countess of Berkeley, to whom I have alluded in this letter, was a woman whose story was a singular romance, which now may be said to belong to "ancient history." She was the daughter of a butcher of Gloucester, and an extremely beautiful person. Mr. Henry Berkeley, the fifth son of Lady Berkeley, for many years Member of Parliament for Bristol, and as many years the persistent advocate of the system of voting by ballot, travelled and resided for some time in America, and formed a close intimacy with —, who, when we came to England, accepted Mr. Berkeley's invitation to visit his mother at Cranford, and took me with him, to make the acquaintance of this remarkable old lady. She was near eighty years old, tall and stately, with no apparent infirmities, and great remains of beauty. There was great originality in all she said, and her manner was strikingly energetic for so old a woman. I remember, one day after dinner, she had her glass filled with claret till the liquid appeared to form a rim above the vessel that contained it, and, raising it steadily to her lips, looked round the table, where sat all her children but Lord Fitzhardinge, and saying, "God bless you all," she drank off the contents without spilling a drop, and, replacing the glass on the table, said, "Not one of my sons could do that."

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One morning, when I was rather indisposed, and unable to join any of the parties into which the guests had divided themselves on their various quests after amusement, I was left alone with Lady Berkeley, and she undertook to give me a sketch of her whole history; and very strange it was. She gave me, of course, her own version of the marriage story, and I could not but wonder whether she might have persuaded herself into believing it true, when she wound up her curious and interesting account of her life by saying, "And now I am ready to be carried to my place in the vault, and my place in the vault is ready for me" (she pointed to the church which adjoined the old mansion); "and I have the key of it here," and she gave a hearty slap upon her pocket. She told me of her presentation at Court, and the uproar it occasioned among the great ladies there, whose repugnance to admit her of their number she described with much humor, but attributed solely to the fact of her plebeian descent, of which she spoke unhesitatingly.

The impression I gathered from her narrative, rather unconsciously on her part I suspect, was that the Queen, whose strictness upon the subject of reputation was well known, objected to receiving her (Lady Berkeley called her, rather disrespectfully, "Old Charlotte" all the time, but spoke of George III. as "the King"), but was overruled by the King, who had a personal friendship for Lord Berkeley.

The strangest thing in her whole account of herself, however, was the details she gave me of her singular power over her husband. She said that in a very few

LADY
BERKELEY'S

years after their marriage (by courtesy) she perceived that her husband's affairs were in the most deplorable state of derangement: that he gambled, that he was over head and ears in debt, that he never had a farthing of ready money, that his tenantry were worse off than any other in the country, that his agents and bailiffs and stewards were rogues who ground them and cheated him, that his farmers were careless and incompetent, and that the whole of his noble estate appeared to be going irretrievably to ruin; when the earl complaining one day bitterly of this state of things, for which he knew no remedy, she told him that she would find the remedy, and undertake to recover what was lost and redeem what remained, if he would give her absolute discretionary power to deal with his property as she pleased, and not interfere with her management of it for a whole year. He agreed to this, but, not satisfied with his promise, she made him bind himself by oath and, moreover, execute documents, giving her legal power enabling her to act independently of him in all matters relating to his estate. The earl not unnaturally demurred, but at length yielded, only stipulating that she should always be prepared to furnish him with money whenever he wanted it. She bound herself to do this, and received regular powers from him for the uninterrupted management of his property and administration of his affairs for a whole year. She immediately set about her various plans of reform, and carried them on vigorously and successfully, without the slightest interference on the part of her dissipated and careless husband, who had entirely forgotten the whole compact between them. Some months after the agreement had gone into effect, she perceived that he was harassed and disturbed about something, and questioning him, found he had incurred a heavy gambling debt, which he knew not how to meet. His surprise was extreme when, recalling the terms of their mutual agreement, she put him in possession of the sum he required. "He called me an angel," she said. "You see, my dear, one is always an angel, when one holds the strings of the purse, and that there is money in it."

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She persevered in her twelvemonth's stewardship, and at the end of that time had redeemed her word, and relieved her husband's estate from its most pressing embarrassments. The value of the land had increased; the condition of the tenantry had improved; intelligent and active farmers had had the farms rented to them, instead of the previous sleepy set of incumbents; and finally, a competent and honest agent, devoted to carry out her views, was placed over the whole. The property never fell from this highly prosperous condition, for Lord Berkeley never withdrew it from his wife's supervision; and she continued to administer his affairs till his death, and maintained an extraordinary influence over all the members of her family at the time of my acquaintance with her. They were all rather singular persons, and had a vein of originality which made them unlike the people one met in common society. I suppose their mother's unusual character may have had to do with this.

Lord Fitzhardinge was never at Cranford when I was there, though I have, at various times, met all the other brothers.

Frederick Berkeley went into the navy, and rose to the important position of an admiral; Craven Berkeley, Grantley Berkeley, and Henry Berkeley were all in Parliament. The latter was for many years Member for the important constituency of Bristol, and, probably in consequence of opinions acquired during his residence in the United States, was a consistent advocate for the introduction of vote by ballot in our elections. This gentleman was an unusually accomplished person: he had made preparatory studies for two professions, the Church and the Bar; but though he embraced neither career (possibly on account of an accident he met with while hunting, which crippled him for life), the reading he had gone through for both had necessarily endowed him with a more than common degree of mental cultivation. He was an excellent musician, played on the piano and organ with considerable taste and feeling, and had a much more thorough acquaintance with the science of music than is usual in an amateur.

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Morton Berkeley sought no career; he lived with his mother and sister, Lady Mary, at Cranford, his principal pleasure and occupation being the preservation

of the game on the estate—an object of not very easy accomplishment, owing to the proximity of Cranford to London, the distance being only twelve miles by railroad, and the facilities thus offered of escape and impunity to poachers necessarily considerable. The tract immediately round Cranford was formerly part of the famous, or rather infamous, Hounslow Heath; and I have heard Mr. Henry Berkeley say that in his youth he remembered perfectly, when he went to London with his father, by day or night, loaded pistols were an invariable part of the carriage furniture.

My first acquaintance with Mr. Morton Berkeley's devotion to the duties of a gamekeeper was made in a very singular manner, and accompanied by a revelation of an unexpected piece of sentiment.

— and myself were visiting at Cranford on one occasion, when the only strangers there beside ourselves were Lady C—, Lord and Lady S—, and Lord F— and his sister, a lady of some pretensions to beauty, but still more to a certain fashionable elegance of appearance, much enhanced by her very Parisian elaborateness of toilette.

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One night, when the usual hour for retiring had come, the ladies, who always preceded the gentlemen by some hours to their sleeping apartments, had left the large room on the ground-floor, where we had been spending the evening. As we ascended the stairs, my attention was attracted by some articles of dress which lay on one of the window-seats: a heavy, broad-brimmed hat, a large rough pea-jacket, and a black leather belt and cutlass—a sort of coastguard costume which, lying in that place, excited my curiosity. I stopped to examine them, and Lady Mary exclaiming, "Oh, those are Morton's night-clothes; he puts them on when everybody is gone to bed, to go and patrol with the gamekeeper round the place. *Do* put them on for fun;" she seized them up and began accoutring me in them.

When I was duly enveloped in these very peculiar trappings, we all burst into fits of laughter, and it was instantly proposed that we should all return to the drawing-room, I marching at their head in my gamekeeper's costume. Without further consideration, I ran downstairs again, followed by the ladies, and so re-entered the room, where the gentlemen were still assembled in common council, and where our almost immediate return in this fashion was hailed by a universal shout of surprise and laughter. After standing for a minute, with a huge rough overcoat over my rose-colored satin and *moiré* skirts, which made a most ludicrous termination to the pugnacious habit of my upper woman, I plunged my hand into one of the pockets, and drew forth a pair of hand-cuffs (a prudent provision in case of an encounter with poachers). Encouraged by the peals of merriment with which this discovery was greeted, I thrust my other hand into the other pocket, when Mr. Morton Berkeley, without uttering a word, rushed at me, and, seizing me by the wrist, prevented my accomplishing my purpose. The suddenness of this movement frightened me at first a good deal. Presently, however, my emotion changed, and I felt nothing but amazement at being thus unceremoniously seized hold of, and rage at finding that I could not extricate myself from the grasp that held me. Like a coward and a woman, I appealed to all the other gentlemen, but they were laughing so excessively that they were quite unable to help me, and probably anticipated no great mischief from Mr. Berkeley's proceeding. I was almost crying with mortification, and actually drew the cutlass and threatened to cut the fingers that encircled my wrist like one of the iron handcuffs, but, finding my captor inexorable, I was obliged, with extreme sulky confusion, to beg to be let go, and promise to take the coat off without any further attempts to search the pockets. I divested myself of my borrowed apparel a great deal faster than I had put it on, and its owner walked off with the pea-jacket, the right pocket of which remained unexplored. We ladies withdrew again, rather crestfallen at the termination of our joke, I rubbing my wrist like Mary Stuart after her encounter with Lord Ruthven, and wondering extremely what could be the mysterious contents of that pocket.

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The next day Lady Mary told me that her brother had long cherished a romantic sort of idolatry for Miss F—, and that, as a pendant to the handcuffs in one

pocket of his dreadnought, the other contained her miniature, which he dreaded the night before that my indiscretion would produce, to the derision of the men, the distress and confusion of the young lady herself, and the possible displeasure of her brother. Mr. Morton Berkeley's manners to me after that were again, as they always had been, respectful and rather reserved; the subject of our "fight" was never again alluded to, and he remained to me a gentle, shy, courteous (and romantic) gentleman.

He was habitually silent, but when he did speak, he was very apt to say something apposite, and generally containing the pith of the matter under discussion. I remember once, when I was reproaching his brother Henry and his sister with what I thought the unbecoming manner in which they criticised the deportment and delivery of a clergyman whose sermon they had just listened to (and who certainly was rather an unfortunate specimen of outward divinity), Mr. Morton Berkeley suddenly turned to me, and said, "Why, Mrs. Butler, he is only the rusty bars the light shines through"—a quotation, in fact, but a very apposite one, and I am not sure but that it was an unconscious one, and an original illustration on his part.

Mr. Thomas Duncombe, the notorious Radical Member for Finsbury, very generally and very disrespectfully designated in the London society of his day as "Tommy Duncombe," and Mr. Maxse (Lady Caroline Berkeley's husband), were also among the persons with whom I became acquainted at Cranford.

THOMAS
DUNCOMBE.

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Of a curious feat of charioteership performed by the latter gentleman I was told once by the Duke of Beaufort, who said he had derived from it the nickname of "Go-along Maxse." Driving late one night with a friend on a turnpike road after the gates were closed, he said to his companion, "Now, if the turnpike we are just coming to is shut, I'll take the horse and gig over the gate." The gig was light, the horse powerful and swift. As they bowled along and came in sight of the gate, they perceived that it was closed; when Mr. Maxse's companion calling out to him, "Go-along, Maxse," that gentleman fulfilled his threat or promise, whichever it might be, and put his horse full at the gate, which the gallant creature cleared, bringing the carriage and its live freight safe to the ground on the other side; a feat which I very unintentionally imitated, in a humble degree, many years after, with an impunity my carelessness certainly did not deserve.

Driving in a state of considerable mental preoccupation out of my own gate one day at Lenox, in a very light one-horse "wagon" (as such vehicles are there called), instead of turning my horse's head either up or down the road, I let him go straight across it, to the edge of a tolerably wide dry ditch, when, suddenly checking him, the horse, who was a saddle-horse and a good leaper, drew himself together, and took the ditch, with me in the carriage behind him, and brought up against a fence, where there was just room for him to turn round, which he immediately did, as if aware of his mistake, and proceeded to leap back again, quite successfully without any assistance of mine, I being too much amazed at the whole performance to do anything but sit still and admire my horse's dexterity.

I have adverted to the still existing industry of "gentlemen of the road," in speaking of Cranford in the days of the Earl of Berkeley, who used to take pistols in the carriage when he went to London. On one occasion, when he was riding, unattended but fortunately not unarmed, over some part of Hounslow Heath, a highwayman rode up to him, and, saluting him by name, said, "I know, my lord, you have sworn never to give in to one of us; but now I mean to try if you're as good as your word." "So I have, you rascal, but there are two of you here," replied the earl. The robber, thrown off his guard, looked round for the companion thus indicated, and Lord Berkeley instantly shot him through the head; owing it to his ready presence of mind that he escaped a similar fate at the hands of his assailant.

HIGHWAYMEN.

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My mother, I think, had the advantage of a slight personal acquaintance with one of the very last of these Tyburn heroes. She lived at one time, before her marriage, with her mother and sisters and only brother, at a small country house

beyond Finchley; to which suburban, or indeed then almost entirely rural, retreat my father and other young men of her acquaintance used occasionally to resort for an afternoon's sport, in the present highly distinguished diversion of pigeon-shooting. On one of these occasions some one of her habitual guests brought with him a friend, who was presented to my mother, and joined in the exercise of skill. He was like a gentleman in his appearance and manners, with no special peculiarity but remarkably white and handsome hands and extraordinary dexterity, or luck, in pigeon-shooting. Captain Clayton was this individual's name, and his visit, never repeated to my mother's house, was remembered as rather an agreeable event. Soon after this several outrages were committed on the high-road which passed through Finchley; and Moody, the celebrated comic actor, who lived in that direction, was stopped one evening, as he was driving himself into town, by a mounted gentleman, who, addressing him politely by name, demanded his watch and purse, which Moody surrendered, under the influence of "the better part of valor." Having done so, however, he was obliged to request his "very genteel" thief to give him enough money to pay his turnpike on his way into town, where he was going to act, whereupon the "gentleman of the road" returned him half-a-crown, and bade him a polite "Good-evening." Some time after this, news was brought into Covent Garden, at rehearsal one morning, that a man arrested for highway robbery was at the Bow Street Police Office, immediately opposite the theatre. Several of the *corps dramatique* ran across the street to that famous vestibule of the Temple of Themis; among others, Mr. Moody and Vincent de Camp. The latter immediately recognized my mother's white-handed, gentleman-like pigeon-shooter, and Moody his obliging MacHeath of the Finchley Common highway. "Halloa! my fine fellow," said the actor to the thief, "is that you? Well, perhaps as you *are* here, you won't object to return me my watch, for which I have a particular value, and which won't be of any great use to you now, I suppose." "Lord love ye, Mr. Moody," replied *Captain Clayton*, with a pleasant smile, "I thought you were come to pay me the half crown I lent you."]

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HARLEY STREET, Friday, April 22nd, 1842.

MY DEAR T—,

I am not in the least indifferent to the advent of £100 sterling....

I am amused with your description of Dickens, because it tallies so completely with the first impression he made upon me the only time I ever met him before he went to America.... I admire and love the man exceedingly, for he has a deep warm heart, a noble sympathy with and respect for human nature, and great intellectual gifts wherewith to make these fine moral ones fruitful for the delight and consolation and improvement of his fellow-beings.

Lord Morpeth is indeed, as we say, another guessman, but quite one of the most amiable in this world or *that*. He is universally beloved and respected, so tenderly cherished, by his own kindred that his mother and sisters seem absolutely miserable with various anxieties about him, and the weariness of his prolonged absence. He is a most worthy gentleman, and "goes nigh to be thought so" by all classes here, I can tell you....

You ask me if I have any warmer friends in England than your people, who are certainly my warmest friends in America. I have some friends in my own country who have known and loved me longer than your family; but I do not think, with one or two exceptions, that they love me better, nor do I reckon upon the faith and affection of my American friends less than upon that of my English ones. But the number of people whom I entirely love and trust is very small anywhere, and yet large enough to make me thank God every day for the share He has given me of worthy friendships—treasures sufficient for me to account myself very rich in their possession; living springs of goodness and affection, in which my spirit finds never-failing refreshment. But I have in my own country a vast number of very kind and cordial acquaintances, and, to tell you the truth, am better understood (naturally) and better liked in society, I think, here than on your side of the water. I fancy I am more popular, upon the whole, among my own people than among yours; which is not to be wondered at, as difference is almost always an

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element of dislike, and, of course, I am more different from American than English people. Indeed, I have come to consider the difference of nationality a broader, stronger, and deeper difference than that produced by any mere dissimilarity of individual character. It is tantamount to looking at everything from another point of view; to having, from birth and through education, other standards; to having, in short, another intellectual and moral horizon. No personal unlikeness between two individuals of the same nation, however strong it may be in certain points, is equal to the entire unlikeness, fundamental, superficial, and thorough, of two people of different nations.

I am anxious to close this letter before I go out, and shall only add, in replying to your next question of whether I ever feel any desire to return to the stage, *Never...* My very nature seems to me dramatic. I cannot speak without gesticulating and making faces, any more than an Italian can; I am fond, moreover, of the excitement of *acting*, personating interesting characters in interesting situations, giving vivid expression to vivid emotion, realizing in my own person noble and beautiful imaginary beings, and *uttering the poetry of Shakespeare*. But the stage is not only this, but much more that is not this; and that much more is not only by no means equally agreeable, but positively odious to me, and always was.

Good-by. God bless you and yours.

Believe me always yours most truly,

FANNY BUTLER.

HARLEY STREET, May 1st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have just despatched a letter to Emily, from whom I have had two already since she reached Bannisters. She writes chiefly of her mother, whose efforts to bear her trial are very painful to poor Emily, whose fewer years and excellent mental habits render such exertions easier to her. To no one can self-control under such sorrow ever be easy.

You ask about my going to the Drawing-room, which happened thus: The Duke of Rutland dined some little time ago at the Palace, and, speaking of the late party at Belvoir, mentioned me, when the Queen asked why I didn't have myself presented. The duke called the next day at our house, but we did not see him, and he being obliged to go out of town, left a message for me with Lady Londonderry, to the effect that her Majesty's interest about me (curiosity would have been the more exact word, I suspect) rendered it imperative that I should go to the Drawing-room; and, indeed, Lady Londonderry's authoritative "Of course you'll go," given in her most *gracious* manner, left me no doubt whatever as to my duty in that respect, especially as the message duly delivered by her was followed up by a letter from the duke, from Newmarket, who, from the midst of his bets, handicaps, sweepstakes, and cups, wrote me over again all that he had bid the marchioness tell me. Wherefore, having no objection whatever to go to Court (except, indeed, the expense of my dress, the idea of which caused me no slight trepidation, as I had already exceeded my year's allowance), I referred the matter to my supreme authority, and it being settled that I was to go, I ordered my tail, and my top, train, and feathers, and went. And this is the whole story, with this postscript, that, not owning a single diamond, I hired a handsome set for the occasion from Abud and Collingwood, every single stone of which darted a sharp point of nervous anxiety into my brain and bosom the whole time I wore them.

As you know that I would not go to the end of the street to see a drawing-room full of full moons, you will easily believe that there was nothing particularly delightful to me in the occasion. But after all, it was very little more of an exertion than I make five nights of the week, in going to one place or another; and under the circumstances it was certainly fitting and proper that I should go.

I suffered agonies of nervousness, and, I rather think, did all sorts of awkward things; but so, I dare say, do other people in the same predicament, and I did not trouble my head much about my various *mis*-performances. One thing, however, I can tell you: if her Majesty has seen me, I have not seen her; and should be quite excusable in cutting her wherever I met her. "A cat may look at a king," it is said; but how about looking at

the Queen? In great uncertainty of mind on this point, I did not look at my sovereign lady. I kissed a soft white hand, which I believe was hers; I saw a pair of very handsome legs, in very fine silk stockings, which I am convinced were not hers, but am inclined to attribute to Prince Albert; and this is all I perceived of the whole royal family of England, for I made a sweeping courtesy to the "good remainders of the Court," and came away with no impression but that of a crowded mass of full-dressed confusion, and neither know how I got in nor out of it....

You ask about Liszt. He does not take the management of the German Opera, as was expected; indeed, I wonder he ever accepted such an employment. I should think him most unfit to manage such an undertaking, with his excitable temper and temperament. I do not know whether he will come to London at all this season. Adelaide has been bitterly disappointed about it, and said that she had reckoned upon him in great measure for the happiness of her whole summer....

You ask next in your category of questions after Adelaide's dog, and whether it is led in a string successfully yet; and thereby hangs a tale. T'other morning she was awakened by a vehement knocking at her door, and S—— exclaiming, in a loud and solemn voice, "Adelaide, thy maid and thy dog are in a fit together!" which announcement she continued to repeat, with more and more emphasis, till my sister, quite frightened, jumped out of bed, and came upon the stairs, where she beheld the two women and children just come in from their walk; Anne, looking over the banisters with her usual peculiar air of immovable dignity, slowly ejaculating, "What a fool the girl is!" Caroline followed in her wake, wringing her hands, and alternately shrieking and howling, like all the Despairs in the universe. It was long before anything could be distinguished of articulate speech, among the *fräulein's* howls and shrieks; but at length it appeared that she had taken "die Tine" out in the Regent's Park with Anne and the children, who now go out directly after their breakfast. Tiny, it seems, enjoyed the trip amazingly, and became so excited and so very much transported with what we call animal spirits in human beings that it began to run, as the *fräulein* thought, away. Whereupon the *fräulein* began to run after it; whereupon Tiny, when it heard this Dutch nymph heavy in hot pursuit, ran till it knocked its head against a keeper's lodge, and here, because it shook and trembled and stared, probably at its own unwonted performance, a sympathizing crowd collected, who instantly proclaimed it at first in a *convulsion* fit, and then decidedly mad. Water was offered it, which it only stared at and shook its head, evidently dreading the cleansing element. A policeman coming by immediately proposed to kill it. This, however, the *fräulein* objected to; and catching the bewildered quadruped in her arms, she set off home, escorted by a running mob of sympathetic curiosity. But about half-way the struggle between herself and "die Tine" became so terrific that it ended by the luckless little brute escaping from her, and precipitating itself down an area, where it remained, invoking heaven with howls, while Caroline ran howling down the street. The man-servant was then sent (twice with a wrong direction) to fetch the poor little creature up, and bring it home. At length Caroline accompanied the footman to the scene of the dog-astrophe (you wouldn't call it *cat-astrophe*, would you?), and "die Tine" was safely lodged in the back-yard here, where, being left alone and not bothered with human solicitude, it presently recovered as many small wits as it ever had, drank voluntarily plenty of water, and gave satisfactory signs of being quite as rational as any lady's little dog need be; but the *fräulein* protests she will never take "die Tine" out walking again.

Good-bye dear. God bless you. I am pretty well, if that comports with low spirits and terrible nervous irritability.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

My father desires his love to you.

HARLEY STREET, Friday, May 6th, 1842.

I did ask Emily my botanical questions, but she could tell me no more than you have done, and knew nothing special about the primroses.

THE DOG
TINY.

You ask me a great deal in your letter about my father again taking the management of Covent Garden, and on what terms he has done so; all which I have told you in the letter I have just despatched to you....

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Adelaide has repeatedly said that, as soon as she has realized three hundred a year, she will give up the whole business; and I comfort myself with that purpose of hers; for if at the conclusion of next season she will go to America for a year, she will more than realize the result she proposes to herself... I cannot, however, help fearing that obstacles may arise to prevent her eventually fulfilling her purpose when the time comes for her retiring, according to her present expectation and wish....

I have not been out a great deal lately, We seem a little less inclined to fly at all quarry than last season; and as I never decide whether we shall accept the invitations that come or not, I am very well pleased that some of them are declined. I believe I told you that Lady Londonderry had asked us to a magnificent ball. This I was rather sorry to refuse, as a ball is quite as great a treat to me as to any "young miss" just coming out. Indeed, I think my capacity of enjoyment and excitement is greater than that of most "young misses" I see, who not only talk of being *bored*, but actually contrive, poor creatures! to look so in the middle of their first season.

I spent two hours with poor Lady Dacre yesterday evening.... After sitting with her, we went to a large party at Sydney Smith's, where I was very much amused and pleased, and saw numbers of people that I know and like—rather.

You ask about my walks.... They are now chiefly confined to my peregrinations in the Square, measuring the enclosed gravel walks of which I have already, since your departure, finished the "Mémoires de l'Enfant du Peuple," and brought myself, *mirabile dictu!* to within twenty pages of the end of Mrs. Jameson's book upon Prussian school statistics....

I do not think Mr. W— any authority upon any subject. I consider him a perfect specimen of a charlatan, and his opinions with regard to slavery and the abolitionists are particularly little worthy of credit in my mind, because he *used* America precisely as an actor would, to make money wherever he could by his lectures, which he puffed himself, till he was absolutely laughed at all over the country, and which were, by the accounts of those who heard them, perfectly shallow and often quite erroneous as far as regarded the information they pretended to impart. The Southern States were a lucrative field for his lecturing speculation; the Northern abolitionists were far from being sufficiently numerous or influential for it to be worth his while to conciliate them; and for these reasons I attach little value to his statement upon that or indeed any other subject.

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You ask me what was my impression altogether of the Drawing-room. I have told you about my own performances there, of which, however, I dare say I exaggerated the awkwardness to myself. The whole thing wearied me, just as any other large, overcrowded assembly where I could not sit down would; and that is the chief impression it has left upon me. I believe I was flattered by the Queen's expressing any curiosity about me, but I went simply because I was told it was right that I should do so. I am always horribly shy, or nervous, or whatever that foolish sensation ought to be called, at even having to walk across a room full of people; and therefore the fuss and to-do and ceremonial of the presentation (particularly not having been very well drilled beforehand by Lady Francis, who presented me) were disagreeable to me; but I have retained no impression of the whole thing other than of a very large and fatiguing rout. We are advised to go again on the birthday, but that I am sure we shall not do; and now that the Queen—God bless her!—has perceived that I do not go upon all-fours, but am indeed, as Bottom says, "a woman like any other woman," I have no doubt her gracious Majesty is abundantly satisfied with what she saw of me.

THE QUEEN.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[The enthusiastic abolitionist, Mrs. Lydia Child, had written to me, requesting me to give her for publication some portions of the journal I had kept during my residence in Georgia; and I had corresponded with my friend Mrs. Charles

Sedgwick upon the subject, deciding to refuse her request. My Georgia journal never saw the light till the War of Secession was raging in America, and almost all the members of the society in which I was then living in England were strongly sympathizing with the Southern cause, when I thought it right to state what, according to my own observation and experience, that cause involved.]

HARLEY STREET, May 6th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

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The carriage is waiting to take — to the *Levéé*, and I am waiting till it comes back to go upon my thousand and one daily errands. Adelaide, it being her last day at home, appears anxious to enjoy as much as she can of my society, and has therefore gone fast asleep in the arm-chair by the table at which I am writing, and has expressed her intention of coming out and paying visits with me this morning. She starts at eight o'clock this evening, and will reach Birmingham, I believe, about one. This arrangement, which I should think detestable, pleases her very much....

Mr. Everett, our friend, presents —, and I thought Anne would have fallen down in a fit when she heard that the ceremony consisted in going down on one knee and kissing the Queen's hand. She did not mind my doing it the least in the world, but her indignation has been unbounded at the idea of a free-born American citizen submitting to such degradation. Poor thing! "Lucifer, son of the morning," was meek and humble to her.

We dined to-day with the Francis Egertons, to meet the young Guardsmen who are to form our *corps dramatique* for "The Hunchback," which, you know, we are going to act in private. To-morrow evening we go to Sydney Smith's, and on Monday down to Oatlands for a few days. I am always delighted in that place and the lovely wild country round it. Lady Francis will mount me, and I expect my old enjoyment in riding about those beautiful and well-remembered haunts with her....

There has been a grand row at the Italian Opera-House, among the managers, singers, and singeresses. Mario (Mons. Di Candia; I suppose you know who I mean) has, it seems, for some reason or other, been *discharged*. Madame Grisi, who sympathizes with him, refuses to uplift her voice, that being the case; the new singeress, Frezzolini, does not please at all; and the new singer, Rouconi, isn't allowed by his wife to sing with any woman but herself, and she is a perfect *dose* to the poor audience. Lumley, the solicitor, manager of these he and she divinities, declares that if they don't behave better he'll shut the theatre at the end of the week. In the mean time, underhand proposals have been made to Adelaide to stop the gap, and sing for a few nights for them—a sort of proposal which does not suit her, which she has scornfully rejected, and departed with her tail over her shoulder, leaving the behind scenes of Her Majesty's Theatre with their tails between their legs....

THE OPERA
HOUSE.

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My dearest Harriet, you ask me if I do not think the spirit of martyrdom is often alloyed with self-esteem and wilfulness. God alone knows the measure in which human infirmity and human virtue unite in inducing the sacrifice of life and all that life loves for a point of opinion. I confess, for my own part, self-esteeming and wilful as I am, that to suffer bodily torture for the sake of an abstract question of what one believes to be right is an effort of courage so much above any that I am capable of that I do not feel as if I had a right to undervalue it by the smallest doubt cast upon the merit of those who have shown themselves capable of it. It may be that, without such admixture of imperfection as human nature's highest virtues are still tinged with, the confessors of every good and noble cause would have left unfulfilled their heroic task of witnessing to the truth by their death; but if indeed base alloy did mingle with their great and conscientious sacrifice, let us hope that the pangs of physical torture, the anguish of injustice and ignominy, and the rending asunder of all the ties of earthly affection, may have been some expiation for the imperfection of their most perfect deed....

Will you, my dear, be so good as to remember what a hang-nail is like? or a grain of dust in your eye? or a blister on your heel? or a corn on your toe? and then reflect what the word "torture" implies, when it meant all that the most devilish cruelty could invent. Savonarola! good gracious me! I would have *canted* and *recanted*, and called black white, and white black, and confessed, and denied! Please don't think of it! God be

praised, those days are over! Not but what I edified Mr. Combe greatly once, when I was a girl, by declaring that if, by behaving well under torture, I could have vexed my tormentors very much, and if I might have had plenty of people to see how well I behaved, I thought I could have managed it; to which he replied, "Oh, weel now, Fanny, ye've just got the very spirit of a martyr in you." See if that theory of the matter answers your notion....

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You ask me how I managed about diamonds to go to Court in. I hired a set, which I also wore at the *fête* at Apsley House; they were only a necklace and earrings, which I wore as a bandeau, stitched on scarlet velvet, and as drops in the middle of scarlet velvet bows in my hair, and my dress being white satin and point lace, trimmed with white Roman pearls, it all looked nice enough. The value of the jewels was only £700, but I am sure they gave me £7000 worth of misery; and if her Majesty had but known the anguish I endured in showing my respect for her by false appearances, the very least she could have done would have been to have bought the jewels and given them to me. Madame Dévy made my Court dress, which was of such material as, you see, I can use when I play "The Hunchback" at Lady Francis's. I am ruining myself, in spite of my best endeavors to be economical; but if it is any comfort for you to know it, my conscience torments me horribly for it....

God bless you. Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

HARLEY STREET, Saturday, May 7th, 1842.

... What an immense long talk I am having with you this morning, my dear Hal! I do not believe you are wearied, however; but you will surely wonder why I did not put all these letters under one cover with the three sovereign heads on the one packet; and I am sure I don't know why I have not. But it doesn't matter much my appearing a little more or a little less absurd to you.

You ask who I shall associate with while — and Adelaide are away.... I presume with my own writing-table and the carriage cushions, just as I do now, just as I did before, and just as I am likely to do hereafter....

It was not the presence of the Queen that affected my nerves at the Drawing-room, but *my own* presence, *i.e.*, as the French say, I was "très embarrassée de ma personne." The uncertainty of what I was to do (for Lady Francis had been exceedingly succinct in her instructions), and the certainty of a crowd of people staring all round me,—this, I think, and not the overpowering sense of a royal human being before me, was what made me nervous. Were I to go again to a Drawing-room, now that I know my lesson, I do not think I should suffer at all from any embarrassment. We are not asked to the fancy ball at the Palace, I am told, because of our omission in not attending at the Birthday Drawing-room, which, it seems, is a usual thing after a first presentation. I should like to have seen it; it will be a fine sight. In the mean time, as many of our acquaintances are going, we come in for a full share of the insanity which has taken possession of men's and women's minds about velvets, satins, brocades, etc. You enter no room that is not literally *strewed* with queer-looking prints of costumes; and before you can say, "How d'ye do?" you are asked which looks best together, blue and green, or pink and yellow; for, indeed, their selections are often as outrageous as these would be. I never conceived people could be so stupid at combining ideas, even upon this least abstruse of subjects; and you would think, to hear these fine ladies talk the inanity they do about their own clothes, now they are compelled to think about them for themselves, that they have no natural perceptions of even color, form, or proportion. The fact is that even their *dressing-brains* are turned over to their French milliners and lady's-maids. I understand Lady A— says she will make her dress alone (exclusive of jewels) cost £1000.

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BIRTHDAY
DRAWING-
ROOM.

Some people say this sort of mad extravagance does good; I cannot think it. It surely matters comparatively little that the insane luxury of the self-indulgent feeds the bodies of so many hundred people if at the same time the mischievous example of their folly

and extravagance is demoralizing their hearts and minds and injuring a great many more.

Touching Lady A—, she gave the address of one of her milliners to Lady W—, who, complaining to her of the exorbitant prices of this superlative *faiseuse*, and plaintively stating that she had charged her fifty guineas for a simple morning dress, Lady A— replied, "Ah, very likely, I dare say; I don't know anything about *cheap clothes*."

I do not know where Adelaide is likely to lodge in Dublin, nor do I believe she knows herself; but before this letter reaches you, you will have found out. I had almost a mind to ask her to write to me, but then I knew both how she hates it and how little time she was likely to have, so I forbore. She has left me with the pleasing expectation that any of these days her eccentric musical friend Dessauer may walk in, to be by me received, lodged, entertained, comforted, and consoled, in her absence (in which case, by-the-by, you know, I should associate with him while she is away). From parts of his letters which she has read to me, I feel very much inclined to like him, ... and I imagine I shall find him very amusing....

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You ask about our getting up of "The Hunchback" at the Francis Egertons'. I forget whether you knew that Horace Wilson [my kind friend and connection, the learned Oxford Professor of Sanscrit, who to his many important acquirements and charming qualities added the accomplishments of a capital musician and first-rate amateur actor] has been seriously indisposed, and so out of health and spirits as to have declined the part of Master Walter, which he was to have taken in it. This has been a great disappointment to me, for he would have done it admirably, and as he is a person of whom I am very fond, it would have been agreeable to me to have had him among us, and I should have particularly liked him for so important a coadjutor. He failing us, however, Knowles himself has undertaken to play the part, and I shall be glad enough to do it with him again. I have a great deal of compassionate admiration for poor Knowles, who, with his undeniable dramatic genius, his bright fancy, and poetical imagination, will, I fear, end his days either in a madhouse or a poorhouse. The characters beside Sir Thomas Clifford and Modus (which you know are taken by Henry Greville and —) are filled by a pack of young Guardsmen, with whom I dined, in order to make acquaintance, at Lady Francis's t'other day. Two of them, Captain Seymour and a son of Sir Francis Coles, are acquaintances of yours and your people.

SHERIDAN
KNOWLES.

You ask how I am amusing myself. Why, just as usual, which is well enough. I am of too troubled a nature ever to lack excitement, and have an advantage over most people in the diversion I am able to draw from very small sources.

I went last night to the French play, to see a French actress called Déjazet make her first appearance in London. The house was filled with our highest aristocracy, the stalls with women of rank and character, and the performance was, I think, one of the most impudent that I ever witnessed. Dr. Whewell [the celebrated Master of Trinity] and Mrs. Whewell were sitting near us, and left the theatre in the middle of Déjazet's first piece— I suppose from sheer disgust. She is a marvellous actress, and without exception the most brazen-faced woman I ever beheld, and that is saying a great deal. Good-bye.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

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HARLEY STREET, Saturday, May 14th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

On my return from Oatlands yesterday, I found no fewer than four letters of yours, and this morning I have received a fifth.... I am most thankful for all your details about Adelaide, who, of course, will not have time to write to any of us herself.... Miss Rainsforth, her mother, and their travelling manager, Mr. Callcott, are her whole party.... Miss Rainsforth is a quiet, gentle, well-conducted, well-bred, amiable person; Mr. Callcott is a son of the composer, and a nephew of our friend Sir Augustus, and has the refinement of mind and manners which one would look for in any member of that family.... I am very sorry that Adelaide cannot see more of you, and you of her....

You ask whether it is a blessing or a curse not to provide one's own means of

subsistence. I think it is a great blessing to be able and allowed to do so. But I dare say I am not a fair judge of the question, for the feeling of independence and power consequent upon earning large sums of money has very much destroyed my admiration for any other mode of support; and yet certainly my *pecuniary* position now would seem to most people very far preferable to my former one; but having *earned* money, and therefore most legitimately *owned* it, I never can conceive that I have any right to the money of another person.... I cannot help sometimes regretting that I did not reserve out of my former earnings at least such a yearly sum as would have covered my personal expenses; and having these notions, which impair the comfort of *being maintained*, I am sometimes sorry that I no longer possess my former convenient power of coining. I do not think I should feel so uncomfortable about inheriting money, though I had not worked for it; for, like any other free gift, I think I should consider that legitimately my own, just like any other present that was made me....

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"The Hunchback" is to be acted at the Francis Egertons', in London, though I do not very well see how; for Bridgewater House is in process of rebuilding, and their present residence in Belgrave Square, though large enough for all social purposes, is far from being well adapted to theatrical ones; insomuch—or, rather, so little—that it is my opinion we shall be in each other's arms, laps, and pockets throughout the whole performance, which will be inconvenient, and in some of the situations slightly indecorous.

I have received this morning, my dear, your notice of the "Sonnambula," for which we are all very grateful to you. Give my love to my sister. I expected her success as a matter of course, and did not anticipate much annoyance to her from her present mode of life, ... because I have known her derive extreme amusement and diversion from circumstances and associates that would have been utterly distasteful to me. Her love and perception of the ridiculous is not only positive enjoyment, but a protection from annoyance and a mitigation of disgust. My father desires his love to you, and bids me thank you for your kindness in sending him the newspapers. With regard to that last song in the "Amina," of which you speak as of a *tour de force*, it is hardly so much so, in point of fact, as her execution of the whole part, which is too high for her; and though she sings it admirably in spite of that, she cannot give it the power and expression that she would if it lay more easily in her voice. This, however, is the case with other music that she sings, and the consequence is that, though she has great execution, and power, and sweetness, and finish in the use of her artificial voice, it wants the spontaneous force in high music of a naturally high organ.

ADELAIDE
KEMBLE.

Pray, did you ever pity me as much as you do Adelaide in the exercise of her profession? You certainly never expressed the same amount of compassion for my strolling destinies, nor did I ever hear you lament in this kind over the fate of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, both of whom had impertinences addressed to them by your Dublin gallery humorists. Pray, what is the meaning of this want of feeling on your part for *us others*, or your excess of it for Adelaide? Is it only singing histrions who appear to you objects of compassion? Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I have to write to Emily, and to answer an American clergyman, a friend of mine, who has written to me from Paris; and moreover, being rather in want of money, I am about to endeavor to make practicable for the English stage a French piece called "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle," which, with certain vicious elements, has some very striking and effective situations, and is, dramatically speaking, one of the most cleverly constructed plays I have seen for a long while. Therefore, farewell. If I could *earn* £200 now, I should be glad.

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HARLEY STREET, Thursday, May 19th, 1842.

Thank you, my dearest Harriet, for your long account of Adelaide. She has written to my father, which I was very glad of.... Of course, I have not expected to hear from her, but have been delighted to get all your details. In her letter to my father, she says she gets on extremely well with her companions, that they are gay and merry, and that her life with them is pleasant and amuses her very much.

You do not ask me a single question about a single thing, and therefore I will just tell you how matters in general go on with me. In the first place, I heard yesterday that we

are definitely to return to America in August. Some attempt was made to renew our lease of this house for a few months; but difficulties have arisen about it, and we shall probably return to the United States as soon as possible after our lease expires. I do not yet feel at all sure of the fulfilment of this intention, however; but at any rate it is one point of apparent decision indicated....

My feelings and thoughts about the return are far too numerous and various to be contained in a letter. One thing I think—I feel sure of—*that it is right*, and therefore I am glad we are to do it. My father, to whom this intention has not yet been mentioned, is looking wonderfully well, and appears to be enjoying his mode of life extremely. He spends his days at Covent Garden, and finds even now, when the German company are carrying on their *operations* there, enough to do to keep him interested and incessantly busy within those charmed and charming precincts. I am pretty well, though not in very good spirits; my life is much more quiet and regular than when you were here, and I enjoy a considerable portion of retiracy.

I have taken possession of Adelaide's little sitting-room, and inhabit it all day, and very often till tea-time in the evening. Owing to our day no longer being cut to pieces by our three-o'clock dinner (on account of Adelaide), I do not run into arrears with my visits, and generally, after discharging one or two recent debts of that sort, am able to get an hour's walk in Kensington Gardens, and come home between four and five o'clock.

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We have not been out a great deal lately; we have taken, I am happy to say, to discriminating a little among our invitations, and no longer accept everything that offers.

I spent three delightful days at Oatlands, which is charming to me from its own beauty and the association of the pleasure which I enjoyed there in past years. The hawthorn was just coming into blossom, the wild heaths and moors and commons were one sheet of deep golden gorse and pale golden broom, and nothing could be lovelier than the whole aspect of the country.

The day before yesterday I dined *tête-à-tête* with Mademoiselle d'Este, for whom I have taken rather a fancy, and who appears to have done the same by me. Her position is a peculiar and trying one, combined with her character, which has some striking and interesting elements. She is no longer young, but has still much personal beauty, and that of an order not common in England: very dark eyes, hair, and complexion, with a freedom and liveliness of manner and play of countenance quite unusual in Englishwomen.... She lives a great deal alone, and reads a great deal, and thinks a little, and I feel interested in her. She has sacrificed the whole comfort and, it appears to me, much of the possible happiness of her life to her notion of being a princess, which, poor thing! she is not; and as she will not be satisfied with, or even accept, the position of a private gentlewoman, she is perpetually obliged to devise means of avoiding situations, which are perpetually recurring, in which her real rank, or rather *no* rank, is painfully brought home to her. This unfortunate pretension to princess-ship has probably interfered vitally with her happiness, in preventing her marrying, as she considers, below her birth [*i.e.* royally]; and as she is a very attractive woman, and, I should judge, a person of strong feelings and a warm, passionate nature, this must have been a considerable sacrifice; though in marrying, to be sure, she might only have realized another form of disappointment.

MADemoISELLI
D'ESTE.

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Yesterday we went to a fine dinner at Lord F——'s. He and his sisters are good-natured young people of large fortune, whose acquaintance we made at Cranford, and who are very civil and amiable in their demonstrations of good-will towards us. A son of the Duke of Leinster was at this dinner, and invited —— to go with him this morning and see Prince Albert review the Guards; which he has accordingly done.

To-night we go to Sydney Smith's, which I always enjoy exceedingly; and for next week, I am happy to say, we have at present no engagements but a dinner at the Francis Egertons', and another evening at Sydney Smith's....

I believe I have now told you pretty much all I have to tell. I am working at a translation of a French piece called "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle," by which I hope to make a little money, with which I should be very glad to pay Mademoiselle Dévy's bill for my spring finery.

I went to Covent Garden the other day, to see if I could find anything in the theatre wardrobe that I could make use of for "The Hunchback," and did find something; and, moreover, I think Adelaide will be able to get her dress for Helen from there, though it seemed rather a doleful daylight collection of frippery. My first dress I can make one of my own white muslin ones serve for, my last I shall get beautifully out of my Court costume; so that the three will only cost me the price of altering them for the private theatrical occasion.

We met at Oatlands Mrs. G——, the mother of the Member for Dublin, who has been preparing herself, by a twelve years' residence on the Continent, for a plunge into savagedom, by a return to her home in Connemara; and it was both comical and sad to hear her first launch out upon the merits of the dear "wild Irish," and her desire to be among and serviceable to "her people," and then, all in the same breath, declare that the mere atmosphere of England and English society was enough to kill any one with "the blue devils" who had ever been abroad; and this, mind you, is the impression British existence makes upon her in the full height of the gay London season. Fancy what she will find Connemara! She knows you and your people, and gave me a most ardent invitation to the savage Ireland where she lives. Poor woman! I pity her; her case is not absolutely unknown to me, or quite without parallel in my own experience.

Good-bye. God bless you.

Your affectionate

F. A. B.

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HARLEY STREET.

This letter has been begun a week; it is now Saturday, May 28th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Pray give my love to Mrs. Kemble, and tell her that the Queen Dowager sent for me to go and pay her a visit yesterday. For goodness' sake, Harriet, don't misunderstand me, I am only in joke! I live among such very matter-of-fact persons that I really tremble for an hour after every piece of nonsense I utter. You must observe by this that I am in a painfully frequent state of trepidation; but what I meant by this message to Mrs. Kemble is that I have been extremely amused at her taking the trouble to write to Mrs. George Siddons to find out "all about" my going to the Drawing-room, and the rumor which had reached her of the Queen having desired to see me. George Siddons told me this himself, and it struck me as such a funny interest in my concerns on the part of Mrs. Kemble, who takes none whatever in *me*, that I thought I would send her word of the piece of preferment which has occurred to me since, viz. being sent for by the Queen Dowager, who desired my friend Mademoiselle d'Este to bring me to call upon her. But what wonderful gossip it does seem to be writing gravely round and round from Leamington to London, and from London to Leamington, about!

You ask me how it fares with me. Why, busily and wearily enough. We have had a perfect deluge of invitations lately, two or three thick of a night....

We are going to-night to the Duchess of Sutherland's fancy ball at Stafford House, which is to be a less formal, but not less magnificent, show than the Queen's masque.

I have not begun to rehearse "The Hunchback" yet, for *I* shall not require many rehearsals; but one of our party attended the first this morning, and said all the young amateurs promised very fairly, and that Henry Greville did his part extremely well, which I am very glad to hear. I have had but one visit from him since his return to town, when, of course, he discussed Adelaide's plans with great zeal. He certainly wishes very much that she should sing at the Opera, but his view of the whole matter is so different from mine ... that we are not likely to agree very well, even upon so general a point of discussion as her best professional interests.

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I am much concerned at your observations about her exhaustion and hoarseness. I am so anxious that her present life should not be prolonged, so anxious that she should realize her very moderate wishes and leave it, that I cannot bear to think of any possible failure of her precious gift from over-exertion.... I think, begging your pardon, you talk some

THE
DUCHESS
OF
SUTHERLAND.

nonsense when you compare your existence, as an object of rational pity, with my sister's. All other considerations set apart, there are certain conditions of life, which are the result of peculiar states and stages of society, that are indisputably less favorable for the production of happiness, and the exercise of goodness also, than others. Among these results of over-civilization are the careers of public exhibitors of every description. In judging of their conduct or character, we may make every allowance for the peculiar dangers of their position, and the temptations of their peculiar gifts; but I confess I am amazed at any woman who, sheltered by the sacred privacy of a home, can envy the one or desire the other.

Dearest Harriet, this letter has lain so long unfinished, and I am now so engulfed in all sorts of worry, flurry, hurry, row, fuss, bustle, bother, dissipation and distraction, that it is vain hoping to add anything intelligible to it. Good-bye, dearest.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, May 29th, 1842.

DEAREST HARRIET,

This is Sunday, and, owing to my custom of neither paying visits nor going to dinner or evening parties on "the first day of the week," I look forward to a little leisure; though the repeated raps at the door already this morning remind me that it will probably be interrupted often enough to render it of little avail for any purpose of consecutive occupation....

You ask me if I think of "taking to translating." My dear Harriet, if you mean when I return to America, I shall take to nothing there but the stagnant life I led there before, which, in the total absence of any impulse from the external circumstances in which I live and the utter absence of any interest in any intellectual pursuit in those with whom I live, becomes absolutely inevitable; and so I think that, once again in my Transatlantic home, I shall neither originate nor translate anything.

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I have "taken to translating" "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle" because my bill at Mademoiselle Dévy's is £97, and I am determined *my brains* shall pay it; therefore, also, I have given my father a ballet on the subject of Pocahontas, and am preparing and altering "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle" for Covent Garden, for both which pieces of work I hope to get something towards my £97. Besides this, I have offered my "Review of Victor Hugo" to John for the *British Quarterly Review*, of which he is, you know, the editor—of course, telling him that it was written for an American magazine—and he has promised me sixteen guineas for it if it suits him. Besides this, I have offered Bentley the beginning of my Southern journal, merely an account of our journey down to the plantation.... Besides this, I have drawn up and sketched out, act by act, scene by scene, and almost speech by speech, a play in five acts, a sequel to the story of Kotzebue's "Stranger," which I hope to make a good work of. Thus, you see, my brains are not altogether idle; and, with all this, I am rehearsing "The Hunchback" with our amateurs, for three and four hours at a time, attending to my own dresses and Adelaide's (who will attend to nothing), returning, as usual, all the visits, and going out to dinners and parties innumerable. This, you will allow, is rather a double-quick-time sort of existence; but the after-lull of the future will be more than sufficient for rest.

LITERARY
OCCUPATIONS.

Alexandre Dumas is the author of "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle," and I was led to select that piece to work upon, not so much from the interest of the story, which is, however, considerable, as from the dramatic skill with which it is managed, and the circumstances made to succeed each other. There is, unfortunately, an insuperably objectionable incident in it, which I have done my best to modify; but it is one of the most ingeniously constructed pieces I have seen for a long time, and gives admirable opportunities for good acting to almost every member of the *dramatis personæ*.

Mademoiselle d'Este has no right to the painful feeling of illegitimacy, for her mother was her father's wife, and therefore she has not, what indeed I can conceive to be, a bitter source of wounded pride and incessant rational mortification. The Duke of Sussex married Lady Augusta Murray, and that, I should think, might satisfy his daughter, in

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spite of all the Acts of Parliament afterwards devised to restrict and regulate royal marriages. Mademoiselle d'Este's is merely a perpetual protest against an irreversible social decree, and an incessant, unavailing struggle for the observance and respect conventionally due to a rank which is *not* hers; and though it appears to me as senseless a cause of trouble as ever human being chose to accept, yet as incessant bitterness and mortification and annoyance are its results for her, poor soul! of course to her it is real enough, if not in itself, in the results she gathers from it.

My dinner has intervened, my dear, since this last sentence, and, moreover, a permission from my sister to inform you that *she is engaged to be married!*...

You ask how Adelaide looks after her Dublin campaign. She looks better now, in spite of all her fatigue, than she has done since her return from Italy; her face looks almost fat, to which appearance, however, it is in some degree helped by her hair being already in rehearsal for "The Hunchback," falling in ringlets on each side of her head, which becomes her very much....

I have heard from Elizabeth Sedgwick, and she concurs in the propriety of my *not* giving Mrs. Child my Southern journal. I shall say no more upon that subject....

Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I look forward with anticipated refreshment to a ride which I have some chance of getting to-morrow, and for which I am really gasping. I got one ride this week, and the escort that came to the door for me touched and flattered me not a little: old Lord Grey and Lady G—, and his two grandsons, and Lord Dacre, and B— S—, all came up from their part of the town *to fetch me a ride*, which was a great kindness on their part, and an honor, pleasure, and profit to me. God bless you, dear. I feel, as Margery says, "in a kind of bewilder," but ever yours,

FANNY.

[My first meeting with Mademoiselle d'Este took place at Belvoir Castle, where we were both on a visit to the Duke of Rutland, and where my attention was drawn to the peculiarity of her conduct by my neighbor at the dinner-table, who said to me, just after we had taken our places, "Do you see Mademoiselle d'Este? She will do that now every day while she remains here." Mademoiselle d'Este at this moment entered the dining-room alone, and passed down the side of the table with an inclination to the duke, and a half-muttered apology about being late. This, it seems, was simply a pretence to cover her determination not to give precedence to any of the women in the house by being taken into dinner after them. The Duchesses of Bedford and Richmond, the Countess of Winchelsea, and other women of rank being then at the castle, Mademoiselle d'Este's pretensions stood not the slightest chance of acknowledgment, and she took this quite ineffectual way of protesting against her social position.

MADemoISELLI
D'ESTE.

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Everybody at Belvoir was sufficiently familiar with her to accept these sort of proceedings on her part. To me they seemed more undignified and wanting in real pride and self-respect than a quiet acquiescence in the inevitable would have been. The conventional distinction she demanded had been legally refused her, and it was not in the power of the society to which she belonged to give it to her, however much they might have felt inclined to pity her position and excuse her resentment of it. But it was inconceivable to me that she should not either withdraw absolutely from all society (which is what I should have done in her place), or submit silently to an injury against which all protest was vain, which renewed itself, in some shape or other, daily, and which really involved no personal affront to her or injustice to the character of her mother. I thought she made a great mistake, which did not prevent my being attracted by her; and while we were at Belvoir, and immediately afterwards at Lord Willoughby's together, and subsequently on our return to London, we had a good deal of familiar and friendly intercourse with each other, in the course of which I had many opportunities of observing the perpetual struggle she maintained against what she considered the intolerable hardship of her position.

She occupied a pretty little house in Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, and never allowed her servants to wear anything but the undress of the royal household;

the scarlet livery being, of course, out of the question. On one or two occasions I dined with her *tête-à-tête*, and took no notice of the fact, which I remembered afterwards, that she invariably sent the servant out of the room, and helped herself and me with her own hands; but once, when the Duchess of B— dined with us, and Mademoiselle d'Este had a dumb-waiter placed beside her, and, sending the man-servant out of the room, performed all the table service (except, indeed, bringing in the dishes), with our assistance only, the duchess assured me afterwards that this was simply because, in her own house, Mademoiselle d'Este would not submit to the unroyal indignity of being waited upon after her guests at her own table by her own servants.

When the preparations for the fancy ball at the Palace were turning half the great houses in London into milliners' shops, filled with stuffs, and patterns, and pictures, and materials for fancy dresses, and drawings of costumes, and gabbling, shrieking, distracted women, Mademoiselle d'Este consulted me about her dress, and we passed a whole morning looking over a huge collection of plates of historical personages and picturesque portraits of real or imaginary heroines. Among these I repeatedly put aside several that I thought would be especially becoming to her dark beauty and fine figure; and as often was surprised to find that among those I had thus selected she had invariably rejected a certain proportion, among which were two or three particularly beautiful and appropriate, one or other of which I should certainly have chosen for her above the rest. I couldn't imagine upon what theory of selection she was guiding her examination of the prints until, upon closer examination, I perceived that the only portraits from which she had determined to make her choice of a costume were those of princesses of blood royal. Poor woman!

I once saw a curious encounter between her and the Marchioness of L—, in which the most insolent woman of the London society of that day was worsted with her own peculiar weapon, by the princess "claimant," and ignominiously beaten from the field.

The occasion of my being presented to the Queen Dowager was this: I had been dining one day with Mademoiselle d'Este, when the Marchioness of Londonderry came in, and read me a note she had received from the Duke of Rutland, in which the latter said that the Queen had asked him why I had not been presented at Court. After Lady Londonderry was gone, I expressed some surprise at this unexpected honor, and some dismay at finding that it was considered a matter of course that, under these circumstances, I should go to the Drawing-room. I felt shy about the ceremony, and sordidly reluctant to spend the sum of money upon my dress which I knew it must cost me. All this I discussed with Mademoiselle d'Este, and expressing my surprise at the Queen's having condescended to ask why I didn't have myself presented, Mademoiselle d'Este exclaimed, "Oh, my dear, those people are so curious!" meaning the Queen and Prince Albert, towards whom she had a great feeling of sore dislike; but whether she meant by "curious" inquisitive or singular—*queer*—I didn't ask her, being rather astonished at this "singular" mode of speaking of our liege lady and her illustrious consort.

Poor Mademoiselle d'Este's feeling of bitterness against the Queen arose, I have since been told, from various small slights which her sensitive pride conceived she had received from her. Mademoiselle d'Este's determination to assert her right to be considered a royal personage had, perhaps, met with some other rebuffs from the Queen, besides the one which she herself told me of with great irritation.

On the occasion of Queen Adelaide's Drawing-rooms, she had always permitted Mademoiselle d'Este to make her entrance by the same approach, and at the same time, with other members of the royal family. After the accession of Queen Victoria, Mademoiselle d'Este claimed the same privilege, which, however, was not granted her. She told me this with many passionate, indignant comments, and apparently desirous that I should be impressed by the superior charm and graciousness of Queen Adelaide, whom she called "her Queen," and of whom she spoke with the most affectionate regard and respect, she said, "You must come

with me and see *my* Queen," and accordingly she solicited permission to present me to the Queen Dowager, which was granted, and I went with her one morning to pay my respects to that great and good lady, and was to have done so a second time, but was prevented by our departure from town.

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I drove with Mademoiselle d'Este to Marlborough House in the morning, and we were ushered through several apartments into a small-sized sitting-room, where we were left. After a few moments a lady entered, to whom Mademoiselle d'Este presented me. The Queen Dowager was then apparently between fifty and sixty years old; a thin, middle-sized woman, with gray hair and a long face, discolored by the traces of some eruption. She looked in ill health, and was certainly very plain, but her manner and the expression of her face were very gentle and gracious, and her voice, with its German accent, sweet and agreeable. She asked Mademoiselle d'Este if she was going to the Duchess of Sutherland's ball, and on her replying that she was not going, and giving some trifling reason for not doing so, I couldn't help laughing, because on our way to Marlborough House she had told me, with what appeared to me very superfluous wrath and indignation, that she had received an invitation to the duchess's ball, but that as it was coupled with an intimation that it was hoped the persons who had been at the Queen's great fancy ball, given a week before, would wear the same costumes at Stafford House, Mademoiselle d'Este chose to consider this an impertinent dictation, and said first "she would go in a plain white satin gown," then "in a white muslin petticoat," finally, that "she wouldn't go at all;" and working herself up by degrees into more fury as she talked, she abused the Duchess of Sutherland vehemently, mimicking her in a most ludicrous manner, and saying that she always reminded her of "a great fat, white, trussed turkey," which comparison and the ridiculous rage in which she made it made me laugh till I cried, in spite of my admiration for the Duchess of Sutherland, whose beauty and gracious sweetness of manner always seemed to me very charming. When therefore, Mademoiselle d'Este assigned another reason for not going to the Stafford House ball, in answer to the Queen's inquiry, I couldn't help laughing, and told the Queen the truth was that Mademoiselle d'Este's pride was hurt at being requested to come in the fancy dress she had worn at the Palace; and so, for this imaginary absurd offence, she was going to give up a very fine and pleasant *fête*. The Queen laughed, and, turning to Mademoiselle d'Este, said, "Your friend is right. You are very foolish; you will lose a pleasant evening for nothing."

QUEEN
ADELAIDE.

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After this the conversation fell on the French plays and the performances of Mademoiselle Déjazet, who was then acting at the St. James's Theatre. The Queen having asked my opinion of these representations, I said I was unwilling to enter upon the subject, as I did not know how far the forms of etiquette would permit me to express what I thought in her Majesty's presence. Upon her pressing me, however, to state my opinion upon the subject, I reiterated what I had said in a previous conversation with Mademoiselle d'Este upon the matter, objecting to the extreme immorality of the pieces, and expressing my astonishment at seeing decent Englishwomen crowd to them night after night, since they certainly would not tolerate such representations on the English stage.

Mademoiselle d'Este replied that that was because, on the English stage, they would be coarse and vulgar. I denied that the difference of language made any essential difference in the matter, though she was certainly right in saying that the less refined style of English acting might make the offensiveness of such pieces more unpleasantly obtrusive; but that in looking round the assembly of fine ladies at Déjazet's performances, I comforted myself by feeling very sure that half of them did not understand what they were listening to; but I think it must have been "nuts" to the clever, cynical, witty, impudent Frenchwoman to see these *dames trois fois respectables* swallow her performances *sans sourcilliez*.

After some more conversation on general subjects, the Queen Dowager rose, saying she hoped Mademoiselle d'Este would bring me to visit her again; and so

we received our *congé*.

Mentioning the appearance of some eruption on the good Queen's face reminds me of a painful circumstance which took place one day when, meeting a beautiful child of about four years old, the daughter of one of the ladies of the Court, who was going into the Palace gardens under the escort of her nurse, the Queen stopped the child, and, attracted by her beauty, stooped to kiss her, when the little thing drew back with evident disgust, exclaiming, "No, no; you have a red face! Mamma says I must never kiss anybody with a red face." The poor Queen probably seldom received such a plain statement of facts in return for her condescension. Her unostentatious goodness and amiable character have now become matter of history. One of the most characteristic traits of her life was her ordering of her own funeral with a privacy and simplicity more touching than any royal pomp, specifying that her coffin should be carried to the grave by four sailors—a last tribute of affection to her husband's memory.

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Among the passages in Charles Greville's Memoirs that shocked me most, and that I read with the most pain, were the coarse and cruel terms in which he spoke of Queen Adelaide.

Mademoiselle d'Este, when far advanced in middle life, married Lord Chancellor Truro. She may have found in so doing a certain satisfaction to her pride which no other alliance with a commoner could have afforded her, since the Lord Chancellor of England (no matter of how lowly an origin), on certain occasions, takes precedence of the whole aristocracy of the land.]

HARLEY STREET, Monday, May 30th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have just finished a letter to you, in which I tell you that I have sketched out the skeleton of another tragedy; but I find Emily has been beforehand with me. You ask me what has moved me to this mental effort. My milliner's bill, my dear; which, being £97 sterling, I feel extremely inclined to pay out of my own brains; for, though they received a very severe shock, and one of rather paralyzing effect, upon my being reminded that whatever I write is not my own legal property, but that of another, which, of course, upon consideration, I know; I cannot, nevertheless, persuade myself that that which I invent—*create*, in fact—can really belong to any one but myself; therefore, if anything I wrote could earn me £97, I am afraid I should consider that I, and no one else, had paid my bill.

In thinking over the position of women with regard to their right to their own earnings, I confess to something very like wrathful indignation; impotent wrath and vain indignation, to be sure—not the less intense for that, however, for the injustice is undoubtedly great. That a man whose wits could not keep him half a week from starving should claim as his the result of a mental process such as that of composing a noble work of imagination—say "Corinne," for example—seems too beneficent a provision of the law for the protection of male *superiority*. It is true that, by our marriage bargain, they feed, clothe, and house us, and are answerable for our debts (not my milliner's bill, though, if I can prevent it), and so, I suppose, have a right to pay themselves as best they can out of all we are or all we can do. It is a pretty severe puzzle, and a deal of love must be thrown into one or other or both scales to make the balance hang tolerably even.

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Madame de Staël, I suppose, might have said to Rocca, "If my brains are indeed yours, why don't you write a book like 'Corinne' with them?" You know, though he was perfectly amiable, and she married him for love, he was an intellectual zero; but perhaps the man who, acknowledging her brilliant intellectual superiority, could say, "Je l'aimerai tant, qu'elle finira par m'aimer," deserved to be master even of his wife's brains.... I wish women could be dealt with, not mercifully, nor compassionately, nor affectionately, but *justly*; it would be so much better—for men.

How can you ask me if I despise, as great gossip, Emily's telling you that I am writing another tragedy! Why, my dear, I shouldn't consider it despicable gossip if Emily were to

tell you what colored gloves I had on the last time she saw me. Do we not all three love each other dearly? and is not everything, no matter how trifling, of interest in that case? But Mrs. John Kemble does not pretend to love me dearly, I flatter myself, and therefore her writing to inquire into my proceedings, and for minute details of my presentation at Court, did seem to me contemptible gossip. At her age, perhaps, it is pardonable enough, though it appears to me rather inconsistent, when one has no liking for a person, to trouble one's head about where they go or what they do.

You ask me about the subject of my play. It is one that my father suggested to me years ago, and which grew out of a question as to whether the Stranger (in Kotzebue's play so called) does or does not forgive his unfaithful wife in the closing scene. With several other dramatic schemes, it has hovered dimly before my imagination for some time past. The other night, however, as I was brushing my hair before going to bed, my brain, I suppose, receiving some stimulus from the scrubbing of my skull, the whole idea suddenly came towards me with increasing distinctness, till it gradually stood up as it were from head to foot before me—a very mournful figure, whose form and features were all vividly defined. I instantly caught up S——'s copy-books—there was no other paper at hand—and on the covers of two of them wrote out my play, act by act and scene by scene.... The short-lived triumph of this spirit of inspiration died away under the effect of a conversation by which it was interrupted, and I collapsed like a fallen *omelette soufflée* (not to say *souffletée*).

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The story of my piece is a sequel to "The Stranger," the retribution which reaches the faithless wife and mother in her children, after they grow up; which, together with the perpetual struggle on the part of her husband (who has taken her home again) not to wound her conscience, which is so sick and sore that every word, breath, and look *does* wound it, might form, I think, an interesting dramatic picture, with considerable elements for poetry to work upon.

I went to the Duchess of Sutherland's fancy ball in my favorite costume, a Spanish dress, which suited my finances as well as my fancy, my person, and my purse; for I had nothing to get but a short black satin skirt, having beautiful flounces of black lace, high comb, mantilla, and, in short, all things needful already in my own possession.

I have told you of Adelaide's new prospects, in which I rejoice as much as I can rejoice in anything. She is herself very happy, poor child! and 'tis a pleasure and a positive relief to see her face, with its bright expression of newly dawned hope upon it.

Good-night, dear. My head aches, and I feel weary and worn out; our life just now is one of insane, incessant dissipation. Thank God, I have a bed, and have not lost the secret of sleeping.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[A long discussion with my wise and excellent friend and connection, Mr. Horace Wilson, induced me to think a good deal upon the possibility of a man, in the position of Kotzebue's "Stranger," receiving back his wife to the home she had deserted. Mr. Wilson condemned the idea as absolutely inadmissible and fatally immoral. In our Saviour's teaching it is said that a man shall put away his wife for only *one* cause; but is it said that he shall in every case put her away for *that* cause? and is the offence a wife commits against her husband the one exception to the universal law of the forgiveness which Christ taught? Men have so considered it; and in the general interest of the preservation of society, a wife's fidelity to her duties becomes one of the most important elements of security; the protection of the family, the integrity of inheritance, the rightful descent of property, are all involved in it. But these are questions of social expediency, and, though based on deep moral foundations, are not of such overwhelming moral force as to forbid the contemplation of any possible exception to their authority. I have heard—I know not if it is true—that in some parts of Germany, formerly, where the practice of divorce obtained to a degree tolerated nowhere else in Christendom, it occasionally happened that, after a legal separation and intermediate marriages (sanctioned also by the law), the original pair, set free once more by death or *second divorce*, resumed their first ties—a condition of

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A SEQUEL
TO "THE
STRANGER."

KOTZEBUE'S
"STRANGER."

things which appears monstrous, considered as that which we call marriage, with the English and American branch of the Anglo-Saxon family, the holiest of human ties; with Roman Catholic Christians, an indissoluble bond, sacred as a sacrament of their Church.

Without being able to determine the question satisfactorily in my own mind with reference to the supposed conclusion of the play of "The Stranger," in which Mr. Wilson said that the husband, receiving his repentant wife in his arms, was highly offensive to all morality, which demanded imperatively her absolute rejection and punishment, I began to consider what sort of escape from punishment it might be which would probably follow the forgiveness of her husband, her readmission to her home, and the renewal of her intercourse with her children. In Kotzebue's play the persons are all German, and their nationality has to be borne in mind in contemplating Waldburg's possible forgiveness of his wife. Steinforth, his dearest friend, and a man of the highest honor and morality (as conceived by the author), urges upon Waldburg the pardon of Adelaide; urges it almost as a duty, and zealously assists Madame von Wintersen's plan of bringing the unhappy people together, and effecting a reconciliation between them by means of the unexpected sight of their children. Moreover, when Waldburg rejects his friend's advice and entreaties that he will forgive his wife, it is hardly upon the ground of any deep moral turpitude involved in such a forgiveness, but upon the score of the insupportable humiliation of reappearing in the great world of German society to which they both belong with "his runaway wife on his arm," and the "whispering, pointing, jeering" of which their reconciliation would be the object, winding up with the irrevocable "Never! never! never!"

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Nevertheless, in Kotzebue's play he does receive his wife in his arms as the curtain falls, and the German public go home comforted in believing her forgiven. I do not know how the dumb-show at the end of the English play is generally conducted; but in my father's instance, I know he so far carried out my friend Horace Wilson's sentiment (which was also his own on the subject) that, while his miserable wife falls senseless at his feet, he turns again in the act of flying from her as the curtain drops, leaving the English public to go home comforted in the belief that he had *not* forgiven her.

The result of these discussions, as I said, led me to imagine how far such a woman would escape her righteous punishment, even if restored to her home; and in the sequel to "The Stranger," which I endeavored to construct, I worked out my own ideas upon the subject.

Forgiveness of sin is not remission of punishment; and the highest justice might rest satisfied with the conviction that God, who forgives every sinner, punishes every sin; nor can even His mercy remit the righteous consequence ordained by it. God's punishments are *consequences*, the results of His all-righteous laws, *never to be escaped from*, but leaving forever possible the blessed hope of His forgiveness; but no one ever yet outran his sin or escaped from its inevitable result.

The grosser human justice, however, which is obliged to execute itself on the bodies of criminals demands the open degradation and social ostracism of unfaithful wives as a necessary portion of its machinery, and the well-being of the society which it maintains.]

HARLEY STREET, Friday, June 10th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I finished one letter to you last night, and, finding that I cannot obtain tackle to go on the river this morning and fish, I sit down to write you another. And first, dear, about getting an admission for E— to see our play. I am sorry to say it is not in my power. Thinking I had rather a right to one or two invitations for my own friends on each of the nights, I asked Lady Francis to give me three tickets for the first representation, intending to beg the same number for each night. I gave one to Mr. S—, and another

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to a nephew of Talma's, a very agreeable French naval officer, with whom we have become acquainted, and who besought one of me. But when I had proceeded thus far in my distribution of admissions, I was told I had committed an indiscretion in asking for any, and that I must return the remaining one, which I did, ... and when your request came about a ticket for E—, I was simply assured that it was "impossible." So, dear, you must be, as I must be, satisfied with this decision—which I am not, for I am very sorry, ... Lady Francis would gladly, I have no doubt, have asked any of my friends had we wished her to do so; she did send an invitation to Horace Wilson and his wife, but that was because he was to have acted for her, and was only prevented by being too unwell to undertake the part.

I am very glad that Captain Seymour likes me, as the liking is very reciprocal. Indeed, I think our whole company presents a very favorable specimen of our young English gentlemen: they are all of them very young, full of good spirits, amiable, obliging, good-humored, good-tempered, and well-mannered; in short, I think, very charming.

How shall I feel, you say, acting that part again?... My dearest Harriet, thus much at Richmond on Monday morning; it is now Thursday evening, and I have been crying and in a miserable state of mind and body all day long. On Monday we acted "The Hunchback" for the third time, and on Tuesday we all went down to Cranford, and drew long breaths as we got into the delicious air, all fragrant with hay and honeysuckle and syringa. I left my children at what was in posting days a famous country inn, at about half a mile from Lady Berkeley's house, but which, since the completion of the railroad, has become much less frequented and important, but is quiet and comfortable and pleasant enough to make it a very nice place of deposit for my chicks.

"THE
HUNCHBACK."

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On Wednesday afternoon, when I went over to see them, I found F—, pale and coughing, and heard with dismay that the measles were pervading the whole neighborhood. I went to town that evening to act "The Hunchback" for the last time, and was haunted by horrid visions of my child ill and suffering, and the very first thing I met on entering London was a child's coffin and funeral. You can better judge than I can express how this sort of omen affected my imagination; and in this frame of mind I went through our last representation of "The Hunchback," and did not reach home till the white face of the morning was beginning to look down from the ends of the streets at us.

We did not get to bed till past three, and were up again at a little after seven, in order to take the railroad to Cranford, where we had promised to breakfast. One of our party was too late for the train, and we posted down with four horses in order to save our time, which on the great Ascot day was not, as you may suppose, a very economical proceeding....

Good-bye, dear. I will answer all your questions about "The Hunchback" another time.

Ever yours,

FANNIE.

HARLEY STREET, June 12th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

... I am now going to answer your various questions to the best of my ability. You wanted to know how I felt at acting "The Hunchback" again. Why, so horribly nervous the first night that the chair shook under me while my hair was being dressed. I trembled to such a degree from head to foot, and the rustling of the curl-papers as the man twisted them in my hair almost drove me distracted, for it sounded like a forest cracking and rattling in a storm. After the performance, my limbs ached as if I had been beaten across them with an iron bar, and I could scarcely stand or support myself for exhaustion and fatigue. This, however, was only the first night, and I suppose proceeded from the painful uncertainty I felt as to whether I had not utterly forgotten how to act at all. This one representation over, I had neither fright, nervousness, nor the slightest fatigue, and it is singular enough that no recollections or associations whatever of past times were awakened by the performance. I was fully engrossed by the endeavor to do the part as well as I could, and, except in the particular of copying, as well as I could recollect it, my dress of former days, the Julia of nine years ago did not once present herself to my

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thoughts. The first time I played it, I rather think I was worse than formerly, but after that probably much the same....

How does this dreadfully hot weather agree with you, my dear? For my own part, I am parboiled and stupid beyond all expression. I hate heat always and everywhere, and it seems to me that in our damp climate it is even more oppressive than under the scorching skies of August in Pennsylvania. However, of that I won't be sure, for the present is, with me, always better or worse than the absent.

I think I have nothing more to tell you about "The Hunchback." ... Beyond doing it as well as I could, I cared very little about it; it seemed a sort of routine business, just as it used to be, except for the inevitable unwholesome results of its being amusement instead of business; the late hours—three o'clock in the morning—and champagne and lobster salad suppers, instead of my former professional decent tea and to bed, after my work, before twelve o'clock.

Adelaide acted Helen charmingly, without having bestowed the slightest pains upon it. Had she condescended to give it five minutes' careful study, it would have been a perfect performance of its kind; but as it was, it was delightfully droll, lively, and graceful, and certainly proved her natural powers of comic acting to be very great....

You ask me about my play. I have not touched it since I wrote to you last, and really do not know when I shall have a minute in which to do so, unless, indeed, in this coming week at Oatlands,—and a great deal may be done in a week; but I am altogether quite down about it. Our last representation of "The Hunchback" was, as in duty bound, the best, and everybody was, or pretended to be, in ecstasies with it. Our time and attention have been so engrossed with the dresses, rehearsals, and performances that we absolutely seemed to experience a sudden *lull* in our daily lives after it was all over.

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I shall probably not be in town till the 24th. I am going down to Mrs. Grote's with my sister on the 21st, and as S— is of the party, it will not, I suppose, be according to "received ideas" that I should leave her there. On the 24th, however, she must be back in town; and as for my departure for America, dear Hal, you do well not to grieve too much beforehand about that.... Therefore, my dear Hal, lament not over my departure, for Heaven only knows when we shall depart, or if indeed we shall depart at all.

Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

OATLANDS, June 14th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

... I return to town this evening in order to go to a party at Mrs. Grote's, to which we have been engaged for some time past, and remain in town all to-morrow, because we dine at Harness's.... The quiet of this place, and very near twelve hours' sleep, and, above all, a temporary relief from all causes of nervous distress, have done me all the good in the world.... I cannot but think mine, in one respect, a curious fate; and perhaps, with the magnifying propensity of egotism, I exaggerate what seems to me its peculiarity. But to be placed for years together out of the reach of all society; to be left day after day to the solitude of an absolutely lonely life; to be deprived of all stimulus from without; to hear no music; to see no works of art; to hear no intellectually brilliant or even tolerably cultivated or interesting conversation; indeed, often to pass days without exchanging a thought or even a word with any grown person but my servants; to ride for hours every day alone through lonely roads and paths, sit down daily to a solitary dinner, and pass most of my evenings listening to the ticking of the clock, or wandering round and round the dark garden-walks;—to lead, I say, such a life for a length of time, and then be plunged into the existence, the sort of social Maelstrom we are living in here now, is surely a great trial to a person constituted like myself, and would be something of one, I think, to a calmer mind and more equable temperament than mine....

You ask if my father has been told of our intended return to America. I have told him,

but neither he nor any one else appears to believe in it; and from what I wrote you in my last letter, I think you will agree that they are justified in their incredulity.

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You ask how Adelaide is. Flourishing greatly; the annoyance and vexation of the late difficulties with the theatre being past, she has recovered her spirits, and seems enjoying to the full her present hopes of future happiness....

God bless you, my dear Hal.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

OATLANDS, June 16th, 1842.

MY DEAR T—,

An hour's railroading from London has brought me into a lovely country, a perfect English landscape of broad lawns, thick tufted oaks, and placid waters, under my windows. But an hour from that glare, confusion, din, riot, and insanity, to the soothing sights and sounds of this rural paradise! And after looking at it till my spirits have subsided into something like kindred composure and placidity, I open my letter-case, and find your last unanswered epistle lying on the top of it. "If Cunard and Harnden have proved true," you must have received by this time our reply to your proposition touching the Coster business. Thus far on Monday last; and having proceeded thus far, I fell fast asleep, with the pen in my hand, the sound of the rustling trees in my ears, and the smell of the new-mown grass in my nose. Since that noonday nap of mine, I have been back to town for a party at Mrs. Grote's and a dinner at Harness's. I mention names because these worthies are known to Catherine and Kate; and here I am, thanks to the railroad, back again among all these lovely sights and sounds and smells, and pick up my pen forthwith to renew my conversation with you. And first, as in duty bound, business. I wrote you word that we did not disdain the compromise offered by Mr. Coster, and we now further beg that you will receive and keep for us the sum proposed by that gentleman as payment of his debt.

MRS.
GROTE.

Thank you very much for your kindness to H——. Kate wrote me a most ludicrous account of the poor singer's first experiment on his voice in your presence. I have not the least idea what his merits really are, having never heard or, to the best of my knowledge, seen him; but, as a pupil of the Royal Academy, his acquirements ought certainly to be those of a competent teacher. However, I need not, I am sure, tell you that, in recommending him to you, I did not contemplate laying the slightest stress upon your conscience, and having heard him you must recommend him or not according to that....

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My sister thanks you for your zeal on her behalf, and so do I; but you will not be called upon for any further, or rather, I should say, nearer demonstration of it; for the young lady has lately come to the conclusion that marrying and staying at home is better than wandering singing over the face of the earth; and I suppose by next Christmas she will be married. I have no room for more.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[My correspondence with my friend Miss S—— was interrupted by a visit of several weeks which she paid us, and not resumed on my part until the month of August, when I was on my way back from Scotland, and she was travelling on the Continent with her friend Miss W——.]

LIVERPOOL, Wednesday, August 10th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

You bid me write to you immediately upon receiving your letter of the 24th of July, dated from Ulm, but I only received that letter last night on my arrival here from Scotland, and I know not how long its rightful delivery to me has been delayed. I fear, in consequence

of this circumstance, this answer to it may miscarry; for perhaps you will have left Munich by the time it gets there. However, I can but do as you bid me, and so I do it, and hope this, for me, rare exercise of the virtue of obedience may find its reward in my letter reaching you.

I am glad your meeting with the Combes was so pleasant. I can bear witness to the truth of their melancholy account of dear Dr. Combe, whom I went to see while I was in Edinburgh. He is so emaciated that the point of his knee-bone, through his trousers, perfectly fascinated me; I couldn't keep my eyes off it, it looked so terribly and sharply articulated that it seemed as if it were coming through the cloth. His countenance, however, was the same as ever, or, if possible, even brighter, sweeter, and more kindly benevolent. I have always had the most affectionate regard and admiration for him, and think him in some respects superior to his brother.

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I am delighted to think of your fine weather, and the great enjoyment it must be to you two, so happy in each other, to travel through the lovely summer days together, filling your minds and storing your memories with beautiful things of art and nature, which will be an intellectual treasure in common, and a fountain of delightful retrospective sympathy....

You must continue to direct to Harley Street, for although we were, by our original agreement, to have left it on the 1st of August, I conclude, as it is now the 10th, and I have heard no word of our removing, that some arrangement has been made for our remaining there, at least till our departure, which I understand is fixed for October 21st....

I have received a letter from Elizabeth Sedgwick, informing me that Kate's marriage is to take place about October 10th. I shall not be at it, which I regret very much.

In the same letter she tells me that Dr. Channing is spending the summer at Lenox; and that he had shown her a most interesting letter he had received from a house-builder in Cornwall, England. This man wrote to Channing to thank him for the benefit he had derived from his writings, particularly his lectures on the mental elevation of the working classes. Dr. Channing answered this letter, and the poor man was so overjoyed at this favor, as he esteemed it, that he could not refrain from pouring out his thankfulness in another letter, in which he assured his reverend correspondent that the influence of his writings upon his class of the community in that part of England was and had been very great, and instanced a fellow-artisan of his own, who said that Channing's writings had reconciled him to being a working man. Elizabeth said that Dr. Channing, while reading this letter, was divided between smiles and tears. She also told me that he had talked to her a good deal about Mrs. Child (you know, the abolitionist who wanted to publish my Southern journal; she is a correspondent of his, and a person for whom he has the highest esteem, regarding her as "a most highly principled and noble-minded woman.")

DR.
CHANNING.

I am so tired, dearest Hal, and feel such a general lassitude and discouragement of mind and body, that I will end my letter. Give my most affectionate love to Dorothy, whom I should love dearly if I saw her much. I wish I was with you, seeing the Danube, that river into which poor Undine carried her immortal soul, and her broken woman's heart, when she faded over the boat's side, saying, "Be true, be true, oh, misery!" God bless you, dearest Hal.

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Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, September 16th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You ask me what I am doing. Flying about in every direction, like one distracted, trying to *amuse* myself; going to evenings at Lady Lansdowne's, and to mornings at the Duchess of Buccleuch's; dining at the Star and Garter at Richmond, in gay and great company, and driving home alone between one and two o'clock in the morning....

I have undertaken to keep and to ride S——'s horse while he is away; and I think, by

means of regular exercise, I shall at any rate keep *paroxysms* aloof. I am going to a ball at Lord Foley's on Monday; to a children's play at the Francis Egertons' on Tuesday; to Richmond again to dine with the Miss Berrys and Lady Charlotte Lindsay on Wednesday; on Thursday to dine at Horace Wilson's, etc.... Perhaps you will wonder, as I do sometimes, that I keep the few senses I have in the life I lead; but so it is, and so it has to be.

Good-bye. God bless you. I keep this letter till I hear from you where to send it, and, with dearest love to Dorothy, am

Ever yours,

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, September 30th, 1842.

MY DEAREST GRANNY [LADY DACRE],

Yesterday morning we drove down to Chesterfield Street, not without sundry misgivings on my part that Lord Dacre would feel that we persecute him, that he might be busy and not like being interrupted, etc. When the door was opened, however, and while we were still interrogating the footman, his own dear lordship came to it, and graciously bade me alight, which of course I gladly did, and so we sat with him a matter of half an hour, hearing his discourse, which ran at first on you and the dear girls [his granddaughters], and then broadened gradually from private interests to his public experience, and all the varied observation of his honorable political career. "I could have stayed all night to have heard good counsel," but was obliged to drive to the theatre to fetch my sister from rehearsal, and so, most reluctantly, came away. It seemed to me very good, and amiable, and humane, and condescending of Lord Dacre to spare so much of his time and attention to us young and insignificant folk; the courtesy of his reception was as deeply appreciated by me, I assure you, as the interest of his conversation; and so tell my lord, with my best of courtesies.

LADY
DACRE.

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I went in the evening to hear my sister sing "Norma" for the last time, and cried most bitterly, and, moreover, thought exceedingly often of your ladyship; and why? I'll tell you; it was the *last* time she was to do it, and when I saw that grace and beauty and rare union of gifts, which were adapted to no other purpose half so well as to this of dramatic representation; when I heard the voice of popular applause, that utterance of human sympathy, break at once simultaneously from all those human beings whose emotions she was swaying at her absolute will,—my heart sank to think that this beautiful piece of art (for such it now is, and very near perfection), would be seen no more; that this rare power (a *talent*, as it verily then seemed to me, in the solemn sense of the word, and a precious one of its own kind) was about to be folded in a napkin, to bear interest no more, of profit or pleasure, to herself or others.

My dear Granny, you will well understand how I came to think of you during that performance; for the first time, I thought *like* you on this subject. I caught myself saying, while the tears streamed down my face, "If she is only happy, after all!" (But oh, that *if*!) It seemed amazing to abdicate a secure fortune, and such a power—power to do anything so excellently (putting its recognition by the public entirely out of account) for that fearful risk. God help us all! 'Tis a hard matter to judge rightly on any point whatever; and settled and firm as I had believed my opinion on this subject to be, I was surprised to find how terrible it was to me to see my sister, that woman most dear to me, deliberately leave a path where the sure harvest of her labor is independent fortune, and a not unhonorable distinction, and a powerful hold upon the sympathy, admiration, and even kindly regard of her fellow-creatures, while she thus not unworthily ministers to their delight, for a life where, if she does not find happiness, what will atone to her for all this that she will have left? However, I have need to remember, while thinking of her and her future, what I have never forgotten hitherto, that the soul lives neither on fortune, fame, nor happiness; and that which is noblest in her, which is above either her genius, grace, or beauty, and far more precious than all of them united, will thrive, it may be, better in obscurity and the different trials of her different life than in the vocation she is now abandoning. *Amen!*

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Thank you, my dear Granny, for all your advice, and still more for the love which

dictates it; I lay both to heart. Thank you, too, for the little book. I wish I knew the woman who wrote it; she must be a paragon.

God bless you, dear Granny. I write you a kiss as the children do, and am

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, October 2nd, 1842.

MY DEAR T—,

It is hardly of any use writing to you, because, unless I am "drowned in the ditch," I shall see you very soon after you get this letter. I have, however, as I believe you know, a very decided principle upon the subject of answering letters, and therefore shall duly reply to your epistle, though I hope to follow this in less than a fortnight.

I am sorry to say that if your ever "feeling young again" is to depend upon your seeing a *Miss Kemble* once more in America, you are doomed to disappointment, and must decidedly go on, not only growing but feeling old, as *Miss Kembles* there are now no more—at least at my father's house.... So you see a due regard for her fellow-creatures on the other side of the Atlantic has not existed in my sister's heart, or she would, of course, have postponed all personal prospects of happiness, or rather peace and quiet, to a proper consideration for the gratification of the American public.

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I think your observations upon my projected journey to Georgia are taken from an entirely mistaken point of view. I am utterly unconscious of entertaining any inimical feeling towards America or the Americans; on the contrary, I am distinctly conscious of the highest admiration for your institutions, and an affectionate regard for the northern part of your country (where those institutions can alone be said to be put in practice) that is second only to the love and reverence I bear to my own country. This being the case, I cannot think that anything I write about America can, with any sort of propriety, be characterized as "the lashings of a foe."

With regard to Dickens, I do not know exactly what proceedings of his you refer to as exhibiting want of taste or want of temper towards your country-people.... But small counterweights may surely be allowed to such admirable qualities of both head and heart as he possesses. He sent me, on his return to England, a printed circular, which was distributed among all his literary acquaintances and friends, and which set forth his views with regard to the question of international copyright; but except this, I know of nothing that he has publicly put forth upon the matter. His "Notes" upon America come out, I believe, immediately; and I shall be extremely curious to see them, and sorry if they are unfavorable, because his popularity as a writer is immense, and whatever he publishes will be sure of a wide circulation. Moreover, as it is very well known that, before going to America, he was strongly prepossessed in favor of its institutions, manners, and people, any disparaging remarks he may make upon them will naturally have proportionate weight, as the deliberate result of experience and observation. M— told me, after dining with Dickens immediately on his return, that one thing that had disgusted him was the almost universal want of conscience upon money matters in America; and the levity, occasionally approaching to something like self-satisfaction, for their "sharpness," which he had repeated occasions of observing, in your people when speaking of the present disgraceful condition of their finances and deservedly degraded state of their national credit.... But I do hope (because I have a friend's and not a "foe's" heart towards your country) that Dickens will not write unfavorably about it, for his opinion will influence public opinion in England, and deserves to do so.

CHARLES
DICKENS.

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As for Lord Morpeth, you need not be afraid of his "booking" you; he is the kindest gentleman alive, and moreover, I think, far too prudent a person for such a proceeding....

Lord Ashburton's termination of the boundary question is vehemently abused by the Opposition, but that is of course. Some old-school Whigs, sound politicians, and great friends of mine, were agreeing quietly among themselves the other day that *anyhow* they were heartily glad that there was to be no war between the countries.

I perceive, however, that the question of the right of search (*question brûlante*, as the French say) is still untouched, or rather unsettled; yet in my opinion it contains more elements of danger than the other. But I suppose your great diplomatists think one question settled in twenty years is quite enough for the rapid pace at which our Governments pant and puff after public opinion in these steam-speed-thinking times.

We have been in the country till within the last fortnight, but have come up to town to prepare for our departure. London is almost empty, but the only topics that keep alive the sparse population of the club-houses are the dismissal of Baroness L—— from Court and her departure for Germany, and a terrible *esclandre* in a very high circle, including royal personages.... I treat you to the London scandal, and my doing so is ridiculous enough; but there is nothing I would not sooner write about than myself and my own thoughts, feelings, and concerns, just now. How thankful I shall be when this month is over!...

Believe me yours most truly,

F. A. B.

HARLEY STREET, Saturday, 8th, 1842.

MY DEAR GRANNY,

I dined yesterday at Charles Greville's, where dined also Mr. Byng; both of them, I believe, were your fellow-guests lately, at the Duke of Bedford's. Among other Woburn talk, there is no little discourse about B——. Westmacott, too (the sculptor), who is a very old friend of ours, chimed in, and we had a very pretty chorus on the argument of her fine countenance, striking appearance, intelligence, etc., which I listened to and joined in with great pleasure, because I love the child; thinking, at the same time, how many qualities, of which perhaps her gentlemen eulogists took no cognizance, went to make up the charm of the outward appearance which they admired—the candor, truth, humility, and moral dignity, the "inward and spiritual grace," of which what they praised is but "the outward and visible sign." As I know this, the commendation of her superficial good gifts, by superficial observers, was very agreeable to me.

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You ask me if I think you are going to keep up a correspondence with me at this rate. I do not know exactly what that means; but be sure of one thing, that as long as I can succeed in drawing an answer out of you, I shall *persevere*.

My father has a violent lumbago; so, I am sorry to say, has the theatre, which, in spite of my sister's exertions, can hardly keep upon its legs. Her success has to compensate for the deplorable houses on the nights when she does not appear. But great as her success is, it will not make the nights pay on which she does not sing, when the theatre is absolutely empty. What they will do when she goes I cannot in the smallest degree conceive. *We* are just being sucked into the Maelstrom of bills, parcels, packages, books, pictures, valuables, trumpery, rummaging, heaping together, throwing apart, selecting, discarding, and stowing away that precedes an orderly departure after a two years' disorderly residence; in the midst of all which I have neither leisure nor leave to attend to the heartache which, nevertheless, accompanies the whole process with but little intermission.

Love to your dear lord and the dear girls, and believe me ever, my dear Granny,

Your affectionate

FANNY.

HARLEY STREET, Friday, 14th, 1842.

DEAR GRANNY,

I find there is every probability of our not leaving England until the 4th of November (several people tell me they have been told so), and such is the extreme uncertainty of our movements always that it would not surprise me very violently if we did not go then. I fear, however, this will not afford me any further glimpses of you; and, indeed, at the bottom of my heart, I do not wish for any more "last dying speeches and confessions." To

LADY
DACRE.

part is very bad, but to keep continually parting is unendurable.

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My sister goes on with the "Semiramide," and her attraction in it increases. She acts and sings admirably in it, and, all sisterly prepossessions apart, looks beautiful.

We went the other night to see "As You Like It" at Drury Lane. It was *painfully* acted, but the scenery, etc., were charming; and though we had neither the caustic humor nor poetical melancholy of Jacques, nor the brilliant wit and despotical fancifulness of the princess shepherd-boy duly given, we *had* the warbling of birds, and sheep-bells tinkling in the distance, to comfort us. I hope it is not profanation to say, "These should ye have done, and not have left the others undone." Nevertheless, and in spite of all, the enchantment of Shakespeare's inventions is such to me that they cannot be marred, let what will be done to them. As long as those words of profoundest wisdom and those images of exquisite beauty are but uttered, their own perfection swallows up all other considerations and impressions with me, and I bear indifferent and even bad acting of Shakespeare better than most people.

Why did you not make *him*, instead of the stage, the subject of our discussions together? For his works my enthusiasm grows every year of my life into a profounder and more wondering love and admiration.

I am grateful for Lord Dacre's offer, though it was not made to me; and, had it been so, should have closed with it eagerly. To correspond with one who has seen and known and *thought* so much is a rare privilege.

Good-bye, dear Granny. Give my love to the girls, and my "duty" to my lord, and believe me

Your affectionate

FANNY BUTLER.

HARLEY STREET, Friday, 23rd, 1842.

MY DEAR GRANNY,

That last half-hour before we got off from "The Hoo" the other day was a severe trial to my self-command; but I was anxious not to afflict you, and I was willing, if possible, to begin the bitter series of partings, of which the next month will be one succession, with something like fortitude, however I may end it. Thank you for writing to me, and thank you for all your kindness to me through these many years, now that you have *persevered* in being fond of me....

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Do not be anxious about my happiness, my dear friend, but pray for me, that I maybe enabled to do what is right under all circumstances; and then it cannot fail to be well with me, whether to outward observation I am what the world calls happy or not.

Give my affectionate love to Lord Dacre, and thank him for all his goodness to me and mine. I send my blessing to the girls. I have written to B——. God bless you all, my kind friends, and make life and its vicissitudes minister to your happiness hereafter.

You will hear of me, dear Granny, for the girls will write to me, and I shall answer them, and you will remember, whenever you think of me, how gratefully and affectionately I must

Ever remain yours,

FANNY BUTLER.

[Lady Dacre saw much trouble in store for me in my intemperate expression of feeling on the subject of slavery in America, and repeatedly warned me with affectionate solicitude to moderate, if not my opinions, the vehement proclamation of them. She was wise and right, as well as kind in her advice.]

STOCKBRIDGE, October 26th, 1842.

DEATH OF
DR.
CHANNING.

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You have no doubt heard and lamented the death of our dear friend, Dr. Channing. Dead he is not; he lives, and will live in the widespreading life he has communicated. He passed the summer at Lenox, occupying with his family your rooms at the hotel. We passed some hours of every day together. He enjoyed our lovely hill country with the freshness of youth, his health was invigorated, and his mind freer, and his spirits more buoyant than I ever knew them; he endured more fatigue than he had been able to encounter since he travelled in Switzerland fifteen years ago. His affectionateness, purity, simplicity—a simplicity so perfect that it seemed divine—surrounded his greatness with an atmosphere of light and beauty. His life has been a most prosperous one, no storms without, and a heavenly calm within. His last work in his office was a discourse which he delivered in our village church on the 1st of August, on the emancipation of the slaves in the British West Indies. I shall send it to you, and pray mark the prophetic invocation with which it concludes. You should have seen the inspired expression of his intellectual brow, and the earnest, spiritual look that seemed to penetrate the clouds that hang over the eternal world and to reflect its light. On the Sundays of his sojourn with us he had domestic worship in our houses, and his last service was in that apartment where his beloved friend Follen officiated....

Eliza Follen is recovering the elasticity of her mind. Time can, I think, do all things, since it has dissipated that horrible image of the burning steamer in which her husband perished, that was ever before her. She is publishing his Memoirs, and, among other things, she read me some patriotic songs which he wrote in Sand's time in Germany; they were in the boldest tone of insurrection, and were, of course, proscribed and suppressed. She had heard her husband occasionally hum a stanza or two of them, and he had once written out a single one for her which she found in her work-basket. This she transmitted to his mother in Germany, and with this clue alone the mother obtained the rest; and eloquent outbreakings they are of a spirit glowing with freedom and humanity....

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I have passed lately a day at our State Lunatic Asylum. On my first going there, in the evening the physician invited me into the dancing-hall, where some sixty of the patients were assembled. The two musicians were patients, one utterly *demented*, incapable of any reasonable act except playing a tune on his violin, which he did with accuracy. Except the doctor's children (as beautiful as cherubs, and ministering angels they are), there were no sane persons among the dancers. "There," said the physician, "is a homicide; there, a poor girl who went crazy the day after her brother drowned himself, and who fancies herself that brother; there, the King of England," etc. They were all dancing with the utmost decorum and regularity. They attend chapel on a Sunday without disturbance; they were all (among them maniacs who had been for half a score of years chained in dungeons of our common gaols) "clothed," and, if "not in their right mind," comfortable and cheerful; they *all* had plants in their rooms and books on their tables. Much depends on individual character, and the physician is, as you would expect, a man of the highest moral power, and the very embodiment of the spirit of benevolence, and if poetry and painting had laid their heads together to give him a fitting form, they could have done nothing better than nature has. My heart was ready to burst with gratitude. Who can say the world does not move some forward steps?

CLARENDON HOTEL, November 6th, 1842.

DEAR GRANNY,

You know that it is now determined that we do not sail by the next steamer....

Dearest Granny, do not you, any more than I do, reckon which love is best worth having, of young or old love; for all love is *inestimable*, and should be gratefully rendered thanks for. There is something charming and *pathetic* in the *profusion* with which the young love; it is touching, as one of the magnificent superabundances, one of the generous extravagances, of their prodigal time of life. But the love of the old is as precious as the beggared widow's mite; and in bestowing it they know what they give, from a store that day by day diminishes. The affections of the young are as sudden and soft, as bright and

bounteous, as copious and capricious as the showers of spring; the love of the old is the one drop in the cuse, which outlasts the journey through the desert.

You may perhaps see in the papers a statement of the disastrous winding up of the season at Covent Garden, or rather its still more disastrous abrupt termination. After our all protesting and remonstrating with all our might against my father's again being involved in that Heaven-forsaken concern, and receiving the most positive and solemn assurances from those who advised him into it for the sake of having his name at the head of it that *no* responsibility or liability whatever should rest upon or be incurred by him; and that if the thing did not turn out prosperously, it should be put an end to, and the theatre immediately closed;—they have gone on, in spite of night after night of receipts below the expenses, and now are obliged suddenly to shut up shop, my poor father being, as it turns out, personally involved for a considerable sum.

COVENT
GARDEN.

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This, as you will well believe, is no medicine for his malady. I spend every evening with him, and generally see him in the morning besides. These last few days he suffers less acute pain, but complains more of debility, and hardly leaves his sofa, where he lies silent, with his eyes closed, apparently absorbed in painful sensations and reflections. Yet, though he neither speaks to nor looks at me, he likes to have me there; and, as Horace Twiss said, "to hear the scissors fall" now and then, by way of companionship; and certainly derives some comfort from the mere consciousness of my presence.

My sister has gone to Brighton for a few days, her health having quite given way, what with hard work and harder worry. She returns on Monday, but it is extremely doubtful whether she will resume her performances at all, so that I fear the expectations of the clan Cavendish will be disappointed.

She did act most charmingly in the "Matrimonio Segreto." In point of fact, her comic acting is more perfect than her tragic, although there are not in it, and naturally cannot be, the same striking exhibitions of dramatic power; but it is smoother, more even, better finished.

You must get Lady Callcott's "Scripture Herbal." Lady Grey lent it me, and I read it with great pleasure. It is an interesting, graceful, and learned work, which she has illustrated very exquisitely. There is something very sweet and soothing in the idea of last thoughts having been thus devoted to what is loveliest in nature and holiest in religion.

God bless you, dear Granny. Give my love to the lasses, and my affectionate "duty" to my lord; and believe me

Your loving grandchild,

F. A. B.

[Our departure for America was indefinitely postponed, and the American nurse I had brought to England with my children left me and returned home alone.]

THE CLARENDON, Monday, November 28th, 1842.

MY DEAREST GRANNY,

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I duly delivered your message, and am desired to tell you that a house is being looked for for us in your neighborhood, and that, as soon as one is found that we think you will approve of, it will be taken. Moreover, I am desired to add that the expensive reputation of the Clarendon is very much exaggerated.... We have been here a fortnight to-day, and I think there is every probability of our being here at least a fortnight longer, even if we get away then.... My father suffers less acutely these last few days, but his debility appears to increase with the decrease of his positive pain....

My sister returned from Brighton to-day, completely set up again; she is to go on with her performances till Christmas, when the whole concern passes into the hands of Mr. Bunn, who perhaps is qualified to manage it.

I think I should like to *act* with my sister during this month, in order to secure their salaries to the actors, to make up the deficit which now lies at the door of my father's management, to put a good benefit into his poor pocket, to give rather a more cheerful

ending to my sister's theatrical career, and, though last, not least, for the pleasure and *fun* of acting with her. Don't you think we should have good houses? and wouldn't *you* come and see us?...

God bless you, dear Granny.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. B.

THE CLARENDON, December 1st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Lord Titchfield, who was here yesterday, begged me to ascertain from you whether it is only *my* bust that you desire, or whether you would like to have casts from my father's and from the two of Adelaide. Write me word, dear, that the magnificent marquis may fulfil your wishes, which he is only waiting to know in order to send the one or the four heads to you in Ireland....

LORD
TITCHFIELD.

My sister returned from Brighton on Monday, apparently quite recovered; in good looks, good voice, and good spirits. The horrible mess in which everybody is mixed up who has anything to do with Covent Garden, and in which she is so deeply involved, renewed her annoyances and vexations immediately on her arrival in town; but I passed the evening with her yesterday, and she did not seem the worse for work or worry, for she sang, for her own pleasure and that of her guests, the whole evening....

Give my kind remembrances to all your people, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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[The Marquis of Titchfield was employing the French sculptor Dantan to make busts of my father, my sister, and myself, for him; and most kindly gave me casts of them all, and sent my friend Miss St. Leger a cast of mine.]

THE CLARENDON, January 5th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

I have sent your wishes to Lord Titchfield, and I am sure they will be quickly complied with. I have no idea that he means otherwise than to *give* you my bust; any other species of transaction being apparently quite out of his line, and *giving* his especial gift. I have, nevertheless, taken pains to make clear to him your intentions in the matter; I have desired him to have the bust forwarded to the care of Mr. Green, because I thought you would easily find means of transporting it thence to Ardgillan. Was this right?

The houses at Covent Garden are quite full on my sister's nights, but deplorably empty on the others, I believe. I speak from hearsay, for I have not been into the theatre since the terrible business of the late break-up there, and do not think I shall even see her last performances, for I have no means of doing so; I can no longer ask for private boxes, as during my father's management, of course, nor indeed would it be right for me to do so on her nights, because they all let very well; and as for paying for one, or even for a seat in the public ones, I have not a single farthing in the world to apply to such a purpose.... So you see, my dear, I am in no case to treat myself to seats at the play, either private or public.

Adelaide is still pretty well. The night before last was her benefit; she had a very fine house, and sang "Norma," and the great scene from "Der Freyschütz," and "Auld Robin Gray;" and yesterday evening she seemed very tired, but she had people to dinner and to tea nevertheless....

Certainly one had need believe in something better than one sees, or at any rate than I see just now; for such petty selfishnesses and despicable aims, pursued with all the energy and eagerness which should be bestowed upon the highest alone; such cheating, tricking, swindling, lying, and slandering, are enough to turn any Christian cat's

stomach....

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I must tell you two things about Miss Hall that have given me such an insight into the delights of the position of an English governess as I certainly never had before. When first she joined us here at the Clarendon, Anne was still with us, and she being always accustomed to take her meals with the children, and yet of course not a proper companion for Miss Hall, we thought that till the nurse went to America we would request the governess to dine with us. On Anne's departure, I signified to the head waiter that from that time Miss Hall would take her dinner with the children; whereupon, with a smirk and sniff of the most insolent disdain, and an air of dignity that had been hurt, but was now comforted, the bloated superior servant replied, "Well, ma'am, to be sure, it always was so in *them famullies* where I have lived; the governess never didn't eat at the table." The fact is natural, and the reason obvious, but oh! my dear, the manner of the fat, pampered porpoise of a man-menial was too horrid. Then, on going for a candle into Miss Hall's room one evening, I found she had been provided with tallow ones, and, upon remonstrating about it with the chambermaid, she replied (with a courtesy at every other word to me), "Oh, ma'am, we always puts *tallow* for the governesses."

Good-bye, dear. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

CRANFORD HOUSE, January 8th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

I am spending two days at Cranford—you know, I believe, where I mean, old Lady Berkeley's place.... I came to get the refreshment of the country; old Lady Berkeley is very kind to me, and I like her daughters, Lady Mary particularly. I came down yesterday (Saturday), and shall return early to-morrow, for on Wednesday the children are to have a party of their little friends, and I am making a Christmas-tree for them (rather out of date), and expect to be exceedingly busy both to-morrow and Tuesday in preparing for their amusement.

My father does not suffer nearly as much pain as he did a short time ago, but his strength appears to me to be gradually diminishing....

CHARLES
KEMBLE.

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[Our return to America being once more indefinitely postponed, we now took a house in Upper Grosvenor Street, close to Hyde Park, to which we removed from the Clarendon, my sister residing very near us, in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square.]

26, UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, Wednesday, March 1st, 1843.

Thank you, my dear T—, for your attention to our interests and affairs.... It seems to me that to have to accept the conviction of the unworthiness of those we love must be even worse than to lay our dearest in the earth, for we may believe that they have risen into the bosom of God. However, each human being's burden is the one whose weight must seem the heaviest to himself, and He alone who lays them on proportions them to our strength and enables us to walk upright beneath them....

[Extract from a letter from Miss Sedgwick.]

NEW YORK, March 3rd, 1843.

The great topic with us just now is the trial of Mackenzie, of whom, as the chief actor in the tragedy of the "Somers," you must have heard. Some of your journals cry out upon him, but, as we think, only the organs of that hostile inhuman spirit that bad minds try

to keep alive on both sides of the water. His life has been marked with courage and humanity; all enlightened and unperverted, I may say all sane opinion with us, is in his favor. After the most honorable opinion from the Court of Inquiry, he is now under trial by court-martial, demanded by his friends to save him from a civil suit. S—, the father of the Ohio mutineer, is a man of distinguished talent, of education, and head of the War Department, but a vindictive and unscrupulous man. He is using every means to ruin Mackenzie, to revenge the death of a son, Heaven-forsaken from the beginning of his days, and whose maturest acts (he died at nineteen) were robbing his mother's jewel-case and stealing money from his father's desk. My nephew is acting as Mackenzie's counsel, and his wife, a Roman wife and mother, is a friend of mine....

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I heard a story the other day, "a true one," that I treasured for you as racy, as characteristic of slavery and human nature. A most notoriously atrocious, dissolute, *hellish* slave-owner died, and one of his slaves—an old woman—said to a lady, "Massa prayed God so to forgive him! Oh, how he prayed! And I am afraid God heard him; they say He's so good."

UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, April 17th, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

I have executed your commission with regard to two of the books you desired me to get, but the modern Italian work, published in 1840, in Florence, and the "Mariana" of 1600, I am very much afraid I shall not be able to procure; the first because it would be necessary to send to Florence for it, which could very easily be done, but then I shouldn't be here to receive it; and the second, the copy of "Mariana," of the edition you specify, because Bohn assures me that it is extremely rare, having been suppressed on account of the king-killing doctrines it inculcates, and the subsequent editions being all garbled and incorrect. As you particularly specified that of 1600, of course I would not take any other, and shall still make further attempts to procure that, though Panizzi, the librarian of the British Museum, and Macaulay, who are both friends of mine, and whom I consulted about it, neither of them gave me much encouragement as to my eventual success. The "Filangieri" and Buchanan will arrive with me. I would send them to G—A—, but that, as we return on the 4th of May, I think there is every reason to expect that we shall be in America first.

So much for your commission. With regard to your complaint that I give you nothing to do, I think you will have found that fault amended in my last communication, wherein I request you to accept my father's power of attorney, and undertake to watch over his interests in the New Orleans Bank....

As for people's comments on me or my actions, I have not lived on the stage to be cowardly as well as bold; and being decidedly bold, "I thank God," as Audrey might say, that I am not cowardly, which is my only answer to the suggestion of "people saying," etc.

THE
WORLD'S
OPINION.

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For a year and a half past I have been perfectly wretched at our protracted stay in Europe, and as often as possible have protested against our prolonged sojourn here, and all the consequences involved in it. This being the case, "people" attributing our remaining here to me troubles me but little, particularly as I foresaw from the first that that must inevitably be the result of our doing so.

I seldom read the newspapers, and therefore have not followed any of the details of this Mackenzie trial. The original transaction, and his own report of it, I read with amazement; more particularly the report, the framing and wording of which appeared to me utterly irreconcilable with the fact of his having written, as Lord Ashburton informed me, a very pleasing book, of which certainly the style must have been very different. He, Lord Ashburton, spoke of him as though he knew him, and gave him the same character of gentleness and single-mindedness that you do.

Although our return to America will be made under circumstances of every possible annoyance and anxiety, it gives me heartfelt pleasure to think I shall soon see all my good friends there again, among whom you and yours are first in my regard....

Butler Place is to be let, if possible, and at any rate we are certainly not to go back to it;

whereat my poor little S—— cries bitterly, and I feel a tightening at the heart, to think that the only place which I have known as a *home* in America is not what I am to return to.... The transfer of that New Orleans stock by my father to me—I mean the law papers necessary for the purpose—cost £50 sterling. England is a dear country many ways.

Ellsler is in London now, and, I am assured by those who know, *diviner* than ever. I think her gone off both in looks and dancing. That rascal W—— has robbed her of the larger portion of her earnings. What a nice lover to have!

Believe me ever

Yours most truly,

F. A. B.

April 15th 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You must not scold if there are letters missing in my words this week, for I have enough to do and to think of, as you well know, to put half the letters of the alphabet out of my head for the next twelvemonth....

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Immediately after breakfast on Saturday I went down on my knees and packed till Emily came to walk with me, and packed after I came in till it was time to go shopping and visiting. I went to bid the L——'s good-bye; we dined with the Proctors, and had a pleasant dinner: Mr. and Mrs. Grote, Rogers, Browning, Harness and his sister. In the evening I went to Miss Berry's, where Lady Charlotte Lindsay and I discoursed about you, and she pitied you greatly for having, upon the top of all your troubles, forgotten your keys....

Sunday morning I packed instead of going to church, and, in fact, packed the blessed livelong day, with an interval of rest derived from an interminable visit from Frederick Byng (*alias* Poodle). Yesterday my father and Victoire (my aunt), and Adelaide and E—— (who, to my infinite joy, came home on Saturday), dined with us. My father was better, I think, than the last evening we were with him, though, of course, a good deal out of spirits. Victoire was pretty well, but quite surprised and mortified at hearing that I would not suffer her to pack my things, for fear of its fatiguing her; and told me how she had been turning in her mind her best way of contriving to be here packing all day, and home in Charlotte Street in time to give my father his dinner. She is Dall's own sister!

Yesterday I completed, with Emily's assistance (which nearly drove me mad), the packing of the great huge chest of books, boxes, etc., and she and I walked together, but it was bitter cold and ungenial, regular *beasterly* wind. (Mrs. Grote says *she* invented that name for it, and, for reasons which will be obvious to you, I gave it up to her without a blow.) In the afternoon I went shopping with Adelaide, and then flew about, discharging my own commissions.

In the evening our "first grand party of the season came off;" nearly two hundred people came, and seemed, upon the whole, tolerably well amused. Adelaide and Miss Masson and I sang, and Benedict played, and it all went off very well. There were six policeman at the door, and Irish Jack-o'-lanterns without count; "the refreshment table was exceedingly elegantly set out" by *Gunter*—at a price which we do not yet know....

RECEPTION.

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I dread our sea-voyage for myself, for all sorts of physical reasons; morally, I dare say I shall benefit from a season of absolute quiet and the absence of all excitement. The chicks are well; they are to go down to Liverpool on Saturday, in order to be out of the way, for we leave this house on Monday, and their departure will facilitate the verifying of inventories and all the intolerable confusion of our last hours. Mrs. Cooper, as well as Miss Hall, will go with them to Liverpool, and I have requested that, instead of staying in the town, they may go down to Crosby Beach, six miles from it, and wait there for our arrival. This is all my history. I am in one perpetual bustle, and I thank Heaven for it; I have no leisure to think or to feel....

I beg leave to inform you that Miss Hall came to my party in a most elegant black satin dress, with her hair curled in *profuse ringlets* all over her head.

God bless you, my dear Hal. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

Thursday, April 27th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

You ask how it goes with me. Why, I think pretty much as it did with the poor gentleman who went up in the flying machine t'other day, which, upon some of his tackle giving way, began, as he describes, to "turn round and round in the air with the most frightful velocity." My condition, I think, too, will find the same climax as his, viz. falling in a state of *senselessness* into a steam-packet. If the account be true, it was a very curious one. As for me, I am absolutely breathless with things to do and things to think of.... Still, I get on (like a deeply freighted ship in a churning sea, to be sure), but I *do* make some way, and the days *do* go by, and I am glad to see the end of this season of trial approaching, for all our sakes.

Any one would suppose I was in great spirits, for I fly about, singing at the top of my voice, and only stop every now and then to pump up a sigh as big as the house, and clear my eyes of the tears that are blinding me. Occasionally, too, a feeling of my last moments here, and my leave-taking of my father and sister, shoots suddenly through my mind, and turns me dead sick; but all is well with me upon the whole, nevertheless.

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Adelaide was in great health and spirits on Monday night, and sang for us, and seemed to enjoy herself very much, and gave great delight to everybody who heard her. She sang last night again at Chorley's, but I thought her voice sounded a little tired. To be sure, in those tiny boxes of rooms, the carpets and curtains choke one's voice back into one's throat, and it just comes out beyond one's teeth, with a sort of muffled-drum sound. Thus far, dearest Hal, yesterday. To-day, before I left my dressing-room, I got your present. Thank you a thousand times for the pretty chain [a beautiful gold chain, which, together with a very valuable watch, was stolen from me in a boarding-house in Philadelphia, almost immediately on my return there], which is exquisite, and will be very dear. Yet, though I found the "fine gold," the empty page of letter-paper on each side of it disappointed me more than it would have been grateful to express; but when I came down to breakfast I found your letter, and was altogether happy.... I was wearing my watch again, for I found the risk and inconvenience of always carrying it about very tiresome, but I had it on an old silver chain that I have had for some years. Yours is prettier even than my father's, and I love to feel it round my neck.

You say you hope my sister will be brave on the occasion of our parting, and not try my courage with her grief. I will answer for her. I am sure she will be brave. I know of no one with more determination and self-control than she has....

The secret of helping people every way most efficiently is to stand by and be *quiet* and *ready* to do anything you *may be asked to do*. This is the only real way to help people who have any notion of helping themselves.

On Monday evening we had our first party, which went off exceedingly well. On Tuesday morning Emily and I walked together, and I packed till lunch, after which I drove out with Adelaide, shopping for her, and doing my own *do's*. In the evening I went to my father, whom I found in most wretched spirits, but not worse in health. He has determined, I am thankful to say, not to see the children again before they go, which I think is very wise. After leaving him, I went to a party at our friend Chorley's, where dear Mendelssohn was, and where I heard some wonderful music, and read part of "Much Ado about Nothing" to them. Yesterday Emily came, and we walked together, and I packed and did commissions all day. Our second party took place in the evening, and we had all our grandee friends and fine-folk acquaintances....

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MENDELSSOHN

God bless you, dear Hal. Emily is waiting for me to go out walking with her.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

MY DEAR CHARLES GREVILLE,

I send you back Channing's book, with many thanks. The controversial part of his sermons does not satisfy me. No controversy does; no arguments, whether for or against Christianity, ever appear to me *conclusive*; but as I am a person who would like extremely to have it demonstrated *why* two and two make four, you can easily conceive that arguments upon any subject seldom seem perfectly satisfactory to me. As for my convictions, which are, I thank God, vivid and strong, I think they spring from a species of intuition, mercifully granted to those who have a natural incapacity for reasoning, *i.e.* the whole female *sect*. And, talking of them, I do not like Dryden, though I exclaim with delight at the glorious beauty and philosophical truth of some of his poetry; but oh! he has nasty notions about women. Did you ever see Correggio's picture of the Gismonda? It is a wonderful portrait of grief. Even Guercino's "Hagar" is inferior to it in the mere expression of misery. Knowing no more of the story years ago than I gathered from a fine print of Correggio's picture, I wrote a rhapsody upon it, which I will show you some day.

The "Leaf and the Flower" is very gorgeous, but it does not touch the heart like earnest praise of a virtue, loved, felt, and practised; and Dryden's "Hymns to Chastity" would scarcely, I think, satisfy me, even had I not in memory sundry sublime things of Spenser, Dante, and Milton on the same theme. Thank you for both the books. Each in its kind is very good.

I am yours very truly,

F. A. B.

[Mr. Greville had lent me a volume of Dr. Channing's "Sermons," and Dryden's "Fables," which I had never before read.]

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26, UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, Saturday, April 29th.

DEAREST GRANNY,

I send you back, with thanks, the critique on Adelaide. It is very civil and, I think, not otherwise than just, except perhaps in comparing my sister *at present* to Pasta.

If genius alone were the same thing as genius and years of study, labor, experience, and practice, genius would be a finer thing even than it is. My sister perpetually reminded me of Pasta, and, had she remained a few years longer in her profession, would, I think, have equalled her. I could not give her higher praise, for nobody, since the setting of that great artist, has even remotely reminded me of her. My sister's voice is not one of the finest I have heard; Miss Paton's is finer, Clara Novello's (the most perfect voice I ever heard) is finer. Adelaide's real voice is a high mezzo-soprano, and in *stretching* it to a higher pitch—that of the soprano-*assoluto*—which she has done with infinite pains and practice, in order to sing the music of the parts she plays, I think she has impaired the quality, the perfect intonation, of the notes that form the joint, the hinge, as it were, between the upper and middle voice; and these notes are sometimes not quite true—at any rate, weak and uncertain. In brilliancy of execution, I do not think she equals Sontag, Malibran, or Grisi; *but* there is in other respects no possible comparison, in my opinion, between them and herself, as a lyrical dramatic artist; and Pasta is the only great singer who, I think, compares with her in the qualities of that noble and commanding order which distinguished them both. In both Madame Pasta and my sister the dramatic power is so great as almost occasionally to throw their musical achievements, in some degree, into the shade. But in their lyrical declamation there is a grandeur and breadth of style, and a tragic depth of passion, far beyond that of any other musical performers I have known. In one respect Adelaide had the promise of greater excellence than Pasta—the versatility of her powers and her great talent for comedy.

ADELAIDE
KEMBLE.

How little her beautiful face was ever disfigured by her vocal efforts you have seen; and noted, I know, that power of appealing to Heaven at once with her lustrous eyes and her soaring voice; ending those fine, exquisite, prolonged shakes on the highest notes with

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that gentle quiver of the lids which hardly disturbed the expression of "the rapt soul sitting in her eyes." She has a musical sensibility which comprehends, in both senses of the word, every species of musical composition, and almost the whole lyrical literature of Europe; in short, she belongs, by organization and education, to the highest order of artists. But why—oh, why am I giving you a dissertation on her and her gifts, for a purpose which will never again challenge her efforts or their exercise? (Quite lately, one who knew and loved her well told me that Rossini had said of her, "To sing as she does three things are needed: this"—touching his forehead,—"this"—touching his throat,—"and this"—laying his hand on his heart;—"she had them all.")

I sometimes think, when I reflect upon the lives of theatrical artists, that they are altogether unnatural existences, and produce—pardon the bull—*artificial natures*, which are misplaced anywhere but in their own unreal and make-believe sphere. They are the anomalous growth of our diseased civilizations, and, removed from their own factitious soil, flourish, I half believe, in none other. Do not laugh at me, but I really do think that creatures with the temperaments necessary for making good actors and actresses are unfit for anything else in life; and as for marrying and having children, I think crossing wholesome English farm stock with mythological cattle would furnish our fields with a less uncanny breed, of animals.

I wish some laws were made shutting up all the theatres, and only allowing two dramatic entertainments every year: one of Shakespeare's plays, and one of Mozart's operas, at the cost of Government, and as a national festivity. Now, I know you think I am quite mad, wherefore adieu.

I am ever yours most truly,

F. A. B.

UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, May, 1843.

DEAREST GRANNY,

I am of Lord Dacre's mind, and think it wisest and best to avoid the pain of a second parting with you. Light as *new* sorrows may appear to you, the heart—your heart—certainly will never want vitality enough to feel pain through your kindly affections. God bless you, therefore, my good friend, and farewell. For myself, I feel bruised all over, and numbed with pain; so many sad partings have fallen one after another, day after day, upon my heart, that acuteness of pain is lost in a mere sense of unspeakable, sore weariness; and yet these bitter last days are to be prolonged.... God help us all! But I am wrong to write thus sadly to you, my kind friend; and indeed, though from this note you might not think my courage what it ought to be, I assure you it does not fail me, and, once through these cruel last days, I shall take up the burden of my life, I trust, with patience, cheerfulness, and firm faith in God, and that conviction which is seldom absent from my mind, and which I find powerful to sustain me, that duty and not happiness is the purpose of life; and that from the discharge of the one and the forgetfulness of the other springs that peace which Christ told His friends He gave, and the world gives not, neither takes away. Let dear B— come and see me; I shall like to look on her bright, courageous face again. Give my affectionate love to Lord Dacre, and believe me

Ever gratefully and affectionately
Your grandchild,

FANNY.

UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, May 3rd, 1843.

Thank you, dearest Hal, for Sydney Smith's letter about Francis Horner: it is bolder than anything I had a notion of, but very able and very amiable, and describes charmingly an admirable man. There is one expression he—Sydney Smith—applies to Horner that struck me as strange—he speaks of "important human beings" that he has known; and, I cannot tell why, but with all my self-esteem and high opinion of human nature and its capabilities in general, the epithet "important" applied to human beings made me smile, and keeps recurring to me as comical. It must have appeared much more so to you, I

"IMPORTANT
HUMAN
BEINGS."

should think, with your degraded opinion of humanity.

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You ask how our second party went off. Why, very well. It was much fuller than the other, and in hopes of inducing people to "spread themselves" a little, we had the refreshments put into my drawing-room; but they still persisting in sticking (sticking literally) all in the room with the piano, which rather annoyed me, because I hate the proximity of "important human beings," I came away from them, and had a charming quiet chat in the little boudoir with Lord Ashburton and Lord Dacre, during which they discussed the merits of Channing, and awarded him the most *unmitigated* praise as a good and great man. It is curious enough that in America the opponents of Dr. Channing's views perpetually retorted upon him that he was a clergyman, a mere man of letters, whose peculiar mode of life could not possibly admit of his having large or just, or, above all, practical political knowledge and ideas, or any opinions about questions of government that could be worth listening to; whereas these two very distinguished Englishmen spoke with unqualified admiration of his sound and luminous treatment of such subjects, and, instancing what they considered his best productions, mentioned his letter to Clay upon the annexation of Texas, even before his moral and theological essays.

Our company stayed very late with us, till near two o'clock; and upon a remark being made about the much smaller consumption of refreshments than on the occasion of our first party, D—, our butler, very oracularly responded, "Quite a different class of people, sir;" which mode of accounting for the more delicate appetite of our more aristocratic guests, made with an ineffable air of cousinship to them all, sent me into fits of laughing.

You ask me what I shall have to do from Monday till Wednesday, to fill up my time and keep my thoughts from drowning themselves in crying. I shall leave this house after breakfast for the *Clarendon*. I have a great many small last articles to purchase, and shall visit all my kindred once more. Then, too, the final packing for "board ship" will take me some time, and I have some letters to write too. I dine with Lady Dacre on Monday; they are to be alone except us and E— and my sister. I shall leave them at eight o'clock to go and sit with my father till ten, his bed-time; and then return to Chesterfield Street [Lord Dacre's]. As for Tuesday—Heaven alone knows how I shall get through it.

On Thursday last we dined with Sydney Smith, where we met Lord and Lady Charlemont, Jeffrey, Frederick Byng, Dickens, Lady Stepney, and two men whom I did not know,—a pleasant dinner; and afterwards we went to Mrs. Dawson Damer's,—a large assembly, more than half of them strangers to us....

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On Friday morning Adelaide and E— and we breakfasted with Rogers, to meet Sydney Smith, Hallam, and his daughter and niece, the United States Minister, Edward Everett, Empson, and Sir Robert Inglis. After breakfast I went to see Charles Greville, who is again laid up with the gout, and unable to move from his sofa. We dined with my sister, who had a large party in the evening; and as the hour for breaking up arrived, and I saw those pleasant kindly acquaintances pass one after another through the door, I felt as if I was watching the vanishing of some pleasant vision. The nearest and dearest of these phantasmagoria are yet round me; but in three days the last will have disappeared from my eyes, for who can tell how long? if not forever!

All day yesterday I was extremely unwell, but packed vehemently....

Charles Young, who is a most dear old friend of mine, and dotes upon my children, came to see them off, and went with them to the railroad. S— begged for some of her grandfather's hair, but that he might not be told it was for her, for fear of grieving him!

CHARLES
YOUNG.

This is the last letter you will get from me written in this house. Victoire, quite tired out with packing, is lying asleep on the sofa, and poor dear Emily sits crying beside me.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

LIVERPOOL, Thursday, May 4th, 1843.

I wrote to you last thing last night, dearest Hal; and now farewell! I have received a better account of my father.... Dear love to Dorothy, and my last dear love to you. I shall write and send no more loves to any one. Lord Titchfield—blessings on him!—has sent me a miniature of my father and four different ones of Adelaide. God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Yours,

FANNY.

HALIFAX WHARF, Wednesday, May 17th, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

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When I tell you that yesterday, for the first time, I was able to put pen to paper, or even to hold up my head, and that even after the small exertion of writing a few lines to my father I was so exhausted as to faint away, you will judge of the state of weakness to which this dreadful process of crossing the Atlantic reduces your very *robustious* grandchild.

It is now the 17th of May, and we have been at sea thirteen days, and we are making rapid way along the coast of Nova Scotia, and shall touch at Halifax in less than an hour. There we remain, to land mails and passengers, about six hours; and in thirty-six more, wind and weather favoring us across the Bay of Fundy, we shall be in Boston. In fifteen days! Think of it, my dearest Granny! when thirty used to be considered a rapid and prosperous voyage.

My dear friend, how shall I thank you for those warm words of cheering and affectionate encouragement which I received when I was lying worn out for want of sleep and food, after we had been eight days on this dreadful deep? My kind friend, I do not want courage, I assure you; and God will doubtless give me sufficient strength for my need: but you can hardly imagine how deplorably sad I feel; how poor, who lately was so rich; how lonely, who lately was surrounded by so many friends. I know all that remains to me, and how the treasure of love I have left behind will be kept, I believe, in many kind hearts for me till I return to claim it. But the fact is I am quite exhausted, body and mind, and incapable of writing, or even thinking, with half the energy I hope to gather from the first inch of dry land I step upon. Like Antæus, I look for strength from my mother, the Earth, and doubt not to be brave again when once I am on shore.

The moment I saw the dear little blue enamel heart I exclaimed, "Oh, it is Lady Dacre's hair in it!" But tears, and tears, and nothing but tears, were the only greeting I could give the pretty locket and your and dear B——'s letters.

My poor chicks have borne the passage well, upon the whole—sick and sorry one hour, and flying about the deck like birds the next....

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Our passage has been made in the teeth of the wind, and against a heavy sea the whole way. We have had no absolute storm; but the tender mercies of the Atlantic, at best, are terrible. Of our company I can tell nothing, having never left my bed till within the last three days. They seem to be chiefly English officers and their families, bound for New Brunswick and the Canadas. The ship stops, and to the perpetual flailing of the paddles succeeds the hissing sound of the escaping steam. We are at Halifax. I send you this earliest news of us because you will be glad, I am sure, to get it.

Give my love to my dear lord; my blessing and a kiss to dear B——. I will write to her from New York, if possible. God bless you, my dear friend, and reward you for all your kindness to me, and comfort and make peaceful the remainder of your earthly pilgrimage. I can hardly hold my pen in my hand, or my head up; but am ever your grateful and affectionate

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, May 23rd, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

We landed in Boston on Friday morning at six o'clock, and almost before I had drawn my first breath of Yankee air Elizabeth Sedgwick and Kate had thrown their arms round me.

MR.
CUNARD.

You will want to know of our seafaring; and mine truly was miserable, as it always is, and perhaps even more wretched than ever before. I lay in a fever for ten days, without being able to swallow anything but two glasses of calves'-foot jelly and oceans of iced water. At the end of this time I began to get a little better; though, as I had neither food, nor sleep, nor any relief from positive sea-sickness, I was in a deplorable state of weakness. I just contrived to crawl out of my berth two days before we reached Halifax, where I was cheered, and saddened too, by the sight of well-known English faces. I had just finished letters to my father, E—, and Lady Dacre, for the *Hibernia*, which was to touch there the next morning on her way *home*, and was sitting disconsolate with my head in my hands, in a small cabin on deck, to which I had been carried up from below as soon as I was well enough to bear being removed from my own, when Mr. Cunard, the originator of this Atlantic Steam Mail-packet enterprise, whom I had met in London, came in, and with many words of kindness and good cheer, carried me up to his house in Halifax, where I rested for an hour, and where I saw Major S—, an uncle of my dear B—, and where we talked over English friends and acquaintances and places, and whence I returned to the ship for our two days' more misery, with a bunch of exquisite flowers, born English subjects, which are now withering in my letter-box among my most precious farewell words of friends.

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The children bore the voyage as well as could be expected; sick one half hour, and stuffing the next; little F— *pervading* the ship from stem to stern, like Ariel, and generally presiding at the officers' mess in undismayed she-loneliness.

Your friend Captain G— was her devoted slave and admirer.... I saw but little of the worthy captain, being only able to come on deck the last four days of our passage; but he was most kind to us all, and after romping with the children and walking Miss Hall off her legs, he used to come and sit down by me, and sing, and hum, and whistle every imaginable tune that ever lodged between lines and spaces, and some so original that I think they never were imprisoned within any musical bars whatever. I gave him at parting the fellow of your squeeze of the hand, and told him that as yours was on my account, mine was on yours. He left us at Boston to go on to Niagara.

Our ship was extremely full, and there being only one stewardess on board, the help she could afford any of us was very little.... While in Boston I made a pilgrimage to dear Dall's grave: a bitter and a sad few minutes I spent, lying upon that ground beneath which she lay, and from which her example seemed to me to rise in all the brightness of its perfect lovingness and self-denial. The oftener I think of her, the more admirable her life appears to me. She was undoubtedly gifted by nature with a temperament of rare healthfulness and vigor, which, combined with the absence of imagination and nervous excitability, contributed much to her uniform cheerfulness, courage, and placidity of temper; but her self-forgetfulness was most uncommon, her inexhaustible kindness and devotedness to every creature that came within her comfortable and consolatory influence was "twice-blessed," and from her grave her lovely virtues seemed to call to me to get up and be of good cheer, and strive to forget myself, even as perfectly as she had done.... How bitter and dark a thing life is to some of God's poor creatures!

I have told you now all I have to tell of myself, and being weary in spirit and in body, will bid you farewell, and go and try to get some sleep. God bless you, my beloved friend; I am very sad, but far from out of courage. Give dear Dorothy my affectionate love.

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I am ever yours,

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, 30th, 1843.

MY DEAR F—,

We are all established in a boarding-house here, where my acquaintances assure me that I am very comfortable; and so I endeavor to persuade myself that my acquaintances are better judges of that than I am myself. It is the first time in my life that I have ever lived in any such manner or establishment; so I have no means of trying it by

comparison; it is simply detestable to me, but compared with *more* detestable places of the same sort it is probably *less* so. "There are differences, look you!" ...

I am sure your family deserve to have a temple erected to them by all foreigners in America; for it seems to me that you and your people are home, country, and friends to all such unfortunates as happen to have left those small items of satisfaction behind them. The stranger's blessing should rest on your dwellings, and one stranger's grateful blessing does rest there....

Believe me, yours most truly,

F. A. B.

Please to observe that the charge of 13s. 8d. is for personal advice, conferences, and tiresome morning visits; and if you make any such charge, I shall expect you to earn it. 6s. 4d. is all you are entitled to for anything but personal communication.

[This postscript, and the beginning of the letter, were jesting references to a lawyer's bill, amounting to nearly £50, presented to me by a young legal gentleman with whom we had been upon terms of friendly acquaintance, and whom we had employed, as he was just beginning business, to execute the papers for the deed of gift I have mentioned, by which my father left me at his death my earnings, the use of which I had given up to him on my marriage for his lifetime.

A LAWYER'S
BILL.

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Our young legal gentleman used to pay us the most inconceivably tedious visits, during which his principal object appeared to be to obtain from us every sort of information upon the subject of all and sundry American investments and securities. Over and over again I was on the point of saying "Not at home" to these interminably wearisome visitations, but refrained, out of sheer good nature and unwillingness to mortify my *visitant*. Great, therefore, was our surprise, on receiving a *bill of costs*, to find every one of these intolerable intrusions upon our time and patience charged, as personal business consultations, at 13s. 8d. The thing was so ludicrous that I laughed till I cried over the price of our friend's civilities. On paying the amount, though of course I made no comment upon the price of my social and legal privileges, I suppose the young gentleman's own conscience (he was only just starting in his profession, and may have had one) pricked him slightly, for with a faint hysterical giggle, he said, "I dare say you think it rather sharp practice, but, you see, getting married and furnishing the house is rather expensive,"—an explanation of the reiterated thirteens and sixpences of the bill, which was candid, at any rate, and put them in the more affable light of an extorted wedding present, which was rather pleasant.]

PHILADELPHIA, June 4th, 1843.

DEAREST GRANNY,

You will long ere this have received my grateful acknowledgments of your pretty present and most kind letter, received, with many tears and heart-yearnings, in the middle of that horrible ocean. I will not renew my thanks, though I never can thank you enough for that affectionate inspiration of following me on that watery waste, with tokens of your remembrance, and cheering that most dismal of all conditions with such an unlooked-for visitation of love.

I wrote to you from Halifax, where, on the deck of our steamer, your name was invoked with heartfelt commendations by myself and Major S—. That was a curious conversation of his and mine, if such it could be called; scarcely more than a breathless enumeration of the names of all of you, coupled indeed with loving and admiring additions, and ejaculations full of regret and affection. Poor man, how I did pity him! and how I did pity myself!

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I have just written to our B—, and feel sad at the meagre and unsatisfactory account which my letter contains of me and mine; to you, my excellent friend, I will add this much more.... But I shall forbear saying anything about my conditions until they become

better in themselves, or I become better able to bear them. God bless you and those you love, my dear Lady Dacre. Give my affectionate "duty" to my lord, and believe me ever your gratefully attached

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, June 26th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Your sad account of Ireland is only more shocking than that of the newspapers because it is yours, and because you are in the midst of all this wild confusion and dismay. How much you must feel for your people! However much one's sympathy may be enlisted in any public cause, the private instances of suffering and injustice, which inevitably attend all political changes wrought by popular commotion, are most afflicting.

SAD
ACCOUNT
OF
IRELAND.

I hardly know what it is reasonable to expect from, or hope for, Ireland. A separation from England seems the wildest project conceivable; and yet, Heaven knows, no great benefit appears hitherto to have accrued to the poor "earthen pot" from its fellowship with the "iron" one. As for hoping that quiet may be restored through the intervention of military force, at the bayonet's point,—I cannot hope any such thing. Peace so procured is but an earnest of future war, and the victims of such enforced tranquillity bequeath to those who are only temporarily *quelled*, not permanently *quieted*, a legacy of revenge, which only accumulates, and never goes long unclaimed and unpaid. England seems to me invariably to deal unwisely with her dependencies; she performs in the Christian world very much the office that Rome did in the days of her great heathen supremacy—carry to the ends of the earth by process of conquest the seeds of civilization, of legislation, and progress; and then, as though her mission was fulfilled, by gradual mismanagement, abuse of power, and insolent contempt of those she has subjugated, is ejected by the very people to whom she had brought, at the sword's point, the knowledge of freedom and of law. It is a singular office for a great nation, but I am not sure that it is not our Heaven-appointed one, to conquer, to improve, to oppress, to be rebelled against, to coerce, and finally to be kicked out, *videlicet*, these United States.

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But now to matters personal.... The intense heat affects me extremely; and not having a horse, or any riding exercise, the long walks which I compel myself to take over these burning brick pavements, and under this broiling sun, are not, I suppose, altogether beneficial to me....

I went to church yesterday, and Mr. F— preached an Abolition sermon. This subject seems to press more and more upon his mind, and he speaks more and more boldly upon it, in spite of having seen various members of his congregation get up and leave the church in the middle of one of his sermons in which he adverted to the forbidden theme of slavery. Some of these, who had been members of the church from its earliest establishment, and were very much attached to him, expressed their regret at the course they felt compelled to adopt, and said if he would only *give them notice* when he intended to preach upon that subject they would content themselves with absenting themselves on those occasions only, to which his reply not unnaturally was, "Why, those who would leave the church on those occasions are precisely the persons who are in need of such exhortations!"—and of course he persevered.

I think it will end by his being expelled by his congregation. It will be well with him wherever he goes; but alas for those he leaves! I expect to be forbidden to take S— to church, as soon as the report of yesterday's sermon gets noised abroad....

God bless you, dear. Good-bye. I am heavy-hearted, and it is a great effort to me to write. What would I not give to see you! Love to dear Dorothy, when you see or write to her.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

YELLOW SPRINGS, PENNSYLVANIA, July 6th, 1843.

Here I am sitting (not indeed "on a rail"), but next thing to it, on the very hardest of wooden benches; my feet on the very hardest bar of the very hardest wooden chair; and my *cork* inkstand, of the most primitive formation, placed on a rough wooden table about a foot square, which is not large enough to hold my paper (so my knees are my desk), and is covered with a coarse piece of rag carpeting;—the whole, a sort of prison-cell furnishing. Before me stretches as far as it can about a quarter of an acre of degraded uneven ground, enclosed in a dilapidated whitewashed wooden paling, and clothed, except in several mangy bare patches, with rank weedy grass, untended unwholesome shrubs, and untidy neglected trees.... Behind me is a whitewashed room about fifteen feet by twelve, containing a rickety, black horse-hair sofa, all worn and torn into prickly ridges; six rheumatic wooden chairs; a lame table covered with a plaid shawl of my own, being otherwise without cloth to hide its nakedness or the indefinite variety of dirt-spots and stains which defile its dirty skin. In this room Miss Hall and S — are busily engaged at "lessons." Briefly, I am sitting on the piazza (so-called) of one of a group of tumble-down lodging-houses and hotels, which, embosomed in a beautiful valley in Pennsylvania, and having in the midst of them an exquisite spring of mineral water, rejoice in the title of the "Yellow Springs."

Some years ago this place was a fashionable resort for the Philadelphians, but other watering-places have carried off its fashion, and it has been almost deserted for some time past; and except invalids unable to go far from the city (which is within a three hours' drive from here), and people who wish to get fresh air for their children without being at a distance from their business, very few visitors come here, and those of an entirely different sort from the usual summer haunters of watering-places in the country.

The heat in the city has been perfectly frightful.... On Sunday last a thermometer, rested on the ground, rose to 130°, that being the heat of the earth; and when it was hung up in the shade the mercury fell, but remained at 119°. Imagine what an air to breathe!... Late in the afternoon last Sunday, a storm came on like a West Indian tornado; the sky came down almost to the earth, the dust was suddenly blown up into the air in red-hot clouds that rushed in at the open windows like thick volumes of smoke, and then the rain poured from the clouds, steadily, heavily, and continuously, for several hours.

INTENSE
HEAT.

In the night the whole atmosphere changed, and as I sat in my children's nursery after putting them to bed in the dark, that they might sleep, I felt gradually the spirit of life come over the earth, in cool breezes between the heavy showers of rain. The next morning the thermometer was below 70°, 30° lower than the day before.... This morning the children took me up a hill which rises immediately at the back of the house, on the summit of which is a fine crest of beautiful forest-trees, from which place there is a charming prospect of hill and dale, a rich rolling country in fine cultivation—the yellow crops of grain, running like golden bays into the green woodland that clothes the sides and tops of all the hills, the wheat, the grass, the oats, and the maize, all making different checkers in the pretty variegated patchwork covering of the prosperous summer earth.

The scattered farmhouses glimmered white from among the round-headed verdure of their neighboring orchards. Nowhere in the bright panorama did the eye encounter the village, the manor-house, and the church spire,—that picturesque poetical group of feudal significance; but everywhere, the small lonely farmhouse, with its accompaniments of huge barns and outhouses, ugly the one and ungainly the others, but standing in the midst of their own smiling well-cultivated territory, a type of independent republicanism, perhaps the pleasantest type of its pleasantest features.

In the whole scene there was nothing picturesque or poetical (except, indeed, the blue glorious expanse of the unclouded sky, and the noble trees, from the protection of whose broad shade we looked forth upon the sunny world). But the wide landscape had a peaceful, plenteous, prosperous aspect, that was comfortable to one's spirit and exceedingly pleasant to the eye.

After our walk we came down into the valley, and I went with the children to the cold bath—a beautiful deep spring of water, as clear as crystal and almost as cold as ice, surrounded by whitewashed walls, which, rising above it to a discreet height, screen it

only from earthly observers. No roof covers the watery chamber but the green spreading branches of tall trees and the blue summer sky, into which you seem to be stepping as you disturb the surface of the water. Into this lucid liquid gem I gave my chickens and myself, overhead, three breathless dips—it is too cold to do more,—and since that I have done nothing but write to you.

You ask what is said to Sydney Smith's "petition." Why, the honest men of the country say, "'Tis true, 'tis pity; pity 'tis, 'tis true." It is thought that Pennsylvania will *ultimately* pay, and not repudiate, but it will be *some time* first. God bless you, my dear Hal. I have not been well and am miserably depressed, but the country always agrees excellently with me.

SYDNEY
SMITH AND
PENNSYLVANIA

Ever yours,

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, Sunday, 9th, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

After last Sunday's awful heat, it became positively impossible to keep the children any longer in Philadelphia; and they were accordingly removed to the Yellow Springs, a healthy and pleasant bathing-place at three hours' distance from the city. On Saturday morning their nurse, the only servant we have, thought proper to disapprove of my deportment towards her, and left me to the maternal delights of dressing, washing, and looking after my children during that insufferable heat. Miss H— was entirely incapacitated, and I feared was going to be ill, and I have reason to thank Heaven that I am provided with the constitution that I have, for it is certain that I need it. On Sunday night a violent storm cooled the atmosphere, and on Monday morning the nurse was good enough to forgive me, and came back: so that the acme of my trial did not last too long. On Tuesday the children were removed to the country, and though the physician and my own observation assured me that F— required sea-bathing, it is an unspeakable relief to me to see her out of the city, and to find this place healthy and pleasant for them. The country is pretty, the air pure, the baths delightful; and my chicks, thank God, already beginning to improve in health and spirits.

As for the accommodations, the less said about them the better. We inhabit a sort of very large barn, or barrack, divided into sundry apartments, large and small; and having gleaned the whole house to furnish our *drawing-room*, that chamber now contains one rickety table, one horse-hair sofa that has three feet, and six wooden chairs, of which it may be said that they have several legs among them; but I must add that we have the whole house to ourselves, and our meals are brought to us from the "Great Hotel" across the street,—privileges for which it behoves me to be humbly thankful, and so I am. If the children thrive I shall be satisfied; and as for accommodation, or even common comfort, my habitation and mode of life in our Philadelphia boarding-house have been so far removed from any ideas of comfort or even decency that I ever entertained, that the whitewashed walls, bare rooms, and tumble-down verandas of my present residence are but little more so.... I suppose there was something to like in Mr. Webster's speech, since you are surprised at my not liking it; but what was there to like? The one he delivered on the laying of the foundation-stone of the monument (on Bunker's Hill, near Boston) pleased me very much indeed; I thought some parts of it very fine. But the last one displeased me utterly.... Pray send me word all about that place by the sea-side, with the wonderful name of "Quoge." My own belief is that the final "e" you tack on to it is an affected abbreviation for the sake of refinement, and that it is, by name and nature, really "Quagmire."

Believe me always
Yours truly,

F. A. B.

YELLOW SPRINGS, July 12th, 1843.

DEAR GRANNY,

The intelligence contained in your letter [of the second marriage of the Rev. Frederick Sullivan, whose first wife was Lady Dacre's only child] gave me for an instant a painful shock, but before I had ended it that feeling had given place to the conviction that the contemplated change at the vicarage was probably for the happiness and advantage of all concerned. The tone of B——'s letter satisfied me, and for her and her sister's feeling upon the subject I was chiefly anxious. About you, my dearest Granny, I was not so solicitous; however deep your sentiment about the circumstance may be, you have lived long and suffered much, and have learned to accept sorrow wisely, let it come in what shape it will. The impatience of youth renders suffering very terrible to it; and the eager desire for happiness which belongs to the beginning of life makes sorrow appear like some unnatural accident (almost a personal injury), a sort of horrid surprise, instead of the all but daily business, and part of the daily bread of existence, as one grows by degrees to find that it is.

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His daughter's feeling about Mr. Sullivan's marriage being what it is, the marriage itself appears to me wise and well; and I have no doubt that it will bring a blessing to the home at the vicarage and its dear inmates. Pray remember me most kindly to Mr. Sullivan, and beg him to accept my best wishes for his happiness, and that of all who belong to him; the latter part of my wish I know he is mainly instrumental in fulfilling himself. May he find his reward accordingly!

Of myself, my dear friend, what shall I tell you? I am in good health, thank God! and as much good spirits as inevitably belong to good health and a sound constitution in middle life....

The intense heat of the last month had made both my children ill, and a week ago they were removed to this place, called the Yellow Springs, from a fine mineral source, the waters of which people bathe in and drink. Round it is gathered a small congregation of rambling farm-houses, built for the accommodation of visitors. The country is pretty and well cultivated, and the air remarkable for its purity and healthiness; and here we have taken lodgings, and shall probably remain during all the heat of the next six weeks, after which I suppose we shall return to town.

LIVING
UNDER
DIFFICULTIES.

I wish you could see my present *locale*. The house we are in is the furthest from the "Hotel" (as it is magnificently called), and is a large, rambling, whitewashed edifice, with tumble-down wooden piazzas (verandas, as we should call them) surrounding its ground-floor. This consists of one very large room, intended for a public dining-room, with innumerable little cells round it, all about twelve feet by thirteen, which are the bedrooms. One of these spacious sleeping-apartments, opening on one side to the common piazza and on the other to the common eating-room, is appropriated to me as a "private parlor," as it is called; and being at present, most fortunately, the only inmates of this huge barrack, we have collected into this "extra exclusive" saloon all the furniture that we could glean out of all the other rooms in the house; and what do you think we have got? Two tiny wooden tables, neither of them large enough to write upon; a lame horse-hair sofa, and six lame wooden chairs. As the latter, however, are not all lame of the same leg, it is quite a pretty gymnastic exercise to balance one's self as one sits by turns upon each of them, bringing dexterously into play all the different muscles necessary to maintain one's seat on any of them. It makes sitting quite a different process from what I have ever known it to be, and separates it entirely from the idea usually connected with it, of rest. But this we call luxury, and, compared with the condition of the other rooms (before we had stripped them of their contents), so it undoubtedly is. The walls of this boudoir of mine are roughly whitewashed, the floor roughly boarded, and here I abide with my chicks. The decided improvement in their health and looks and spirits, since we left that horrible city, is a great deal better than sofas and armchairs to me, or anything that would be considered elsewhere the mere decencies of life; and having the means of privacy and cleanliness, my only two absolute indispensables, I take this rather primitive existence pleasantly enough. This house is built at the foot of a low hill, the sides of which are cultivated; while the immediate summit retains its beautiful crest of noble trees, from beneath which to look out over the wide landscape is a very agreeable occupation towards sunset.

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Chester County, as this is called, is the richest, agriculturally speaking, in Pennsylvania; and the face of the country is certainly one of the comeliest, well-to-do, smiling, pleasant earth's faces that can be seen on a summer's day; the variety of the different tinted

crops (among them the rich green of the maize, or Indian corn, which we have not in England), clothing the hill-sides and running like golden bays into the green forest that once covered them from base to summit, and still crowns every highest point, forms the gayest coat of many colors for the whole rural region.

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The human interest in the landscape is supplied not by village, mansion, parsonage, or church, but by numerous small isolated farm-houses, their white walls gleaming in the intense sunlight from amidst the trim verdure of their orchards, and their large barns and granaries surveying complacently far and wide the abundant harvests that are to be gathered into their capacious walls. The comfort, solidity, loneliness, and inelegance, not to say ugliness, of these rural dwellings is highly characteristic, the latter quality being to a certain degree modified by distance; the others represent very pleasingly, in the midst of the prosperous prospect, the best features of the institutions which govern the land—security, freedom, independence.

There is nothing visibly picturesque or poetical in the whole scene; nothing has a hallowed association for memory, or an exciting historical interest, or a charm for the imagination. But under this bright and ever-shining sky the objects and images that the eye encounters are all cheerful, pleasing, peaceful, and satisfactorily suggestive of the blessings of industry and the secure repose of modest, moderate prosperity.

Dearest Granny, I had not intended to cross my letter to you; but the young ones will decipher the scrawl for you, and I flatter myself that you will not object to my filling my paper as full as it will hold. These four small pages, even when they are crossed, make but a poor amount of communication compared with the full and frequent personal intercourse I have enjoyed with you.

What a shocking mess you are all making of it in Ireland just now! I hear too that you are threatened with bad crops. Should this be true, I do not wonder at my lord's croaking, for what will the people do?

SHOCKING
STATE OF
IRELAND.

The water we bathe in here is strongly impregnated with iron, and so cold that very few people go into the spring itself. I do: and when the thermometer is at 98° in the shade, a plunge into water below 50° is something of a shock. B—— would like it, and so do I. Will you give my affectionate remembrance to my lord, and

Believe me always, dear Granny,
Your attached

F. A. B.

YELLOW SPRINGS, 19th July, 1843.

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And so, my dear T——, you are a "tied-by-the-leg" (as we used, in our laughing days, to call the penniless young Attachés to Legations)? I am heartily sorry, as yours is not diplomatic but physical infirmity; and would very readily, had I been anywhere within possible reach, have occupied the empty arm-chair in your library, and "charmed your annoys" to the best of my ability.... Dear me! through how long a lapse of years your desire that I would undertake a translation of Schiller's "Fiesco" leads me! When I was between sixteen and seventeen years old, I actually began an adaptation of it to the English stage; but partly from thinking the catastrophe unmanageable, and from various other motives, I never finished it: but it was an early literary dream of mine, and you have recalled to me a very happy period of my life in reminding me of that labor of love. You perhaps imagine from this that I understood German, which I then did not; my acquaintance with the German drama existing only through very admirably executed literal French translations, which formed part of an immense collection of plays, the dramatic literature of Europe in innumerable volumes, which was one of my favorite studies in my father's library.

I am not, however, at all of your opinion, that "Fiesco" is the best of Schiller's plays. I think "Don Carlos," and "William Tell," and especially "Wallenstein," finer; the last, indeed, finest of them all. My own especial favorite, however, for many years (though I do not at all think it his best play) was "Joan of Arc." As for his violation of history in "Wallenstein" and "Mary Stuart," I think little of that compared with the singular insensibility he has shown to the glory of the French heroine's death, which is the more

remarkable because he generally, above most poets, especially recognizes the sublimity of moral greatness; and how far does the red pile of the religious and patriotic martyr, surrounded by her terrified and cowardly English enemies and her more basely cowardly and ungrateful French friends, transcend in glory, the rose-colored battle-field apotheosis Schiller has awarded her! Joan of Arc seems to me never yet to have been done justice to by either poet or historian, and yet what a subject for both! The treatment of the character of Joan of Arc in "Henry VI." is one reason why I do not believe it to be wholly Shakespeare's. He never, it is true, writes out of the spirit of his time, neither was he ever absolutely and servilely subject to it—for example, giving in Shylock the delineation of the typical Jew as conceived in his day, think of that fine fierce vindication of their common humanity with which he challenges the Christian Venetians, Solanio and Solarino—"Hath not a Jew eyes?" etc.

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By-the-by, did you ever hear a whisper of a suggestion that Joan of Arc was *not* burned? There is such a tradition, that she was rescued, reprieved, and lived to a fine old age, though rather scorched.

And now, at the fag end of my paper, to answer your question about Leonora Lavagna. I think, beyond all doubt, the sentiment Schiller makes her express as occurring to her at the altar perfectly natural. When the character and position of Leonora are considered, her love for Fiesco—however, chiefly composed of admiration for his person and more amiable and brilliant personal qualities—must inevitably have derived some of its strength from her generous patriotism and insulted family pride; and nothing, in my opinion, can be more probable than that she should have seen in him the deliverer of Genoa, at the moment when every faculty of her heart and mind was absorbed in the contemplation of all the noble qualities with which she believed him endowed.

The love of different women is, of course, made up of various elements, according to their natural temperament, mental endowments, and educated habits of thought; and it seems to me the sort of sentiment Leonora describes herself as feeling towards Fiesco at the moment of their marriage is eminently characteristic of such a woman. So much for the Countess Lavagna.

THE LOVE
OF WOMEN.

I think you are quite mistaken in calling Thekla a "merely ideal" woman; she is a very *real* German woman—rarely perhaps, but to be found in all the branches of the Anglo-saxon tree, in England certainly, and even in America.

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To these subjects of very pleasing interest to me succeeds in your letter the exclamation elicited by poor Mrs. D—'s misfortune, "Blessed are they who die in the Lord!" to which let me answer, "Yea, rather, blessed are they who live in the Lord!" Our impatience of suffering may make death sometimes appear the most desirable thing in all God's universe; yet who can tell what trials or probations may be ordained for us hereafter? The idea that there "may be yet more work to do," probably *must* be (for how few finish their task here before the night cometh when "no man can work," as far as this world is concerned, at any rate!), is a frequent speculation with me; so that whenever, in sheer weariness of spirit, I have been tempted to wish for death, or in moments of desperation felt almost ready to seize upon it, the thought, not of what I may have to suffer, but what I must have to do, *i.e.* the work left undone here, checks the rash wish and rasher imagination, and I feel as if I must sit down again to try and work. But weariness of life makes the idea of existence prolonged beyond death sometimes almost oppressive, and it seems to me that there are times when one would be ready to consent to lie down in one's grave and become altogether as the clods of the valley, relinquishing one's immortal birthright simply for rest. To be sure you will answer that, for rest to be pleasurable, consciousness must accompany it; but oh, how I should like to be *consciously unconscious* for a little while!—which possibly may strike you as nonsense.

I dare say women are, as you say, like cats in a great many respects. I acknowledge myself like one, only in the degree of electricity in my hair and skin; I never knew anybody but a cat who had so much.

Thank you for the paper about Theodore Hook. I knew him and disliked him. He was very witty and humorous, certainly; but excessively coarse in his talk and gross in his manners, and was hardly ever strictly sober after dinner....

MY DEAREST HAL,

Indeed I am not spending my summer with my friends at Lenox, ... but boarding at a third-rate watering-place about thirty miles from Philadelphia, where there is a fine mineral spring and baths, remarkably pure and bracing air, and a pretty, pleasant country, under which combination of favorable influences we have all improved very much, and dear little F— looks once more as if she would live through the summer, which she did not when we left Philadelphia. As for our accommodations at this place, they are as comfortless as it is possible to imagine, but that really signifies comparatively little.... I ride, and walk, and fish, and look abroad on the sweet kindly face of Nature, and commune gratefully with my Father in heaven whenever I do so; and the hours pass swiftly by, and life is going on, and the rapid flight of time is a source of rejoicing to me.... I laughed a very sad laugh at your asking me if my watch and chain had been recovered or replaced. How? By whom? With what? No, indeed, nor are they likely to be either recovered or replaced. I offered, as a sort of inducement to semi-honesty on the part of the thief or thieves, to give up the watch and pencil-case to whoever would bring back my dear chain, but in vain. Had I possessed any money, I should have offered the largest possible reward to recover it; but, as it is, I was forced to let it go, without being able to take even the usual methods resorted to for the recovery of lost valuables. I will now bid you good-bye, dearest Hal. I have no more to tell you; and whenever I mention or think of that chain, I feel so sad that I hate to speak or move. I flatter myself that, were you to see me now, you would approve highly of my appearance. I am about half the size I was when last you saw me.

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God bless you, dear. I am, therefore, only half yours,

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, August 15th, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

Yesterday, at three o'clock, I was told that we must all return to town by five, which accordingly was accomplished, not without strenuous exertion and considerable inconvenience in making our preparations in so short a time. I do not know in the least whether we are to remain here now or go elsewhere, or what is to become of us....

I do not know the lines you allude to as mine, called "The Memory of the Past," and think you must have written them yourself in your sleep, and then accused me of them, which is not genteel. I have no recollection of any lines of my own so called. Depend upon it, you dreamt them. I hope you had the conscience to make good verses, since you did it in my name. I have not supposed you either "neglectful or dead." I knew you were at Quoge, which Mr. G— reported to be a very nice place....

"The Memory of the Past."

You have misunderstood me entirely upon the subject of truth in works of fiction and art; and I think, if you refer to my letter, if you have it, you will find it so. I hold truth sacred everywhere, but merely lamented over Schiller's departure from it in the instance of "Joan of Arc" more than in that of "Wallenstein."

It has been an annoyance to me to leave the Yellow Springs, independently of the hurried and disagreeable mode of our doing so. I like the country, which is really very pretty, and I have been almost happy once or twice while riding over those hills and through those valleys, with no influences about me but the holy and consolatory ministrings of nature.

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My activity of temperament and love of system and order (perhaps you did not know that I possessed those last tendencies) always induce me to organize a settled mode of life for myself wherever I am, no matter for how short a space of time, and in the absence of nervous irritation or excitement, regular physical exercise, and steady intellectual occupation, always produce in me a (considering all things) wonderfully cheerful existence; ... and my spirits, obedient to the laws of my excellent constitution, rise above my mental and sentimental ailments, and rejoice, like those of all healthy animals, in mere physical well-being....

Good-bye, dear T—. Remember me most kindly to S—; and

Believe me always yours very truly,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, August 22nd, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

I am not sure that cordial sympathy is not the *greatest* service that one human being can offer another in this woe-world. Certainly, without it, all other service is not worth accepting; and it is so strengthening and encouraging a thing to know one's self kindly cared for by one's kind, that I incline to think few benefits that we confer upon each other in this life are greater, if so great....

The horrible heat, and the admonishing pallor that is again overspreading my poor children's cheeks, has led to a determination of again sending them out of town; and I heard yesterday that on Saturday next they are to go to the neighborhood of West Chester. The fact of going out of town again is very agreeable to me on my own account, letting alone my sincere rejoicing that my children are to be removed from this intolerable atmosphere; but all this packing and unpacking which devolves upon me is very laborious and fatiguing, and the impossibility of obtaining any settled order in my life afflicts me unreasonably....

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Peccavi! The verses you mentioned are mine, and you certainly might have written much better ones for me in your sleep, if you had taken the least pains. They were indited as many as twenty years ago, and how Mr. Knickerbocker came possessed of them is a mystery to me....

I want you to do me a favor, which I have been thinking to ask you all this week past, and was now just like to have forgotten. Will you ask John O'Sullivan if he would care to have a review of Tennyson's Poems from me, for the *Knickerbocker*, and what he will give me for such review? I am compelled to be anxious for "compensation." Send me an answer to this inquiry, please; and believe me

Very truly yours,

F. A. B.

P.S.—Lord Morpeth is a *lovely* man, and I love him.

LORD
MORPETH.

PHILADELPHIA, August 25th, 1843.

DEAR GRANNY,

A thousand thanks for your kind and comfortable letter, from the tone of which it was easy to see that you were "as well as can be expected," both body and soul. Indeed, my dearest Granny, it is true that we do not perceive half our blessings, from the mere fact of their uninterrupted possession. Of our health this seems to me especially true; and it is too often the case that nothing but its suspension or the sight of its deplorable loss in others awakens us to a sense of our great privilege in having four sound limbs and a body free from racking torture or enfeebling, wasting disease. As for me, what I should do without my health I cannot conceive. All my good spirits (and I have a wonderful supply, considering all things) come to me from my robust physical existence, my good digestion, and perfect circulation. Heaven knows, if my cheerfulness had not a good tough root in these, as long as these last, it would fare ill with me; and I fear my spiritual courage and mental energy would prove exceedingly weak in their encounter with adverse circumstances, but for the admirable constitution with which I have been blessed, and which serves me better than I serve myself....

On the tenth of next month I am going up to the dear and pleasant hill-country of Massachusetts, to pay my friends a visit, which, though I must make it very short, will prove a most acceptable season of refreshment to my heart and spirit, from which I expect to derive courage and cheerfulness for the rest of the year, as I shall certainly not see any of them again till next spring, for they are about two hundred and fifty miles away from me, which, even in this country of quite unlimited space, is not considered exactly next-door neighborhood.

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You ask after "the farm," which is much honored by your remembrance. It is let, and we are at present living in a boarding-house in town, and I rather think shall continue doing so; but I really do not know in the least what is to become of me from day to day....

I am grieved to hear of the affliction of the Greys. Pray remember me very affectionately to Lady G. Her father's illness must be indeed a sore sorrow to her, devoted as she is to him.

My dear Granny, do not you be induced to *croak* about England. She may have to go through a sharp *operation* or two; but, depend upon it, that noble and excellent constitution is by no means vitally impaired, and she will yet head the nations of the earth, in all great and good and glorious things, for a long time to come, in spite of Irish rows and Welsh *consonants* (is there anything else in Wales? How funny a revolution must be without a vowel in it!) ... I believe that great and momentous changes are impending in England; and when I suggest among them as *possible* future events the doing away with the law of primogeniture, hereditary legislation, and the Church establishment, of course you will naturally say that I think England is going to the dogs faster even than you do. But I think England will survive all her political changes, be they what they may, and, as long as the national character remains unchanged, will maintain her present position among the foremost peoples of the world; with which important and impressive prophecy comfort yourself, dear Granny.

We are going out of town, to which we returned a fortnight ago, to-morrow at half-past six in the morning, and it is now past midnight, and I have every mortal and immortal thing to pack with my own single pair of hands, which is Irish, Lord bless us! So good-night, dear Granny.

Believe me ever your affectionate

FANNY.

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PHILADELPHIA, August 25th, 1843.

You will pay no more, dear Hal, for this huge sheet of paper, being single, I believe, than for its half; and I do not see why I should cheat myself or you so abominably as by writing on such a miserable allowance as the half sheet I have just finished to you.

Mr. Furness's abolition sermons have thinned his congregation a little—not much.... There is no other Unitarian church in Philadelphia, where the sect is looked upon with holy horror, pious commiseration, and Christian reprobation, but where, nevertheless, Mr. Furness's own character is held in the highest esteem and veneration.

Your question about society here puzzles me a good deal, from the difficulty of making you understand the absolute absence of anything to which you would give that name. I do not think there is anything, either, which foreigners call *société intime* in Philadelphia. During a certain part of the year certain wealthy individuals give a certain number of entertainments, evening parties, balls, etc. The summer months are passed by most of the well-to-do inhabitants somewhere out of the city, generally at large public-houses, at what are called fashionable watering-places. Everybody has a street acquaintance with everybody; but I know of no such thing as the easy, intimate society which you seem to think inevitably the result of the institutions, habits, and fortunes in this country.

SOCIETY IN
PHILADELPHIA.

It does not strike me that social intercourse is easy at all here; the dread of opinion and the desire of conformity seem to me to give a tone of distrust and caution to every individual man and woman, utterly destructive of all freedom of conversation, producing a flatness and absence of all interest that is quite indescribable. I have hitherto always lived in the country, and mixing very little with the Philadelphians have supposed that the mere civil formality at which my intercourse with most of them stops short would lead necessarily to some more intimate intercourse if I ever lived in the city. I now perceive, however, that their communion with each other is limited to this exchange of morning visits, of course almost exclusively among the women; and that society, such as you and I understand it, does not exist here.

Yet, of course, there must be the materials for it, clever and pleasant men and women,

and I had sometimes thought, when I foresaw the probability of our leaving our country house and establishing ourselves in the city, that I should find some compensation in the society which I hoped I might be able to gather about me; ... but I am now quite deprived of any such resource as any attempt of the kind might have produced, by my present position in a boarding-house, where I inhabit my bedroom, contriving, for sightliness' sake, to sleep on a wretched sofa-bed that my room by day may look as decent and little encumbered as possible; but where the presence of wash-hand-stand and toilette apparatus necessarily enforces the absence of visitors, except in public rooms open to everybody.... I have received a great many morning visits, and one or two invitations to evening parties, but I do not, of course, like to accept civilities which I have no means of reciprocating, and so I have as little to expect in the way of social recreation as I think anybody living in a large town can have. So much for your inquiries about my social resources in this country. Had I a house of my own in Philadelphia, I should not at all despair of gradually collecting about me a society that would satisfy me perfectly well; but as it is, or rather as I am, the thing is entirely out of the question.

Of the discomfort and disorder of our mode of life I cannot easily give you a notion, for you know nothing of the sort, and, until now, neither did I. The absence of decent regularity in our habits, and the slovenliness of our whole existence, is peculiarly trying to me, who have a morbid love of order, system, and regularity, and a positive delight in the decencies and elegancies of civilized life.

God bless you, dear.

Your affectionate

FANNY

PHILADELPHIA, September 1st, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

I know not how long your letter had been in Philadelphia, because I have been out of town, and in a place so difficult of access that letters are seldom forwarded thither without being lost or delayed long enough to be only fit for losing.

I told you of our sudden removal from the Yellow Springs. In the succeeding fortnight, which we spent in town, the children began again to droop and languish and grow pale, and it was determined to send them into the country again: rooms have been accordingly hired for us three miles beyond West Chester, which is seven miles from the nearest railroad station on the Columbia railroad, altogether about forty miles from town, but for want of regular traffic and proper means of conveyance an exceedingly tedious and unpleasant drive thence to the said farm. Here there is indeed pure air for the children, and a blessed reprieve from the confinement of the city; but so uncivilized a life for any one who has ever been accustomed to the usual decencies of civilization, that it keeps me in a constant state of amazement.

We eat at the hours and table of these worthy people, and I am a little starved, as I find it difficult to get up a dinner appetite before one o'clock in the day; and after that nothing is known in the shape of food but tea at six o'clock. We eat with *two-pronged iron forks*; *i.e.* we who are "sopisticate" do. The more sensible Arcadians, of course, eat exclusively with their knives. The farming men and boys come in to the table from their work, without their coats and with their shirt-sleeves rolled up above their elbows; and my own nursemaid, and the servant-of-all-work of the house, and any visitors who may look in upon our hostess, sit down with us promiscuously to feed; all which, I confess, makes me a little melancholy. It is nonsense talking about positive equality; these people are sorry associates for me, and so, I am sure, am I for them.

To-day I came to town to endeavor to procure some of the common necessaries that we require: table implements that we can eat with, and lights by which we may be able to pursue our occupations after dark.

I read your speech with great pleasure; it was good in every way. I am glad you do not withdraw yourself from the field of action where your like are so much wanted. I cannot give up my hope and confidence in the institutions of your country; they are the expectation of the world; and if the Americans themselves, by word or deed, proclaim

THE
NONSENSE
OF
EQUALITY.

their scheme of free government a failure, it seems to me that the future condition of the human race is ominously darkened, and that all endeavor after progress or improvement is a fruitless struggle towards an unattainable end. But this is not so. Your people will yet prove it, and it will and must be through the influence and agency of worthy men like yourself, to whom fitly belongs the task of rallying this faithless people, flying from their standards in the great world-conflict. Call them back, such of you as have voices that can be heard; for your nation is the vanguard of the race, and if they desert their trust its degradation will be protracted for long years to come.

The despondency of some of your best men is deplorable, and the selfish discouragement in which they withdraw from the fight, giving place to public evil for the sake of their personal quiet, a fatal omen to the country. It is curiously unlike the spirit of Englishmen. Never, certainly, were good men and true so needed anywhere as here at this moment, when the noblest principles that men are capable of recognizing in the form of a government seem about to be cast down from the rightful supremacy your fathers gave them, and the light of freedom which they kindled to lighten the world extinguished in distrust and dismay.

God bless you and prosper you in every good work. Remember me most kindly to S—, and believe me always

Yours very truly,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, September 9th, 1843.

Your English is undoubtedly better than Cicero's Latin to me, my dear T—, inasmuch as I understand the one and not the other. I shall not stop on my way through New York, on Monday, nor my way back, except to spend a Sunday in your city, when I shall be very glad to see S— and you.

I am disappointed at the uncertainty you express about being in Lenox while I am there.

Can you ascertain for me whether the Harpers, the New York publishers, would be willing to publish a volume of Fugitive Poems for me, and would give me *anything* for them? If it is not too much trouble to ascertain this, it would be doing me a great service....

I write in haste, but remain ever yours,

F. A. B.

DEAR T—,

I shall not dine with you to-day for various, all good, reasons, and send you word to that effect, simply because it would not be so civil, either to S— or you, to leave my excuse till the time when I should present myself.

I had hoped to have returned to Philadelphia with Mr. F— this morning, but I am to remain till after Thursday, when we were to have given a dinner to Macready. He called this morning, however, and said he had another engagement for Thursday, so what will be done in the matter of our proposed entertainment to him I know not.

I hope your eyes are not the worse for that hateful theatre last night. You cannot imagine how that sort of thing, to which I was once so used, now excites and irritates my nerves. The music, the lights, the noise, the applause, the acting, the grand play itself, "Macbeth,"—it was all violent doses of stimulant; and I begin to think my mental constitution is like gunpowder, only unignitable when in the water: I suppose that accounts for my affection for water, apart from fishing.

I have got the greatest quantity of letters to write, and must begin upon Tennyson, so I shall not want for occupation while I am kept here.

Yours ever truly,

NEW YORK, September 26th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

I was up till past two o'clock last night, and up at 5.30 this morning: I have travelled half the day, from Philadelphia to New York, and shopped the rest of the day, and am now steaming up the Hudson to Albany, on my way to Lenox, where I am going to spend a few days with my friends the Sedgwicks. Although I am very weary, and my eyes ache for want of sleep, I must write to you before I go to bed; for once up in Berkshire, I shall have but little time to myself, and I would not for a great deal that the steamer should go to England without some word from me to you.... So here I am wandering up forlornly enough, with poor Margery for my attendant, who appears to me to be in the last stage of a consumption, and to whom this little excursion may perhaps be slightly beneficial, and will certainly be very pleasurable.... I shall in all probability see none of the Sedgwicks again for a year....

STEAMING
UP THE
HUDSON.

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I suppose, dear Hal, we are crossing the Tappan Zee (the broadest part of the Hudson River, where its rapid current spreads from shore to shore into the dimensions of a wide lake), and the boat rocks so much that I feel sick, and must leave off writing and go to bed, after all. God bless you, dear. Good-night.

Dearest Hal, this letter, which I had hoped to finish on board the Hudson night-boat, was cut short by my fatigue and the rocking of the vessel; and, as I expected, during my stay at Lenox no interval of leisure was left me to do so....

I sprained my ankle slightly, jumping from off a fence; and though I have carefully abstained from using my foot since I did so, it is still so weak that I am afraid of standing upon it much, and must consequently abide the results (invariable with me) of want of exercise, headache, sideache, and nervous depression and irritability. When I get to Philadelphia, if I am no better, I will hire a horse for a little while, and shake myself to rights.

God bless you, dear Hal. Good-bye.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, October 10th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

How much I thank you for your generosity to me! for the watch you are sending me, which I have not yet received. I cannot value it more than I did that precious chain, the loss of which, happening at a time when I was every way most unhappy, really afflicted me deeply.

I hope nothing will happen to this new remembrance of yours and token of your love. I shall feel most anxious till it arrives, and then I think I shall sleep with it round my neck, so great will be my horror of having it stolen from me in this wretched and disorderly lodging-house, where, as it is, I am in perpetual misery lest I should have left any closet or drawer in my bed-room unfastened, and where we are obliged to lock our sitting-room if we leave it for a quarter of an hour, lest our property should be stolen out of it,—a state of anxious and suspicious caution which is as odious as it is troublesome....

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When I arrived in New York last Sunday morning on my return from Berkshire, and was preparing to start for Philadelphia the next day, I found I was to stay in New York to meet and greet Mr. Macready, who had just landed in America, and to whom we are to give an entertainment at the Astor House, as we have no house in Philadelphia to which we can invite him....

My next errand, while I was out to-day, was to go and see a person who has thought proper to go out of her mind about me. She is poor and obscure, the sister of a tailor in this town; she had a little independence of her own, but lent it to the State of

DUCHESS
OF
ORMOND.

Pennsylvania, after the fashion of Sydney Smith, and has lost it, or at any rate the income of it, which, after all, is all that signifies to her, as she is no longer young and will probably not live to see the State grow honest, which its friends and well-wishers confidently predict that it will.

This poor woman is really and positively mad about me, as I think you will allow when I tell you that she is never happy when she sees me unless she has hold of my hand *or my gown*; that she has bought a portrait of me by Sully, over which she has put a ducal coronet, as she says I am the *Duchess of Ormond!* It is really a serious effort of good nature in me to go and see her, for her crazy adoration of me is at once ludicrous and painful. But my visits are a most lively pleasure to her—she thanks me for coming with the tears in her eyes, poor thing; and it would be brutal in me to withhold from her a gratification apparently so intense, because to afford it her is irksome and disagreeable to me. Her name is N—, and she told me to-day (but that may have been only another demonstration of her craziness) that there was a large disputed inheritance in Ireland left to heirs unknown of that name; that the true heirs could not be found, and that she really believed she might be entitled to it if she only knew how to set about establishing her right. She is the daughter of an English or Irish man, and her family were well connected in England (I couldn't help thinking, while she was talking, of your and my uncle John's dear Guilford). What a curious thing it would be if this poor, obscure, old, ugly, half-insane woman were really entitled to such a property! She is tolerably well educated too, a good French and Italian scholar, and a reader of obsolete books. She is a very strange creature.

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I forget whether I told you that I had taken Margery up to Lenox with me, in the hope that the change of air and scene might be of benefit to her; but ever since her return she has been ill in her bed, poor thing! and though the only servant-girl she had left her, and she is in the most forlorn and wretched condition possible, neither her mother nor her sisters have been near her to help or comfort her—such is the Roman Catholic horror of a divorced woman (for she has at length sued for and obtained her divorce from her worthless husband). And so, I suppose, they will let her die, such being, it seems, their notion of what is right.... Poor woman! her life has been one entire and perfect misery....

God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

PHILADELPHIA, October 3rd, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

I have just received, by Harnden's Express, my Tennyson, which I had left at Lenox, and with it your old note, written to me while I was yet there, which the conscientious folk sent me down. It seems odd to read all your directions about my departure from the dear hill-country and my arrival in New York. How far swept down the current of time already seem the pleasant hours spent up there! You do not know how earnestly I desire to live up there. I do believe mountains and hills are kindred of mine—larger and smaller relations, taller and shorter cousins; for my heart expands and rejoices and beats more freely among them, and doubtless, in the days which "I can hardly remember" (as Rosalind says of her Irish Rat-ship), I was a bear or a wolf, or what your people call a "panter" (*i.e.* a panther), or at the very least a wild-cat, with unlimited range of forest and mountain. [The forests and hill-tops of that part of Massachusetts had, when this letter was written, harbored, within memory of man, bears, panthers, and wild-cats.] That cottage by the lake-side haunts me; and to be able to realize that day-dream is now certainly as near an approach to happiness as I can ever contemplate.

I am working at the Tennyson, and shall soon have it ready. Tell me, if you can, where and how I am to send it to John O'Sullivan.

Thank you, my dear T—, for your and S—'s civility to C— H—. His people are excellent friends of mine, and you cannot conceive anything more disagreeable—painful to me, I might say—than the mortification I felt in receiving him in my present

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uncomfortable abode, and being literally unable to offer him a decent cup of tea.

It is an age since I saw Mr. G—, so can give you no intelligence of him. J— C— and the O—s form my *société intime*. They come and sit with me sometimes of an evening, otherwise *mon chez moi* is undisturbed and lonely enough. I walk a great deal every day, for the weather is lovely, and the blessed blue sky an inexhaustible source of delight and enjoyment to me.

To-morrow I am obliged to go out to the farm upon business. I shall go on horseback (upon the legs of my Tennyson article), and expect not only pleasure but profit from my old habitual exercise; but I would a little rather not be going *there* at all.

ARTICLE ON
TENNYSON.

I went all over our town house yesterday. It is a fine house, and has an excellent garden, with quite large trees in it. It is let unfurnished for about half the price which such a house in London would command. I confess it was rather a trial to return from looking at this large house of—*mine?* to the "Maison Vauquier" (see Balzac's "Père Goriot") which we inhabit.

Thank you for your offer of helping me with my review. I could not possibly think of using your eyes, precious and perilled as they are, instead of my own. I dare say I shall manage with my own translated acquaintance with Æschylus and Homer. However, and at any rate, if I find it necessary to *cram*, I will not do so by proxy.

Good-bye. Give my kindest love to S—.... How is Master C—? How is his voice? Has he worked out that problem yet about that vexed question on which he threw so much light at your house, and about which you were so tiresome? Seriously, that lad is a clever fellow; and I assure you we perpetrated some pretty profound metaphysics between your house and the Astor Hotel that wet Sunday evening.

Believe me yours truly,

F. A. B.

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[The young gentleman alluded to in the above letter, who was visiting the United States, and had brought letters of introduction to my friends in New York, was the son of an old Yorkshire family, among whom had existed for several generations a passionate desire to *fly*, and a firm conviction that they could invent a machine which would enable them to do so. The last I heard of that young Icarus above mentioned was from two of his friends and companions, the sons of Mrs. Norton, who, standing with me above the tremendous precipice called the Salto di Tiberio, which plunges from the edge of the rocks of Capri straight down into the Mediterranean, told me they had had all the difficulty in the world in preventing C— from launching forth upon his flying machine from that stupendous pier into mid air, and quite as infallibly mid ocean. With infinite entreaties they finally persuaded him to send forth his machine, unfreighted with human life, on its experimental trip. He did so, and his bird, turning ignominious somersaults on its way, at length found a perch, and folded its wings on a hoary rock-anchored tree that stretched out an arm of succor to it above the abyss, and there, perhaps, it still roosts; and elsewhere, perhaps, its author is pursuing other flights.]

PHILADELPHIA, Wednesday, May 15th, 1844.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

My last letter to you was pretty nearly filled with dismal private affairs, and now, Heaven knows, all residents in Philadelphia have a gloomy story to tell of public ones. We have had fearful riots here last week between the low American population and the imported population from Ireland, who have also taken the opportunity of the present anarchy and confusion to indulge in violent exhibitions of their own special home-brewed feud of Protestant against Catholic. A few nights ago there was a general mob-crusade against the Roman Catholic churches, several of which, as well as various private dwellings, were burnt to the ground. The city was lighted from river to river with the glare of these conflagrations—this city of "brotherly love;" whole streets looking like pandemonium avenues of brass and copper in the lurid reflected light. Your people have

lost little of their agreeable combined facetiousness and ferocity, as I think you will allow when I tell you that, while a large Catholic church was burning, the Orange party caused a band of music to play "Boyne Water;" and when the cross fell from above the porch of the building, these same Christian folk gave three cheers. "Where," I suppose you exclaim, "were the civil authorities and military force?" All on the ground of action, compelled to be idle spectators of these outrages, because they had no warrant to act, and could not shoot down the Sovereign People, even while committing them, without the Sovereign People's leave.

The popular jealousy of power, which always exists more or less under republican institutions, interferes not a little with the efficiency of an organized police or other abiding check upon public effervescence. Rioters, therefore, in times of excitement have generally a fair start of the law, and are able to accomplish plenty of mischief before they can be prevented, because a powerful force of preventive police and municipal officers, invested with permanent authority, are abominations in the eyes of a free and independent American citizen.

POPULAR
JEALOUSY
OF POWER.

As, however, by a very wholesome law, the city pays for all damages committed by public violence upon property, the whole population of the town will be taxed for the *spre* of these lively gentry; and under the pressure of this salutary arrangement the whole militia turned out, all the decent citizens organized themselves into patrols and policemen, and by the time the riot had raged three days, and the city had incurred a heavy debt for burnt and pillaged property, a stop was put to the disorder. Cannon were planted round all the remaining Catholic churches to protect them; the streets were lined with soldiers; every householder was out on guard in his particular district during the night, and by dint of effectual but, unfortunately, rather tardy measures order has been restored.

My own affairs are far from flourishing, and I am heartily glad to have anything else to speak of, little cheerful as the anything else may be....

I hope all is well with you. Geraldine is almost a woman now, I suppose. I think of you much oftener than I write to you, and am

Ever yours,

FANNY.

May 20th, 1844.

No, my dearest Hal, the day is never long, but always short, even when I rise before six.... I have a vivid consciousness of an increased perception of the minor *goods* of existence, in the midst of its greatest evils, and things that till now have been mere enjoyments to me now appear to me in the light of positive blessings.

My delight in everything beautiful increases daily, and I now count and appreciate the innumerable alleviations that life has in every twenty-four hours, even in its seasons of severest trial.

A spirit of greater thankfulness is often engendered by suffering itself; it is one of the "sweet uses of adversity," and mitigates it immensely.

A beautiful flower was brought to me to-day; and while I remained absorbed in contemplating it, it seemed to me a very angel of consolatory admonition.

God bless you, dearest friend. How full of sources of comfort He has made this lovely woe-world!

Ever yours,

FANNY.

PHILADELPHIA, Sunday, June 9th, 1844.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I am sure you will be sorry to hear of the accident which has befallen my poor little F

— . She fell last week over the bannisters of the stairs, and broke her arm. The fracture was fortunately a simple one of the smaller bone of the arm, which, I suppose, in a little body of that sort, can hardly be much more than gristle. She is doing well, and, as she appears to have escaped all injury to the head, which was my first horrible apprehension, I have every reason to be thankful that the visitation has not been more severe. The accident occasioned me a violent nervous shock. I am now far from well myself, and I am pursued with debilitating feverish tendencies, which I vainly endeavor to get rid of...

I am much puzzled, my dear Lady Dacre, what to say to you beyond this bulletin. My circumstances do not afford any great variety of cheerful topics for correspondence, and the past and the future are either painful or utterly uncertain.

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I am studying German, in the midst of the small facilities for mental culture which my present not very easy or happy position affords, and have serious thoughts of beginning to work at Euclid, and trying to make myself something of a mathematician. Possibly some knowledge of the positive sciences might be of use to me in my further dealings with the world; for the proper comprehension and appreciation of and judicious commerce with which some element, either natural or acquired, is undoubtedly wanting in me.

I have always wished very much that I had been made to study mathematics as a young person, and considering that Alfieri betook himself to Greek at forty-eight, I see no very good reason why I should not get at least as far as the *pons asinorum* at thirty-four.

STUDY OF
MATHEMATICS.

I believe this latent hankering after mathematics has been a little fanned in me by reading De Quincey's letters to a young man upon the subject of a late education, which have fallen into my hands just now, and which so earnestly recommend the zealous cultivation of this species of knowledge.

I hope Lord Dacre is well. Pray remember me to him very affectionately, and tell him that I am afraid, in answer to his question, I must reply that the Americans in this part of the United States do not at present appear over-scrupulous about paying their debts. Their demonstrations towards England just now seem to me rather absurd. The "sensible" of the community (alas! nowhere the majority, but here at this moment a most pitiful minority) are of course ashamed of, and sorry for, what is going on; and, moreover, of course do not believe in a war. But I am afraid, if the good sense of England does not keep this country out of a scrape, its own good sense will hardly do it that good turn.

An American wrote to me the other day: "As for our calling ourselves a great people, I think we are a people who, with the greatest possible advantages, have made the least possible use of them; and if anything can teach these people what greatness is, it must be adversity."

Farewell, and God bless you, my dear Lady Dacre.

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

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PHILADELPHIA, July 14th, 1844.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I am told that the newspapers in England have been filled with the severest comments upon the late outbreaks of popular disorder in this city of "brotherly love."

About a month ago the town was lighted from one end to the other with the burning of Catholic churches; and now, within the last week, the outrages have recommenced with more fury than ever, because, for a wonder, the militia actually did fire upon the mob, who, unused to any such demonstration of being in earnest on their part, had possessed themselves of cannon and fire-arms, and would have exterminated the small body of militia which could be gathered together at the first outbreak of the riot, but which is now backed by a very considerable force of regular troops.

The disturbance is not in the city proper, but in a sort of suburb not subject to the

municipal jurisdiction of Philadelphia, but having a mayor and civil officers of its own.

The cause assigned for all these outrages is fear and hatred of the Roman Catholic Irish; and there is no doubt an intensely bitter feeling between them and the low native population of the cities; added to which, the Irish themselves do not fail to bring over their home feud, and the old Orange spirit of bloody persecution joins itself to the dread of Popery, which is becoming quite a strong feeling among the American lower classes.

It is absurd, and yet sad enough, that not six months ago "Repeal Unions"—Irish Repeal Unions—were being formed all over this country in favor of, and sympathy with, the poor, oppressed Roman Catholics in Ireland; "professional" politicians made their cause and England's oppression of them regular popularity capital; writing and speechifying in the most violent manner, and with the most crass ignorance, upon the subject of their wrongs and the tyranny they endured from our government; and now Philadelphia *flares* from river to river with the burning of Roman Catholic churches, and the Catholics are shot down in the streets and their houses pillaged in broad daylight.

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The arrest of several of the ringleaders of the mob, and the arrival of large numbers of regular troops, have produced a temporary lull in the city; but the spirit of lawless violence has been permitted to grow and strengthen itself in these people for some time past now; and of course, as they were allowed, unchecked and unpunished, to set fire to the property of the negroes, and to murder them without anybody caring what befell the persons or property of "damned niggers," the same turbulent spirit is now breaking out in other directions, where it is rather less agreeable to the *respectable* portion of the community, but where they will now find considerable difficulty in checking it; and, of course, if it is to choose its own objects of outrage and abuse, the *respectable* portion of the community may some day be disagreeably surprised by having to take their turn with the poor Roman Catholic Irish and the poor American negroes. The whole is a lamentable chapter of human weakness and wickedness, that would cast shame and scorn upon republican institutions, if it were not that Christianity itself is liable to the same condemnation, judged by some of its apparent results.

You ask me if I apportion my time among my various occupations with the same systematic regularity as formerly. I endeavor to do so, but find it almost impossible.... I read but very little. My leisure is principally given to my German, in which I am making some progress. I walk with the children morning and evening; I still play and sing a little at some time or other of the day, and write interminable letters to people afar off, who I wish were nearer. I walk before breakfast with the children, *i.e.* from seven till eight. Three times a week I take them to the market to buy fruit and flowers, an errand that I like as well as they do. The other three mornings we walk in the square opposite this house. After breakfast they leave me for the morning, which they now pass with their governess or nurse. For the last two months I have ridden every day, but have unhappily disabled my horse for the present, poor fellow! by galloping him during a sudden heavy rain-shower over a slippery road, in which process he injured one of his hip-joints, not incurably, I trust, but so as to deprive me of him for at least three months. [My dear and noble horse never recovered from this injury, but was obliged to be shot. He had been sold, and I had ransomed him back by the publication of a small volume of poems, which gave me the price demanded for him by the livery-stable keeper who had bought him; but the accident I mention in this letter deprived me of him. He was beautiful and powerful, high-spirited and good-tempered, almost a perfect creature, and I loved him very much.]

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I shall now walk after breakfast, as, my rides being suppressed, my walks with the chicks are not exercise enough for me. After that, I prepare for my German lesson (which I take three times a week) and write letters. I take the children out again at half-past six, and at half-past seven come in to my dinner; after dinner I go to my piano, and generally sit at it or read until I go to bed, which I do early,—*et voilà!*

Almost all the people I know are out of town now, and I do not see a human creature; the heat is intense and the air foul and stifling, and we are gasping for breath and withering away in this city atmosphere....

God bless you, dear Hal.

I am ever yours,

FAVORITE
HORSE.

[In the autumn of 1845 I returned to England, and resided with my father in Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, until I went to Italy and joined my sister at Rome; a plan for my returning with my father to America having been entertained and abandoned in the mean time.]

MORTIMER STREET, October 3d, 1845.

Heaven be praised, my American letters are finished!—eleven long ones, eleven shillings' worth. I am sure somebody (but at this moment I don't rightly know who) ought to pay me eleven shillings for such a batch of work. So now I have nothing to do but answer your daily calls, my dearest Hal, which "nothing," as I write it, looks like a bad joke. If you expect me, however, to write you a long letter on the heels of that heavy American budget, you deceive yourself, my dear friend, and the truth is not in you.

In the first place, I have nothing to say except that I am well and intensely interested by everything about me. I am very sorry to have neglected sending you "Arnold" [his Life, just published at that time], but it shall be done this day.

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London, with its distracting quantity of *things to do*, is already laying hold of me; and the species of vertigo which I experience after my lonely American existence, at finding myself once more overwhelmed with visits, messages, engagements, and endless notes to read and answer, is pitiable. I feel as if I had been growing idiotic out there, my life here is such an amazing contrast.

I had a visit yesterday from dear old Lady Charlotte Lindsay, who was exceedingly kind and cordial indeed to me. We said many good words about you. After she was gone, the old Berry sisters (who still hang on the bush) tottered in, and I felt touched to the heart by the affectionate sympathy and kind goodwill exhibited towards me by these three very old and charming ladies.

LADY
CHARLOTTE
LINDSAY.

I had a delightful dinner yesterday at Milman's, where I met Lady Charlotte again, Harness, Lockhart, Empson, and several other clever pleasant people.

To-day I carried my last six American despatches myself to the post, and then trotted all the way up to Horace Wilson's, to see him and my cousin Fanny, by way of exercise....

I am going to dine to-day with Sir Edward Codrington—the admiral, you know. He and his family are old friends of mine; he has been here twice this week, sitting two hours at a time with me, spinning long yarns about the battle of Navarino and all the to-do there was about it. He actually brought me a heap of manuscript papers on the subject to look over, which, quite contrary to my expectation, have interested me very much.

To-morrow, at three o'clock, my maid and I depart for the Hoo; as we go per coach, and the distance is only twenty-five miles, I hope that journey won't ruin me.

My father has just come home from Brighton, instead of remaining there till Monday, as he had intended; he said he felt himself getting fatigued, and therefore thought it expedient to come away. He has caught a slight rheumatic pain in one of his shoulders, but otherwise seems well. To-morrow I will send you another bulletin.

Your affectionate,

FANNY.

MORTIMER STREET, October, 1845.

Since beginning this letter, my beloved Hal, I have been reading Channing's sermon upon Dr. Follen's death. It is, in fact, a sermon upon human suffering, in a paroxysm of which I was when I began to write to you; and for a remedy took up this sermon, which has comforted me much.

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Chorley was expressing to me, two days ago, his unbounded veneration for the character of Dr. Follen, as it is faintly and imperfectly represented in the memoir which

his wife published of him. I knew that I had with me Channing's sketch of him in that sermon on human suffering, and told Chorley that I would look for it for him. I found it yesterday, and merely read that part of it towards the end which referred to Dr. Follen's character; and it is to that circumstance that I attribute a dream I had last night, in which I sat devoutly at *Arnold's* feet, expressing to him how earnestly I had desired the privilege of knowing him: he was surrounded by Channing, Follen, and others whom I could not remember. In reading to-day the whole of that fine discourse of Channing's, I was led to compare the great similarity of the expressions he uses, in speaking of sceptics and scepticism, to those Arnold makes use of on the same subjects in his letters to Lady Francis Egerton. For instance, "Scepticism is a moral disease, the growth of some open or latent depravity; deliberate, habitual questionings of God's benevolence argue great moral deficiency." Another thing that struck me was the resemblance between Dr. Arnold and Dr. Follen in the matter of independent self-reliance. Channing says of the latter, "He was singularly independent in his judgments. He was not only uninfluenced by authority, and numbers, and interest, and popularity; but by friendship, and the opinions of those he most loved and honored. He seemed almost too tenacious of his convictions."

Do you remember what Sydney Smith says of Francis Horner? This great firmness of opinion in Arnold and Follen reminds me of it by contrast: "Francis Horner was a very modest person, which men of great understanding seldom are. It was his habit to confirm his opinion by the opinions of others, and often to form them from the same source."

MORTIMER STREET, November, 1845.

DEAR EMILY,

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During that hour that we spent at Netley, the last few moments of which were made full of hopeful thoughts by the passing away of the visible clouds from the visible sky, I could not but reflect upon the glorious stability of things spiritual, contrasted with the mutability and evanescence of things temporal. Our hearts, which are united by *real* bonds—the love of truth, the fear of God, and the desire of duty—have remained so united through all these years of absence and distance from each other; and when I thought of our former visit to Netley, I remembered that nothing had failed me but that which could not be abiding and steadfast, for it was not good.

To tell you how thence my soul wandered to the eventual reclaiming of all who have strayed from righteousness, and the possible reunion, in the immeasurable future, of souls which have been sundered here because of sin, and the final redemption of all God's poor erring children, would be to attempt to utter one of those rapid, deep, and ineffable actions of our spirits which are too full of hope, of faith, and the holiest peace, for words to be meant to express them.

MORTIMER STREET, Thursday, 6th, 1845.

DEAREST HAL,

My father came home yesterday afternoon from Brighton. He said he was getting a little tired of his work, and complained of a touch of rheumatism in his shoulder.... He is making arrangements to read at Highgate next week. Harry Chester, some cousin or connection of Emily's, and a quondam kind friend of mine, is at the head of some institution at Highgate, and has been in negotiations with him for three readings at some public hall or lecture-room there. My father is to read there three times, and is to dine each time at some friend's house. Mr. Chester very kindly begged me to accompany him, and dine with them....

I dined at Sir Edward Codrington's yesterday, and was there introduced to a charmingly pretty Mrs. Bruce, formerly Miss Pitt, one of the queen's maids-of-honor; and I assure you my edification was considerable at some of her courtly experiences....

MRS.
BRUCE.

I believe Solomon says that "in the multitude of counsellors is safety;" it does not seem so with me just now, for in my multitude of counsels and counsellors I find only utter bewilderment.

Until Monday I shall be at the Hoo, where you can address me, "To the care of Lord Dacre, the Hoo, Welwyn, Herts."

God bless you, dearest Hal. Give my kind love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

[The days were not yet, either in England or America, when a married woman could claim or hold, independently, money which she either earned or inherited. How infinite a relief from bitter injustice and hardship has been the legislation that has enabled women to hold and own independently property left to them by kindred or friends, or earned by their own industry and exertions. I think, however, the excellent law-makers of the United States must have been intent upon atoning for all the injustice of the previous centuries of English legislation with regard to women's property, when they framed the laws which, I am told, obtain in some of the States, by which women may not only hold bequests left to them, and earnings gained by them, entirely independent of their husbands; but being thus generously secured in their own rights, are still allowed to demand their maintenance, and the payment of their debts, by the men they are married to. This seems to me beyond all right and reason—the compensation of one gross injustice by another, a process almost *womanly* in its enthusiastic unfairness. It must be retrospective amends for incalculable former wrongs, I suppose.]

MORTIMER STREET, November 17th, 1845.

When I consider that this is the third letter I write to you this blessed day, dear Hal, I cannot help thinking myself a funny woman; and that if you are as fond of me as you pretend to be, you ought to be much obliged to the "streak of madness" which compels me to such preposterous epistolary exertions.

And so because the sea rages and roars against the coast at St. Leonard's, and appals your eyes and ears there, my dearest Hal, you think we had better not cross the Atlantic now. But the storms on that tremendous ocean are so *local*, so to speak, that vessels steering the same course and within comparatively small distance of each other have often different weather and do not experience the same tempests. Moreover, Mrs. Macready has just been here, who tells me that her husband crossed last year rather earlier than I did, in October, and had a horrible passage; and the last time I came to England we sailed on the 1st of December, and had a long but by no means bad voyage. There is no certainty about it, though, to be sure, strong probability of unfavorable weather at this season of the year....

I told you that I had got off dining at the L—s' to-day by pleading indisposition, which is quite true, for I am very unwell. I shall remain dinnerless at home, which is no great hardship, and one for which I dare say I shall be none the worse. My father talks of going to Brighton this week, and then I shall scatter myself abroad in every direction....

My father leaves town on Wednesday, and as he is to be absent two or three weeks, I suppose he will only return in time to sail.

I have written to Mrs. Grote to say I will come to Burnham on Thursday, and my present plan is to remain there until Monday next, and probably then go to the Hoo. The Grevilles, Charles and Henry, have been here repeatedly; they are both of them now gone out of town. I called to-day on Mrs. O'Sullivan, and there I found Dr. Holland, with whom I had one more laugh upon the subject of his never reaching Lenox after all dear Charles Sumner's efforts to get him there. [Dr. Holland, while in America, had made various unsuccessful attempts to visit the Sedgwick family in Berkshire, winding up with a failure more ludicrous than all the others, under the guidance of his, their, and my friend, Charles Sumner....]

DR.
HOLLAND.

I have had a most affectionate note of welcome from Mrs. Jameson, and am rather in terror of her advent, as I feel considerable awkwardness about her various late passages-at-arms with my sister. Mrs. Macready came to see me this afternoon, and told

me that she heard I was about to return forthwith to America....

Now, dear, I think I have really done my duty by you to-day. God bless you. Give my affectionate love to the "good angel" [Miss Wilson]. As for your "roaring sea," I only wish I was in it just where you are (nowhere else, though). I am not well, and very much out of spirits; disgusted, and, I have no doubt, disgusting; but, nevertheless,

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Ever yours,

FANNY.

Arnold's Christianity puzzles me a little. He justifies litigation between men and war between nations. Whenever I set about carrying out my own Christianity I shall do neither; for I do not believe either are according to Christ's law.

I called on the Miss Hamiltons to-day, and we talked "some" of you. I have had another most affectionate note from Lizzie Mair, entreating me to go to Edinburgh. But oh! my dear Hal, the money? *Che vita!*

MORTIMER STREET, Thursday, 20th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

There is another thing that makes me pause about coming to Hastings—the time for my departure for America will be drawing very near when I return to town on Monday from Mrs. Grote's, which is the only visit that I shall have it in my power to pay....

Tuesday is the 25th. I must see my brother John again before I go. This will take two days and one night, and my father talks of going down to Liverpool on the 2nd or 3rd, so that I could only run down to Hastings for a few miserable hours, again to renew all the pain of bidding you another farewell....

I left off here to get my breakfast. We have lowered the price and the quality of our tea, in consequence of which, you see, my virtue and courage are also deteriorated [Miss S — used to say that a cup of good tea was *virtue* and *courage* to her], and this is why I feel I had perhaps better not come to Hastings.

Thus far, my dearest Harriet, when your letter of the 19th—yesterday (you see I did look at the date)—was brought to me. It is certainly most miserable to consider what horrible things men contrive to make of the mutual relations which might be so blest. I do not know if I am misled by the position from which I take my observations, but it seems to me that one of the sins most rife in the world is the *misuse*, or *disuse*, of the potent and tender ties of relationship and kindred.

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With regard to coming to you, my dear Hal, I am much perplexed. I have made Mrs. Grote enter into arrangements to suit me, which I do not think I ought now to ask her to alter. Old Rogers is going down to Burnham, to be with me there, going and coming with me; and with what I feel I ought and must do to see my brother, I know not what I can and may do to see you, my dear friends. I am full of care and trouble and anxiety, and feel so weary with all the processes of thinking and feeling, deliberating and deciding, that I am going through, that I must beg you to determine for me. If you, upon due consideration, say "Come," I will come. And forgive me that I put it thus to you, but I have a sense of mental incapacity, amounting almost to imbecility; and I feel, every now and then, as if my brain machinery was running down, and would presently stop altogether. Seriously, what with the greater and the less, the unrest of body and the disquiet of mind, I feel occasionally all but distracted....

I will write you more when I answer your letter of this morning.

God bless you, my dearest friend....

I have so much to say to you about Arnold, but shall perhaps forget it. Is it not curious that reading his thoughts and words should have tended to strengthen in me a conviction of duty upon a point where he appears to take an absolutely different view from mine?—that of seeking and obtaining redress from wrong by an appeal to processes of litigation and legal tribunals; but the earnestness of his exhortations to the conscientious pursuit of one's individual convictions of duty was powerful in making me cleave to my own perception and sense of right, though it brought me to a conclusion

DR.
ARNOLD.

diametrically opposite to his own.

This, however, is often the case. The whole character of a good man has vital power over one even where his special opinions are different from one's own, and may even appear to one mistaken.

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The abiding spirit of a man's life, more than his special actions and peculiar theories, is that by which other men are moved and admonished. I have extreme faith in the potency of this species of influence, and comparatively less in the effect of example, in special cases and particular details of conduct. Christ's teaching was always aimed at the spirit which should govern us, not at its mere application to isolated instances; and to those who sought advice from Him for application to some special circumstance He invariably answered with a deep and broad rule of conduct, leaving the conscience of the individual to apply it to the individual case; and it seems to me the only way in which we can exhort each other is by the love of truth, the desire of right, the endeavor after holiness, which may still be ours, and to which we may still effectually point our fellow-pilgrims, even when we ourselves have fallen by the wayside under the weight of our own infirmities, failures, and sins.

See! I intended to have broken off when I wrote "God bless you." How I have preached on! But I have much more to say yet. Dear love to Dorothy.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Friday, November 21st, 1845.

The *Hibernia* is in, the *Great Britain* is in, and I have had my letters, ... not a few of them from various indifferent people, who want me to do business and attend to their affairs for them here. Truly I am in a plight to do so every way. One man wants me to exert the influence which he is sure *my intimacy with Mr. Bunn* (!) must give me to have an opera of his brought out at Drury Lane; another writes to me that "my family's well-known interest in the *theatres*" (a large view of the subject) "must certainly enable me to have a play of his produced at one of them;" and so forth, and so on.

All these people will think me a wretch, of course, because I cannot do any of the things they want me to do; moreover, no power of human explanation will suffice hereafter to make them aware that I am not upon terms of affectionate intimacy with Mr. Bunn, that no member of my family has now any interest whatever in any theatre whatever, and that I have been so overwhelmed with anxieties and troubles of my own as to make my attention to the production of operas and plays and such like things quite impossible just now.

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The strangest part of all this is that these men write to me, desiring me to commend that which I think bad, and that which, moreover, they know that I think bad; but they seem to imagine that some effort of sincere friendship and kindness on my part is all that is necessary to induce me, in spite of this, to recommend and heartily to praise what I hold to be worthless.

Friendship with eyes and ears and a conscience is, I believe indeed, for the most part, and for the purposes of most people, tantamount to no friendship at all, or perhaps rather to a mild form of enmity.

Do you not think it is rather farcical on your part to request me to answer your letters, when you know 'tis as much as my place (in creation) is worth not to do so, and that, moreover, every day's post brings me that which impresses the sufficiency of each day's *allotments* devoutly to my mind? Did I ever *not* answer your letters, you horrid Harriet? My dear Hal, in spite of the last which I received from you, after I had just concluded a very long one to you, bearing date November 20th (there now! you see I remember the date even of my yesterday's letter!), I still wish for another deliberate expression of your opinion about my coming down to Hastings. That you desire it, in spite of all considerations, I know. What your judgment is, now that I have laid all considerations before you, I should like to know....

To-day was appointed for my visit to Mrs. Grote, and Rogers was to have come for me at

one o'clock, to go to the Paddington railroad, near the Ten-Mile Station, on which she lives; but lo and behold, just as I was completing my preparations comes an express to say that Mrs. Grote had been seized with one of her neuralgic headaches, and could not possibly receive us till to-morrow! so there ended the proposed business of the day.

LIBERAL
ADVICE.

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I had a visit from John O'Sullivan, a call from Rogers to readjust our plans for to-morrow, and a very kind long visit from Milman.... I receive infinite advice on all hands about my perplexed affairs, all of it most kindly meant, but little of it, alas! available to me. Some of it, indeed, appears to me so worldly, so false, and so full of compromise between right and wrong for the mere sake of expediency; sometimes for cowardice, sometimes for peace, sometimes for pleasure, sometimes for profit, sometimes for mere social consideration,—the whole system (for such it is) accepted and acknowledged as a rule of life—that, as I sit listening to these friendly suggestions, I am half the time shocked at those who utter them, and the other half shocked at myself for being shocked at people so much my betters.... My abiding feeling is that I had better go back to my beloved Lenox, to the side of the "Bowl" (the Indian name of a beautiful small lake between Lenox and Stockbridge), among the Berkshire hills, where selfishness and moral cowardice and worldly expediency exist in each man's practice no doubt quite sufficiently; but where they are not yet universally recognized as a social system, by the laws of which civilized existence should be governed. You know, "a bad action is a thousand times preferable to a bad principle."

Among the other things which the American mail brought me was a charming sketch by my friend W— of the very site upon which we settled that I should build my house. The drawing is quite rough and unfinished, but full of suggestion to one who knows the place.

I went by appointment this afternoon to see Lady Dacre. Poor thing! she was much overcome at the sight of me. Her deep mourning for her young grandchild, and her pathetic exclamations of almost self-reproach at her own iron strength and protracted old age, touched me most deeply. She seemed somewhat comforted at finding that I had not grown quite old and haggard, and talked to me for an hour of her own griefs and my trials.

She and Lord Dacre pressed me with infinite kindness to go down to them at the Hoo; and though I felt that if we sail on the 4th I ought to be satisfied with having had this glimpse of them, if my stay were prolonged I should like very much to go there for a short time.

Lord Dacre told me that the *Great Western* had arrived yesterday, and brought most threatening news of the hostile spirit of America about the Oregon question; he fears there will certainly be a war. Good God, how horrible! The two foremost nations of Christendom to disgrace themselves and humanity by giving such a spectacle to the world!

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After my visit to the Dacres, I came back to my solitary dinner in Mortimer Street; and, reflecting upon many things during this lonely evening, have wished myself between you and dear Dorothy, who neither of you tell falsehoods or pretend to like things and people that you dislike. Wouldn't it be a nice world if one could live all one's time with none but the best good people? I have spent the whole evening in reading my friend Charles Sumner's Peace Oration, which I only began in America; and to listening to the lady playing on the piano next door, and envying her. Our landlord has a piano in his room downstairs, I find, and he is not at home: now, that is a real temptation of the very devil. How I should like to pay half an hour's visit to it!

My dear Hal, Mrs. Jameson is coming to see me to-morrow morning! What shall I do—what shall I say about her *tiff* with Adelaide? Wasn't it a pity that Mrs. Grote was taken ill this morning?

SAMUEL
ROGERS.

God bless you. I want to say one or two words to dear Dorothy, according to right, for she has written to me in your two last letters.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Oh, I do wish I was with you! for you are not in the least base, mean, cowardly, or

worldly.

DEAREST GOOD ANGEL,

Do not fancy, from the vehemence of my style to Harriet, that I am in a worse mental or material condition than I am. I only do hope that before I have lived much longer it will please God to give me grace to love and admire the great bulk of my fellow-creatures more than I do at present. *Certainly*, dear Dorothy, if I should remain in England, I will come down to Hastings for a fortnight; and owe my subsistence for that time to you and Hal. Perhaps these rumors of wars may make some difference in my father's plans. I should be very happy with you both. I have a notion that you would spoil me as well as Hal, and, used to that as I used to be "long time ago," it would be quite an agreeable novelty now.

Ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

Friday, November 21st, 1845.

This letter was begun yesterday evening, my beloved Hal. My nerves are rather in a quieter state than when I wrote last, thanks to a warm bath and cold head-douche, which, taken together, I recommend to you as beneficial for the brain and general nervous system....

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I am going to dine *tête-à-tête* with Rogers; I have persuaded him to come down with me to Burnham. Poor old man! he is very much broken and altered, very deaf, very sad. This last year has taken from him Sydney and Bobus Smith; and now, the day before yesterday, his old friend Lady Holland died, and he literally stands as though his "turn" were next—it may be mine.

Do you know, that in reading that striking account of Arnold's death, I got such a pain in my heart that I felt as if I was going to die so. *So!* So, indeed, God grant I might die! but none can die so who has not so lived.

Two things surprise me in Arnold's opinions—three,—his detailed account of wars between nations without any expression of condemnation of war, but rather a soldierly satisfaction in strife and strategy. This, by-the-by, my friend Charles Sumner notices with regret in his "Peace Oration." Then Arnold's apparent approbation of men, even clergymen, going to law for their rights, while at the same time speaking with detestation of the legal profession, which surely involves some inconsistency. Clergymen, according to the vulgar theory, are imagined to be, if not less resentful in spirit, at any rate more pacific in action than the laity, and ought, to my thinking, no more to go to law than to war. The third thing that puzzles me is his constant reference to what he calls a Church, or "*the* Church," which, with his views about Christianity, is a term that I do not comprehend.

It is curious to me to see Emily's marks along the margin. They are the straight ones, and are applied zealously everywhere to passages of dogmatical discussion about doctrines. Mine you will find the crooked ones, and my pencil, of course, invariably flew to the side of what expressed moral excellence and a perception of material beauty. Those passages that Emily has marked I do not understand—does she? I ask this in all simplicity, and not at all in arrogance; for I cannot make head or tail of them. Perhaps she can make both, for I think she has a taste and talent for theological controversy. I was surprised to find she had not marked his diary and journals at all; I hardly knew how to leave them *unmarked* at all. Those Italian journals of his made me almost sick with longing. It is odd that this southern mania should return upon me so strongly after so many years of freedom from it, merely because there seemed to arise just now a possibility of this long-relinquished hope being fulfilled. I know that I could not live in Italy, and I suppose that I should be dreadfully offended and grieved by the actual state of the people, in the midst of all the past and present glory and beauty, which remains a radiant halo round their social and political degradation. But I did once so long to live in

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Italy, and I have lately so longed to see it, that these journals of Arnold's have made me cry like a child with yearning and disappointment.

My brother John told me that, in his opinion, Arnold was not entirely successful as a trainer of young men: that the power and peculiarity of his own character was such that, in spite of his desire that his pupils should be free, independent, and individual, they involuntarily became more or less mental and moral imitations of him: that he turned out nothing but young Arnolds—copies, on a reduced scale, of himself; few of them, if any, as good as the original. This involuntary conformity to any powerful nature is all but inevitable, where veneration would consciously and deliberately lead to imitation, and thus those minds which would most willingly leave freedom to others, both as a blessing and a duty, become unintentionally compelling influences to beget and perpetuate, in those around them, a tendency to subservience and dependency.

Charles Greville seems very much amused at my enthusiasm for Arnold, and still more when I told him that, for Arnold's sake, I wished to know Bunsen. He said he was sure I should not like him. Rogers told me the same thing; ... that Arnold was a man easily to be taken in by any one who would devote themselves to him, which he—Rogers—said Bunsen did when they met abroad.... How much of this is true, God only knows: Rogers is often very cynical and ill-natured (alas, he has lived so long, and known so much and so many!) It may not be true; though, again, Arnold "was but a man as other men are," and went but upon two legs, like the best of them; nevertheless, if I were to remain in England, I would make some effort to know his chosen friend. Rogers, with whom I dined yesterday, told me that if he had known this wish of mine, he would have asked Bunsen to meet me. I then questioned him about Whately, and he said I should be delighted with him—perhaps, dear H., because he is a little mad, you know, and I appear to some of my friends here to have that mental accomplishment in common with other more illustrious folk.

ROGERS ON
ARNOLD.

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And now I have finished that book, Arnold's Life, by his spiritual son. It has been to me, in the midst of all that at present harasses and disgusts me, a source of peace and strength, and I have taken it up hour after hour, like the antidote to the petty poisons of daily life.

I have had two notes from Lady Dacre about arranging hours to meet; but, unfortunately, the little time I have is so taken up that it will be impossible for me to see her, as she begs me, this morning. They leave town again on Saturday, and I do not suppose that it will be in my power to get down again to the Hoo, which she urges me very much to do, ... so that I fear I shall not see her before I go, which is a grief to me.

John O'Sullivan does not sail till the 4th, and if we go then, I shall feel that my father will have somebody who will humanely look after him on board ship when I am disabled.... I think he has now some intention of making the expedition for the sake of giving readings, and perhaps of acting again, in the principal cities of the United States, and, apart from my interest and affairs, this may be a sufficient motive for his undertaking the voyage.

I am going to write a word to the dear good angel, and therefore, my beloved Hal, farewell....

[I have not endorsed my brother's opinion about Arnold's influence on his pupils. Long after this letter was written, I had the honor and advantage of making the acquaintance of Baron Bunsen, and was able to judge for myself of the value of the opinions I had heard of him.]

MY DEAREST DOROTHY,

... I shall hold my mind and body in readiness to come down on Wednesday, if up till Monday you still wish for me. I have told Hal all I have to tell of myself, and she may tell you as much of it as she pleases....

Just after my father's departure, I received a very kind invitation from my friend Lady M —, who is staying in Brighton, to come and remain with her while my father was

there....

God bless you, dear Dorothy. I love you more than I seem to know you, but I know that you are good, and most good to my dear Harriet, and that I am

Yours very affectionately,

FANNY.

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MORTIMER STREET, Tuesday, November 25th, 1845.

DEAREST HAL,

I had a letter yesterday from my father, from Brighton.... He has renounced the project of crossing the Atlantic at present....

Of course, dear Hal, we are none of us half patient enough. Suffering and injustice are so intolerable to us that we *will* not endure them, and forget all the time that God allows and endures them.

You ask me if I recollect my discussion with you going down to Southampton. Very well, my dear Hal, and your appearance especially, which, in that witch's travelling-cap of yours, is so extremely agreeable to me that you recur to me in it constantly, and as often I execrate your bonnet. How much I do love beauty! How I delight in the beauty of any one that I love! How thankful I am that I am not beautiful! my self-love would have known no bounds.

I am writing with a very bad pen. I told you of that pen Rogers mended for me, and sitting down to try it, wrote the two following lines, which he gave me, of Cowper's:

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

You will understand that this touched me much. You hope that my nerves will have leisure to become tranquillized in the country; but the intellectual life by which I am surrounded in England is such a contrast to my American existence that it acts like a species of perpetual intoxication. The subjects of critical, literary, and social interest that I constantly hear so ably and brilliantly discussed excite my mind to a degree of activity that seems almost feverish, after the stagnant inertia to which it has been latterly condemned; and this long-withheld mental enjoyment produces very high nervous excitement in me too. The antagonism I often feel at the low moral level upon which these fine intellectual feats are performed afterwards causes a reaction from my sense of satisfaction, and sometimes makes that appear comparatively worthless, the power, skill, and dexterity of which concealed the sophistry and seduced me while the debate was going on.

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My dearest H—, I wrote all this at Burnham. You will see by this that we do not leave England by the next steamer, and I think there is every probability of my remaining here for some time to come, and, therefore, spending a full fortnight with you at Hastings....

I have a quantity to say to you about everything, but neither time nor room. We had much talk about Arnold at the Beeches, and the justice dealt him by a cynical poet, a hard-headed political economist, a steeled man of the world, and two most dissimilar unbelievers was various and curious.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

MORTIMER STREET, November 26th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I expect my father home to-day; but, as I have written to you, his note from Brighton expressed no annoyance at my determination....

I must see if I cannot possibly write something for a few pence, so as not to stretch out a beggar's hand even to him.... I enjoyed my visit to Burnham extremely: the admirable clever talk, the capital charming music, the delight of being in the country, and the

ecstasy of a fifteen miles' ride through beautiful parks and lanes, filled my time most pleasurably. I know no one who has such a capacity (that looks as if I had written *rapacity*—either will do) for enjoyment, or has so much of it in mere life—when I am not being tortured—as I have. I ought to be infinitely thankful for my elastic temperament; there never was anything like it but the lady heroine of Andersen's story "The Ball," who had "cork in her body."

We had much talk about Arnold and Bunsen, much about Sydney Smith, several of whose letters Mrs. Grote gave us to read. Rogers read them aloud, and his comments were very entertaining, especially with the additional fun of Mrs. Grote holding one of the letters up to me in a corner alone, when I read, "I never think of death in London but when I meet Rogers," etc.

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I have written a very long letter to my sister to-day, and one to E—. I am going to dine with Mrs. Procter, to meet Milnes, whose poetry you know I read to you here one evening, and you liked it, as I do, some of it, very much.... As for L—, I think one should be a great deal cleverer than he is to be so amazingly conceited, *and of course, if one was, one wouldn't be*; and if that sentence is not lovely, neither is "Beaver hats." ("Beaver hats is the best that *is*, for a shower don't hurt 'em, the least that *are*," quoth an old countrywoman to Mrs. FitzHugh, comparing the respective merits of beaver and straw.)

Only think, Hal, what an enchanting man this landlord of ours must be! He has had his pianoforte tuned, and actually proposes sending it up into one of these rooms for my use. I incline to think the difficulty with him is not so much having a woman in the house, as a natural desire to receive a larger compensation if he takes this woman—me—in.

God bless you, dear. I feel happy in the almost certain prospect of being with you before very long, and you cannot imagine how much my heart is lightened by the more hopeful circumstances in which I think I am placed....

Good-bye, dear Hal. Give my love to Dorothy, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY

November 29th, 1845.

I have just returned home from a dinner at Mrs. Procter's. It is a quarter to twelve o'clock, and until twelve I will write to you, my dear Hal. I found your ink-bottle on my table. Thank you. This is my birthday. Did you give it me on that account?—a compliment to the anniversary. I have not written so much as usual to you these last few days; my time is very much taken up; for, even at this dead season of the year, as it is called in London, I have many morning visitors, who come and sit with me a long while, during which time no letters get written. I wrote to you last on Wednesday, the day on which my father was to come to town. At one o'clock, accordingly, he marched in, looking extremely well, kissed me, opened his letters, wrote me a check for £10, and at five o'clock went off to Brighton again, telling me he should remain there until next Monday week, and, in the mean time, bidding me "*amuse myself*, and make myself as comfortable as I could." ...

CHARLES
KEMBLE.

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It is past twelve now, and I am getting tired; the late hours and good dinners and wine and coffee are a wonderful change in my American habits of life, and seem to me more pleasant than wholesome, after the much simpler mode of existence to which I have become accustomed latterly. I took a good long walk on Friday, across the Green Park and St. James's Park to Spring Gardens, and up the Strand to Coutts', and home again....

I had a pleasant dinner yesterday at Lady Essex's. Rogers took me there, and brought me home in his carriage; he is exceedingly kind to me. Henry Greville dined with us, sat by me, and talked to me the whole time about my sister, which was very pleasant and did me good. Sir Edward Codrington and his daughter, who are old friends of mine, were there, and met me with great cordiality; and though the evening was not very brilliant, I enjoyed myself very much.

Kinglake, the author of "Eothen," paid me a long visit to-day, and was very agreeable....

Mrs. Procter asked me to-day to take their family dinner with them, because she knew I should else dine all alone. Mr. Procter was not at home, so that we had a *tête-à-tête* gossip about everybody....

I know very well that nobody likes to be bored, but I think it would be better to be bored to extinction than to mortify and pain people by rejecting their society because they are not intensely amusing or distinguished, or even because they are intensely tiresome and commonplace....

Good-night, dear. My eyes smart and ache; I must go to bed. I have seen to-day some verses written by an American friend of mine on my departure. I think they are good, but cannot be quite sure, as they are about myself. I will send them to you, if you care to see them.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

MORTIMER STREET, November 30th, 1845.

I wrote to you until 12.30 last night, and it is now 12.30 this morning, and it must be very obvious to you that, not being Dorothy, I can have nothing under the heavens to say to you. Let me see for the *events* of these hours. After I went to bed I read, according to a practice which I have steadily followed for the past year, in the hope of substituting some other *last thoughts* and visions for those which have haunted me, waking or sleeping, during that time. So last night, having, alas! long ago finished Arnold, and despatched two historical plays, long enough, but nothing else, to have been written by Schiller, which my brother gave me, I betook myself to certain agricultural reports, written by a Mr. Coleman, an American, who came over here to collect information upon these subjects for an agricultural society. These reports he gave me the other day, and you know I read implicitly whatever is put into my hands, holding every species of book worth reading for something. So I read about fencing, enclosing, draining, ditching, and ploughing, till I fell asleep, fancying myself Ceres.

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This morning, after some debate with myself about staying away from church, I deliberately came to the conclusion that I would do so, because I had a bad headache. (Doesn't that sound like a child who doesn't want to go to church, and says it has got a stomach-ache? It's true, nevertheless.) But—*and* because I have such a number of letters to write to America, that I thought I would say my prayers at home, and then do that.

And now, before beginning my American budget, I have written one to Lady Dacre, one to Emily, one to my brother, and this one to you; and shall now start off to the other side of the Atlantic, by an epistle to J— C—, the son of the afore-mentioned agriculturist, a friend of mine, who when I last left America held me by the arm till the bell rang for the friends of those departing by the steamer to abandon them and regain the shore, and whose verses about me, which I mentioned to you in my last night's letter, please me more than his father's account of top-dressing, subsoiling, and all the details of agriculture, which, however, I believe is the main fundamental interest of civilization.

PURSUIITS.

Before this, however, I must go and take a walk, because the sun shines beautifully, and

"I must breathe some vital air,
If any's to be found in Cavendish Square."

I'm sorry to say we are going to leave this comfortable lodging and our courteous landlord, whose civilities to me are most touching. I do not know what my father intends doing, but he talked of taking a house at *Brompton*. What a distance from everything, for him and for me!

I have just had a kind note from the M—s, again earnestly bidding me down to Hampshire; another affectionate invitation from Lord and Lady Dacre to the Hoo, and a warm and sympathizing letter from Amelia Twiss, for whom, as you know, I entertain even a greater regard and esteem than for her sisters....

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My dear Hal, when my father told me that he was going to Brighton for three weeks, it

seemed quite impossible that we should sail for America on December 4th. Now that that question is settled, at any rate temporarily, I feel restored to something like calm, and think I shall probably go and see the M—s, and perhaps run down to Hastings to visit—Dorothy Wilson, of course.

God bless you, dear. Does Dorothy write better about nothing than I do?

Ever yours,

FANNY.

THE HOO, WELWYN, HERTS, December, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

... God knows I am admonished to patience, both by my own helplessness and the inefficiency of those who, it seems to me, ought to be able to help me....

Doubtless, my father reasonably regrets the independence which I might by this time have earned for myself in my profession, and feels anxious about my unprovided future. I have written to Chorley, the only person I know to whom I can apply on the subject, to get me some means of publishing the few manuscript verses I have left in some magazine or other.... If I cannot succeed in this, I shall try if I can publish my "English Tragedy," and make a few pounds by it. It is a wretchedly uncomfortable position, but compared with all that has gone before it is *only* uncomfortable.

I came down here yesterday, and found, though the night was rainy and extremely cold, dear Lord Dacre and B—— standing out on the door-step to receive me. She has grown tall, and stout, and very handsome.... Is it not wonderful that the spirit of life should be potent enough ever to make us forget the death perpetually hovering over and ready to pounce upon us? and yet how little dread, habitually, disturbs us, either for ourselves or others, lying all the time, as we do, within the very grasp of doom! Lord Dacre is looking well; my friend Lady Dacre is grown more deaf and much broken. Poor thing! she has had a severe trial, in the premature loss of those dearest to her....

God bless you, dear Hal. Good-by. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

THE HOO, WELWYN, December 6th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I have been spending the greater part of the morning in sitting for my likeness to a young girl here, a Miss E——, daughter of some old friends of the Dacres, whose talent for drawing, and especially for taking likenesses, is uncommon.

SITTING
FOR A
PORTRAIT.

That which Lawrence pronounced the most difficult task he ever undertook could hardly prove an easy one to a young lady artist, who has, however, succeeded in giving a very sufficient likeness of one of my faces; and I think it so pretty that I am charmed with it, as indeed I always have been with every likeness almost that has ever been taken of me, but the only true ones—the daguerreotypes. However, even daguerreotypes are not absolutely accurate; the process is imperfect, except for plane (not *plain*, you know) surfaces. Besides, after all, it takes a human hand to copy a human face, because of the human soul in both; and the great sun in heaven wants fire, light, and power, to reproduce that spark of divinity in us, before which his material glory grows pale.

As long as he was Ph[oe]bus Apollo, and went about, man-fashion, among the girls, making love to such of them as he fancied, he may have been something of an artist, his conduct might be called artistic, I should say; but now that he sits in the sky, staring with his one eye at womankind in general, Sir Joshua, and even Sir Thomas, are worth a score of him.

While I was sitting, Mrs. E——, my young artist's mother, read aloud to us the new volume of Lord Chesterfield's writings.

My impression of Lord Chesterfield is a very ignorant one, principally derived from the very little I remember of that profound science of superficiality contained in his "Letters to his Son." The matter I heard to-day exalted him infinitely in my esteem, and charmed me extremely, both by the point and finish of the style (what fine workmanship good prose is!) and the much higher moral tone than anything I remembered, and consequently expected from him.

Mrs. E— read us a series of his "Sketches of his Political Contemporaries," quite admirable for the precision, distinctness, and apparent impartiality with which they were drawn, and for their happiness of expression-and purity of diction. Among them is a character of Lord Scarborough, which, if it be a faithful portrait, is perhaps the highest testimony in itself to the merit of one who called such a man his intimate friend; and going upon the faith of the old proverbs, "Show me your company and I'll tell you what you are," "Like will to like," "Birds of a feather flock together," and all the others that, unlike Sancho Panza, I do not give you, has amazingly advanced Lord Chesterfield in my esteem.

We have this morning parted with some of the company that was here. Mr. and Mrs. Hibbard, clever and agreeable people, have gone away, and, to my great regret, carried with them my dear B—, for whom my affection and esteem are as great as ever. Mrs. Hibbard is the daughter of Sydney Smith, and so like him that I kept wondering when she would begin to abuse the bishops....

Dearest Hal, I took no exercise yesterday but a drive in an open carriage with Lady Dacre. The Americans call the torture of being thumped over their roads in their vehicles *exercise*, and so, no doubt, was Sancho's tossing in the blanket; but voluntary motion being the only effectual motion for any good purpose of health (or holiness, I take it), I must be off, and tramp while the daylight lasts.

What a delightful thing good writing is! What a delightful thing good talking is! How much delight there is in the exercise and perfection of our faculties! How *full* a thing, and admirable, and wonderful is this nature of ours! So Hamlet indeed observes—but he was mad. Good-bye. Give my love to dear Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

THE HOO, WELWYN, December 7th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Just before I came down here, Rogers paid me a long visit, and talked a great deal about Lady Holland; and I felt interested in what he said about the woman who had been the centre of so remarkable a society and his intimate friend for so many years. Having all her life appeared to suffer the most unusual terror, not of death only, but of any accident that could possibly, or impossibly, befall her, he said that she had died with perfect composure, and, though consciously within the very shadow of death for three whole days before she crossed the dark threshold, she expressed neither fear nor anxiety, and exhibited a tranquillity of mind by no means general at that time, and which surprised many of the persons of her acquaintance. If, however, it be true, as some persons intimate with her have told me, that her terrors were not genuine, but a mere expression of her morbid love of power, insisting at all costs and by all means upon occupying everybody about her with herself, then it is not so strange that she should at last have ceased to demand the homage and attention of others as she so closely approached the time when even their most careless recollection would cease to be at her command.

Rogers said that she spoke of her life with considerable satisfaction, asserting that she had done as much good and as little harm as she could during her existence. The only person about whom she expressed any tenderness was her daughter, Lady —, with whom, however, she had not been always upon the best terms; and who, being *ultra-serious* (as it is comically called), had not unnaturally an occasional want of sympathy with her very unserious mother. Lady Holland, however, desired much to see her, and she crossed the Channel, having travelled in great haste, and arrived just in time to fulfil

LADY
HOLLAND.

her mother's wish and receive her blessing.

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Her will creates great astonishment—created, I should say; for she is twice buried already, under the Corn Law question. She left her son only £2000, and to Lord John Russell £1500 a year, which at his death reverts to Lady L—'s children. To Rogers, strange to say, nothing; but he professed to think it an honor to be left out. To my brother, strange to say, something (Lord Holland's copy of the "British Essayists," in thirty odd volumes); and to Lady Palmerston her collection of fans, which, though it was a very valuable and curious one, seems to me a little like making fun of that superfine fine lady.

I have just come back from church, dear Hal, where the Psalms for the day made me sick. Is it not horrible that we should make Christian prayers of Jewish imprecations? How can one utter, without shuddering, such sentences as "Let them be confounded, and put to shame, that seek after my soul. Let them be as the dust before the wind: and the angel of the Lord scattering them. Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them"? Is it not dreadful to think that one must say, as I did, "God forbid!" while my eyes rested on the terrible words contained in the appointed *worship* of the day; or utter, in God's holy house, that to which one attaches no signification; or, worst of all, connect in any way such sentiments with one's own feelings, and repeat, with lips that confess Christ, curses for which His blessed command has substituted blessings?

We were speaking on this very subject at Milman's the other evening, and when I asked Mrs. Milman if she joined in the repetition of such passages, she answered with much simplicity, like a good woman and a faithful clergywoman, "Oh yes! but then, you know, one never means what one says,"—which, in spite of our company consisting chiefly of "witty Churchmen," elicited from it a universal burst of laughter. I have not space or time to enlarge more upon this, and you may be thankful for it....

I will just give you two short extracts from conversations I have had here, and leave you to judge how I was affected by them....

I am sometimes thankful that I do not live in my own country, for I am afraid I should very hardly escape the Pharisee's condemnation for thinking myself better than my neighbors; and yet, God knows, not only that I am, but that I do, not. But how come people's nations so inside out and so upside down?

Good-bye, my dear. I am enjoying the country every hour of the day. Give my love to dear Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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MORTIMER STREET, Monday, December 8th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Your delightful little inkstand is the very pest of my life; it keeps tumbling over backwards every minute, and pouring the ink all over, and making me swear (which is really a pity), and is, in short, invaluable; and I am so much more obliged to you than I was even at first for it, now that I know, I hope, all its inestimable qualities, that I think it right to mention the increased gratitude I feel for the hateful little bottle. There it goes again! Oh, thank you, my love! Just let me pick it up, and wipe the mess it has made.

I left the Hoo this morning, and have just been a couple of hours in Mortimer Street. I find my father going to dine at Judge Talfourd's, and, I am happy to say, free from the pain in his side which had alarmed me, and which I now suppose, as he did at the time, to have proceeded only from cold. He looks well, and is in good spirits.

I find a note here from Miss Berry, inviting me to dinner *to-day*, which has been waiting for me ever since Friday. Of course I could not go, and felt distressed that the old lady's kind bidding should have remained so long unanswered. Just as I was despatching my excuse, however, in rushed Agnes (Gooseberry, you know, as Sydney Smith used to call her), all screams and interjections, to know why I hadn't answered her note, which was

THE
BERRYS.

very annoying. However, in nursery language, I *peacified* the good old lady to the best of my ability. I am sorry to lose their pleasant party, but have an excessive dislike to hurrying immediately from one thing to another in this way, and therefore must really spend this evening of my arrival in peace and quiet.

Mrs. — called to-day. I am sorry to say that she provokes me now, instead of only annoying me, as she used to do. It's really quite dreadful! She talks such odd bits of sentimental morality, that somehow or other don't match with each other, or with anything else in creation, that it disgusts me, and I am so disagreeable and so conscious of it, and she is so conscious that I am conscious of it, that, poor things! it is quite piteous for both of us.

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You ask me the name of the political economist I met at Burnham. William Nassau Senior, a very clever man, a great talker, good upon all subjects, but best upon all those on which I am even below my average depth of ignorance, public affairs, questions of government, the science of political economy, and all its kindred knowledges. The rest of our party were only Rogers and myself, our host and hostess (Mr. and Mrs. Grote), and a brother of the latter, who has been living many years in Sweden, has a charming countenance, a delightful voice, sings Swedish ballads exquisitely, worships Jenny Lind, and knows Frederica Bremer intimately. He added an element of gentleness and softness to the material furnished by our cast-iron "man of facts" and our acrid poet, that was very agreeable. In speaking of Arnold, I was ineffably amused at hearing Mrs. Grote characterize him as a "*very weak man*," which struck me as very funny. *The Esprit Forte*, however, I take it, merely referred to his belief in the immortality of the soul, the existence of a God, and a few other similar "superstitions." They seemed all to agree that he was likely to "turn out" *only* such men as Lord Sandon and Lord Ashley. [The training of Arnold, acting upon a noble mind inherited from a noble-minded mother, produced the illustrious man whom all Protestant Christendom has lately joined to mourn, Dean Stanley, of whom, however, no mention was made in the above discussion.] You, who know the political bias of these men, will be better able to judge than I am, how far this was a compliment to Arnold's intellect; to his moral influence, I suppose, the character of "only such" pupils would bear high testimony.

My father reads to-morrow at Highgate, and, I believe, twice again there in the course of next week. Beyond that, I think he has no immediate plans for reading, and indeed his plans seem altogether to me in the most undecided state.

I found letters here from my sister and E—, both of them urging me to join them in Rome; these I read to my father, and I am thankful to say that he seemed to entertain the idea of my doing so, and even hinted at the possibility of his accompanying me thither, inasmuch as he felt rather fatigued with his reading, would be glad to recruit a little, would wish to protect me on my journey to Italy, and, finally, never having been in Rome, would like to see it, etc. He said, after we got there he could either leave me with my sister or stay himself till the spring, when we might all come back together.

IDEA OF
GOING TO
ITALY.

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You may imagine how enchanted I was at the bare suggestion of such a plan. I told him nothing he could do would give me so much happiness, and that as I had come back upon his hands in the state of dependence in which I formerly belonged to him, it was for him to determine in what manner the burden would be least grievous to him, least costly, and least inconvenient; that if he thought it best I should go to my sister, I should be thankful to do so; but that if he would come with me, I should be enchanted.

I think, dearest Hal, that this un hoped-for prospect will yet be realized for me. I am very fortunate in the midst of my misfortune, and have infinite cause to be grateful for the hope of such an opportunity of distracting my thoughts from it. Even to go alone would be far preferable for me to remaining here, but I should have to leave my father alone behind, and do most earnestly wish he may determine to come with me.

Our landlord and he cannot agree about terms, and I suspect that he would not remain in the lodgings under any circumstances on that account. Oh! I hope we shall go together to Italy. "Dahin! Dahin!" ...

How I do wish you were sitting on this little striped sofa by me! No offence in the world to you, my dear Dorothy (or the Virgin Martyr), because I wish you were here too—in the first place that Hal might not be too dissatisfied with my society; in the next place

that I might enjoy yours; and in the third place that you might benefit by both of ours.

I remain, dearly beloved females both of yours affectionately,

FANNY.

There goes your ink-pot head over heels backward again! Oh, it has recovered itself! Hateful little creature, what a turn it has given me—as the housemaids say—without even succeeding in overturning itself, which it tried to do! It is idiotic as well as malicious!

MORTIMER STREET, Tuesday.

DEAREST HAL,

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I did not hear a great deal more than I told you about Bunsen at Burnham. They all seemed to think him so *over-cordial* in his manner as not to be sincere—or at any rate to produce the effect of insincerity. Senior said that one of his sons was for a time private tutor in a family, while Bunsen himself was one of the King of Prussia's ministers. I could not very well perceive myself the moral turpitude of this, but the answer was that it was *infra dig.*, and of course that is quite turpitude enough. At the Hoo I asked Lord Dacre if he knew Bunsen, but he did not. I should have attached some value to his opinion of him, because he has no vulgar notions of the above sort, and also because, having lived at one time in Germany among Germans, he has more means of estimating justly a mind and nature essentially German like Bunsen's than most Englishmen, who—the very cleverest among them—understand *nothing* that is not themselves, *i.e.* English, in intellect or character.

Mrs. E— told me that she had heard from some of the great Oxford dons that the impression produced among them by the first pupil of Arnold's who came among them was quite extraordinary—not at all from superior intelligence or acquirement, but from his being absolutely a *new creature* (think of the Scripture use of that term, Hal, and think how this circumstance illustrates it)—a *new kind* of man; and that so they found all his pupils to differ from any young men that had come up to their colleges before. When I deplored the cessation of this noble and powerful influence by Arnold's death, she said—what indeed I knew—that his spirit survived him and would work mightily still. And so of course it will continue to work, for to the increase of the seed sown by such a one there is no limit. She told me that one of his pupils—by no means an uncommon but rather dull and commonplace young man—had said in speaking of him, "I was dreadfully afraid of Arnold, but there was not the thing he could have told me to do that I should not instantly and confidently have set about." What a man! I do wonder if I shall see him in heaven—as it is called—if ever I get there.

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Mrs. E— told me that Lady Francis [Egerton] knew him, and did not like him altogether; but then he, it seems, was habitually reserved, and she neither soft nor warm certainly in her outward demeanor, so perhaps they *really* never met at all.... Mrs. E— said Lady Francis had not considered her correspondence with Arnold satisfactory. I suspect it was upon theological questions of doctrine (or doctrinal questions of theology); and that Lady Francis had complained that his letters did not come sufficiently to the point. What can her point have been?...

As for what you say about deathbed utterances—it seems to me the height of folly to attach the importance to them that is often given to them. The physical conditions are at that time such as often amply to account for what are received as spiritual ecstasies or agonies. I imagine whatever the *laity* may do, few physicians are inclined to consider their patients' utterances *in articulo mortis* as satisfactorily significant of anything but their bodily state. Certainly by what you tell me of — his moral perceptions do not appear to have received any accession of light whatever from the near dawning of that second life which seems sometimes to throw such awful brightness as the dying are about to enter it far over the past that they are leaving behind.

DEATHBED
UTTERANCES.

My dinner at Mrs. Procter's was very pleasant. In the first place I love her husband very much; then there were Kenyon, Chorley, Henry Reeve, Monckton Milnes, and Browning!—a goodly company, you'll allow. Oh, how I wish wits were catching! but if they were, I don't suppose after that dinner I should be able to put up with poor pitiful *prose people*

like you for a long time to come.

With regard to the London standard of morality, dear Hal, I do not think it lower, but probably a little higher upon the whole than that of the society of other great capitals: the reasons why this highly civilized atmosphere must be also so highly mephitic are obvious enough, and therefore as no alteration is probable, or perhaps possible in that respect, I am not altogether sorry to think that I shall live in a denser intellectual but clearer moral atmosphere in my "other world." I do not believe that the brains shrink much when the soul is well nourished, or that the intellect starves and dwindles upon what feeds and expands the spirit.

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My little sketch of Lenox Lake lies always open before me, and I look at it very often with yearning eyes ... for the splendid rosy sunsets over the dark blue mountain-tops, and for the clear and lovely expanse of pure waters reflecting both, above all for the wild white-footed streams that come leaping down the steep stairways of the hills. I believe I do like places better than people: these only look like angels *sometimes*, but the earth in such spots looks like heaven always—especially the mountain-tops so near the sky, so near the stars, so near the sun, with the clouds below them, and the humanity of the world and its mud far below them again—all but the spirit of adoration which one has carried up thither one's self. I do not wonder the heathen of whom the Hebrew Scriptures complain offered sacrifices on every high hill: they seem—they are—altars built by God for His especial worship. Good-bye, my dearest Hal.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

[After I had the pleasure and honor of making Baron Bunsen's acquaintance, I was one day talking with him about Arnold, and the immense loss I considered his death to England, when he answered, almost in Mrs. E——'s words, but still more emphatically, that he would work better even dead than alive, that there was in him a powerful element of antagonism which roused antagonism in others: his individuality, he said, stood sometimes in the way of his purpose, he darkened his own light; "he will be more powerful now that he is gone than even while he was here."

In Charles Greville's "Memoirs," he speaks of going down to Oatlands to consult his sister and her husband (Lord and Lady Francis Egerton) upon the expediency of Arnold's being made a bishop by the prime minister of the day—I think his friend, Lord Melbourne—and says that they gave their decided opinion against it. I wonder if the correspondence which Lady Francis characterized as "unsatisfactory" was her ground of objection against Arnold. It is a curious thing to me to imagine his calling to the highest ecclesiastical office to have depended in any measure upon her opinion.

I forget what Arnold's politics were; of course, some shade of Whig or Liberal, if he was to be a bishop of Lord Melbourne's. The Ellesmeres were Tories: she a natural Conservative, and somewhat narrow-minded, though excellently conscientious; but if she prevented Arnold being named to the Queen, she certainly exercised an influence for which I do not think she was quite qualified. I think it not improbable that Arnold's orthodoxy may not have satisfied her, and beyond that question she would not go.]

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Wednesday, December 10th, 1845.

Here, dearest Hal, are J—— C——'s verses; I think they have merit, though being myself the subject of them may militate against my being altogether a fair judge. He stood by me when last I sailed from America, until warned, with the rest of my friends, to forsake me and return to the shore....

All poets have a feminine element (good or bad) in them, but a feminine man is a species of being less fit, I think, than even an average woman to do battle with adverse circumstance and unfavorable situation....

You ask me about my interviews with Mrs. Jameson. She has called twice here, but did not on either occasion speak of her difference with my sister. To-day, however, I went to Ealing to see her, and she then spoke about it; not, however, with any feeling or much detail: indeed, she did not refer at all to the cause of rupture between them, but merely stated, with general expressions of regret, that they were no longer upon cordial terms with each other....

Mrs. Jameson told me a story to-day which has put the climax to a horrid state of nervous depression brought on by a conversation with my father this morning, during which every limb of my body twitched as if I had St. Vitus's dance. The scene of the story was Tetschen, the Castle of the Counts Thun, of which strange and romantic residence George Sand has given a detailed description in her novel of "Consuelo." ...

As for the Moloch-worships of this world, of course those who practise them have their reward; they pass their children through the fire, and I suppose that thousands have agonized in so sacrificing their children. Is it not wonderful that Christ came eighteen hundred years ago into the world, and that these pitiless, mad devil-worships are not yet swept out of it?...

I cannot tell you anything about myself, and, indeed, I can hardly think of myself....

My father has determined not to accompany me to Italy, so I shall go alone....

God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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Friday, 12th, 1845.

Your ink-bottle, my dear, has undergone an improvement, if indeed anything so excellent could admit of bettering. The little round glutinous stopper—india-rubber, I believe—from the peculiar inconvenience of which I presume the odious little thing derives its title as patent, has come unfastened from the top, and now, every time I open and shut it, I am compelled to ink my fingers all over, in order to extract this admirable stopper from the mouth of the bottle, or crane it back into its patent position in the lid, where it won't stay. 'Tis quite an invaluable invention for the practice of patience.

I have nothing whatever to tell you. Two days ago my father informed me he had determined to send me alone to Italy. Since then I have not heard a word more from him upon the subject. He read at Highgate yesterday evening for the second time this week, but, as he had dinner engagements each time at the houses of people I did not know, I did not accompany him. I think he reads to-morrow at Islington, and if so I shall ask him to let me go with him. He reads again on Thursday next, at Highgate....

I believe my eyes are growing larger as I grow older, and I don't wonder at it, I stare so very wide so very often, Mrs. — talks sentimental morality about everything; her notions are *pretty near* right, which is the same thing as pretty near wrong (for "a miss," you know, "is as good as a mile"). She is near right enough to amaze me how she contrives to be so much nearer wrong; she is like a person trying to remember a tune, and singing it not quite correctly, while you know it better, and can't sing it at all, and are ready to go mad with mistakes which you perceive, without being able to rectify them: that is a musical experience of which you, not being musical, don't know the torture....

Did I tell you that Mrs. Jameson showed me the other day a charming likeness of my sister which she had made—like that pretty thing she did of me—with all the dresses of her parts? If I could have done a great littleness, I could have gone down on my knees and begged for it; I wished for it so much.

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She spoke to me in great tribulation about a memoir of Mrs. Harry Siddons which it seems she was to have undertaken, but which Harry Siddons (her son) and William Grant (her son-in-law) do not wish written. Mrs. Jameson seems to feel some special annoyance upon this subject, and says that Mrs. Harry was herself anxious to have such a record made of her; and this surprises me so much, knowing Mrs. Harry as I thought I

did, that I find it difficult to believe it....

EVE.

Do you remember, after our reading together Balzac's "Récherche de l'Absolu," your objecting to the character of Madame de Cläes, and very justly, a certain meretricious taint which Balzac seldom escapes in his heroines, and which in some degree impaired the impression that character, in many respects beautifully conceived and drawn, would have produced? Well, there is a vein of something similar in Mrs. —'s mind, and to me it taints more or less everything it touches. She showed me the other day an etching of Eve, from one of Raphael's compositions. The figure, of course, was naked, and being of the full, round, voluptuous, Italian order, I did not admire it,—the antique Diana, drawing an arrow from her quiver, her short drapery blown back from her straight limbs by her rapid motion, being my ideal of beauty in a womanly shape. "Ah, but," said Mrs. —, "look at the inimitable *coquetry* of her whole air and posture: how completely she seems to know, as she looks at the man, that he can't resist her!" (It strikes me that that whole sentence ought to be in French.) Now, this is not at all my notion of Eve; even when she damned Adam and all the generations of men, I think she was more innocent than this. I imagine her like an eager, inquisitive, greedy child, with the fruit, whatever it was, part in her hand and part between her teeth, holding up her hand, or perhaps her mouth, to Adam. You see my idea of Eve is a sensual, self-willed, ignorant savage, who saw something beautiful, that smelt good, and looked as if it tasted good, and so tasted it, without any aspiration after any other knowledge. This real innate fleshly devil of greediness and indiscretion would, however, not bear the heavy theological superstruction that has been raised upon it, and therefore a desire for forbidden knowledge is made to account for the woman's sin and the sorrows of all her female progeny. To me this merely sensual sin, the sin of a child, seems much more picturesque, a good deal fitter for the purposes of art, without the mystic and mythical addition of an intellectual desire for knowledge and the agency of the Satanic serpent. Alas! the mere flesh is devil enough, and serves for all the consequences.

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Blackwood will publish my verses, and, I believe, pay me well for them; indeed, I shall consider any payment at all good enough for such trumpery.

Good-bye, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

My dearest Dorothea, or the Virgin Martyr, I make a courtesy to you. [By this title of a play of Massinger's I used frequently to address Miss Wilson, whose name was Dorothy.]

Saturday, December 13th, 1845.

Thank you, dear Hal, again, for those elastic circles. Now that I know how to use them, I am extremely charmed with them. In my sister's letter to me she gave me no further detail of her health than merely to state that she had injured herself seriously by sitting for hours on the cold stones of St. Peter's....

You know, dear Harriet, that few women have ever had such an education as to enable them fully to appreciate the classical associations of Italy (by-the-by, do you remember that one brief and rather desponding notice of female education in "Arnold's Letters"?); and as for me, I am as ignorant as dirt, so that all that full and delightful spring of pleasure which a fine classical knowledge opens to the traveller in the heroic lands is utterly sealed to me. I have not even put my lips to the brink of it. I have always thought that no form of human enjoyment could exceed that of a thorough scholar, such a one as Arnold, for instance, visiting Rome for the first time.

It is not, however, from recollection, association, or reflection that I look to deriving pleasure in Italy, but from my vivid perceptive faculties, from my senses (my nose, perhaps, excepted), and in the mere beauty that remains from the past, and abides in the present, in those Southern lands. You know what a vividly perceptive nature mine is; and, indeed, so great is my enjoyment from things merely material that the idea of ever being parted from this dear body of mine, through which I perceive them and see, hear, smell, touch, and taste so much exquisite pleasure, makes me feel rather uncomfortable. My spirit seems to me the decidedly inferior part of me, and, compared with my body,

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which is, at any rate, a good machine of its sort, almost a little contemptible, decidedly not good of its sort. I sometimes feel inclined to doubt which is the immortal; for I have hitherto suffered infinitely more from a defective spirit than from what St. Paul calls "this body of corruption."

My dear Harriet, if I get a chance to get into the waterfall at Tivoli, you may depend upon it I will; because just at such times I have a perfectly immortal faith in my mortality. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Monday, December 15th, 1845.

DEAREST HAL,

Thank you for your nice inkstand, but I do not like your sending it to me, nevertheless; because I am sure it is a very great privation to you, being, as you are, particular and fidgety in such matters; and it is not a great gain to me, who do not care what I write out of, and surely I shall always be able, go where I will, among frogs or macaronis, to procure *sucre noir* or *inchiostro nero* to indite to you with. I shall send you back the poor dear little beloved pest you sent me first, because I am sure the stopper can be readjusted, and then it will be as *good* as ever, and you will have a peculiar inkstand to potter with, without which I do not believe you would be yourself.

Thank you for the extract from Arnold. I have no idea that Adam was "a mystical allegory," and you know that I believe every man to be his own devil, and a very sufficient one for all purposes of (so-called) damnation....

I suppose the history of Genesis to be the form assumed by the earliest traditions in which men's minds attempted to account for the creation and the first conditions of the human species. The laborious and perilous existence of man; the still more grievous liabilities of woman, who among all barbarous people is indeed the more miserable half of mankind: and it seems obvious that in those Eastern lands, where these traditions took their birth, the growth of venomous reptiles, the deadliest and most insidious of man's natural enemies, should suggest the idea of the type of all evil.

GENESIS.

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Moses (to whom the Genesis is, I believe, in spite of some later disputants, generally attributed), I presume, accepted the account as literally true, as probably did the authorities, Chaldean or other, from which he derived it....

Moses' "inspiration" did not prevent his enacting some illiberal and cruel laws, among many of admirable wisdom and goodness; and I see no reason why it should have exempted him from a belief in the traditions of his age....

I have heard that there has lately been found in America part of the fossil vertebræ of a serpent which must have measured, it is said, *a hundred and forty feet!* I cannot say I believe it, but if any human creatures inhabited the earth at the time when such "small gear" are supposed to have disported themselves on its surface, if the merest legend containing reference to such a "worm" survived to scare the early risers on this planet of ours, in its first morning hours of consolidation, who can wonder that such a creature should become the hideous representative of all evil, the origin of all sin and suffering, and the special being between which and the human race irreconcilable enmity was to exist forever? for surely not even the most regenerate mind in Christendom could live on decent terms with the best-disposed snake of such a length as that.

I do not think Mrs. Jameson had positively *done* anything in the matter of Mrs. Harry Siddons's memoirs beyond looking over a good many papers and *preparing her mind* with a view to it; and what you tell me a little shakes my confidence in my own opinion upon the subject, which, indeed, was by no means positively made up about it, because I know—at least I think—there *were* elements in Mrs. Harry's mind not altogether incompatible perhaps with the desire of leaving some record of herself, or having such made for her by others.... There are few people whom I pity more than Mrs. Jameson. I always thought she had a great deal of good in her, but the finer elements in her character have become more apparent and valuable to me the longer I have known her;

her abilities are very considerable, and her information very various and extensive; she is a devoted, dutiful daughter, and a most affectionate and generous sister, working laboriously for her mother and the other members of her family.... I compassionate and admire her very much.

I dined on Friday last with dear Miss Cottin, who is a second edition of my dear Aunt Dall. Think of having known two such angels in one's life! On Saturday I dined *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Procter, who is extremely kind to me.... Yesterday I dined with my father at the Horace Wilsons'; to-day I dine with Chorley, and to-morrow at the George Siddonses'.

You cannot think how much my late experiences have shattered me and broken my nervous equanimity.... To-day my father came suddenly into the room while I was playing on the piano, and startled me so by merely speaking to me that I burst into tears, and could not stand for several minutes, I trembled so. I have been suffering for some time past from an almost constant pain in my heart. I have wretched nights, and sometimes pass the whole morning of these days when I dine out, sitting on the floor, crying....

God bless you, dear.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

MORTIMER STREET, December, 1845.

No, my dearest Hal, it would be impossible for me to tell you how sad I am; and instead of attempting to do so, my far better course is to try and write of something else.

My father still sits with maps and guide-books about him, debating of my route; and though I told him the other day that I would be ready to start at any moment he appointed, and that we both agreed that, on account of the cold, I had better not delay my departure, he has neither determined my line of march nor said a single word to me about my means of subsistence while I am abroad.

DEBATING
THE ROUTE.

This morning he said that he had not yet entirely resolved not to accompany me; that if he could conscientiously do it, he should like it of all things; but that he did not feel warranted in neglecting any opportunity of making money. I think, perhaps, he is postponing his determination till some answer is received from America about V—'s tiny legacy to me.... But the very quickest answer to that letter cannot reach England before the middle of next month, and it seems a great pity to delay starting till the weather becomes so cold that we must inevitably suffer from it in travelling.

I feel no anxiety about the whole matter, or indeed any other. I am just as well here, and just as well there, and just as well everywhere as anywhere else. And though I should be glad to see all those much desired things, and most glad to embrace my sister again, and though I am occasionally annoyed and vexed here, I have many friends, and am very well off in London; and elsewhere, of course, I shall find what will annoy and vex me. I am quite "content," a little after Shylock's fashion at the end of the judgment scene. At the core of some "content" what heart-despair may abound!...

I told you of my dining at Mrs. Procter's yesterday. She was quite alone.... She showed me a beautiful song written by my sister, words and music, a sort of lullaby, but the most woful words! I think I must have inspired her with them, they threw me into such a state of nervous agitation....

What a machine *I* am shut up in! Surely a desire to beget a temperance in all things had need be the law of *my* existence; and, but that I believe work left unfinished and imperfect in this life is finished in another, I should think the task almost too difficult of achievement to begin it here.

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

I found at last the little cross you have made over your house in the engraving of the St. Leonard's Esplanade, and when I had found it wondered how I came to miss it; but the truth is it was a blot, and the truth is I took it for nothing more....

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You know I think, in spite of the French proverb, "*Toute vérité n'est pas bonne à dire*," that I think all truth *is* to be told; that is the teller's part: how it is received, or what effect it has, is the receiver's.... I think to suspect a person of wrongdoing more painful than to know that they have done wrong. In the first place, uncertainty upon the character of those we love—the most vital thing in life to us, except our own character—is the worst of all uncertainties. Your trust is shaken, your faith destroyed; belief, that soul of love, is disturbed, and, in addition to all this, as long as any element of uncertainty remains you have the alternate misery of suspecting yourself of unworthy, wicked, and base thoughts, of unjust surmises and uncharitable conclusions. When you know that those you love have sinned against you, your way is open and comparatively easy, for you have only to forgive them. I believe I am less sorry to find that A— has wronged me by her actions than I should have been to find that I had wronged her by my thoughts.... I would a great deal rather have to forgive her for her misconduct, and pity her for her misery, poor woman! than blame myself for the wickedness of unworthily suspecting her. I am really relieved to know that, at any rate, I have not done her injustice.

I have been about all day, getting my money and passport, and paying bills and last visits. I go on Saturday to Southampton, and cross to Havre. I do not know why Emily fancied I was to be at Bannisters to-night, but that last week, when my father suddenly asked me how soon I could start, I replied, "In twenty-four hours," and then wrote to Emily that possibly I might be at Southampton to-day. I go by diligence from Havre to Rouen, by railroad from Rouen to Paris, in the same *coupé* of the diligence which is put bodily—the diligence, I mean—upon the rails; thence to Orleans by post-road, ditto; thence to Châlons-sur-Saône, ditto, down the Saône to Lyons, down the Rhone to Marseilles; steam thence to Civita Vecchia, and then vetturino to Rome. This is the route my father has made out for me; and, all things considered, I think it is the best, and presents few difficulties or inconveniences but those inevitable ones which must be encountered in travelling anywhere at this season of the year.

PREPARATIONS
FOR ITALY.

I shall not see you before I go, my dearest Hal, but I shall be with you before the Atlantic separates us once again; I know not how or where, but look forward to some season of personal intercourse with you before I return once more to America. The future, to be sure, lies misty enough before me, but I have always a feeling of nearness to you which even the Alps rising between us will not destroy, and I do not doubt to see you again before many months are passed. I am going this evening to the Miss Berrys'; they have asked me repeatedly to dine with them, and I have not had a single disengaged day, and as they have taken the trouble of coming to see after me bodily several times, I must pay my respects to them before I go, as in duty bound....

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I had a letter from T—; he had not yet received either of mine, and knew nothing of Philadelphia or any of its inhabitants. He seems to think the Oregon question very black, and that the aspect of affairs on both sides of the water threatens war....

My father now talks of reading in every direction as soon as I am gone—Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh; the latter place he told me he thought he should go to in March; and then again, every now and then, he says, as soon as he can settle his affairs he shall come after me, as he should like to be in Rome at Easter to get the Pope's blessing. God bless you with a better blessing, my dearest Hal!

Ever yours,

FANNY.

... Charles Greville has given me a book of his to read: it is very well written and interests me a good deal; it is upon the policy of England towards Ireland. He so habitually in conversation deals in the merest gossip, and what appears to me to be the most worldly, and therefore superficial, view of things, that I am agreeably surprised by the ability displayed in his book; for though it is not in any way extraordinary, it is in every way beyond what I expected from him.

[The direct railroad routes through France are now followed by all travellers to Italy, and the picturesque coach-road which I took from Orleans to Autun at this time, when they did not exist, is little likely to draw wayfarers aside from them; nor was the season of the year when I made that journey at all a favorable one in which to visit the forest and mountain region of the Nivernais. I was snowed up at a miserable little village among the hills called Château Chinon; the diligences were unable for several days to come up thither, the roads being impassable, and I had to make my way through the picturesque wild region in a miserable species of dilapidated cabriolet, furnished me at an exorbitant price from Château Chinon to Autun, where I was again picked up by the diligence.]

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Thursday, December 18th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I leave London the day after to-morrow for Southampton. I am full of calls, bills, visits, sorrow, perplexity, and nervous agitation, which all this hurry and bustle increase tenfold; letters to write, too, for the American post is in, and has brought me four from the other side of the water to deal with. In the middle of all this, Mrs. Jameson sends me long letters of Sarah Grant's and Mary Patterson's to read, which prove most distinctly to my mind that she, Mrs. Jameson, wishes to write a memoir of Mrs. Harry Siddons; but do not at all prove so distinctly to my mind that Mrs. Harry Siddons wished a memoir of herself to be written by Mrs. Jameson. So all this I have had to wade through, and shall have to answer, wondering all the while what under the sun it matters what I think about the whole concern, or why people care one straw what people's opinions are about them, or what they do.

MRS.
JAMESON.

My opinion about memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, lives, letters, and books in general indeed, Mrs. Jameson is perfectly familiar with; and therefore her making me go through this voluminous correspondence just now, when she knows how pressed I am for time, seems to me a little unmerciful; but, however, I've done it, that's one comfort.

Then comes dear George Combe, with a long letter, the second this week, upon the subject of Miss C——'s private character, family connections, birth, parentage, reputation, etc., desiring me to answer all manner of questions about her; and I know no more of her than I do of the man in the moon: and all this must likewise be attended to....

About my consulting Wilson (our attached friend and family physician), I did so when I was here before, and I am following the advice he then gave me; but for these physical effects of mental causes, what can be done as long as the causes continue?...

Hayes (my maid) and I are to take the *coupé* of the diligence wherever we can get it on our route, and so proceed together and alone. I shall pay for the third place, but it is worth while to pay something to be protected from the proximity of some travelling Frenchmen; and paying for this extra place is not a very great extravagance, as the cost of travelling by public conveyance on the Continent is very moderate.

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I do not know when Blackwood intends publishing my things. I gave them into Chorley's hands, and Chorley's discretion, and know nothing further about them, but that I believe I shall be paid for them what he calls "tolerably well," and therefore what I shall consider magnificently well, inasmuch as they seem to me worth nothing at all.

I hear of nothing but the change of Ministry, but have been so much engrossed with my own affairs that I have not given much attention to what I have heard upon the subject. I believe Sir Robert Peel will come into some coalition with the Whigs, Lord John Russell, Lord Howick, etc., and this is perhaps the best thing that can happen, because, by all accounts, the Whigs have literally not got a man to head them. But I do not think anything is yet decided upon.

And now, my dear, I must break off, and write to M—— M——, *and* George Combe about Miss C——'s virtue (why the deuce doesn't he look for it in her skull?), *and* Mrs. Jameson, *and* all America.

I breakfasted this morning with Rogers, and dine this evening at the Procters'. What an

enviable woman I might appear!—only you know better.

Yours truly,

FANNY.

MORTIMER STREET, Friday Night (*i.e.* Saturday Morning, at 2 o'clock), December 19th, 1845.

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No! my dearest Hal, I do not think that to one who believes that life is spiritual education it needs any very painful or difficult investigation of circumstances to perceive, not why such and such special trials are sent to certain individuals, but that all trial is the positive result of or has been incurred by error or sin; and beholding the beautiful face of bitterest adversity, for such is one of its aspects, that all trial is sent to teach us better things than we knew, or than we did, before. There is nothing for which God's mercy appears to me more praiseworthy than the essential essence of improvement, of progress, of growth, which *can* be expressed from the gall-apple of our sorrows. To each soul of man the needful task is set, the needful discipline administered, and therefore it doesn't seem to me to require much investigation into mere circumstances to accept my own trials. They are appointed to me because they are best for me, and whatever my apparent impatience under them, this is, in deed and truth, my abiding faith....

But it is past two o'clock in the morning. I am almost exhausted with packing and writing. Seven letters lie on my table ready to be sealed, seven more went to the post-office this afternoon; but though I will not sleep till I bid you good-night, I will not write any more than just that now. My fire is out, my room cold, and, being tired with packing, I am getting quite chilled. You must direct to me to the care of Edward Sartoris, Esq., Trinità dei Monti, Rome, and I will answer you, as you know. I will write to you to-morrow, that is to-day, when I get to Bannisters; or perhaps before I start, if I can get up early enough to get half an hour before breakfast.

Good-night. God bless you. I am unutterably sad, and feel as though I were going away from everybody, I know not whither—it is all vague, uncertain, indefinite, all but the sorrow which is inseparable from me, go where I will, a companion I can reckon upon for the rest of my life everywhere. As for the rest, if we did but recollect it, our next minute is always the unknown.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BANNISTERS, Saturday, December 20th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

My last words and thoughts were yours last night; but this morning, when I hoped to have written to you again, I found it impossible to do so; so here I am in the room at Bannisters where you and I and Emily were sitting together a few weeks ago,—she on her knees, writing for a fly to take me to the steamer to-night, and I writing to you from this place, where it seems as if you were still sitting beside us. Emily won't let me send you your little square ink-bottle for Queen's heads, but says she will keep it for you, so there I leave it in her hands.

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Charles Greville's book (for it is not a pamphlet) is called "The Policy of England to Ireland," or something as nearly like that as possible. My praise of it may occasion you some disappointment, for I am pleased with it more because it is so much better than anything I expected from him than because it is particularly powerful or striking in itself. The subject interests me a good deal, and the book is very agreeably and well written, and in a far better tone than I should have looked for in anything of his.

CHARLES
GREVILLE.

I have besought Mr. Lowndes to forward my letters to me without any delay, and I have no doubt he will do so....

As for death, well is it with those who quietly reach the fifth act of their lives, with only the usual and inevitable decay and dropping off of all beloved things which time must

bring; the sudden catastrophe of adverse circumstance, wrecking a whole existence in the very middle of its course, is a more terrible thing than death.

My dearest Hal, I have no more to say but that "I love you." Emily is talking to me, and I feel as if I ought to talk to her. Give my dear love to dear Dorothy, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

ROME, TRINITÀ DEI MONTI, Monday, April 20th, 1846.

You ask me what I shall do in the spring, my dear Hal. My present plan is to return to England next December, and remain with my father, if he can have me with him without inconvenience, till the weather is fine enough to admit of my returning without too much wretchedness to America....

When E— and my father wrote to me to return to England, I had no idea but that I was to have a home with the latter, that he expected and wished me to live with him.... I think now that if his deafness obliges him to give up his public readings, and cuts him off from his club and the society that he likes, he will not be sorry that I should remain with him....

By-the-by, I take your question about my plans for the spring to refer not to this but to next spring, as I suppose you know that I mean to remain with my sister during the coming summer, and that we are going to spend the greater part of it at Frascati, where E— has taken a charming apartment in a lovely villa belonging to the Borghese.

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You will be in England next winter, dear Hal, and I shall come then and stay with you and Dorothy. You have interfered so little with my journal-keeping by your letters that I have been wondering and lamenting that I did not hear from you for the last some time, and was all but wrought up to the desperate pitch of writing to you *out of turn*, to know what was the matter, when I received your last letter. I do not, however, keep my journal with any sort of regularity; my time is extremely and very irregularly occupied, and I should certainly preserve no record whatever of my impressions but for the very disagreeable conviction that it is my duty to do so, if there is, as I believe there is, the slightest probability of my being able by this means to earn a little money and to avoid drawing upon my father's resources. I have a great contempt for this process, and a greater contempt for the barren balderdash I write: but exchange is no robbery, a thing is worth what it will fetch, and if a bookseller will buy my trash, I will sell it to him; for beggars must, in no case, be choosers....

You say that I have yet told you nothing of my satisfaction in Rome. I wish you had not made your challenge so large. How shall I tell you of my satisfaction in Rome? and at which end of Rome, or my satisfaction, shall I begin? You must remember, in the first place, that its strangeness is not absolutely to me what it is to many English people; the brilliant and enchanting sky is not unlike that with which I have been familiar for some years past in America; the beautiful and (to us Anglo-Saxon islanders) unusual vegetation bears some resemblance to that of the Southern States in winter. Boston, you know, is in the same latitude as Rome, and though the American northern winter is incomparably more severe than that of Italy, the summer heat and the southern semi-tropical vegetation are kindred features in that other world and this. The difference of this winter climate and that of the United States has hitherto been an unfavorable one to me; for I have been extremely unwell ever since I have been here—the sirocco destroys me body and soul while it lasts, and there is a sultry heaviness in the atmosphere that gave me at first perpetual headaches, and still continues to disagree extremely with me. Now, of these abatements of my satisfaction I have told you, but of my satisfaction itself I should find it impossible to tell, but I should think you might form some idea of it, knowing both me and the place where I am.

ROMAN
AND
AMERICAN
SKIES.

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I have hitherto been more anxious to remain with my sister than to go and see even the sights of Rome. Now, however, that our departure for Frascati must take place in about a month, I get up at seven every morning, and go out before breakfast alone, and in this way I am contriving to do some of my traveller's duty.

I walked this morning to the Pantheon, and heard Mass there. On my return home, I went into the Church of the Trinità dei Monti, to hear the French nuns sing their prayers. This afternoon we have been to the Villa Albani, which is ridiculously full of rose-bushes, which are so ridiculously full of roses that, except in a scene in a pantomime, I never saw anything like it. We remained in the garden, and the day was like a warm English April day, in consequence of which we had the loveliest pageant of thick sullen rain and sudden brilliant flashes of sunlight chasing each other all over those exquisite Alban Hills, with our very *un-English* foreground of terraces, fountains, statues, vases, evergreen garden walls of laurel, myrtle, box, laurestinus, and ridiculous rose-bushes in ridiculous bloom. There never was a more enchanting combination of various beauty than the landscape we looked at and the place from which we looked at it. I brought away some roses and lemon-blossoms: the latter I enclose in this letter, that some of the sweetness I have been enjoying may salute your senses also, and recall these divine scenes to your memory still more vividly. We came home from the Villa Albani in the most tremendous pour of rain, and had hardly taken off our bonnets when the whole sky, from the pines on Monte Maris to the Dome of Santa Maria Maggiore, was bathed all over in beauty and splendor indescribable. If we had only been Claude Lorraine, what a sunset we should have painted!

We have a charming little terrace garden to our house here, in which my "retired leisure" takes perpetual delight....

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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FRASCATI, Wednesday, May 20th, 1846.

FRASCATI.

MY DEAR HAL,

One would suppose that writing was to the full as disagreeable to you as it is to me, yet you do not profess that it is so, but merely write that you have little to say, as you think, that will interest me. Now, this is, I think, a general fallacy, but I am sure it is an individual one: the sight of your handwriting, representing as it does to me your face, your voice, and, above all, your generous and constant affection, makes the mere superscription of your letters worth a joyful welcome from me; and for any dearth of matter on your part, it lies, I rather think, chiefly in the direction which least affects me, *i.e.* society gossip, or "*news*," *as it is called* (O Lord! such *old news* as it is), being for ever the same stuff with a mere imperceptible difference in the pattern on it, let it come from what quarter of the civilized globe it will; and which, as far as I have had occasion to observe latterly, forms the chief resource of "polite letter-writers."

Of matters that do interest me, you might surely have plenty to say—your own health and frame of mind; the books you read, and what you think of them; and whatever of special interest to yourself occurs, either at home or abroad. At Ardgillan, you know, I know every inch of *your* ground, and between the little turret room and the Dell it seems to me many letters might be filled; then the state of politics in England interests me intensely; and the condition of Ireland is surely a most fruitful theme for comment just now....

We are now at Frascati, and in spite of the inexhaustible, immortal interest of Rome, I am rejoicing with my whole nature, moral, mental, and physical, in our removal to the country. The beautiful aspect of this enchanting region, occasionally, by rare accident, recalls the hill country in America that I am so fond of; but this is of a far higher and nobler order of beauty.

The Campagna itself is an ever-present feature of picturesque grandeur in the landscape here, and gives it a character unlike anything anywhere else.

The district of country round Lenox rejoices in a number of small lakes (from one hill-side one sees five), of a few miles in circumference, which, lying in the laps of the hills, with fine wooded slopes sweeping down to their bright basins, give a peculiar charm to the scenery; while here, as you know, the volcanic waters of Albano and Nemi lie so deep in their rocky beds as to be invisible, unless from their very margins.

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Of the human picturesqueness of this place and people no American scenery or population have an atom; and isolated, ugly, mean, matter-of-fact farm-houses, or whitewashed, clap-boarded, stiff, staring villages, alike without antiquity to make them venerable or picturesqueness to make them tolerable, are all that there represent the exquisitely grouped and colored masses of building, or solitary specimens of noble time-tinted masonry and architecture, that every half-fortress farmhouse in the plain, or hamlet or convent on the hill-side, present in this paradise of painters.

I must confess to you, however, that the *populousness* of this landscape is not agreeable to me. Absolute loneliness and the absence of every trace of human existence was such a striking feature of the American scenery that I am fond of, where it was possible in some directions to ride several miles without meeting man or woman or seeing their dwellings, that the impossibility of getting out of sight of human presence or human habitation is sometimes irksome to me here.

It is true that this scenery is often wildly sublime in its character; nevertheless, it is overlooked in almost every direction by villas, monasteries, or villages, and if one escapes from these (as, indeed, I only suppose I *may*, for I have not yet been able to do so), one stumbles among the ruins and gigantic remains of the great race that has departed, and recollections of men, their works and ways, pursue one everywhere, and surround one with the vestiges of the humanity of bygone centuries.

In the woods of Massachusetts wild-cats panthers, and bears are yet occasionally to be met with, and the absence of the human element, whether present or past, gives a character of unsympathizing savageness to the scenery; while here it has so saturated the very soil with its former existence that where there is nobody there are millions of ghosts, and that, if the sense of solitude is almost precluded, there is an abiding and depressing one of desolate desertion.

The personal danger which I am told attends walking alone about the woods and hills here rather impairs my enjoyment of the lovely country....

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How lamentably foolish human beings are in their intercourse with each other, to be sure, whether they love or hate, or whatever they do!...

The epistle of yours that I am now answering I received only this morning, and, owing no one else a previous debt, sat down instantly to discharge my debt to you. Am I honest? am I just? If I am not, show me how I am not; if I am, why, hold your tongue.

The climate of Rome disagreed with me more than any climate of which I have yet had experience. I had a perpetual consciousness of my bilious tendencies, and when the sirocco blew I found it difficult to bear up against that and the permanent causes of depression I always have to struggle against. The air here is undoubtedly freer and purer, but even here we do not escape from that deadly hot wind, that blast, that I should think came straight from hell, it is so laden with despair.

I liked those pretty lasses, the Ladies T—, very much. All young people interest me, and must be wonderfully displeasing if they do not please me. I met them frequently, but they were naturally full of gayety and life and spirits, which I naturally was not. The little society I went into in Rome oppressed me dreadfully with its ponderous vapidness, and beyond exchanging a few words with these bonnie girls, and admiring their sweet pleasant faces, I had nothing to do with them. There was much talk about the chances of a marriage between Lord W— and Lady M—, but though her father left no stone unturned to accomplish this great blessing for his pretty daughter, the matter seemed extremely doubtful when the season ended and they all went off to Naples.

SOCIETY IN
ROME.

As for Mrs. H—, if she had chronicled me, I am afraid it would scarcely have been with good words. I met her at a party at Mrs. Bunsen's (whose husband is the son of Arnold's friend)... The young lady impressed me as one of that numerous class of persons who like to look at a man or woman whose name, for any reason, has been in the public mouth, and probably her curiosity was abundantly satisfied by my being brought up and shown to her. She made no particular impression upon me, but I have no doubt that in sorrow, or joy, or any real genuine condition, instead of what is called society, she might perhaps have interested me. It takes uncommon powers of fascination, or what is even rarer, perfect simplicity, to attract attention or arouse sympathy in the dead atmosphere of modern civilized social intercourse. All is so drearily dry, smooth, narrow, and

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commonplace that the great deeps of life below this stupid stagnant surface are never seen, heard, or thought of.

If your nieces' constancy in following the round of monotonously recurring amusements of a Dublin season amazes me, they would certainly think it much more amazing to pass one's time as I do, wandering about the country alone, dipping one's head and hands into every wayside fountain one comes to, and sitting down by it only to get up again and wander on to the next spring of living water. The symbol is comforting, as well as the element itself, though it is a mere suggestion of the spiritual wells by which one may find rest and refreshment, and pause and ponder on this dusty life's way of ours.

I rejoice the distress in Ireland is less than was anticipated, and am sorry that I cannot sympathize with your nephew's political views [Colonel Taylor was all his life a consistent and fervent Tory].... Politics appear to me, in a free government, to be the especial and proper occupation of a wealthy landowner; and, in such a country as Ireland, I am sure they might furnish a noble field for the exercise of the finest intelligence and the most devoted patriotism, as well as fill the time with occupation of infinite interest, both of business and benevolence. I should like to be a man with such a work....

My sister's little girl is lovely; she runs about, but does not speak yet. God bless you, my dear friend. Give my love to dear Dorothy. If I can, I will come and see you both at Torquay this next winter. I hope to be in England in November.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

FRASCATI, Wednesday, July 1st, 1846.

... You know of old that the slightest word of blame from you is worse than hot sealing-wax on my skin to me, and that to my self-justifications there is no end. My dear friend, are mental perplexity and despondency, moral difficulty, spiritual apathy, and a general bitter internal struggle with existence, less real trials, less positive troubles, than the most afflicting circumstances generally so classed? I almost doubt it. It may be more difficult to formulate that species of anguish in words, and it may seem a less positive and substantial grief than some others, but the plagues of the soul are *real* tortures, and I set few sufferings above them, few difficulties and few pains beyond those that have their source not in the outward dispensation of events, but in the inward conditions of our physical and moral constitutions.

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Comparing one lot with another, does not rather the equality of the general doom of trouble and sorrow, of difficulty and struggle, witness the impartiality with which we are governed and our several fates distributed to us? The self-assured and self-relying strength of my constitution (I mean by that my character as well as the temperament from which it results) knows nothing of the trials that beset yours—doubt, distrust, despondency. I have health, mental and physical activity, and a "mounting spirit" of indomitable enjoyment that buoyantly protects me from sufferings under which others wince and writhe; nevertheless, I have the sufferings proper to my individuality, and I needs must suffer, if it were only that I may be said to *live*, in the fit and proper sense of the term. Our lots are just; by God they are appointed....

But in spite of abiding sorrow, I have often hours of vivid enjoyment, enjoyment which has nothing to do with happiness, or peace, or hope; momentary flashes, bright gleams of exquisite pleasure, of which the capacity seems indestructible in my nature; and whatever bitterness may lie at my heart's core, it still leaves about it a mobile surface of sensibility, which reflects with a sort of ecstasy every ray of light and every form of beauty.

You certainly do not enjoy as I do, and perhaps therefore you do not suffer as acutely; but we err in nothing more than in our estimate of each other's natures, and might more profitably spend the same amount of consideration upon our own lot, and its capabilities of sorrow or of joy for our own improvement.

Why is it that people do perpetually live below their own pitch? as you very truly

LIVING
BELOW

described their living. My return to civilized society makes me ponder much upon the causes of the desperate frivolity and dismal inanity which calls itself by that name, and in the midst of which we live and move and have our being. If people did really enjoy and amuse themselves, nothing could be better; because enjoyment and amusement *are* great goods, and deserve to be labored for *sufficiently*; but the absence of amusement, of enjoyment, of life, of spirits, of vivacity, of *vitality*, in the society of the present day, and its so-called diversions, strikes me with astonishment and compassion. For my own part, I hold a good laugh to be inestimable in pleasure and in profit; good nonsense well talked only less admirable than good sense well delivered; and a spirit of fun the next best thing to a serious spirit; and moreover, thank God, they are quite compatible! I think the stupid shallowness of society has some deep causes; one among which is, of course, that by devoting all their energies and all their faculties and all their time to mere amusement, as they have no right to do, people fail of their aim, and are neither well amused nor well occupied, nor well anything else. For if "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," what does the reverse do for him? This passion for cakes and sugar-candy in adult, not to say advanced, life is rather lugubrious; and of course it strikes me forcibly on my return from America, where the absence of a wholesome spirit of recreation is one of the dreariest features of the national existence....

Here the absolute necessity for mere amusement strikes me as a sort of dry-rot in certain portions of the fabric of civilized society, and tends to make it a sapless crumbling mass of appearances—the most ostentatious appearance of all, that of pleasure, being perhaps the hollowest and most unreal.

It takes, I believe, no meaner qualities than intelligence and goodness to enable a person to be thoroughly, heartily, and satisfactorily amused.

Unless you, my dear friend, deprecate our meeting to part again, I have no intention whatever of leaving England without seeing you once more. I cannot imagine doing such a thing, unless in compliance with your wish, or submission to inevitable necessity. I hope to come down to Torquay, to you and Dorothy, for a few days in the winter.

I am amused at your saying that you don't think any one would feel very comfortable living with me, who had not a great love of truth. Catherine Sedgwick once said it was impossible to tell a lie before me *with any comfort*; and yet I have told my own lies, and certainly sinned, as did not the worthy lady who, being charged with a falsehood, replied unhesitatingly, "Of course, I know it was a lie; *I made it!* I thought it would do good." Another lady of my acquaintance, speaking of a person we both knew, who was indifferent, to say the least of it, upon the question of veracity, exclaimed, "Oh, but Mrs. C— is really too bad, for she will tell stories *when there isn't the least necessity for it.*"

A— was a curious instance of the distortion of a very upright nature; for she is undoubtedly a person of great natural truth and integrity, and yet, under the influence of an unfortunate passion, her pre-eminent virtue suffered total eclipse; and she must have condescended, proud and sincere as she was, to much duplicity and much absolute falsehood. Poor girl!

I think one great argument against wrong-doing of every sort is that it almost invariably, sooner or later, leads to a sacrifice of truth in some way or other; and for that reason a hearty love of truth is a great preservative from sin in general.

Your letters, directed either to Rome or here, to the care of Edward Sartoris, have reached me hitherto safely and punctually....

My sister particularly begs me to tell you that she rides ("a-horseback, you cuckoo!") between twelve and sixteen miles almost every day. I cannot clearly tell whether she has grown thinner or I have grown used to her figure.

The heat is beginning to be very oppressive, and I wish I was in England, for I hate hot weather. The whole range of the Sabine Hills, as I see them from my window here, look baked and parched and misty, in the glare beyond the tawny-colored Campagna. Every flower in the garden has bloomed itself away; the trees loll their heads to the hot gusts of the sirocco, mocking one with the enchanting beckoning gesture of a breeze, while the air is in truth like a blast from an oven or the draught at the mouth of a furnace.

I walk before breakfast, and steep myself in perspiration; and get into the fountain in

the garden afterwards, and steep myself in cold water; and by dint of the double process, live in tolerable comfort the rest of the day. And I have no right to complain, for this is temperate to the summer climate of Philadelphia.

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Mary and Martha Somerville are paying us a visit of a few days, and I have spent the last two mornings in a vast, princely, empty marble gallery here, teaching them to dance the cachuca; and I wish you could have seen Mrs. Somerville watching our exercises. With her eyeglasses to her eyes, the gentle gentlewoman sat silently contemplating our evolutions, and as we brought them to a conclusion, and stood (*not* like the Graces) puffing and panting round her, unwilling not to say some kindly word of commendation of our effort, she meekly observed, "It's very pretty, very graceful, very"—a pause—"ladylike." She spoke without any malicious intention whatever, dear lady, but she surely left out the *un*. Do you not think it is time I should begin to think of growing old? or do your nieces do anything more juvenile than this, with all their ball-going?

God bless you, my dear Harriet. Good-bye.

I am ever, as ever yours,

FANNY.

FRASCATI, Wednesday, September 2nd, 1846.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

... I think that the women who have contemplated *any* equality between the sexes have almost all been unmarried, for while the father disposes of the children whom he maintains, and which thus endows him with the power of supreme torture, what mother's heart is proof against the tightening of that screw? At any rate, what number of women is ever likely to be found so organized or so principled as to resist the pressure of this tremendous power? My sister, in speaking to me the other day of what she would or would not give up to her husband of conscientious conviction of right, wound up by saying, "But sooner than lose my children, there is *nothing* that I would not do;" and in so speaking she undoubtedly uttered the feeling of the great majority of women....

We suppose my father has gone to Germany, with some intention of giving readings there. He has been on the Continent now upwards of three months, but we never hear anything definite or precise about his engagements from himself; and in his letters he never mentions place, person, or purpose, where he is going, or where likely to be; so that I can form no idea how long I may be deprived of my letters, which are directed to London, to his care.

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My dearest Hal, I have kept no journal since I have been abroad but such as could be published verbatim. I have kept no record of my own life; I have long felt that to chronicle it would not assist me in enduring it.... Indeed, since I came to Italy, I should have kept no diary at all, but that my doing so was suggested to me as a possible means of earning something towards my present support, and with that view I have noted what I have seen, much to my own disgust and dissatisfaction; for I feel very strongly my own inability to give any fresh interest to a mere superficial description of things and places seen and known by everybody, and written about by all the world and his wife, for the last hundred years. Nevertheless, I have done it; because I could not possibly neglect any means whatever that were pointed out to me of helping myself, and relieving others from helping me.... I have given up my walk and my dip in the fountain before breakfast. We ride for three or four hours every afternoon, and a walk of two hours in the morning besides seemed to me, upon reflection, a disproportionate allowance of mere physical exercise for a creature endowed with brains as well as arms and legs.... Upon the whole, we have reason to be grateful for the health we have all of us enjoyed. There has been a great deal of violent and dangerous illness among the English residents passing the summer at Frascati and Albano; quite enough indeed, I think, to justify the ill repute of unhealthiness with which the whole of this beautiful region is branded. Our whole family has escaped all serious inconvenience, either from the malaria usual to the place or the unusual heat of the summer; the children especially have been in admirable health and lovely looks, the whole time we have been here....

SUMMER IN
ITALY.

God bless you, my dearest Hal! I am afraid that it is true that I often appear wanting in charity towards the vices and follies of my fellow-creatures; and yet I really have a great deal more than my outbreaks of vehement denunciation would seem to indicate; and of one thing I am sure, that with regard to any wrong or injury committed against myself, a very short time enables me not only to forgive it, but to perceive all the rational excuses and attenuations that it admits of. I certainly am not conscious of any bitterness of heart towards any one.... I believe it is only in the first perception of evil or sense of injury that I am unmeasured or unreasonable in my expression of condemnation—but you know, my dear, *suddenness* is the curse of my nature.... But my self-love always springs up against the shadow of blame, and so you need pay no heed to what I say in self-justification. If I am censured justly, I shall accept the reproof inwardly, whatever outward show I may make of defending myself against it; for the grace of humility is even more deficient in me than that of charity, and to submit graciously to what seems to me unjust blame is hitherto a virtue I do not possess at all.

[After my return to England, I resumed the exercise of my theatrical profession; the less distasteful occupation of giving public readings, which I adopted subsequently, was not then open to me. My father was giving readings from Shakespeare, and it was impossible for me to thrust my sickle into a field he was reaping so successfully. I therefore returned to the stage; under what disadvantageously altered circumstances it is needless to say.

A stout, middle-aged, not particularly good-looking woman, such as I then was, is not a very attractive representative of Juliet or Julia; nor had I, in the retirement of nine years of private life, improved by study or experience my talent for acting, such as it was. I had hardly entered the theatre during all those years, and my thoughts had as seldom reverted to anything connected with my former occupation. While losing, therefore, the few personal qualifications (of which the principal one was youth) I ever possessed for the younger heroines of the drama, I had gained none but age as a representative of its weightier female personages—Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine, etc.

Thus, even less well fitted than when first I came out for the work I was again undertaking, I had the additional disadvantage of being an extremely incompetent woman of business; and having now to make my own bargains in the market of public exhibition, I did so with total want of knowledge and experience to guide me in my dealings with the persons from whom I had to seek employment.

I found it difficult to obtain an engagement in London; but Mr. Knowles, of the Manchester Theatre, very liberally offered me such terms as I was thankful to accept; and I there made my first appearance on my return to the stage.

Among the various changes which I had to encounter in doing so, one that might appear trivial enough occasioned me no little annoyance. The inevitable rouge, rendered really indispensable by the ghastly effect of the gaslight illumination of the stage, had always been one of its minor disagreeables to me; but I now found that, in addition to rouged cheeks, my fair theatrical contemporaries—fair though they might be—literally whitewashed their necks, shoulders, arms, and hands; a practice which I found it impossible to adopt; and in spite of my zealous friend Henry Greville's rather indignant expostulation, to the effect that what so beautiful a woman as Madame Grisi condescended to do, for the improvement of her natural charms, was not to be disdained by a person so comparatively ugly, I steadily refused to make a whited sepulchre of *that* description of myself, and continued to confront the public with my own skin, looking, probably, like a gypsy, or, when in proximity with any feminine coadjutor, like a bronze figure arm-in-arm with a plaster-of-Paris cast.

Before, however, beginning my new existence of professional toil, I stayed a few days at Bannisters, with Mrs. FitzHugh and my dear friend, her daughter Emily.]

AT
BANNISTERS.

You say, my dear Hal, that you see Emily and me perpetually, in various positions, holding various conversations. Had you a vision of us this morning, by the comfortable fire in my room, I reading, and she listening to, your letter?...

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Thank you, my dear friend, for your *flagellatory* recipe, which I beg to decline. The sponging with vinegar and water I do practise every morning, and as I persevere in it until my fingers can hardly hold the sponge for cold, and my throat is as crimson as if it were flayed, I hope it will answer the same purpose as lashing myself, which I object to, partly, I suppose, for Sancho Panza's reasons, and partly because of its great resemblance to, not to say identity with, the superstitious practices of the idolatrous and benighted Roman Catholic Church.

The amount of medical advice and assistance which I have received since I have been restored to the affectionate society of my dear Emily and her kind mother is hardly to be told....

I shall not answer your letter seriously: I am convinced it is bad for you. I believe Dorothy never laughs (you know the Devil in "Faust" says the Almighty never does), and I am satisfied that what you are languishing for is a little *absurdity*, which she cannot by any possibility afford you.

How I wish I was with you! because, though I am no more absurd than that sublime woman Dorothy, I at least know how to take the best advantage, both for you and myself, of the great gifts you possess in that line; and the mutual sweetness and utility of our intercourse is, I am persuaded, principally owing to the judicious use I make of the extraordinary amount of absurdity it has pleased Heaven to vouchsafe you, my most precious friend.

And so you think I shall have plenty of "admiring friends" for my "gay hours" (!!!!), but shall be glad to fall back, in my less delightful ones, upon the devoted affection of—you? (Oh, Harriet, oughtn't you to be ashamed of yourself?)

I have more friends, I humbly and devoutly thank God for them, than almost any one I know; those I depend upon I can count upon the fingers of one hand, and you are the *thumb*.

In the useless struggle you persist in making to be reasonable (why don't you give it up? I've known you hopelessly at it now forty years or thereabouts), you really make use of very singular and, permit me to say, inappropriate language. After detailing, in a manner that nearly made me cry and laugh with distress for you and disapprobation of you, all your unnecessary agonies of anxiety about me, you suddenly rein yourself up with an extra-reasonable jerk, and say that "the foolish importance you attach to *trifles* is as great as ever."

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Now, my dearest friend, for such you undoubtedly are, allow me to observe that this mode of speaking of me does not appear to me either reasonable or appropriate. From what point of view I can appear a *trifle* to the most partial and rational of my friends, I am at a loss to conjecture. The parallel seems to me to halt on all its feet. A *white, light, sweet*, and *agreeable* article of human consumption bears, I apprehend, extremely small affinity to a *dark, heavy, tart*, and *uneatable* female. However, if you find that this, to me, singularly distorted mode of viewing facts assists your hitherto unsuccessful efforts at mental and moral equipoise, I am perfectly willing to be a trifle in your estimation, or indeed anywhere but on your table.

The pretty, pretty plan you devise for our meeting here during Passion week, dear Hal, is a baseless vision. Our friends go up to London the week after next, and I do not know when I shall be able again to stay so far from it.

I have written to Moxon about the publication of my journal, and I received a note from him this morning, intimating his purpose of visiting me here, in the course of to-day, at which I feel rather nervously dismayed.... There is a great quantity of it, and I suppose my return to the stage may perhaps have some effect in increasing its sale.

Emily and I walk every day together, up and down the shrubbery and round the gardens; and innumerable are the ejaculations of "Oh, how I wish dear Hal was with us!" You are our proper complement, the missing side of the triangle, and it is unnatural for us two to be together here without you.

Mrs. FitzHugh is certainly a wonderful old woman, especially in her kindness and happy, easy cheerfulness....

We drive every day for about an hour in the pony-carriage, and walk again for about half an hour afterwards....

And now, God bless you, my dearest Hal. I long to see you, and am most thankful for all the tender, devoted, anxious affection you bestow on me; I am unspeakably *grateful* to you. Kiss dear Dorothy for me, and tell her for goodness' sake to exert herself, and either be, or allow you to be, slightly ridiculous, or she will die of perfection, and you of a plethora of absurdity, or ridiculousness *rentré*—struck in, as the French say.

I forgot to tell you that — has declined my terms, but offered me others, which I have declined. I have still two other managers, with one of whom I think I may perhaps be able to come to some agreement.

Since writing thus far, I have seen Moxon, who has offered me far more than I expected for my journal before reading it; begging me to let him pay me a portion of it at once, and adding that if, upon perusal of the manuscript, he thinks his profits likely to warrant his giving me more than the sum now named, he should not consider himself justified in not doing so by the fact of his having offered me less.

Good-bye, dearest.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

[It is impossible to have been more generous than Mr. Moxon was in this whole transaction. While talking about the dealings of booksellers with authors, he said that he always bore in mind the liberality he had benefited by when, starting in business a poor and obscure publisher, he had been munificently assisted by Rogers, whose timely aid had laid the foundation of his prosperity. "As I was dealt by," he said, "I endeavor to deal by others, and should be glad to inspire them with the grateful regard towards me which I shall always retain for him." Rogers surely did himself more injustice by his tongue than all his enemies put together could have done him; his acts of kindly generosity were almost as frequent as his bitter, biting, cruel words.]

BANNISTERS, Saturday, 16th.

Yes, my dear Hal, I do intend to correct my own proofs (I thought my proofs corrected me)....

I have just returned from a delightful visit of two hours, which our dear friend Emily contrived for me, to —, the dentist! Not content with cheering and soothing my sadder hours with the number and variety of her medical resources (pills, draughts, doses, potions, lotions, lozenges, etc.), her ever active and considerate affection hit upon this agreeable method of relieving my stay at Bannisters of any possible tedium, and two hours of the darkest, dampest, dreariest winter weather have thus been charmed away through her tender and ingenious solicitude for my enjoyment.

My dear Hal, what you say about laughing *with* people, as an *instead* for laughing *at* them, is, like most things you say, frightful nonsense. And what sort of a laugh, moreover, is it that you offer that unfortunate Dorothy for her feeble participation? Nothing of a healthy, wholesome, vigorous, vital, individual, personal kind; but some pitiful pretence of wit or humor, having for its vague or indefinite object ideal or general, abstract, impersonal, or, so to speak, invisible intangible subjects, wanting all the vivacious pungent stimulus that belongs to real individual absurdity, and the direct ridicule of it, judiciously and dexterously applied; the only efficient—I had almost said legitimate—object of a rational creature's amusement. If Dorothy depends upon you for her entertainment (otherwise than as you involuntarily, unconsciously, naturally, and simply furnish it to me), I pity her; and if you depend upon her for yours, I pity you still more—for I doubt if even I, according to my own system, could extract any from her, she is so *painfully unridiculous*. You must be deplorably dull together, I am—certain, I was

EDWARD
MOXON.

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going to say—satisfied; but that's neither kind nor civil, and I heartily wish for both *your* sakes that I was with you.

UNCERTAINTIES

I am not sure that that visit may not be accomplished yet; for my reappearance on the stage does not seem likely to take place so very immediately but that I might perhaps contrive to run down to you for a short time. But, indeed, all my concerns are like so many pennies tossed up in the air for "heads or tails," and I cannot tell how they will fall, or what results I may arrive at.

I have been asked to go down to Manchester, to act, and if I have any great difficulty or delay to encounter in finding an engagement in London, I shall probably do so.... The step I am about to take is so painful to me that all petty annoyances and minor vexations lose their poignancy in the contemplation of it (*à quelque chose—à bien des choses malheur est bon*), and having at length made up my mind to it, smaller *repugnancies* connected with it have ceased to affect me with any acuteness....

Moxon cannot publish my Italian journal immediately, because the whole of the American edition must be ready to go to press before he brings it out here. I suppose it will come out some time after Easter. Emily told you of his first offer for it, and of his gallant mode of making it. He is surely a pearl and a pattern of publishers.

Kiss that facetious "Virgin Martyr" for me. Such a laugh as you two are likely to get up together! I declare it brings the tears to my eyes to think of it.

[Pg 480]

I rejoice in your account of H— W—. It must be a blessing to every one belonging to him to see him do well such a duty as that of an Irish proprietor, in these most miserable times.

I have at present nothing further to impart to you but the newest news, that I am

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The last sentence of this letter refers to the failure of the potato-crop, and the consequent terrible famine that desolated Ireland.]

10, PARK PLACE, ST. JAMES'S, February 1st, 1847.

I feel almost certain, my dear Hal, that it will be better for me to be *alone* when I come out at Manchester than to have you with me, even if in all other respects it were expedient you should be there. My strength is much impaired, my nerves terribly shattered, and to see reflected in eyes that I love that pity for me which I shall feel only too keenly for myself, on the first night of my return to the stage, might, I fear, completely break down my courage. I am glad for this reason that I am to come out at Manchester, where I know nobody, and not in London, where, although I might not distinguish them, I should know that not a few who cared for me, and were sorry for me, were among my spectators. I am now so little able to resist the slightest appeal to my feelings that, at the play (to which I have been twice lately), the mere sound of human voices simulating distress has shaken and affected me to a strange degree, and this in pieces of a common and uninteresting description. A mere exclamation of pain or sorrow makes me shudder from head to foot. Judge how ill prepared I am to fulfil the task I am about to undertake....

This, however, is one of the most painful aspects of my work. It has a more encouraging one. It is an immense thing for me to be still able to work at all, and keep myself from helpless dependence upon any one.... The occupation, the mere *business* of the business, will, I am persuaded, be good rather than bad for me; for though one may be strong against sorrow, sorrow and inactivity combined are too much for any strength. Such a burden might not kill one, but destroy one's vitality to a degree just short of, and therefore worse than, death—crush, instead of killing and releasing one....

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I was reading over "The Hunchback" last night, and could not go through the scenes between Julia and Clifford, when he assumes the character of Lord Rochdale's secretary, without an agony of crying. I do not see how I am ever to act it again intelligibly, but I

suppose when I *must* do it I *shall*. Things that have to be done are done, somehow or other.

God bless you, my dear Hal.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

One word to Dorothy.

Now, my beloved and best Dorothy, haven't you enough to do with that most troublesome soul, Harriet, without being my "good angel" too? [Miss W— often went by the name of Harriet's "good angel."] I have never seen mine; but if I have one, I should think he or she must be a sort of spiritual heavenly steam-engine, a *three-hundred angel-power*, in order effectually to take care of me.

My dearest Hal, I have missed the dear nuisance of your letters so dreadfully these few days past, that I began seriously to meditate writing to you to know if I had offended you in any way. As for how I fare in this cold weather, the weather is nothing to me, and I used not to mind cold at all, but rather to like it; but my flesh is forsaking my bones at such a rate that I am beginning to shiver for want of covering, and I think to be reduced to a skeleton—a live one, I mean—while the thermometer is as low as it is will be very uncomfortable.

The satisfaction I had in my visit to my brother was that of seeing a person for whom I have a very warm affection, and, in some respects, a very sincere admiration. I believe, too, it was a comfort to poor John to see me and receive the expressions of my love and sympathy.... For his warm heart, his truthfulness and great simplicity of character, his worldly poverty, his great intellectual wealth, but, above all, for that he is my brother, I love him. He and his children are living in a poor small cottage, on a wild corner of common near Cassiobury. How I thought of our old—no, our young days, driving along past "The Grove" and the Cassiobury Park paling. My brother's present home is certainly not an extravagant residence, and though, of course, sufficient for absolute necessary comfort (how much comfort is *necessary?*), is nothing more.... John has advertised in the *Times* for a pupil to prepare for college, and should he be able to obtain one, it would, of course, materially assist him. In the mean time he is working with infinite ardor and industry upon an important work, the "History of the English Law." A friend of his, whom I met there, who is, I think, a competent judge, which, of course, I am not, of any such matter, assured me that the work was one of great erudition and research, but at the same time so dry and difficult, and therefore little likely to be popular, that it would not be easy to persuade any publisher to undertake it. He, Mr. B—, carried the first volume, which is complete, to town with him, to show it to persons capable of appreciating it, and endeavor to get it a little known, so as to procure an offer for its publication. Poor John! his perseverance in the studies he loves is very great, his devotion to them very deep, and if he could only live upon his means with his beloved mistress, Learning, I should think he had made a noble and honorable choice, however bitterly disappointed my father may feel at his not choosing to follow more lucrative pursuits.

ANGLO-SAXON
KEMBLE.

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I am going to act in *Dublin*. I have neither time nor space for more.

God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

10, PARK PLACE, Friday, 12th, 1847.

Direct to me at Manchester, "Theatre Royal," my dear Hal, that is all; or, indeed, I should prefer your directing to the Albion Hotel, that same house where you and I were so charmed by the sunlight on the carpet.

You say I do not know the value of letters. I think I do, for if I had not the very highest value for them I should long ago have given way to my detestation of writing, and put an end to my innumerable correspondences. Your letters have more than once been

snatched up by me, and pressed to my lips; so have my sister's.... I hate writing, it is true, but am content to pay that price for the intercourse of my friends; and though I may not love letters as you do, I do think I have a reasonable appreciation of their value.

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I share in your feeling, dearest Harriet, about my being in Dublin while you are absent from it. I do not know that it seems to me "wrong," but it certainly does seem as unnatural as that there should be a theatre open in Dublin at all at this time, when famine and such dire distress are prevailing in parts of the country.

I am troubled, too, at the uncertainty of how and when we are to meet; and the reason why these various considerations do not, perhaps, engross so much of my thoughts as they do of yours is because I have so many immediate and necessarily absorbing claims upon my attention.

I incline with you, however, to think that I shall not go to Dublin. I have not heard again from the manager, and I begin to hope that he has thought better of his invitation to me. As my work is a matter of necessity, I could not, of course, refuse an engagement in Dublin; but it does seem monstrous that there should be people willing to pay for theatrical entertainments there at this time.

If I do not go I shall lose an opportunity of seeing my brother Henry, which I am looking forward to with great pleasure—the only pleasure in the whole expedition, since you will not be there, which will indeed seem most strange and very *inappropriate*.

Harriet, *you* certainly have a passion for writing, for in your last you have repeated every word I said about my brother John, just as if you had invented it yourself. You are like Ariel, very; and I am like Prospero, very ("Dull thing! I said so"); or, no, I am like Falstaff, to be sure, and you like Prince Hal, with "damnable iteration." ...

Various of my London men friends threaten coming down to Manchester during my engagement there; Charles and Henry Greville, Chorley, and even Moxon, who declared, if my play was brought out, he must be in the pit the first night to see it. [This was my play called "An English Tragedy," which there was some talk of bringing out at Manchester.] I dare say the courage of all of them will give out before this bitter cold, and I shall not be sorry if it does, for I want no sympathizers to make me pitiful over myself.

AN
ENGLISH
TRAGEDY.

I am tolerably well just now, and really believe that when once I am fairly out of the fangs of the dressmakers I shall gather strength rapidly.

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The crudest fact in my fate at present is that I have actually not been able to get all my things made here, and am taking the materials for my Juliet and Queen Katharine dresses to be made up at Manchester; and this is horrid, because, but for this, my off evenings would have really been seasons of rest and quiet. However, it is of no use lamenting over any one detail of such a whole as this business....

Give my love to dear Dorothy. She is half my good angel, by her own voluntary assumption of the character....

Do not be troubled overmuch for or about me, my dearest friend; but commend me, as I do you and myself, to God, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

10, PARK PLACE, Saturday Evening.

MY DEAR HAL,

I never did, and I never shall, offer anything I write to anybody. If my friends ask me for anything I write, I will get it for them, just as I would anything else they ask me to get or to do for them; but I have no idea of volunteering such a bestowal upon anybody. Emily asked me for a copy of my "Year of Consolation," and I have promised her one, and I will certainly give you one if you wish for it. As for accounting, by any process of reasoning of mine, for your desire to have my book, I am quite unable to do so.

My love for my friends would never make me wish to read their books, unless I thought

their book likely to be worth reading. Now, I cannot assume this with regard to my own, especially as I don't believe it.

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Our friends' characters, their love for us, and ours for them, is the stuff of which our adhesion is made; and unless I had a genius for a friend, I should care little for any other mental exhibitions from those I loved than those their daily intercourse afforded me. In personal intercourse, unless a person is a genius, you really get that which is best intellectually, as well as every other way, from your friend. Even in the case of a great genius, I should think his daily intercourse likely to be more valuable in an intellectual point of view than his best works; but then, of such a mind one would naturally wish to possess all and every product that one could obtain. If I thought myself a genius, I might offer you my books unasked—perhaps.

I shall be at the Albion at Manchester, and if you wish to hear from me, you will do well to write to me there....

I have had a most terrible day of fatigue and worry, breaking my back with packing my things, and my heart with paying my bills.

Dear Henry Greville goes to within fifty miles of Manchester with me to-morrow, and stays at a friend's house, whence he and Alfred Potocki purpose coming on for the play on Tuesday evening. After all, I am not sorry he is coming; his regard for me is not of a sort to make me dread the weakening effect of his sympathy, and it will be comfortable to know that among that strange audience I have just such a kind well-wisher as he is, to keep up whatever courage I have.

HENRY
GREVILLE.

Perhaps you may yet see me in Dublin, for the manager wishes me to renew my engagement after the first six nights; and, of course, if he pays me my terms, I shall be glad to remain there as long as he likes.

Give my dear love to dear Dorothy. I am thoroughly worn out, and feel quite unwell; and oh, how cold it will be in that railroad carriage to-morrow!

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

ALBION HOTEL, MANCHESTER, Monday, 15th.

MY DEAR HAL,

I cannot tell you exactly *all* why I dislike writing letters, because my dislike is made up of so many elements. One reason is that the limits of a letter do not permit of one's saying satisfactorily what one has to say upon any subject. I think frequently that my letters must be highly unsatisfactory because of my tendency to discussion, which makes them more like imperfect essays than letters, the chief charm and use of which is to tell of daily events, interests, and occurrences; how one is, what one does, where one goes, etc. Now, while I fear my letters must be unsatisfactory to my friends because they seldom contain details of this sort, they are still more so to me, because I have neither room nor time in them to say anything about anything as I wish to say it. Then, I have an indescribable impatience of the mere mechanical process.

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You say that I talk, though I do not write, willingly to my friends, but whenever I get upon any subject that interests me, with anybody whom I am not afraid of wearying, I talk till I have said all I have to say; and though I never spoke about anything that I cared for without afterwards perceiving that I had left unsaid many important things upon the subject while I spoke, I spoke all that came into my mind at the time. In writing this is never the case, and fast as my pen flies, it seems to me to stick to the paper; while in speaking, what with my voice, my face, and my whole body, I manage to convey an immensity of matter (stuff, you know, I mean) in an incredibly short time. Impatience of all my limitations, therefore, is one cause of my dislike to letter-writing.

You say that I do not object to conversation, though I do to correspondence: and it is quite true that I sometimes have great pleasure in talking; but if I had to talk, even upon the subjects that interest me most, as much as I have to write in the discharge of my

daily correspondence, I should die of exhaustion, and fancy, too, that I was guilty of a reprehensible waste of time. That I am doing what gives my friends pleasure, and is but their due, alone prevents my thinking my letter-writing a waste of time. As therefore it is not to me, as to you, a pleasurable occupation in itself, I do not think it can be compared with "reading Shakespeare, Schiller," or indeed any book worth reading. The exercise of justice towards, and consideration for, others is a form of virtue, and *therefore* letter-writing is, in some cases, a good employment of time.

I have a desire for mental culture, only equalled by my sense of my profound ignorance, and the feeling of how little knowledge is attained, even by scholars leading the most active and assiduously studious existences.

My delight in my own superficial miscellaneous reading is not so much for the information I retain (for I forget, or at least seem to do so, much of what I read), as for the sense of mental activity produced at the time, by reading; and though I forget much, something doubtless remains, upon the whole.

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Knowledge, upon any subject, is an enchanting *curiosity* to me; fine writing on elevated subjects is a source of the liveliest pleasure to me; in all kinds of good poetry I find exquisite enjoyment; and not having a particle of satisfaction in letter-writing for its own sake, I cannot admit any parallel between reading and writing (whatever I might think of arithmetic). I have sometimes fancied, too, that but for the amount of letter-writing I perform, I might (perhaps) write carefully and satisfactorily something that might (perhaps) be worth reading, something that might (perhaps) in some degree approach my standard of a tolerably good literary production—some novel or play, some work of imagination—and that my much letter-writing is against this; but I dare say this is a mistaken notion, and that I should never, under any circumstances, write anything worth anything.

I have always desired much to cultivate the accomplishment of drawing; it is an admirable sedative—a soothing, absorbing, and satisfactory pursuit; but I have never found time to follow it up steadily, though snatching at it now and then according as opportunity favored me. I give but little time to my music now (though some every day, because I will not let go anything I have once possessed); for I shall never be a proficient in it, and I already have as much of it at my command as answers my need of it as a recreation. Any of these occupations is more agreeable to me than letter-writing; so is needlework, so is walking out, so is—almost anything else I could do. Now, as Shylock says, "Are you answered yet?"

DRAWING A
SEDATIVE.

I should be sorry my brother Henry went to the trouble or expense of coming over to Manchester or Liverpool to see me, as there is every probability of my being in Dublin early in March, where I shall act till the 22nd, and perhaps longer.

I have the privilege of sitting with an engraving of Lord Wilton, in his peer's robes, *hung* opposite to me—enough surely for any reasonable woman's happiness....

God bless you, dear; give my love to dear Dorothy. I rejoice for her that the cold is gone.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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My kind friend Henry Greville, and that very charming young Alfred Potocki, brother of the Austrian Ambassadors, Madame de Dietrichstein, and a great friend of Henry's, came down with me half way, yesterday; they stopped at a friend's house about fifty miles from Manchester, and come up to-morrow to see the play, so that I shall have the comfort of people that I like, and not the trial of people that I love, near me on that occasion.

I am not very nervous about my *plunge*; the only thing that I dread is the noise (noise of any sort being what my nerves can no longer endure at all) which I am afraid may greet me. I wish I could avoid my "reception," as it is called, because any loud sound shakes me now from head to foot; this is the one thing that I do dread—I have gained some self-possession and strength in these past years, and I hope my acting itself, as well as my comfort in acting, may benefit by my increased self-command. Poor Hayes (my maid) says that the peace of being alone with me, after our late lodging, is like having left *Hell*; we shall see what she says to-morrow night at the theatre,—poor thing. Farewell.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I acted Julia in "The Hunchback" last night (the first time for thirteen years); got up this morning with a dreadful cough and sore throat, the effect of over-exertion and exposure; went to rehearsal after breakfast, rehearsed Lady Macbeth and Juliana in "The Honeymoon" (a *dancing* part!); have written to three managers, from whom I have received "proposals;" have despatched accounts of myself to my father and sundry of my friends; have corrected forty pages of proof of my Italian journal; have prepared all my dresses for to-morrow; have received sundry visits (among others, that of a doctor, whom I was obliged to send for), and have wished that I had not had so much to do.

I am so far satisfied with my last night's experiment, that I think it has proved that my strength will serve to go through this sort of labor for a couple of years; and I hope during that time, by moving from one place to another, that my attraction may hold out sufficiently to enable me to secure the small capital upon which I can contrive to live independently.

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The theatre here is beautiful; the company very fair; the plays are well and carefully got up. The audience were most exceedingly kind and cordial to me, and I think I have every reason to be thankful, and grateful, and more than satisfied. The manager wants me to renew my engagement, which is a sign, I suppose, that he is satisfied too.

With affectionate respects to my lord, believe me, my dear Lady Dacre,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

MANCHESTER, Thursday, 18th.

I cannot tell how many books have been written by geniuses, dear Hal, and therefore, being unable to answer the first question in your letter, pass on to the next.

The people that I have to deal with here seem to me very much like all other people everywhere else. The proprietor and manager of the theatre is an active, enterprising, intelligent man, who knows the *value* of liberality, and that generosity is sometimes the most remunerative as well as amiable and popular line of action. He is a shrewd man of business, a little rough in his manner, but kindly and good-natured withal, and extremely civil and considerate to me. He is anxious that I should renew my engagement, and I shall be very willing to do so, on my return from Dublin.

STAGE-
MANAGER.

My stage-manager is a brother of James Wallack, well bred, and pleasant to deal with, and also very kind and courteous to me. Everybody in the theatre is civil and good to me, and I am heartily grateful to them all. As for my good host and hostess of the Albion, they really look after me in the most devoted and affectionate manner, so that I am quite of my poor maid's opinion, that this is a paradise of peace and comfort compared with Mrs. —'s lodging-house.

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My dressing-room at the theatre is wretched in point of size and situation, being not much larger than this sheet of paper, and up a sort of steep ladder staircase: in other respects, it is tidy enough, and infinitely better than the dark barrack-room you remember me dressing in when I was in Manchester years ago, when I was a girl—alas! I don't mean a pun! It is not the same theatre, but a new one, built by the Mr. Knowles who engaged me to act here, and one of the prettiest, brightest, and most elegant playhouses I ever saw; admirable for the voice, and of a most judicious size and shape. Unfortunately, a large hotel has been built immediately adjoining it (I suspect by the same person, who is a great speculator, and apt, I should think, to have many, if not too many, irons in the fire), and the space that should have been appropriated to the accommodation of the actors, behind the scenes in the theatre, has been sacrificed to the adjoining building, which is a pity.

If I were to tell you the names of the people who act with me, you would be none the wiser. The company is a very fair one indeed, and might be an excellent one, if they were not all too great geniuses either to learn or to rehearse their parts. The French do not put the flimsiest vaudeville upon the stage without rehearsing it for *three months*;

here, however, and everywhere else in England, people play such parts as Macbeth with no more than three rehearsals; and I am going to act this evening in the "Honeymoon," with a gentleman who, filling the principal part in the piece, has not thought fit to attend at the rehearsal; so that though I was there, I may say in fact that I have had no rehearsal of it,—which is businesslike and pleasant.

Oh, my dear Hal, I strive to judge of my position as reasonably as I can! I do hope that in spite of the loss of youth, of person, and feeling (which latter communicates itself even to acting), I may be able to fill some parts better than I did formerly. I have no longer any nervousness to contend with—only a sense of the duty I owe to my employers and spectators, to take the utmost pains, and do my work as well as I possibly can for them.

My physical power of voice and delivery is not diminished, which is good for tragedy; my self-possession is increased, which ought to be good for comedy; and I do trust I may succeed, at least sufficiently to be able, by going from one place to another, and returning to America when I have worn out my public favor here—say, in two years,—to make what will enable me to live independently, though probably upon very small means.

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I write this after my first night's performance, and I trust my views are not unreasonable. How I wondered at myself, as I stood at the side scene the other night, without any quickening of the pulse or beating of the heart—thanks to the far other experiences I have gone through, which have left me small sensibility for stage apprehensions; and yet I could hardly have believed it possible that I should have been as little nervous as I was. When I went on, however, I had to encounter the only thing I had dreaded; and the loud burst of public welcome (suggestive of how many associations, and what a contrast!) shocked me from head to foot, and tried my nerves to a degree that affected my performance unfavorably through several scenes.

But this was my first appearance after thirteen years of absence from the stage; and, of course, no second emotion of the kind awaits me. The exertion and exposure of the performance gave me a violent cold and sore throat, and I have been obliged to send for a doctor. I had *two* rehearsals yesterday, which did not mend matters, but I have bolstered myself up *pro tem.*, and what with inhaling hot water and swathing my throat in cold, and lozenges and gargles, etc., I hope to fight through without breaking down.... I have heard from Catherine Sedgwick, who says that it is a long time since she heard from you or Emily. She adds: "I shall be very glad to hear from them again. In your absence, I had nothing to give interest to my letters to them, and I have not written; and they, naturally, had no sufficient motive to write to me, so that I have been in complete ignorance about them. Harriet S—— I reckon among my friends for both worlds."

STAGE-LIFE.

God bless you, my dear Hal. Give dear Dorothy my love.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

MANCHESTER, Tuesday, 23d.

A thousand thanks, my dear Lady Dacre, for all your kind inquiries about, and sympathy in, my concerns. I am going on prosperously. The theatre is quite full when I play, in spite of the very bad weather, and I think my employer can afford to pay me, without grudging, my nightly salary.

I think you are right in saying I am my own best critic; my mother being gone, I believe I really am so.

I have played, since I last wrote to you, Juliana, in the "Honeymoon," a rather pretty, foolish part, which I act accordingly; Lady Macbeth, which I never could, and cannot, and never *shall can* act; and Juliet, which, I suppose, I play neither better nor worse than formerly, but which, naturally, I am no longer personally fit to represent.

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I am not very well, for the returning to such labor as this after thirteen years' disuse of it, and at thirty-seven years of age, is a severe physical trial, and has, of course, exhausted me very much. Nothing more, however, ails me than fatigue, and I have no doubt that a few more nights' "hard use" will enable me to stand steady under my new

load of heavy circumstance.

You have asked me for newspaper reports, and I send them to you. You know my feeling about such things, but that is nothing to the purpose; if you can care for such praise or dispraise of me, it is no less than my duty to furnish you with it, at your request, if I can. You know I never read critiques, favorable or unfavorable, myself; so I do not even know what I send you.

Good-bye. Remember me respectfully and affectionately to Lord Dacre, and believe me ever

Yours truly,

FANNY.

MANCHESTER, Thursday, 25th.

DEAR HAL,

Mr. H. F. Chorley I believe to be a great friend of mine, and an uncommonly honest man, but I may be mistaken in both points. Your inquiry about my health I cannot answer very triumphantly. I am not well, and my feet and ankles swell so before I have stood five minutes on the stage, that the prolonged standing in shoes, which, though originally loose for me, become absolute instruments of torture, like those infamous "boots" of martyrizing memory, is a terrible physical ordeal for either a tragic or comic heroine—who had need indeed be something of a real one to endure it.

Some of this trouble is due to general debility, and some to the long-unaccustomed effort of so much standing, and will, I trust, gradually subside as I grow stronger and more used to my work....

I acted Juliet last night, and I am very weary to-day, but thankful to have my most arduous part well over.

Give my love to dear Dorothy. I am very sorry to hear of her being so unwell, for I know how anxious you must be about her. Thank her for her kind words to me....

God bless you, my dear,

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

MANCHESTER, Friday, 26th.

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DEAR HAL,

My throat has given me no more trouble since my first night's acting. I have a pertinacious cough, and a tremendous cold in my head, which are nuisances; but I am free from irritation in the throat, and have found hitherto, in my performances, my voice stronger, instead of weaker, than it was.... I am better than I was last week, and have no doubt I shall acquire strength as I go on, as my first start in this dismal work did not quite break me down.

The people here have shown me the most extreme kindness and hospitality, and I have had invitations to dine out every day this week that I have not acted.

My brother Henry has come over from Dublin, to spend a couple of days with me, and his visit has been an immense pleasure and comfort to me.

My time, thank God, is so incessantly occupied with all kinds of business—writing letters to managers, acquaintances, and friends; rehearsing, acting, looking after my dresses, correcting proof-sheets, and receiving visits—that I have no leisure but what I spend in sleep.

Henry has promised to mount me on a horse of his, when I get to Dublin; and I am sure that my favorite exercise will be of the greatest benefit to me.

The actors here are not more inattentive than they generally are, everywhere, to their

STAGE-LIFE.

business; their carelessness and want of conscience about it is nothing new to me, and all my bygone professional experience had fully prepared me for it. The company here is a better one than I shall probably find anywhere, even in London; and I have the advantage of having to do with a very civil, considerate, and obliging stage-manager.

I have made, at present, no further engagement for acting here. I shall spend Passion-week at Sutton Park with the Arkwrights, who have written to beg me to do so, and whose vicinity to this place makes that arrangement every way best for me, as in Easter-week I am to act in Manchester again, for the benefit of the above-mentioned courteous stage-manager. From the 12th to the 17th of April, I act at Bath and Bristol; and after that I think it is probable I shall act for a short time in London,—but this is uncertain.

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Your questions, for which you apologize, are particularly agreeable to me, as, in spite of the ready invention and fluent utterance on which you compliment me, I am always charmed to have the subject of my letters suggested to me by the questions of my friends.

As my engagement in Dublin, like all the engagements I make, is *a nightly one*, if it does not answer to the manager I shall of course immediately put an end to it. I am secured from loss by payment after each performance but should never think of taking what I do not bring to my employer.

Mr. Calcraft writes me that he is sanguine about the engagement, in spite of the public distress, and wants me to leave three nights open after the 22d for the extension of it. We shall see.

God bless you, dear Hal. Give my affectionate love to Dorothy. I am most happy to hear she is better. The kindness of the Manchester people has filled my room with flowers, my "good angels," about which I am becoming every day more superstitious, for I am never four-and-twenty hours in a place that some do not make their appearance, to cheer and comfort me. Farewell.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BIRMINGHAM, Sunday, 28th.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I played last night for the last time in Manchester. The house was immensely full, and when I went on the stage after the piece, so loud and long and cordial were they in their kind demonstrations of good-will to me that, what with the exhaustion of a whole day's packing (which I have to do for myself, my maid being utterly incompetent) and the getting through my part, the whole thing was too much for me, and I turned quite faint, and all but fell down on the stage. But I am not a fainting woman, and so only went into violent hysterics as soon as I was carried to my dressing-room. So much for that "pride" which you speak of as likely to prevent my shedding tears when encountering the kind acclamations of a multitude of my "fellow-creatures;" the most trying to the nerves of all demonstrations, except, perhaps, its howl of execration.

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I came to this place to-day, and feel indescribably cheerless and lonely in my strange inn. The room at Manchester was the *home* of a fortnight, but this feels most disconsolately unfamiliar. Moreover, I only act here one night, Tuesday, and then go to Liverpool, where the master of the Adelphi Hotel, where I shall stay, is a person to whom I have been known for many years, in whose house I have been with my children, and where I shall feel less friendlessly forlorn than I do here.

I shall remain there about a week, and then go to Dublin, where I expect to stay about a fortnight, and where I shall find my youngest brother—a circumstance of infinite consolation and comfort to me. Passion-week I spend at Sutton Park with the Arkwrights; after that go to Bath and Bristol, and then to London, where I have now an engagement for a month at the Princess's Theatre.

You have now the map of my proceedings for the next six weeks, after which I hope I shall see you in London. I direct this to Chesterfield Street, as you say you shall be back there on Thursday. I have been kept constantly supplied with the loveliest flowers all the

MAP OF
PROCEEDINGS.

time of my stay in Manchester, by one kind person or another, which has greatly helped to keep up my courage and spirits.

Pray give my respects to Lord Dacre.

I am ever, my dear Lady Dacre,
Yours truly,

FANNY.

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Thursday, March 4th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not go to Bath, but to Manchester, on the 25th and 27th, and perhaps on the Monday of Passion-week; but this is not certain. If not on that Monday, then early in Easter-week; and Passion-week I shall spend with Mrs. Arkwright at Sutton.

On Thursday in Easter-week, April 8th, I must be in London, as I act there for two nights gratuitously for your poor starving fellow-countrymen, for whom an amateur performance is being got up.

On April 15th I go down to Bath, and act there on the 17th, and my engagement at the Princess's Theatre does not begin till the 26th of that month. This is the plan of my campaign as far as it is laid out; should any change occur in it, I will let you know as soon as I know of it myself.

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And so your plan for my taking the air, my dear, was to get into a *close* fly. I confess that would not have occurred to my ingenuity, or I should think to that of any but an Irish humorist. I don't feel sure that there mayn't be a pun hidden somewhere in your proposition. *The damp*, indeed, I might have taken, to the greatest perfection, for there did stand a whole row of vehicles before my very windows at Manchester which were being saturated through and through with the rain that fell upon them all day long, and must have adapted them admirably for the purposes of a healthful drive for an invalid suffering from sore throat and a heavy cold.

I have nothing to say to your impertinent remarks on my zigzag progress to my various engagements, neither any observation to make about Emily's information upon the subject of my white cashmere gown.

I am perfectly persuaded that, as a considerable amount of food goes into one's stomach, the use of which is merely to produce necessary distension of all the organs, channels, receptacles, machinery, etc., in short; so a considerable amount of words proceeds out of our mouths, the use of which is merely to keep our lungs aired and our speaking organs in exercise; and for that purpose the follies, and foibles, and even faults of our friends are excellent material, provided no bitterness mixes in the process; from which, as I feel myself very safe between you and Emily, I abandon myself absolutely to you both; and as I believe scribbling (apparently unnecessary) is as necessary to the health of both of you as the apparently superfluous food and words which people swallow and utter, I am quite content you should fill up your paper with the mad eccentricity of the order of my engagements, the rotation of my gowns, and the dripping street-cabs in which I refuse to take the air for the benefit of my health....

I do not know who the amateurs are who are to act for the starving Irish with me in London. Forster, the editor of the *Examiner*, I hear, is one; Henry Greville, who, indeed, is the getter-up of the whole thing, another; but for the rest I do not know.

Your people are what are commonly called a generous people; and that, I suppose, is why they don't mind begging. I think it takes an immensity of generosity to beg.

Only think of Mr. Radley, here at the Adelphi, expressing his surprise, when he saw me, that you were not with me! Was not that really quite touching and nice of him?

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My cousin, Charles Mason, is here.... His amiable temper and gentle manner made him a favorite with my poor mother, and I like to see him on that account....

How sorry I shall be for both you and Dorothy when your pleasant time at Torquay is over! especially for you, who will have to see misery and sometimes hear nonsense. I

mean when you go back to Ireland; not, *of course*, while you are with me....

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, Sunday, 7th.

I have minded what you said (as when didn't I?), and am swallowing ipecacuanha lozenges by the gross. It drives me almost crazy that you should be compelled to make your plans so dependent upon mine, which are so dependent upon the uncertain wills and arrangements of so many people.

The manager of the Princess's Theatre, where I am engaged to act in London, will not allow me to act for the proposed charity at the St. James's Theatre. I offered to give up the engagement with him rather than break my promise to the amateurs and disappoint all their plans; but he will not let me off my engagement to him, and will not permit me to appear anywhere else before that takes place. I think he is injuring himself by balking a pet plan of amusement in which all manner of fine folks, lady patronesses, and the Queen herself, had been induced to interest themselves; and I think his preventing my acting for this charity will injure him much more than my appearance on this occasion, before my coming out at his theatre, could have done. But, of course, he must be the judge of his own interest; and, at any rate, having entered into an engagement with him, I cannot render myself liable to squabbles, and perhaps a lawsuit with him, about it. All these petty worries and annoyances torment and confuse me a good deal. I have a very poor brain for business, and there is something in the ignoble vulgarity and coarseness of manner that I occasionally encounter that increases my inaptitude by the sort of dismay and disgust with which it fills me. If the person who has hired me does not relent about these charity representations, I shall be obliged to give them up, and then I shall act in Manchester at that time, instead of on the 25th and 27th of March, which had been before intended, but which I now think I should give to two representations in Chester on my way back from Dublin. All this, you see, is still in a state of most vexatious uncertainty, and I can give you no satisfaction about it, having been able to obtain none myself....

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STAGE
ANNOYANCES.

Perhaps, dearest Hal, I ought not to have asked you the precise meaning of what you wrote about dear little H—[her nephew, a charming child, who died in early boyhood], but, every now and then, those expressions which have become almost meaningless in the mouths of the great majority of those who use them strike me very much when used by thinking people.

Unless death produces in us an immediate accession of goodness (which, I think, in those who have labored faithfully to be good here, and are therefore prepared and ready for more goodness, it may), I cannot conceive that it should produce greater nearness to God.

Place, time, life, death, earth, heaven, are divisions and distinctions that we make, like the imaginary lines we trace upon the surface of the globe. But goodness, surely, is nearness to God, and *only* goodness; and though I suppose those good servants of His who have striven to do His will while in this life are positively nearer to Him after death, I think it is because, in laying down the sins of infirmity that inevitably lodge in their mortal bodies, they really are thus much better after death.

I do not think this is the case with those who have not striven after excellence, which a young child can hardly be supposed to have done; because if there is one thing I believe in, it is that there is work to do for every soul called into conscious existence.... If Dorothy were to die, I should believe she had gone nearer to God. His care and love for us is, I verily believe, the nearest of all things to us; but I think our *conscious* nearness to Him depends upon how we do His will—*i.e.* how we *strive* to do it.

I do not speak of Christ in this discussion, because, you know, I think it was God's will, but man's nature, that He came to show us, and to teach; and this part of the subject would involve me in more than I have space to write: but we will speak of this hereafter.

Is it not strange that Charles Greville and you should both be writing to me just now upon this same subject, of life after death?

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I have been walking to-day and yesterday in the Botanical Garden here.... The place is

full of the saddest and tenderest recollections to me; it is full, too, of innumerable witnesses of God's mercy and wisdom; plants and flowers from every climate, and the annual resurrection of the earth is already begun among them. I am very unwell to-day, but I was well yesterday, and this seems to be now the sort of life-tenure I may expect:—so be it.

God bless you, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

DEAR DOROTHY,

I send you a kiss, which Hal will give you for me.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, March 14th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I think you must have begun to think that I never meant to write to you again; for it is seldom that three unanswered letters of yours are allowed to accumulate in my writing-book; but since I left Liverpool, I have really not had leisure to write....

The houses at Liverpool were crammed, but here last night there was a very indifferent one, partly, they say, owing to the fact that the Lord Lieutenant bespeaks the play for tomorrow night; but I should think it much more rational to account for it by the deplorable condition to which the famine has reduced the country, which ought to affect the minds of those whose bodies do not suffer with something like a sympathetic seriousness, inimical to public diversions....

I do not care to pursue the argument with you about the change produced by death in the existence of a child. That which you say about it appears to me to involve some absolute contradictions; but I would rather postpone the discussion till we meet.

Charles Greville began writing to me upon these subjects, with reference to the rapidly declining health and strength of his and my friend, Mary Berry; over whose approaching death he lamented greatly, although she is upwards of eighty years old, and, according to my notions, must be ready and willing to depart.

MARY
BERRY.

Charles Greville's ideas, as far as I can make them out, appear to me those of a materialist. His chief regret seems to be for the loss of a person he cared for, and the departure of a remarkable member of his society. Beyond these two views of the subject he does not appear to me to go.

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He has sent me, in the last letter I received from him, an extract from one of Sir James Mackintosh's, on the death of his wife, which he calls a "touching expression of grief," but which strikes me as rather a deplorable expression of grief without other alleviation than the dim and doubtful surmise of a mind the philosophy of which had never accepted the consolations of revelation, and yet, under the pressure of sorrow, rejected the narrower and shallower ones of stoical materialism.

You wish to hear of my arrangement with my cousin, Charles Mason, and I will tell you when it is decided on....

I have had a note from your sister, asking me to dine with them any day after the 16th, when they expect to come to town; but I have declined the invitation, because I do not wish to give up dining with my brother Henry, who comes to me every day when I don't act....

It seems strange that you should ask me if uncertainty, torments me. It torments me SO that I never endure it, even when the only escape from it is by some conclusion that I know to be rash and ill-advised.

"The woman who deliberates," says the saying, "is lost." My loss has been, and ever will be, through precipitation, not deliberation. To choose anything, a gown even, is a martyrdom to me, and, unlike the generality of my sex, I generally go into a shop, wishing to look at nothing, and knowing only the precise color, material, and quantity of the stuff I mean to purchase; for if I were to leave myself the smallest discretion—

option, we will say (I can hardly leave myself what I haven't got)—I should infallibly buy something revoltingly ugly, out of mere impatience of the investigation and deliberation necessary to get something that pleased me. It is to save myself from the trouble of choice that I have made so many arbitrary and, to your thinking, absurd rules about the details of my daily life; but they spare me indecision about trifles, and I find it, therefore, comfortable to follow them.

I am at Morrison's hotel; the rooms are clean, comfortable, and cheerful, but the fare is bad and far from abundant; but if the charges are meagre in proportion, I shall be satisfied, if not with food, at least with equity.

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My friend Arthur Malkin is here, as secretary to one of the members of the committee sent out from England to organize relief for your wretched countrymen. He is good and clever, and it is a great pleasure to me to have him here. I am sorry Mr. Labouchère [afterwards Lord Taunton] is away in Parliament. I wished particularly to have met him.

Lord Bessborough was at the play last night, and sent, after it was over, to invite me to the St. Patrick's ball on Wednesday; but I have declined, as I do not feel at all well enough for dissipations that would bore as well as tire me. I am told he means to ask me to dine at the Castle, which I rather dread, as it is not, I believe, allowable to refuse a representative of majesty; but I dread the exertion and the tedium of the thing, and have a particular dislike to the notion of meeting —....

Good-bye, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Our total ignorance of the laws of health and the accidents of sickness throws us necessarily for help upon the partial knowledge of physicians; but I am often reminded of what that admirable physician and charming man, Dr. Gueneau de Mussy, once said to me: "Madame, nous ne savons rien." "Ah mais!" remonstrated I, "cependant quelque chose?" "Absolument rien, madame," was the consolatory reply of one of the first medical men of Europe, under whose care both I and my sister then were, and to whose skilful and devoted care I attribute the preservation of my sister's life under circumstances of great peril.

The amateur performance given at the St. James's Theatre was Lord Ellesmere's translation of Victor Hugo's "Hernani," which had been acted sixteen years before under such very different circumstances, as far as I was concerned, at Bridgewater House. Mr. C— was again the hero, as I the heroine, of the piece, but the part of Don Carlos was filled by Henry Greville, and that of the old Spanish noble by Mr. John Forster.

JOHN
FORSTER.

It was upon this performance that Mr. Macready passed such annihilating condemnation, not even excepting from his damnatory sentence of total incapacity his friend and admirer, John Forster, whose mode of delivering the part of Don Ruez bore ludicrous witness to Macready's own influence and example, if not direct teaching.

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Macready does not even mention poor Forster; the entry in his diary runs thus: "Went to the amateur play at the St. James's Theatre; the play "Hernani," translated by Lord Ellesmere, was in truth an *amateur* performance. Greville and Craven were very good *amateurs*, but—tragedy by amateurs!"

The recital of a very graceful and touching poetical address, written by Lady Dufferin for the occasion, was part of the evening's work assigned to me, and as I was so weak and suffering from my late severe illness as to be hardly able to stand, it was with a sense of having certainly done my share in the evening's charity that I brought my part of the performance to a close.

While standing at the side-scene before going on to speak this address, dear Lord Carlisle brought me a most exquisite bunch of flowers, saying, "I know I ought to throw this at your head from the front of the house, but I would rather lay it at your feet here."

He then, to my great amazement, proceeded to spread out my satin train for me with a dexterity so remarkable that I asked him where he had served his apprenticeship. "Oh, at Court," said he, "at the drawing-rooms, where I have spread out and gathered up oceans of silk and satin, thousands of yards more than a counter-gentleman at Swan and Edgar's." He certainly had learned his business very well.

After leaving Dublin I entered into an arrangement with my cousin, Charles Mason, to become my agent, and make my engagements for me, undertaking the necessary correspondence with the managers who employed me, and looking after my money transactions with them for me. I stood greatly in need of some such assistance, being quite incompetent to the management of any business, and ignorant of all the usual modes of proceeding in theatrical affairs, to a degree that rendered it highly probable that my interests would suffer severely from my ignorance. My cousin, however, only rendered me this service for a very short time, as he left England for America soon after he undertook it; after which I reverted to my former condition of comparative helplessness, making my contracts with my employers as well as I could, and protecting myself from loss, and keeping out of troublesome complications and disputes, by the light of what natural reason and rectitude I possessed; always making my engagements by the night, and thus limiting any possible loss I might sustain or inflict upon my employers, to my salary and their receipts, for one performance. I also reduced my written transactions to the very fewest and briefest communications possible, with my various theatrical correspondents, and have more than once had occasion to observe that precision, conciseness, and a rigid adherence to mere statements of terms, times, and purely indispensable details of business, were not the distinguishing features of the letters of most of the men of business with whom I corresponded.]

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QUEEN'S HOTEL, BIRMINGHAM, Saturday, May 29th.

MY DEAR HAL,

How did you get through that dreary time after we parted? I did so repent not having left some of my "good angels," my flowers, with you; for though you do not care for them as I do, I love them so much that I think they would have seemed part of myself to you. What a vision remained to me of your lonely stay in that horrid room! But the day passed, and its sorrow, as they all do; and when this reaches you, you will be comfortable and rested, and among your own people again.

From Liverpool to Crewe I had companions in the ladies' carriage in which I was; after that I had it to myself, and lay stretched on the ground for rest the whole of the rest of the way.

I finished Dr. Mays's memoir, and read through half Harriet Martineau's book, before I reached this place.

Women are always said to talk more than men, and yet I have generally observed that when Englishwomen who are strangers to each other travel together, not a single word is exchanged between them; while men almost invariably fall into discourse together. This, I suppose, is partly from the want of subjects of general interest among women, such as politics, agriculture, national questions of importance, etc., which form excellent common ground of conversation for chance companions; while the questions of human society and considerations which concern men and women alike may be too important or too futile, too general or too special, to admit of easy discussion with strangers. The fact is, that most women's subjects of interest are so purely personal and individual that they can only be talked over with intimates.

WOMEN'S
TALK AND
MEN'S
TALK.

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I like Harriet Martineau's book very much, though perhaps not quite so much as I expected. What pleases me best is its spirit, the Christian faith in good, which is really delightful; though I cannot help thinking she mistakes in supposing that one *must* be very ill before one believes in God's sole law, *good*, more almost than in one's own existence.

The descriptions of natural objects are admirable, and the human loving-kindness excellent; but I think she pushes her propositions sometimes to the verge of paradox.... I am delighted to have it, and think it better reading than the *Dublin Magazine*.

I got here at a little after three. The house is upside down with cleansing processes, by reason of which I am put (till a smaller one can be got ready for me) into an amazingly lofty large room, with some good prints hung on the walls, and a pianoforte; seeing which privileges, I have declined transferring myself to any other apartment, and shall be made to pay accordingly.

Tell me of your errand to the theatre at Liverpool, and how you spent the day, and how the sea treated you, and everything about everything.

God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BRISTOL, Sunday, May 30th, 1847.

A thousand thanks, dear friend, for Liebig's book. You are right, I want something more to read. I finished Harriet Martineau (Oh, what ink! wait till I get some better) yesterday evening before tea, and the pamphlet on bread after I got into bed, and the "Liverpool Tragedy" (such a thing!) this morning in the railroad; so that your present of Liebig's book came to my wish and to my need, just as a gift from you should do; and I shall spend this Sunday afternoon in learning those wonderful things, and praising God for them.

I regret very much that I cannot recollect anything distinctly that I read, because the consequence is that books of an order calculated to be of the greatest use to me, books of fact and positive scientific knowledge, are really of less advantage to me than any others, because of their making no appeal to what I should call my emotional memory, and so they only profit me for the moment in which I read them. Works of imagination, of criticism, of history, and biography (even of metaphysical speculation), leave more with me than treatises of positive knowledge or scientific facts. From the others, a spirit, an animus, a general impression, a mental, moral, or intellectual accretion, remains with me; indeed, that is pretty much the whole result I obtain from anything I read. But books of *knowledge*, of scientific or natural facts, though they sometimes affect me beyond the finest poetry with an awe and delight that brings tears to my eyes, have but one invariable result with me, to add to my love and wonder of God. Their other uses depend, of course, upon the memory which retains and applies them subsequently, either in action or observation; and this I fail to do, by reason of forgetting: and it is a sorrow and a loss to me, because the whole world is in some sort transfigured, and life endowed with double significance, to those who are familiar with the details of the wonderful laws that govern them, and their self-communion must be as full of variety and interest as their conversation is to others.

I have infinite respect for knowledge; it is only second in value to wisdom, and to unite both is to be very *fortunate*—which word I use advisedly, for, though the nobler of the two, wisdom is allowed to all, knowledge is not.

I agree with you in what you say of Harriet Martineau's book: the good in it is *her* peculiar good (very good good it is, too), but it must be taken with the shadow of her bad upon it. It seems to me occasionally a little hard and dogmatical, and I have not liked it, upon the whole, as much as I expected, for it is rather less Christian than I expected; yet it is a very valuable book, and I was very thankful for it.

I shall send the recipe for making effervescing bread forthwith to Lenox, to Catherine Sedgwick, who is a martyr to dyspepsia and bad baking, and who, being herself an expert cook, will know how to have the staff of life prepared from these directions, so as to support instead of piercing her, as it mostly does, up among those country operators. They never have good bread there, and are all miserable in consequence, especially herself and her brother Charles, who have delicate stomachs and cannot endure the heavy sour concoction which they are nevertheless obliged to swallow by way of daily

THE BAKING
OF BREAD.

bread. (I almost wonder how they manage to say the Lord's Prayer petition for it.)

The note you forwarded me from Liverpool was another scream from that mad manageress about Macbeth. I wonder if her whole life is passed in such agonies; I think it must be worse than the greatest bodily pain.

Only think, my dear, on arriving here, and inquiring for Hayes, I recollected that I had sent her to Bath and not to Bristol! "Consekens is," as Mr. Sam Weller says (but alas for you! you don't know Pickwick), that I have had to send off a porter from this house to Bath, per railway, to reclaim my erring maid, and fetch her hither; and, being Sunday, fewer trains go between the two places than usual, and she cannot get here till near four o'clock this afternoon, until which time I dare not trust myself to think of the state of mind of the abandoned (in the perfectly honest sense of the word) Bridget or Biddy Hayes; indeed, I shall not get her here till six this evening, and I only hope that I may then.

What a moon there was last night! and how it made me think of you, as it shone into the dark lofty room at Birmingham, where I sat playing and singing very sadly all by myself! The sea must have been as smooth as glass, and you cannot have been sick, even with your best endeavor.

The road from Birmingham here is quite pretty; the country in a most exquisite state of leaf and blossom; the crops look extremely well along this route; and the little cottage gardens, which delight my heart with their tidy cheerfulness, are so many nosegays of laburnum, honeysuckle, and lilac.

The stokers on all the engines that I saw or met this morning had adorned their huge iron dragons with great bunches of hawthorn and laburnum, which hung their poor blossoms close to the hissing hot breath of the boilers, and looked wretched enough. But this dressing up the engines, as formerly the stage-coach horses used to be decked with bunches of flowers at their ears on Mayday, was touching.

I suppose the railroad men get fond of their particular engine, though they can't pat and stroke it, as sailors do of their ship. Speculate upon that form of human love. I take it there is nothing which, being the object of a man's occupation, may not be made also that of his affection, pride, and solicitude, too. Were we—people in general, I mean—*Christians*, forms of government would be matters of quite secondary importance; in fact, of mere expediency. A republic, such as the American, being the slightest possible form of government, seems to me the best adapted to an enlightened, civilized *Christian* community, a community who deserve that name; and, you know, the theory of making people what they should be is to treat them better than they deserve—an axiom that holds good in all moral questions, of which political government should be one.

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This hotel is charming, clean, comfortable, cheerful, very nice.

Farewell. Give my kind regards to your people, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

GREAT WESTERN HOTEL, BRISTOL, Monday, May 31st.

MY DEAR HAL,

Go to Atkinson's and Co., 31, College Green, Dublin, and Pay £8 13s. for my sister, and get a receipt for it, and send it to me, and do this just as fast as ever you love me—that is, this very minute. I will repay you when we meet, or as much sooner as you may wish.

I have this morning received a note of eleven lines from Rome from Adelaide, without one single word of anything in it but a desire that I will immediately pay this debt for her; not a syllable about her husband, her children, herself, or any created thing, but Messrs. Atkinson and Co., and £8 13s. Therefore do what she bids me, and I ask you "right away," as the Americans say, that I may send this afflicted soul her receipt, and bid her be at rest.

That they are still in Rome I know only by the address, which she does put, though not the date; as a compensation for which, however, she heads her letter with the sum she

wishes me to pay, thus—

Rome, Trinita dei Monti.

£8 13s.

—a new way of dating a letter, it strikes me. She must have had poplin on the brain.

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I wrote to you yesterday, my dear, and therefore have little to say to you. After all, *I* had directed my poor maid perfectly *write!* (look how I've spelt this, in the tumult of my feelings and confusion of my thoughts!), and she arrived, but not till three o'clock in the afternoon, paper in hand, with the direction I had myself written as large as life—"The Great Western Hotel, Bristol." The fact is that I had made so sure that she would be here before I was, that, not finding her on my arrival, I made equally sure that I had misdirected her to Bath, and despatched one of the hotel porters thither to hunt for her, which he did, sans intermission, for two hours, and on his return had the pleasure of finding her here. What a capital thing a clear head is, to be sure! At least, I imagine so....

I have just come back from rehearsal at the theatre, where I found a letter from Emily, containing a bad account of her mother, and a most affectionate, cordial, illegible scrawl from poor dear old Mrs. Fitzhugh herself.

I also received a letter from Henry Greville, full of strictures upon my carriage and deportment on the stage, and earnestly entreating me to suffer his *coiffeur* ("a clean, tidy foreigner") to whitewash me after the approved French method, *i.e.*, to anoint my skin with cold cream, and then cover it with pearl powder; and this, not only my face, but my arms, neck, and shoulders. Don't you see me undergoing such a process, and submitting to such "manipulation"?

I have read more than half through Liebig, and am always tempted to glance at the paragraphs *ahead* to see what wonders they contain. I have not yet consulted the last chapter for the "winding-up of the story." The marvels in the midst of which we exist are a "story without an end."

I find some of his details of "quantity" a little puzzling sometimes, but nothing else, and the book is delightful.

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Charles Mason drank tea with me last night, and talked well, and with a good deal of information, about chemistry. He has read somewhat, and has some superficial knowledge of various subjects; moreover, is a judge of physiognomy, for he said he never saw a countenance with a more beautiful expression of goodness than yours. Evidently, like Beatrice, he can "see a church by daylight." Isn't it a pity that he can no longer be my agent? Were you not struck with his great resemblance to your idol, John Kemble? My mother used to say he was more like his son than his nephew; and never having seen his uncle even, the curious collateral likeness showed itself in all sorts of queer tricks in his delivery and deportment on the stage, where, in spite of his resemblance to his celebrated kinsman, he is a most lamentable actor. Of course, being an educated man, he speaks with "good discretion;" of the "emphasis" the less said the better.

I go to Bath to-morrow morning, and remain there until Thursday, when I return here to act Lady Macbeth and then go back again to represent that same lady at Bath either Friday or Saturday.

Farewell, my dear. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BATH, Wednesday, June 2d.

I have just had a long visit from Mr. C—, who is here, and who came to see me this morning with a young niece of his—a fair, sweet-looking girl of about eighteen, who, strangely enough, asked me a good many questions about my affairs.... At the end of their visit, I found that the young lady, while talking and listening to me, had torn up a visiting-card and, with the fragments of it, put together on the table the outline of a tiny

Calvary, the cross upon a heap of rocks. I suppose she is a Catholic, like her uncle, and I wonder why so many religious people of all sorts and denominations take it for granted that others stand in need of "Hints to Religion." ...

I was reminded (unnecessarily) of you at the theatre yesterday evening when, immediately after the hateful stage-warning at my dressing-room door of "Overture on, ma'am!" (the summons to the actors who are to begin a piece), I heard the orchestra break forth into your favorite strain of "Sad and fearful was the story." ...

"OVERTURE
ON,
MA'AM!"

The instinctive horror of suffering of our poor human bodies is pitiful. What a sorry martyr I should have made! though I think I should not so much object to others inflicting pain upon me as to inflicting it upon myself,—that seems to me such an absurd and disagreeable work of supererogation, I should never have been a self-body-torturer for the salvation of my soul....

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You would have been amused yesterday evening if you had been at the theatre with me. The weather was so beautifully bright that I could not bear to shut the shutters and light the gas, so I dressed by the blessed light of heaven, and was sitting all rouged and arrayed for my part, working, with my back to the window, when a small mob of poor little ragged urchins, who had climbed over a railing that separated the theatre from a mean-looking street behind it, collected round it, and, clambering on each other's shoulders, clustered and hung like a swarm of begrimed bees at the window, which was near the ground, to enjoy the sight of me and my finery. Bridget, who is kind-hearted and fond of children, turned the dresses that were hanging up right side out for the edification of the poor little ragamuffins, and their comments were exceedingly funny and touching. We could hear all that they said through the window—how they wondered if I put *them* beautiful dresses on one by one, or over each other; the rose in my hair, which you gave me, and the roses in my shoes, made them scream with delight; and if you could have heard the pathetic earnestness with which one of them exclaimed, "Oh my! don't you wish *them ere windies was cleaner!*" for the dirt-dimmed glass obstructed the full glory of the vision not a little. Poor little creatures! my heart ached with compassion for them and their hard conditions, while they hung and clung in ecstatic amazement at my frippery.

The house at Bristol the first night was wretched, my share of it only £14; here last night it was much better, but I do not yet know the proceeds of it. Charles Mason has latterly dropped a hint or two about intending shortly to go to America, so that I dare say he will be quite prepared to terminate his present arrangement with me.

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In the railroad, coming from Bristol to Bath, I met Edward Romilly, a kind and pleasant acquaintance of mine. I had Liebig's book in my hand, which he said was rather severe railroad reading, and proceeded to enlighten me as to the unsoundness of some of the author's positions and deductions. Now, you know, Edward Romilly married Mrs. Marcet's daughter, and, I take it for granted, in virtue of such a mother-in-law, is wise upon natural philosophy; but still, when one's ignorance is as huge and one's faith as implicit as mine,—when one's one endless, supreme question about everything is Pilate's bewildered, "What is Truth?"—when from history, science, literature, art, nature, one receives every impression with the child's yearning query, "But is it true?" it makes one feel desperate and deplorable thus to have one teacher contradict and discredit another. After all, all knowledge by degrees turns to ignorance, as it were, by dint of more knowledge; and human progress, passing from stage to stage in its incessant onward flight, leaves deserted, from day to day and hour to hour, its temporary abiding-places. There is no rest for those who learn, and ignorance is a great deal more complete and perfect a thing, *here*, at any rate, than knowledge; with which paradox let me hug my ignorance, only regretting that I ever spoiled it by learning even so much as my alphabet.

In spite of Mrs. Marcet's son-in-law, I have finished Liebig, and now have only "Wilhelm Meister" to read, which is one of the most wonderful books that ever was written. I have read it often, and each time I do so I think it more wonderful than before. Do you remember poor Mignon's last song?—"Sorrow hath made me early old, make me again for ever young!" No wonder you love youth, my dear; in heaven there are no old people.

The gardens in which this house stands are exquisite, and full of lovely children, who are a perpetual delight to me.

Good-bye, my dear.

BATH, Friday, June 4th.

DEAR HAL,

... I have just spent a delightful hour with three charming little creatures, children of the master of this hotel, for whom I have been buying toys, and who have been amusing themselves with them and allowing me a time of enchanting participation.

AT BATH.

I drove this morning, because you told me to do so, through the piece of ground they call the park here. It is extremely pretty, and I never grow weary of admiring the orderly love of beauty of our people.

I have had another long visit from Mr. C—— this morning.... Certainly novelists invent nothing more improbable than life.

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I had an explanation with Charles Mason yesterday afternoon, and he did not appear at all annoyed at my intention of discontinuing our present arrangement. I shall give up to him the entire receipts for one night, as else I am afraid he will hardly do more than cover his expenses. Then—the money that worthy man at Liverpool *borrowed* from me, which I shall assuredly never see again, and my travelling and living expenses deducted—my clear gains for this fortnight will be £68. It is not much, but all that much better than nothing. I shall be in town next week, and had intended, at the end of it, to go down to Bannisters; but Emily writes me that they cannot have me then, so I shall probably go to Plymouth, where they want me to act, and after that return to town again, and organize some more country engagements for myself; for I can't afford to be doing nothing. I go to town to-morrow morning, and shall be glad to be *at home* again. I am writing with a vile iron pen, that has neither mind, soul, nor body.

God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

ROYAL HOTEL, PLYMOUTH, June 16th.

MY DEAR HAL,

Do not again put that sponge, saturated with that *stuff*, in your letters. The whiff of it I got accidentally in one I received some days ago was very pleasant, but the quantity you send me to-day is too much, and has given me a headache, and made me sick. Such virtue is there in proportion! Such immense difference in only *more* or *less*!

You bid me *lump* my answers to you, but I hate to do that. I cannot bear to defraud you in quantity, though inevitable necessity condemns me to the disparity of quality in our communications; but to give you poor measure in both seems to me too bad....

I shall act here on Friday, and leave for Exeter on Saturday, and I shall act there one or two nights, but I do not yet know precisely how often. I expect to be in London by the end of next week, and to remain there for a week, after which I shall probably go for some nights to Southampton, so that, in a sort of way, I shall see Emily, and she will see me; further than this I have not at present decided. I have yet to visit the Midland Counties, where I have had engagements offered me, and York, Sheffield, and Leeds; after which I shall probably go on to Scotland. But all this is at present without fixed date.

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Some time in the summer, I have promised to visit the C——s (Roman acquaintances of ours) at Brighton; and I shall stay some time in Scotland at a place called Carolside, with that very nice Mrs. Mitchell, with whom I am fast growing into a fast friendship. We shall be a strange company of widows at her house—herself, T—— M——, poor Emily de Viry, and poorer myself.

These are my floating plans for the summer. Of course you will hear into what specific arrangements they consolidate themselves by degrees.

All the theatres where I act—indeed, as far as I can see, all the theatres throughout the country—are Theatres Royal; and with very good reason, for they are certainly all equally patronized by royalty.

I forgot to tell you that before leaving London, I carried your bag, *i.e.* my worsted-work, to your nephew's lodging, beseeching him, in a civil note, to take charge of it for you. I have received a civil note from him in reply, professing his readiness to do so, but adding that he will not be in Dublin till the dissolution of Parliament, which will not take place till the middle of July; in reply to which, I wrote him another civil note, telling him I would apprise you of this, and then you could either leave the bag in his custody, till he went to Ardgillan, or inform him of any method by which you might choose to have it forwarded to you more immediately.

I am not satisfied with the way in which it is made up; my own work was thick and clumsy enough, and I think they have finished the bag with a view to matching, rather than counteracting, these defects in the original composition. However, its value to you I know will be none the less for this; though, as I also know you are very *particular*, I wish it had been more neatly and lightly finished. I have put the strip of worsted-work you wished preserved inside the bag, and would humbly advise you to cut it up for kettle-holders, for which purpose it appears to me infinitely better adapted than for the housewife you proposed to make of it. However, you know I am shy about giving advice, so never mind what I say....

The weather is cold, rainy, windy, in short, odiously tempestuous; in spite of which I went into the sea yesterday, and shall do so every day while I am here; the freshness of the salt water is delicious.

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Now, at this present moment, when I was about to close this letter, comes another from you, and I shall lump that in this answer; for 'tis absurd merely to wait till to-morrow that I may take up another sheet of paper to write to you upon, when in all human probability I shall have nothing new whatever to tell you.

I find that Charles Mason has made arrangements for me with the Exeter manager, and that I shall act there four nights, and therefore be there all next week, and only return to London next Saturday week. This was in contemplation when I came here, but had not been determined on until to-day.

I have had a very affectionate letter from Lady Dacre, asking me to go down to the Hoo and stay some time with them, which I will do between some of my coming engagements.... No, my dear Harriet, you cannot imagine, and I cannot say, how I shrink from demonstrating a great deal of the affection that I feel; there are no words or sign adequate to it that I should not be reluctant to use, and I think this is at variance with the unhesitating and vehement expression of thought and opinion, and mere impression that is natural to me: but we are all more or less compounded of contradictions, and I *more* than *less*.

At the Exeter Station, coming down to this place, an obliging omnibus or coach driver offered to carry me to Torquay if I was bound thither. Wouldn't it have been nice if I had said *Yes*, and you and Dorothy had still been there? but you weren't, so I said *No*.... Both the Grevilles are friends of ours. Henry has been very intimate with Adelaide for a long time. He has a great many good qualities, and, though essentially a society man, has a good deal of principle; he is not very clever, but bright and pleasant, and very amiable and charming. His brother Charles has better brains, and is altogether a cleverer person. He is a man of the world, and more selfishly worldly, I think, than Henry, whose standard of right is considerably the higher of the two; indeed, Charles Greville's *right* always appears to me a mere synonym for *expedient*, and when I tell him so, he invariably says "they are the same thing," which I do not believe. He is, unfortunately, deaf, but excellent company in spite of that. I met him the day before I left London, at dinner at Lady Essex's, and he told me he and Lord de Maulay were going to start next week on a riding tour through England, beginning with Devonshire. I think it very probable that I shall see him in Exeter next week, as he is to be at the Duke of Bedford's in that neighborhood. He talked eloquently of the beauty of the scenery they were going through, and very seriously urged me to join their party, and ride over England with them, saying it would be a delightfully pleasant expedition—of which I have no doubt, or of the entire propriety of my joining it, and "cavalcading" through Great Britain in his

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and Lord de Maulay's company.

Now I'll tell you what I've done to-day—my holiday. In the first place it poured with rain all the morning, so I sent for a pair of battledores and a shuttlecock, and when Charles Mason came to render up last night's account, I made him come into a beautiful large ball-room I had discovered in this house, and took a good breathing; and he, being like Hamlet, "fat and scant of breath," took it hard.

NEW LONDON INN, EXETER, Monday, June 21st.

DEAR HAL,

Thanks for the purse, which I received this morning. I think you must imagine these country managers pay me as the monks did Correggio, in copper; perhaps, too, you have visions of me carrying my pay home on my back, as he did. (I forget whether that sad story is among the traditions exploded by modern *truth*.)

You have not received my last letter from Plymouth, or you would not have sent me again this tremendous "smell." I beseech you, dear Hal, not to saturate your paper any more with Neroli, or whatever you call it; it gives me a headache, and turns me sick.

My present address is as above, and I shall remain here until Saturday morning, when I return to town.

I only like the leather purse because you have given it to me, and though that makes me *love* it, it does not make me *like* it—my preference is for the pretty, colored, delicately woven purses, through whose meshes the gold and silver smiles and glances, that you see me use, or abuse, as you think, and as their use is to be worn out, I am not much afflicted at their dropping into holes, and in due process of time fulfilling their destiny.

This inn is in the middle of the town, and an old, dingy, dull house; and I have an old, dingy, dark sitting-room, and the only trees I see are two fine *felled* elm trunks, which I have been industriously sketching.

EXETER.

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The cathedral here is a grand old church, and I went yesterday afternoon to service there; but the choir was full, so I sat on a sort of pauper's wooden bench, just outside the choir, and under the beautiful porch that forms the entrance to it; and heard the chanting, but nothing else. I had Hayes with me, and she earnestly entreated me to sit with my feet upon hers, to protect myself from the cold stone pavement; was not that touching and nice of her? I am sure I ought to be grateful for such a comfort as she is to me. Poor thing! she has been in great trouble about her mother. When she was in Ireland she took a small sum of about ten pounds, which belonged to her mother, and placed it in the hands of an aunt of hers, in whom she had implicit trust, wishing to withdraw the money from the possible risk of its being got from her mother by her brother, who lives with her,—he being selfish and unprincipled and likely to take it, and her mother affectionate and self-denying and likely to give it to him. And now poor Hayes gets word from her mother that her aunt says she can neither give her money nor money's worth, owing to the badness of the times; which of course troubles my poor maid very much, for she says her aunt is a woman of substance. However, she does not seem to think the money will ultimately be lost to her mother, but only inconveniently withheld for a time.

At Plymouth, I had a very kind and pressing invitation from Lady Elizabeth Bulteel—Lord Grey's daughter, whom I have known for some time—to go and stay at her pretty place, Flete, two miles from Plymouth; but having to come on here, I could not go to her, which I was very sorry for. She sent me the most exquisite flowers, which I brought away with me, and which are still consoling me here.

Good-bye; God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

NEW LONDON INN, EXETER, Wednesday, June 23d.

I do not plead guilty to general inconsistency, but only to particular inconsistency, in a particular instance, dear Hal.... You are quite welcome to accuse me of it, however; but as in your last letter you imply that I accept the accusation, I beg leave to state distinctly that I do not.... Not, indeed, that I make any pretensions to that order of coherency of action and opinion which is generally called consistency: my principles are few, simple, and comprehensive, and I rather desire so to embrace them with my heart, mind, and soul, that my conduct may habitually conform to them, than am careful in every instance of action to see whether I am observing them. Somebody said very well that principles were moral habits; and our habits become unconscious and spontaneous: and so I think should our consistency be, and not a sort of moral rule or measure to be applied and adjusted to each exigency as it occurs, to produce a symmetrical moral appearance.

I think one reason why I appear, and perhaps am, inconsistent is because I seldom have any consideration for *expediency*—what I should call *secondary* rules of conduct; and I have not much objection to contradicting my course of action in the present hour by that of the next, provided at each time I am endeavoring to do what seems best to me. I desire a certain *frame of mind* that my conduct may flow habitually from it, without constant reference to outward coherency. In the course of life-long endeavor and practice, I suppose, this may be achieved. But do not think me presumptuous if I say that I think people are generally too afraid of appearing inconsistent, too desirous to seem reasonable,—in short, more anxious upon the whole about what they *do* than what they *are*. Of course, the one will much depend upon the other; but they will *match* well enough without an everlasting comparison of shades of color, if they are really in harmony, and, at all events, will certainly *harmonize* even if they do not precisely *match*: there's a woman's shopping illustration for you.... Of course you will understand well enough that I have not referred to the capital inconsistency of which poor St. Paul so pathetically complained—wishing to do right and doing wrong,—nor would you have charged me individually and specially with this, alas! universal moral incoherency.

This is my holiday, and I have been spending it between two famous nursery-gardens in the neighborhood of Exeter, and the cathedral.

These great gardeners send up their exquisite and precious plants to the London horticultural exhibitions, and I saw many for whose beauty and variety gold and silver medals had been awarded to their foster-father florists. The masters of both these establishments very courteously went over them with me, showing me the hot-houses where their choicest and rarest plants were kept; there were some, such exquisite and wonderful creatures, lovely to the eye, delicious to the smell—Patagonians, Javanese, from the Cordilleras, from Peru, from Chili, from Borneo,—the flower tribes of the whole earth.

FLOWERS.

Then, again, they showed me little pots of fine sand, covered with bell glasses, where the eye could hardly detect a point or shade of sickly green upon the surface,—the promise of some *unique* foreign flower, sent from its savage home in the forests of another hemisphere, to blossom at the Chiswick horticultural exhibition, and win medals for the careful cultivators, who have watched with faith—assuredly in this case "the evidence of things not seen"—its precarious growth and doubtful development.

One of these gentlemen horticulturists interested me extremely by his own fervent enthusiasm about his plants. He showed me two perishing-looking miserable dried-up *twigs*, and said, "Those are the only specimens of their kind in the kingdom. They come from Chili, and when healthy bear a splendid blossom as large as a tulip. These are just between life and death: I fear we may kill them with kindness, we are so anxious about them." He told me they had a flower-hunter out in South America, and another in India. And now I must go to bed, because it is twelve o'clock.

I brought home some heavenly flowers from these earthly paradises, and then went and spent the rest of my afternoon in the cathedral—a beautiful old building, of various dates and architecture, the whole effect of which is extremely picturesque and striking.

Good-night, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

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Rachel has been acting at Manchester, to houses of *sixty* pounds (her nightly salary being *one hundred and twenty*), and this because Jenny Lind is going there. I must confess I have no patience with this—as if the rich Manchester merchants could not afford to treat themselves to both! Rachel is really pre-eminent in her art, and so this provokes me.... I dined with the Miss Berrys at Richmond on Wednesday, and met dear old Lady Charlotte Lindsay, who inquired as usual most affectionately after you. Mrs. Dawson Damer dined there, too, and said she remembered being as a very young girl at Wroxton Abbey (Lord Guildford's), and seeing you there a very young girl too.

I began this letter two days ago, and am in all the full wretchedness of packing up. I set off to-morrow for Mrs. Mitchell's, where I hope to be on Thursday afternoon. I shall reach York to-morrow, at three o'clock, and intend sleeping there, of which I have written to apprise Dorothy, as I hope to see her for an hour or two in the evening.

I am obliged to give up my Norwich engagement, which I am very sorry for; but the fast and loose style of the correspondence about it makes it impossible to fix any time for going there. The manager first asked me to go there in August, but now, because Jenny Lind is going there, he wants to put me off till the third week in September, at which time I expect to be in Glasgow, the manager of that theatre having written to me thence that October is not a good month there, and begged me to come in September. I am sorry to lose my Norwich engagement, but cannot help it. I have heard nothing more from the Princess's Theatre.

... My father talks of giving up his readings, and I have therefore spoken to Mitchell, of the St. James's Theatre, about giving some myself, and find him very willing to undertake the whole "speculation" and business, not only in London but all over the provinces, with me and for me; so that I do not feel quite as uncomfortable about the uncertainty of an engagement at the Princess's as I might have done.

READINGS.

Mr. Mitchell is a Liberal, and an honest man, too, and I shall be quite safe in his hands; in the mean time I shall be very glad to be at Carolside instead of in London, though to-day and yesterday the weather has been very cold and chilly, and in Scotland is not likely to be warmer.

Do you hear of this horrid murder in Paris [that of the Duchesse de Praslin, by her husband]? Ever so many people that I know here knew the unhappy woman and her still more wretched husband; and the woman who has been accused of having instigated the crime was little Lady Melgund's governess for six years.

Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

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[Mademoiselle de Luzzy, the governess of the Duc de Praslin's children, was acquitted upon his trial of any complicity in his crime; that of which she was not acquitted, however, was, turning the hearts of her pupils against their unfortunate mother, and endeavoring to establish her position and authority in the duchess's home and family, at her expense. By a most strange turn of circumstance, Mademoiselle de Luzzy, thus connected with the great world of Paris and implicated in one of its most tragic occurrences, went to the United States, where she married a country clergyman, whose family belonged to the peaceful population of Stockbridge—one of the loveliest villages in the "Happy Valley" of the Housatonic. The residence of the Sedgwick family in this charming place attracted to it many foreigners of mark and distinction; but few, certainly, whose claims to notoriety were so peculiar and painful as this lady's.

Mrs. Mitchell, of Carolside, was a Scotchwoman of an Aberdeen family. She was my dear friend for many years, and a perfectly charming person. Her face was exquisitely pretty and her figure faultless; she had very peculiar eyes of a lightish hazel, with such long lashes that it seemed occasionally as if her eyes were shining through a soft haze of golden brown rays. She spoke with a slight Scotch accent, the "winning Scottish speech" which Secretary Philips writes of

as one of Mary Stuart's peculiar charms; and she was personally my notion of that "much blamed, much worshipped" modern Helen. She had remarkable decision of character and force of will, with the gentlest and most feminine appearance and manner; she was humorous and witty, and an incomparable mimic. She was a woman of admirably high principle and rectitude, and in every way as attractive as she was estimable. Her eldest son was proprietor of a charming place, Carolside, just over the Scottish border, and had hardly come of age and inherited it when the Crimean war broke out and compelled him, then a young officer in the army, to leave his pleasant home prospects and encounter the threatening aspect of "grim-visaged war." His mother, whose widowed life had been devoted to him and his younger brother, also a soldier, fluttered after her dear ones to the Crimea, and had the joy to get them safe back from the "world's great snare uncaught."

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Lady M—— and Mrs. Mitchell were attached and almost inseparable friends for many years, occupying the same house in London, travelling on the Continent together, and when in Scotland living together at Mrs. Mitchell's pretty home, Carolside, or hiring some house in the Highlands together. Emily de Viry (afterwards, alas! Emily de Revel) I met again, for the first time for many years, at Carolside. She was the daughter of our friends Mr. and Mrs. Basil Montague, and half-sister of my kind friend Mrs. Procter, and a very intimate friend of my sister Adelaide. She was an extremely interesting person, the tragic close of whose life can never be thought of without profound regret. She had married her cousin Count Charles de Viry, and after years of widowhood she married again the Count Adrien de Revel, Sardinian Ambassador in England, to whom she had not been united a week when they were both carried off by the cholera, which was then raging in Genoa: the same paper which announced their marriage brought the tidings of their untimely death to me. During this visit of mine to Carolside M. de Revel came there for a few days; I was well acquainted with him, and liked him very much.]

CAROLSIDE, EARLSTON, Sunday, 29th.

I am no more in London, my dear Hal, but in one of the sweetest places I ever was in, which, as you know, is a great delight to me.

I am only just beginning to recover from the effects of the journey hither, which, though divided into two days, made me very unwell.... Surely, you never meant, in spite of my invariable habit of replying to all your questions, that I should ever attempt an answer to that suggestion of your love and sorrow which, in speaking of your brother [Barry S——, dead many years before], makes you exclaim, "What now is his nature?" ...

I have been sorrier to think of the death of Dr. Combe than I was to hear of it, when, as is always the case with me, my first feeling was one almost of joy and congratulation. I never have any other emotion on first hearing of a good man's death. I have an instantaneous sense of relief, as it were, for such a one, of freer breathing, of expanded powers; of infirmity, pain, sorrow, trouble, fleshly hinderance, and earthly suffering for ever laid in the grave and left behind; and that glorious creature, a noble human soul, soaring into a purer atmosphere proper to it, and promoted to such higher duties as may well be deemed rewards for duties well fulfilled on earth.

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After a little while I began to cry, thinking of that sweet, beaming, intelligent, benevolent countenance, that I am never to see here again; but this was crying for myself, not him. I am truly grieved for his brother, and all who knew, and loved, and have lost so excellent a friend.

I have a paper in my possession still, which he laughingly drew up and gave me when I was a girl in Edinburgh, a sort of legal document, binding him to appear to me after he was dead; and one or two evenings, as I lay on my sofa alone in Orchard Street, I thought of this, and could not help fancying that if indeed it had been possible he could have appeared to me, the familiar trust and affection with which I always regarded him would have been paramount to all fears and wonders in the first moment of my seeing him.

DEATH OF
DR. COMBE.

I have heard nothing more of my engagement at the Princess's Theatre, and begin to think that perhaps I shall not hear anything more about it; but I scarcely expected to do so before the end of November, because till then I should not be wanted there, and I dare say the manager will leave me as long a time as possible to consider of his offers and my acceptance or rejection of them.

I am charmed with my hostess. She is exceedingly pretty—a great virtue, as you know, in my estimation; she is upright, true, pious, and uncommonly reasonable and judicious: am I not right to be charmed with her? Then, too, she is most kind, gentle, considerate, and affectionate to me, and esteems me, as I believe I have before told you, far beyond my deserts—who can resist *that* bribe?

Upon several points upon which I differ from people's usual modes of thinking and feeling, I find there is a great similarity in our views; and I feel as if I might thank God for an addition to the treasure of excellent people's love that He has comforted my life withal; and count another friend added to those who have been such infinite blessings to me.

I am left to conclude that Mrs. Grote was so absorbed in her interest in Mademoiselle Jenny Lind that I vanished utterly from her mind; for after coming to see me just before I went down to Bannisters and pressing me to go to the Beeches when I returned, I never heard another word about it, or even set eyes upon her again.

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I have been with your precious Dorothy, who came, both to my joy and sorrow, to meet me at the railroad station, with her poor face covered with that hideous respirator, and speaking when she had it off as if she still had it on, her voice was so pale and dim. It grieved me that she should have made an exertion that I feared might injure her, and yet I was delighted to see her and most grateful for her extreme kindness in thus troubling herself. She came, too, with her hands full of flowers (my "good angels" brought to me by your "good angel," which seemed to me pretty and proper, was it not?), and carried me straight off to Fulford [Miss Wilson's home near York], where, in spite of much pain and exhaustion consequent upon the long railroad journey, I passed a blessed few hours with her, though our talk inevitably was of much sorrow....

I have not had time yet to see anything of the condition of the people about this place. The villages and cottages we passed coming hither all struck me as poor and comfortless compared with England; but the less cleanly and tidy habits of the Scotch, and their almost universal practice of going barefoot—at least the women and children,—give an impression of greater poverty and discomfort than really exist, I believe.

CAROLSIDE.

I have not yet received my American letters.... I am to act three nights at Glasgow. I think Kelso is the town nearest Carolside, and that is fourteen miles distant; the post town or village is Earlston (Ercildown), a mile from the house. The whole region belongs to poetry and legend and romance. The Eildon hills overlook it, and Thomas the Rhymer haunts it, and the Scotch ballads are full of it. Do you know—oh no, you know no songs, you unfortunate!—"Leader haughs and Yarrow," or that exquisite melody beloved of Mendelssohn:—

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride!
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome *marrow*!"

(isn't that an odd term of endearment to one's mistress?)

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride!
And think nae mair on the braes of Yarrow"?

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Then there is that lovely ditty "Gala Water," which I always sing in honor of my young host, who is a sort of Laird of Galashiel. The whole place is full of such charming suggestions and associations. The Leader, a lovely, clear, rapid, shallow, sparkling trout-stream, makes a sudden bend across the lawn, opposite the drawing-room and dining-room windows here (last October the pixie got vexed at something and very nearly rushed in to the house); and early before breakfast this morning I walked along the banks of the stream, and then knee deep up its bright waters, and then over the breezy hills, "O'er the hills, amang the heather," whence I watched its gleaming course between red-colored rocks, like walls of porphyry or Roman tufa, and through corn-fields, and by tufted woods, and felt for an hour as if there was no bitterness in life....

I shall remain here till September 11th, when I go to Glasgow, where I expect to act on the 13th. I shall be very sorry to go away, but shall certainly by that time have had enjoyment enough to feel that it would be unwise to tempt the inevitable decree which makes all pleasure and happiness short-lived here, and which, when we strive to retain or detain them, makes us wise through some disappointment or disenchantment, which it is still wiser to anticipate and avoid.

Farewell, dear Hal.

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[Carolside was situated just beyond the Border in Scotland, in that region of romantic and poetical traditions, full of the charm of early legendary and ballad lore, of the associations of Burns's songs and Scott's Border minstrelsy, pervaded with the old superstitions, half-beliefs, dating from as far back as the days of Thomas the Rhymer, and the later powerful influence of the Wizard of the North, the mighty master-magician of our own day.

Melrose, Dryburgh, and Abbotsford, Smailholme, and Beamerside, were all within easy distance of it; "the bonnie broom of Cowdenknowes" bloomed in its neighborhood; the Gala, the Leader, the Tweed, the Yarrow, ran singing through the lovely region, the exquisite melodies that have been inspired by their wild scenery. It was a region of natural beauty, heightened by every association that could add to its charm. The Eildon Hills were our landmarks in all our walks and rides and drives: and Ercildown, modernized into Earlston, the picturesque post-village at our gates.]

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CAROLSIDE, EARLSTON, September 5th.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

... Of the advantageous engagement which you heard I had concluded I cannot speak with any certainty, for it never was settled definitively, and I begin to think will not be concluded. I think it may have been nothing more than a feint on the part of the manager of the Princess's Theatre, who has been urged by Mr. Macready's friends to engage me to act with him, and who, as he will not give me my terms, has, I think, perhaps merely tendered me an arrangement that he knew I would not accept, in order to be able to say that he had *endeavored* to make an arrangement with me. I am very sorry for this, for employment during the winter months in London is what I much desired. However, "there is a soul of good even in things evil," and the later experiences of my life have left me little sensibility to spend upon crosses of this description.

Not to be able to work for my own maintenance would indeed be a serious calamity to me; but if I fail of a theatrical engagement I shall fall back upon my original plan, to me so far preferable, of giving readings. I do not think that now, after a whole year of apparent relinquishment of that pursuit, my father has any thought of resuming it, which leaves me free to make the attempt.

I am staying with a friend at a place on the Scottish Border; the Leader, famous in song, runs across the lawn; we are four miles from Melrose, and about as many from Abbotsford; the country is lovely, and full of poetical and romantic associations.

FOUR
MILES
FROM
MELROSE.

I remain here another week, and then go to Glasgow, where I am to act; after that I expect to pass three weeks in Edinburgh, between my two cousins, Cecilia Combe (whom you remember as Cecy Siddons) and a daughter of my dear friend Mrs. Harry Siddons, who married Major Mair, and is living happily and prosperously in beautiful Edinburgh.

I must either act or give readings during this time, as I can in no wise afford to be idle.

It was a great disappointment to me to *boil* by B—'s very door on my way here [Miss Barbarina Sullivan, Lady Dacre's granddaughter, now the Hon. Lady Grey], but my plans had been all disarranged and confused by other people, and I was most unwillingly compelled to pass by Howick. I have written to offer myself to her in the last week of

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October on my way back to London, and heartily hope she may be able and willing to receive me, as I long to see her in her new home.

Pray give my kind regards to Mrs. Brand. You ought to be of the greatest use, comfort, and pleasure to each other, endowed, as you both are, with the especial graces of age and youth.

With affectionate respects to Lord Dacre, believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Miss Susan Cavendish had married the Hon. Thomas Brand, Lord Dacre's nephew and heir. When I wrote this letter young Mr. and Mrs. Brand lived a good deal at the Hoo with my kind old friends.]

CAROLSIDE, EARLSTON, September 5th.

You ask me what I am doing, dear Hal. I am driving fifteen miles in an open britzska, in a bitter blowing day, to return morning calls of neighbors, whose laudable desire is to "keep the county lively," and who have dragged my little hostess into active participation in a picnic at Abbotsford, which is to take place next Friday, the weather promising to reward the seekers after "liveliness" with their death of cold, if they escape their death of dulness.

I have taken several charming rides; the country is beautiful. I have caught a tolerably good cold—I mean, good of its kind—by wading knee deep in the Leader, and then standing on cold rocks, fishing by the hour; in which process I did catch—cold, but nothing else; for, though the water is still drowning deep in some beautiful brown pools, set in the rocks like huge cairngorms, it is, for the most part, so shallow, and everywhere so clear with the long-continued drought, that the spotted trout and silver eels see me quite as well as I see them, and behave accordingly, avoiding me more successfully, but quite as zealously, as I seek them....

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Our party has hitherto consisted of Emily de Viry, an uncle and brother of Mrs. Mitchell's, and a London banker, a friend of hers. This, with the "liveliness" of the neighborhood, with whom we have dined, and who have dined with us, has been our society.

Next week Lady M—, who has been on a visit at Dunse Castle, returns, and various people are coming from sundry places; but, except the Comte de Revel, I do not know any of those who are expected.

The only music I have is my own, *forbye* a comic song or two, gasped and death-rattled out by poor old Sir Adam Fergusson, whom I met seventeen years ago at Walter Scott's house, and who is still tottering on, with inexhaustible spirits, but a body that seems quite threadbare, tattered, and ready to fall in pieces with long and hard use.

I do not read to the party collectively, but occasionally to Emily de Viry alone, who has asked me once or twice to read her favorite poems of hers, of Wordsworth's, Tennyson's, and Milnes's....

I act in Glasgow on Monday, to-morrow week. On Sunday I shall be in Edinburgh, and shall go and see Cecilia and Mr. Combe. I am sorry you didn't see Mrs. Mitchell, for, though forty years old, she might be fallen in love with any day for her good looks only. She is my notion of what Mary Stuart must have looked like, but she is a marvellous wise and discreet body—mentally and morally, I should think, very unlike the bonnie Queen of Scots.

Did I tell you that one place where we dined was Cowdenknowes? and I felt like singing "The Bonnie Broom" all the time, which would have been an awful accompaniment to the gastronomic enjoyments of the "liveliness of the county." Good-bye, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

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I do not know what my friend's religious opinions are. She was brought up in the midst of strict Presbyterians, but I suspect, from some things I have heard her say, that she is by no means an orthodox sample of that faith. But, you know, I am never curious about people's beliefs, nor anxious that my friends should think as I do upon any subject. The resemblance between Mrs. Mitchell's notions and mine was one that she was led to express quite accidentally on a matter on which few women would agree with me....

I have not heard from Adelaide for a long time—a month at least. The Comte de Revel, the Sardinian Ambassador, was at Carolside while I was there, and spoke of the condition of the whole of Italy as full of insecurity, and liable at any moment to sudden outbreaks of violent and momentous change.

I cannot think that Rome will be a desirable residence for foreigners this winter; but E—— is so indolent that, unless people are massacred in the streets, and, moreover, in the identical street in which he lives, I should much doubt his being willing to move, or thinking it at all necessary to do so. I saw the old Countess Grey and Lady G—— just before they left London about three weeks ago. They were intending to winter in Rome, and told me they were much dissuaded by their friends from doing so.

If you leave Ireland, as you say, on the 1st of October, I am afraid I shall not see you in London, for I expect to pass the whole of that month in Edinburgh; but I hope I shall find leisure to come to St. Leonard's, and see you and Dorothy while you are there.

My plans are at present a little unsettled. I think of going back to Carolside with Mrs. Mitchell and Lady M—— until next Monday, when I shall return to Edinburgh, and from thence proceed to act four nights at Dundee; after that I shall be stationary in Edinburgh for, I hope, at least three weeks. I think I shall not act there, but have some thoughts of giving readings.... Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

DUNDEE, Thursday, 2d.

MY DEAR HAL,

Your letter directed to me to Greenock never reached me. I did not go there; and having left Glasgow without doing so, shall not visit that place at all now.

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I arrived yesterday in Dundee, having left Edinburgh in the morning. I act here two nights, and two in Perth, and return to Edinburgh on Wednesday week to remain with Elizabeth Mair (youngest daughter of Mrs. Harry Siddons) till the last week in October. After that I go southward to visit B—— G—— at Hawick, and the Ellesmeres at Worsley.

Your letter about sleeping in Orchard Street, on your way through London, is so very undecided—I mean upon that particular point—that I shall write to Mrs. Mulliner (my housekeeper) to desire her to receive you, if you should apply for a lodging, so that you can do as you like—either go there or to Euston Square.

I am delighted at the prospect of my three weeks' stay in Edinburgh. Nothing could exceed the affectionate kindness with which Lizzie and her husband received me.

After all that I have seen at home and abroad, Edinburgh still seems to me the most beautiful city I ever saw, and all my associations with it (except those of my last stay there) are peaceful and happy, and carry me back to that year of my life spent with Mrs. Harry Siddons, which has been the happiest of my existence hitherto.... Elizabeth's children are like a troop of angels, one prettier than another; I never saw more lovely little creatures. The companionship of children is charming to me. I delight in them, and am happy to think that I shall live among Lizzie's angels for three weeks. I was living with children at Carolside. Emily de Viry had her little boy and girl with her, the latter a little blossom of only a year old, born, poor thing! after her father's death. Mrs. Mitchell's eldest son was at home from Eton for the holidays, a very fine lad of sixteen, devoted to his mother, who seems to me only to exist through and for him and his brother.... I am to act while I am in Edinburgh, which, of course, is a good thing for me.

E—— has written to Henry Greville to take the house in Eaton Place which they looked at together when he was in London, so I feel sure they will be home in the spring. Adelaide has written a letter to Henry Greville, which he has sent on to me, assuring him of that fact.... She is enchanted at the idea of coming home. Good-bye, my dear. I will write this minute to Mrs. Mulliner to put you in my room, if you go to Orchard Street.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Pg 530]

PERTH, Monday, September 27th.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not understand your note of the 15th, which has only just reached me here on the 27th. You ask me if I "have not written to Lizzie Mair to ascertain her whereabouts." Lizzie is in Edinburgh. I spent the Monday and Tuesday of last week with her, and return there the day after to-morrow, after acting two nights in this lovely place, whither I came on from Dundee yesterday. I shall remain three weeks with Lizzie, and shall see Cecilia and Mr. Combe during some part of that time; for, though they did not return to Edinburgh, as I supposed they would on Dr. Combe's death, they are expected home daily now, and will certainly be there in the first days of October. I wrote from Dundee to Mulliner to make up my bed and do everything in the world for you that you required; and I wrote to you from Dundee, telling you that I had done so. I have now again this minute written to the worthy woman, reiterating my orders to that effect; so sincerely hope you will be properly attended to in my house. Jeffreys, I am sorry to say (sorry for my sake, glad for his), has found an opportunity of placing himself permanently with a gentleman with whom he lived formerly, and has written to tell me of this; so that you will not have his services while you are in Orchard Street. He was an excellent, quiet, orderly servant, and I am sorry I shall not have the advantage of his service during the remainder of my time here.

I am engaged to act with Mr. Murray in Edinburgh for ten nights, from the 16th to the 25th of October. Before that I shall return for three nights to Glasgow, where my last three nights were very profitable, and the manager wishes to have me again. This will probably be next week, the 5th, 6th, and 7th of October. Perhaps I may go for a night or two to Greenock from Glasgow before I return to Edinburgh, but this is uncertain.

From the 12th to the 15th I am going with Mrs. Mitchell, who will take me up in Edinburgh to visit the H—— D——s at Ardoch, and after that shall be stationary for ten days.

[Pg 531]

PERTH, Tuesday, 28th.

In spite of my innate English horror of untidiness, and my maid's innate Irish tendency to it, I should be very sorry if she were to leave me. She has lived with me many years, and I really love as well as esteem her. She has been more than a servant—she has been a friend to me; and I cried some tears at Carolside at the thought of parting with her....

I will tell you another point of agreement between Mrs. Mitchell and myself, which I also discovered accidentally. Emily de Viry was laughing at her for a peculiar mode of dress she has adopted, always wearing a cap upon her pretty head, and never uncovering her arms and neck, though both are beautiful, in evening dress. I was appealed to for my opinion about the costume of middle-aged gentlewomen, and could, of course, only state that it had been my own determination for some years past never to uncover either my arms or neck, or wear any but sober colors as soon as I was forty years old. This is one of those trivial points of agreement which sometimes indicate more resemblance between people's natures than a similarity of opinions on important matters, which may co exist with considerable difference in matters of taste and feeling. Mrs. Mitchell, like myself, does not think that stark nakedness would be indecent among decent savage people, but does object to full-dress semi-nudity among indecent civilized ones.

MODES OF
DRESSING.

Lady M—— did not come with me to Dundee. I would not let her, though her proposal to

do so was certainly dictated partly by her affection for me.... But I would not let her come with me *strolling*, though I should only have been too glad of her company. She paints beautifully.... Alas! an empty heart is a spur and goad to drive one to the world's end, unless the soul be full of God, and the mind and time of wholesome occupation.

The Mairs are excellently kind to me, and I look forward to my stay with them with great pleasure. Cecilia and Mr. Combe are expected daily in Edinburgh, so I shall lose little or nothing of them.

I am just disappointed of a charming opportunity of seeing the lovely country round Perth. Lady Ruthven has sent me a very pressing invitation to spend some days at Freeland, seven miles from here; but I am obliged to return to Edinburgh to-morrow, for which I am very sorry, as I should have liked to go to Freeland, the whole neighborhood of which is beautiful. Good-bye. God bless you.

[Pg 532]

Ever yours,

FANNY.

29, ABERCROMBIE PLACE, EDINBURGH, Saturday, October 2d.

DEAR HAL,

I received a note from Mrs. Mulliner yesterday morning, expressing her readiness to receive you, and her full intention to devote herself to you to the very utmost of her ability. I am sorry Jeffreys will not be there to help you in getting cabs, etc.; but he has found a chance of placing himself permanently with a former master, and, of course, is glad of the opportunity to do so.

I have not yet seen any of the Coxes. Cecilia and Mr. Combe only arrived last night from Hull, having come by Antwerp. They have both got the influenza, and are very much knocked up, and I have seen neither of them yet....

The railroad running through the Castle Gardens has cruelly spoiled them, of course, though from the depth of the ravine, at the bottom of which it lies, it is not seen from Prince's Street; but its silver wake floats up above the highest trees of the banks, and the Gardens themselves are ruined by it. I have a sadly affectionate feeling for every inch of that ground.... I do not admire Scott's monument very much. It is an exact copy in stone of the Episcopal Throne in Exeter Cathedral, a beautiful piece of wood carving. The difference between the white color of the statue and the gray shrine by which it is canopied is not agreeable to me. I should have liked it better if the figure had been of the same stone as the monument, and so of the same color.

In Edinburgh it is never so much the detail of its various parts that arrests my attention and enchants me especially, as the picturesque and grand effect of its several parts in juxtaposition with each other—the beautiful result of all its features together, the striking and romantic whole. The Carlton Hill seems to me more covered with buildings than I thought it was; but I believe you have seen it since I have, so that I do not know how to answer your question about it.

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In determining to act in Edinburgh I followed the advice of the Mairs, who were, of course, more likely to be able to judge of the probable relative success of reading or acting here, and who counselled the latter.... Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[My cousin Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Mrs. Harry Siddons, married Major Mair, son of that fine old officer, Colonel Mair, Governor of Fort George. During several protracted seasons of foreign service, one of the banishments to which his military duty condemned Arthur Mair was a remote and lonely outpost on the furthest border of our then hardly peopled Canadian territory—a literal wilderness, without human inhabitants. Here, alone, with the small body of men under his command, he led a life of absolute mental and intellectual solitude, the effect of which upon his nervous system was such that, on his return to civilized

EFFECTS OF
SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT.

existence, the society of his fellow-creatures, and all the intercourse of busy city life, affected him with such extreme shyness and embarrassment that in his own native town of Edinburgh, for some time after his return to it, he used to avoid all the more frequented thoroughfares, from mere nervous dread of encountering and being spoken to by persons of his acquaintance—an unfavorable result of "solitary confinement," even in a cell as wide as a wilderness.]

STAR HOTEL, GLASGOW, GEORGE SQUARE, October 4th.

DEAR HARRIET,

[Pg 534] My acquaintance with the H— D—s dates only from my last visit to Glasgow, when they joined our party at this hotel, and returned to Carolside with us. The lady is a daughter of a family who are intimate friends of T— M—, and was presented to me when a girl in London some years ago. She has since married, and I met her again, with her husband, here a little while ago.... They both show a very kind desire to be civil and amiable to me, and I like them both, and her especially. They have spent the last five years of their lives wandering together about Europe and Asia. They have no children, and have travelled without any of the servants that generally attend wealthy English people abroad (courier, lady's-maid, valet); and have come home so in love with their wild untrammelled life, that the possession of their estate at Ardoch, and their prospect of an income of many thousands a year, seem equally to oppress them as undesirable incumbrances, requiring them to sacrifice all their freedom, and submit to all sorts of civilized conventional constraints from which they have lived in blessed exemption abroad, and to adopt a style of existence utterly repugnant to their nomadic *no*-habits. G— D—, on their return to Ardoch, proposed to his wife to take up their abode in two of the rooms of their fine large house, and let the rest to some pleasant and amusing people; for, he said, they never could think of living in that house by themselves....

Your distress about my readings I answered with a slight feeling that it was a pity you should begin to be anxious and troubled about the details of a project that may possibly never be carried out after any fashion. I paid heed, nevertheless, to your observations, of which I admit the force, and am so far from having determined to abide by any theoretical convictions of my own upon the subject that I shall be guided entirely by Mr. Mitchell's opinion about the best manner of giving my readings; for, as I do it for money, I shall do it in the way most likely to be profitable. At the same time, I shall certainly use my best endeavor to have the business so arranged as to desecrate as little as possible the great works of the master, in the exposition and illustration of which I look for infinite pleasure and profit of the highest order, whatever my meaner gain by it may be....

[Pg 535] [I am afraid my excellent and zealous manager, Mr. Mitchell, was often far from satisfied with the views I took of the duty imposed upon me by reading Shakespeare. My entire unwillingness to exhaust myself and make my work laborious instead of pleasant to me, by reading more than three, or at the utmost four, times a week, when very often we could have commanded very full rooms for the six; my pertinacious determination to read as many of the plays (and I read twenty-five) as could be so given to an audience in regular rotation, so as to avoid becoming hackneyed, in my feeling or delivery of them, appeared to him vexatious particularities highly inimical to my own best interests, which he thought would have been better served by reading "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and the "Merchant of Venice," three times as often as I did, and "Richard II.," "Measure for Measure," and one or two others, three times as seldom, or not at all. But though Mr. Mitchell could calculate the money value of my readings to me, their inestimable value he knew nothing of.]

Pray now, my dearest friend, consider that you too often challenge with affectionate anxiety for me that future which I may never live to see; and yet do not imagine that I consider your apprehensions and suggestions, were they a thousand times more numerous and more ridiculous, if that were possible, as in any way unsatisfactory; but

highly the contrary, as testifying to that most comfortable fact that you, my beloved Hal, are the very same you ever have been to me, an excellent, precious, devoted, wise, most absurd, and every way invaluable friend. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

GREENOCK, October 9th.

AT
GREENOCK.

I am very glad I did the duty of a hostess, dear Hal, though only in your dreams, and received you hospitably in my own house, though I was not conscious of it. As for that fool Mulliner and that brute Jeffreys, I will hang them up together on one rope when I return, for allowing you to be so horribly disturbed....

If we are in Orchard Street together again, you shall put the Psyche [a fine cast of the Neapolitan truncated statue given to Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Fitzhugh's brother, by the King of Naples] in whatever light you please; but, as I am certain not to return to London till the third week in November, if then, I feel as if, when I get back to Orchard Street, I should have nothing to do but pack up my things preparatory to removing to King Street, where I hope to get Mrs. Humphreys to receive me until I leave England.

I shall certainly not be six weeks in Orchard Street when I return, and the Psyche will desert the drawing-room when I do, and resume her post on the staircase, where she always seemed to me to look down on dear Mrs. Fitzhugh's morning visitors, as they came up the stairs, with a divinely mild severity of expression, as if she felt the bore about to be inflicted by their presence on the inmates of her house, the mortals under her heavenly care.

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You ought to find two letters from me at Bannisters, for I have directed two to you there. How I wish I could be with you and dear Emily! Give my love to her, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[I was at this time occupying my friend Mrs. Fitzhugh's house in Orchard Street, Portman Square, which I rented for a twelvemonth from her. It was a convenient small house in an excellent situation, and one whole side of the drawing-room was covered with a clever painting, by Mr. Fitzhugh, of the bay and city of Naples—a pleasant object of contemplation in London winter days.]

GLASGOW, October 12th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I should very much wish that you would give me one of Loyal's children [a fine Irish retriever of my friend's]; but do not again end any letter to me so abruptly, without even signing your name, because it gives me a most uncomfortable notion that I have not got all you have written, that you have, by mistake, put only a part of your letter in your envelope, and so sent it off unfinished to me.

I left Carolside, to my great regret, yesterday. I came in Mrs. Mitchell's carriage to within fourteen miles of Edinburgh, where I joined the railroad. She accompanied me thus far, and then returned home. At Edinburgh I transferred myself immediately to the Glasgow train, and so came on, without being able to ascertain whether Cecilia Combe and Lizzie Mair are at home or not.

Mrs. Mitchell and Lady M—, and a party of their friends, are coming to Glasgow to-morrow. They will stay at the same inn where I am, and go to the theatre every night that I play, so that I do not feel yet as if I had taken leave of them; and Lady M— intends going on with me to Dundee, where I am going to act when I have finished my engagement here and at Greenock.

Is it not too provoking that the York manager has at length found out that he can afford to give me my terms, and now writes to me to beg that I will go and act in York at the

beginning of next month? which, of course, I cannot, as I am to be three weeks in Edinburgh before I return to England.

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Neither you nor Dorothy mention your winter plans. Have you none made yet?...

I do not think, dear Hal, that you have ever heard me express a positive rejection of phrenology, for the simple reason that, never having taken the pains thoroughly to study it, it would ill become me to do so. At the same time, you know, I have at various times lived much in the society of the principal professors of the science in this country, and they have occasionally taken pains to explain a good deal of their system to me. I have also read a good many of their books, and have had a great personal affection and esteem both for Mr. Combe and his excellent brother. But, in spite of all this, and my entire agreement with almost all their physiological doctrines, phrenology, as I have hitherto seen and heard it, has a positive element of inconclusiveness to me, and I doubt if by studying it I should arrive at any other opinion, since all the opportunities I have enjoyed of hearing it discussed and seeing it acted upon have left my mind in this frame regarding it. I believe myself to have no prejudice on this subject, for I have longed all my life to know something positive and certain about this wonderful machine which we carry about with us, or which carries us about with it, and incline to agree with the views which the phrenological physiologists entertain on the subjects of temperament and general organization. But, in spite of all this, phrenology, as I hear it perpetually referred to and mixed up by them with their habitual speech (it forms indeed so completely the staple of their phraseology that one had need be familiar with the terms to follow their usual conversation), produces no conviction on my mind beyond the recognized fact that a nobly and beautifully proportioned head indicates certain qualities in the human individual, and *vice versâ*.

PHRENOLOGY.

It appears to me merely a new nomenclature for long-known and admitted phenomena; and beyond those, they seem to me to involve themselves in contradictions, divisions, and subdivisions of the brain, so minute and various, and requiring so much allowance for so many conditions, as considerably to neutralize each other, and render the result of their observations, which to them seems positive and conclusive, to me uncertain and unsatisfactory.

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There are many things which my intellectual laziness prevents my examining, which I feel sure, if I did examine, would produce positive results on my mind; but phrenology does not seem to me one of these. If it had been, I should have adopted it, or felt the same sort of belief in it that I do in mesmerism, about which, understanding nothing, I still cannot resist an impression that it is a real and powerful physical agency.... Now you must draw your own conclusions as to the causes of this state of mind of mine with regard to phrenology. The phrenologists, you know, say I am deficient in "causality"—and undoubtedly it is not my predominant mental quality; but I incline to think that I *could* think, as well as the average number of professing phrenologists, if I would take the trouble, for I have known some amongst them who certainly were anything but logical in their general use of their brains.

The only time I ever was in the Highlands was when I went with Dall and my father to Loch Lomond twenty years ago. I had never seen a drop of Loch Katrine till now. We went from Glasgow to Stirling by railroad in an hour, on Saturday morning. From Stirling we took a light open carriage, a kind of britzska, and pair of horses, and posted the same afternoon sixteen miles to Callander, where we slept. Sunday morning we took the same carriage with fresh horses to Loch Katrine. The distance is only ten miles of an enchanting drive; and if I had been able to spend the night at the Trosachs, I could have done it perfectly well, for there is an immense big inn there for the reception of tourists; and though the house was shut up for the season, the servants were in it, and we could have procured bed and board there, and I have no doubt a roast fowl and sherry, or oatmeal and whiskey, if we had preferred them. I had, however, to be back in Stirling the same afternoon, and the weather was wild and gloomy, though not cold, nor positively wet till we got into a little one-horse "machine" to drive through the Trosachs, when the mist shrouded the mountains almost from base to summit, and even Ben Aven, close under him as we were, was barely discernible. Ben An was the feature of the scene that struck me most; the form of its crest is so singularly jagged and fine.

We just drove through the pass to the first ripple of the lake, and then turned right-

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about to Stirling, which we reached before four o'clock in the afternoon, and yesterday morning I was back again in Glasgow, the lakes and mountains remaining in my memory absolutely like a dream. The country from Doune to Callander is beautiful, and in summer it must be an enchanting expedition, though such scenery has its own peculiar winter beauty, grander and more impressive perhaps than even its summer loveliness. I wish I was there again.

I cannot tell you anything more of my receipts at Glasgow, except that those of the second night were much better than the first; but as those were small, this is not saying much. I have not yet received the "returns."

I am glad the news you got from Ardgillan is satisfactory. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

29, ABERCROMBIE PLACE, EDINBURGH, Wednesday, 13th.

I did not see the eclipse, my dear. I did not know there was to be one, and did not therefore look for it; and if I had, I doubt my having been any the wiser, inasmuch as our mornings of late have been very misty.

THE
ECLIPSE.

I am off to-day with Mrs. Mitchell to Ardoch, where I stay only to-morrow, and return Friday to act here on Saturday. Having promised to go, I do not like to break my word, otherwise it seems to me rather a fuss, and a long way to go for one day's rest. Originally our plan was to spend two or three days there, that being all I could then give; but Mrs. Mitchell, with whom I had promised to go, could not get away from visitors at her own house sooner.

I spent the evening with Cecilia and Mr. Combe on Monday. They are both tired from the effect of their journey still, and look fagged and ill. They have both got the influenza too, which does not mend matters; and I am struck with the alteration in Mr. Combe's appearance. He looks old, as well as ill, and very sad—naturally enough on his return to this place, where his dear brother died.

The *becomingness* of Cecilia's gray, or rather white, hair struck me more than any other change in her. She has lost the appearance of hardness (coarseness), which, I think, mingled slightly with her positive beauty formerly, and is to my mind handsomer now than I ever remember her. She is not nearly so stout as she was; her complexion has lost its excess of color, has become softer; and the contrast of her fine dark eyes and silvery curls gives her a striking resemblance to Gainsborough's lovely portrait of her mother. She is looking thin and ill, but seems tolerably cheerful.

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At the end of my engagement at the theatre, during the whole of which I shall remain with the Mairs, I shall spend a few days with her and Mr. Combe; after which I shall come as far south as Howick, and stay a day or two with B— G—, and then cross over to Manchester to the Ellesmeres.

I shall hardly be in London before the third week in November. I have had a letter from my sister, announcing their positive return in the spring; but, as she says they will only leave Rome in May, it is improbable that I should see them at all, as I propose going to America by the steamer of the first of June; but Heaven knows what may happen between this and then. Nobody has the same right to "bother" me, as you call it, that you have, for I love nobody so well; besides, as for Emily, she is a deuced deal quicker in her processes than you are, and snaps up one's affairs by the nape of the neck, as a terrier does a rat, and unless one is tolerably alert one's self, she is off with one in her zeal in no time, whither one would not...

I wish you would tell Mrs. Fitzhugh, with my love, that a man who was acting Joseph Surface with me the other night said to me, "Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you could but be persuaded to commit a trifling *fore paw* (*faux pas*)."

Give my love to dear Emily.

Ever as ever yours,

MY DEAREST HAL,

I expect to be with the Combes for some few days at least, and do not feel altogether as happy as usual in the anticipation of their intercourse.

I think I have observed growing, as it were, upon them, with regard to certain subjects, a sort of general attitude of antagonism, which strikes me painfully.

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All fanaticisms are bad, and the fanaticism of scepticism as bad or perhaps worse than most others, because it wounds more severely the prejudices of others than it can be wounded by them, professing, as it does, to have none to wound.

I am going to stay with Cecilia all next week, and am rather afraid that I shall have to hear things that I love and reverence irreverently treated. We shall probably steer clear of much discourse on religious subjects, though of late Mr. Combe has appeared to me more inclined than formerly to challenge discussion on this ground.

I am afraid I can at the utmost only expect to see my sister for a fortnight after they return, though Henry Greville writes me that I cannot possibly give her the mortification and myself the pain of going away just as she comes back, and that I ought, for both our sakes, to stay at least a month in England after her return: but then he wishes to get up a play with us both.

I think Grantley Manor charming. It gave me a great desire to know Lady Georgiana Fullerton personally; but I am told she has a horror of me, for what she calls my "injustice to the Catholics." What that is I do not know; but whatever it is, I am very sorry for this result of it.

GRANTLEY
MANOR.

Good-bye, dearly beloved.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

29, ABERCROMBIE PLACE, EDINBURGH, Monday, October 25th, 1847.

The last question in your letter, which nevertheless heads it, having been added on over the date, "How is your health?" I can answer satisfactorily—much better.... I am much delighted at you and Dorothy reserving your visit to Battle Abbey till I come to you, and only hope the weather may give you no cause to regret having done so. I have promised Emily to go down to Bannisters in December, and shall then pay you my visit at St. Leonard's.

I do much wish to be once more with you and Dorothy. I have just concluded a very pleasant arrangement with Arthur Malkin and his wife for staying a few days in the neighborhood of the lakes with them, between Keswick and Ambleside, after I leave Howick.

The weather is, I believe, generally favorable for that scenery as late as November. I have never seen the English lakes, and am not likely soon to have so pleasant an opportunity of doing so.

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I have received an application from the York manager to act at Leeds, and having agreed to do so, think I shall probably also act a few nights at York, Hull, and Sheffield, while I am thereabouts; all which, together with my visit to the Ellesmeres, will take up so much of my time that I doubt my being more than a month or three weeks in Orchard Street before my term of possession there expires.... I shall be able to answer your questions about the Combes better when I am with them, but besides my own observation I have the testimony of the —s to the fact of their having become much more aggressive in their feeling and conversation with regard to "Church abuses," "theological bigotry," and even Christianity itself. I am sorry to hear this; but if they *hurt* me, I shall heal myself by looking at the Vatican [a fine engraving of St. Peter's, in Mr. Combe's house].

I had a letter from E—— the other day. I am delighted to say that they have quite determined to return in the spring, and it is just possible that I may see them before I leave England.

E——'s account of the Roman reforms is most encouraging, and I must give you an extract from his letter about them.

"A very important decree was published on the 2d of this month, relative to the organization of a municipal council and magistracy for the city of Rome. Besides the ordinary duties of a municipality, such as public works, *octroi*, etc., it is to have the direction of education. This is a circumstance the consequence of which it is impossible to overrate or to foresee. Hitherto, education has been monopolized by the clergy, and moreover by the Jesuits (whose schools have always been the best by a very great deal, to give the devil his due). The new law does not abolish their establishments, or interfere with them in any way, but the liberal feeling being so strong in the country, the rising generation will be almost entirely educated in the schools founded by the municipality; it is the greatest blow the hierarchy has yet received. The council consists of a hundred members, chosen from different classes of society. It is first named by the Pope, and then renews itself by elections; there are only four members to represent the ecclesiastical bodies."

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There, Hal, what do you think of that? I sit and think of that most lovely land, emerging gloriously into a noble political existence once more, till I almost feel like a poet.

Love to Dorothy.... I only make Hayes *sensible* that she is a *fool* twice a week on an average, not twice a day.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

HOWICK GRANGE, November 14th.

Surely, my dearest Hal, the next time you say you almost despair of mankind, you should add, "in spite of God," instead of "in spite of the Pope."

I arrived here about three hours ago, and have received a most severe and painful blow in a letter from Henry Greville which I found awaiting me, containing the news of Mendelssohn's death. I cannot tell you how shocked I am at this sudden departure of so great and good a creature from amongst his impoverished fellow-beings. And when I think of that bright genius (he was the *only* man of genius I have known who seemed to me to fulfil the rightful moral conditions and obligations of one), by whose loss the whole civilized world is put into mourning; of his poor wife, so ardently attached to him, so tenderly and devotedly loved by him; of his children—his boy, who, I am told, inherits his sweet and amiable disposition; of my own dear sister, and poor E——, so deeply attached to him,—I cannot bear to think, I feel half stupid with pain. And yet your letter is full of other sorrow. O God! how much there is in this sorrowful life! and what suffering we are capable of! and yet—and yet—these can be but the accidents, while the sun still shines, and the beauty and consolation and *virtue* of nature and human life still hourly abound.

You ask me if I have written anything in Edinburgh but letters. I have hardly had leisure to write even letters. I do not know when I have worked so hard as during my last engagement there. I have hardly had an occupation or thought that was not perforce connected with my theatrical avocations. I am heartily glad it is over.

Mr. Combe has given me the "Vestiges of Creation" to read, and I have been reading it.... The book is striking and interesting, but it appears to me far from strictly logical in its great principal deduction, as far as we "human mortals" are concerned. Indeed, Mr. Combe, who thinks it most admirable, was obliged to confess that the main question of progress, involving dissimilar products from similar causes, was *non-proven*. And I think there are discrepancies, moreover, in minor points: but that may only be because of my profound ignorance.

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"THE
VESTIGES
OF
CREATION."

The book is extremely disagreeable to me, though my ignorance and desire for knowledge combined give it, when treating of facts, a thousand times more interest than

the best of novels for me; but its conclusions are utterly revolting to me,—nevertheless, they may be true.

I cannot write any more. B— has just given me the *Athenæum*, with a long notice of Mendelssohn; and I am thinking more of him just now than anything else in the world....

God bless you, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

LEEDS, Friday, November 19th.

Mendelssohn's death did indeed give me a bitter and terrible shock. He was one of the bright sources of truth, at which I had hoped I might drink at some time or other. I always looked forward to some probable season of intercourse with him, the likelihood of which was increased by E— and Adelaide's love for and intimacy with him. Intercourse with him seemed to me a privilege almost certainly to be mine, in the course of the next few years. This is only my own small selfish share of the great general grief. I feel particularly for E—. He seems to find so very few people that satisfy him, whom he is fond of, or who are at all congenial to him, that the loss of a dear friend, and such a man, will indeed fall heavily upon him.

Those whose sympathies are more general, and whose taste can accept and find pleasure in the intercourse of the majority of their fellow-creatures, are fortunate in this respect, that no one loss can make the world empty for them; and thus the qualities of kindness and benevolence are repaid, like all other virtues, even in this world (which is nevertheless not heaven), into the bosom of those who practise them.

For a person who has permitted intellectual refinement to become almost a narrow fastidiousness, and whose sympathies are of that exclusive kind that none but special and rarely gifted persons can excite them, the loss of such a friend as Mendelssohn must be incalculable; and I am grieved to the heart for E—.

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I do not know what is to be done with Covent Garden. I suppose it will remain an opera-house; for to fit it for that it has been made well-nigh unavailable for any other purpose, as I think we shall find on the 7th December, when a representation of "Scenes" from various of Shakespeare's plays is to take place there, for the purpose of raising funds for the purchase of the house Shakespeare was born in.

COVENT
GARDEN.

You know what my love and veneration for Shakespeare are; you know, too, how comparatively indifferent to me are those parts of the natures even of those I most love and honor which belong only to their mortality. The dead bodies of my friends appeal, perhaps, even less than they should do to my feelings, since they have been temporarily inhabited and informed by their souls; but acquainted as you are with these notions of mine, you will understand that I do not entirely sympathize with all that is being said and done about the four walls between which the king of poets came into his world. The thing is more distasteful to me, because originally got up by an American charlatan of the first water, with a view to thrust himself into notoriety by shrieking about the world stupendous commonplaces about the house where Shakespeare was born. It has been taken up by a number of people, theatrical and other, who, with the exception of Macready, have many of them the same petty personal objects in view. Those whose profession compels them, by the absolute necessity of its conditions, to garble and hack and desecrate works which else could not be fit for acting purposes (a fact which in itself sets forth what theatrical representation really is and always must be—do read, *à propos* to this, Serlo's answer to Wilhelm Meister about the impossibility of representing dramatically a great poetical whole), and who now, on this very Shakespearian Memorial night, instead of acting some one of his plays in its integrity, and taking zealously any the most insignificant part in it, have arranged a series of truncated, isolated scenes, that the actors may each be the hero or heroine of their own *bit* of Shakespeare.... This is all I know of the immediate destinies of Covent Garden. They have written to me to act the dying scene of Queen Katharine, to which I have agreed, not choosing to decline any part assigned me in this "Celebration," little as I sympathize with it.

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If I should hear anything further, as I very likely may, from Henry Greville, of the probable fate of Covent Garden next season, I will let you know, that you may dispose accordingly of your property in it.

I have finished the "Vestiges of Creation." I became more reconciled to the theory it presents towards the close of the book, for obvious reasons. Of course, when, abandoning his positive chain (as he conceives it) of proved progression, after leading the whole universe from inorganic matter up to the "paragon of animals," the climax of development, man, he goes on to say that it is *impossible* to limit the future progress, or predict the future destinies of this noble human result, he forsakes his own ground of material demonstration, on which he has jumped, as the French say, *à peds joints*, over many an impediment, and relieves himself (and me) by the hypothesis, which, after all, in no way belongs peculiarly to his system, that other and higher destinies, developments, may, and probably do, await humanity than anything it has yet attained here: a theory which, though most agreeable to the love of life and desire of perfection of most human creatures, in no sort hinges logically on to his *absolute chain of material progression* and development. From the moment, however, that he admitted this view, instead of the one which I think legitimately belongs to his theory, irreconcilable as it seemed to me with what preceded it, the book became less distasteful to me, although I do not think the soundness of his theory (even admitting all his facts, which I am quite too ignorant to dispute) established by his work. Supposing his premises to be all correct, I think he does not make out his own case satisfactorily; and many of the conclusions in particular instances appear to me to be tacked or basted (to speak womanly) together loosely and clumsily, and yet with an effect of more mutual relation, coherence, and cohesion than really belongs to them.

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Mr. Combe is delighted with the book—because it quotes him and his brother, and professes a belief in phrenology; but Mr. Combe himself allowed that the main proposition of the work is not logically deduced from its arguments, and moreover admitted that though well versed in *all* the branches of natural science, the author was perfectly master of *none*. He attributes the authorship to his friend Robert Chambers, or perhaps to the joint labor of him and his brother William. If his surmise in this respect is true there would be obvious reasons why they should not acknowledge so heterodox a book, especially in Edinburgh.

In asking me for *my* theory of human existence, dear Hal, you must have *forgotten me* in your craving desire for some—any—solution of the great mystery with which you are so deeply and perpetually perplexed.

How should I, who know nothing, who am *exceptionally* ignorant, who seldom read, and seldomer think (in any proper sense of the word), have even the shadow of a theory upon this overpowering theme?

To tell you the vague suggestions of my imagination at various times would doubtless be but to re-echo some of your own least satisfactory surmises.

I thank God I have not the mental strength *and infirmity* to seek to grapple with this impossible subject. The faint outlines of ideas that have at any time visited my brain about this tremendous mystery of human life have all been sad and dreary, and most bitterly and oppressively unsatisfactory; and therefore I rejoice that no mental fascination rivets my thoughts to the brink of this dark and unfathomable abyss, but that it is on the contrary the tendency of my nature to rest in hope, or rather in faith in God's mercy and power, and moreover to think that the perception we have (or as you would say, imagine we have) of DUTY, of right to be done and wrong to be avoided, gives significance enough to our existence to make it worth both love and honor, though it should consist of but one conscious day in which that noble perception might be sincerely followed, and though absolute annihilation were its termination. The whole value and meaning of life, to me, lies in the single sense of conscience—duty; and that is here, present, now, enough for the best of us—God knows how much too much for me.

DUTY.

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Good-bye, my dear. I have a most horrible cough and sore throat, and I have been acting with it, feeling every moment that I was doing my poor *parts of speech* a serious injury by the strain I was compelled to put upon them. You may judge of the state of my voice when I tell you that I received from some anonymous kind friend this morning a bottle of cough-mixture, and all manner of lozenges, jujubes, etc. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

ORCHARD STREET.

DEAREST H—,

... I am going with Henry Greville to see Rachel on Wednesday in "Marie Stuart." I wish I could afford to see her every night, but it is a dear recreation. Henry Greville is not "teaching me to act," though I dare say he thinks I may derive profit as well as pleasure from seeing Rachel...

All my friends are extremely impatient of my small gains; I am not, though I certainly should be glad if they were larger....

I have moved my Psyche, my beautiful and serene goddess. As the ancient Romans had especial tutelary gods for their private houses, the patron saints of the heathen calendar, she is my adopted divinity. You know I have had her with me in some of my blackest and bitterest seasons, and have often marvelled at the mere combination of lines which have produced so exquisite an image of noble graceful thoughtfulness. She is not without a certain sweet sternness, too; there is immense power, as well as repose, in that lovely countenance,—how—why—can mere curved and straight lines convey so profoundly moral an impression? She is an admirable companion, and reminds me of Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty," which I every now and then feel inclined to apostrophize her with.

I have sent out the big centre china jar to the table on the stair-case, and have put my goddess in the drawing-room in its place....

I have received a kind invitation from Lady Dacre to the Hoo, and I shall spend next week there, which will be both good and agreeable for me. I expect to find Lady G— there; she is a person for whom I have a great liking and esteem, and whom I shall be glad to meet. Perhaps, too, dear William Harness; but I do not know of anybody else.

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I forget whether I told you that the Sedgwicks had sent me a friend of theirs, an American country clergyman, to lionize about London, which I have been doing for the last three days. I took him to the British Museum, and showed him the Elgin Marbles, and the library, and the curious manuscripts and books which strangers generally care to see; but the profit and pleasure, I should think, of travelling is but little unless the mind is in some slight measure prepared for more knowledge by the possession of some small original stock; and a great many Americans come abroad but poorly furnished not only with learning but with the means of learning.

Charles Greville got me an admission for my Yankee friend to the House of Lords. We were admitted while the business was going on, and saw the curious old form of passing the Acts of Parliament by Commission, than the ceremonies of which it is difficult to imagine anything more quaint, not to say ludicrous, and apparently meaningless.

We heard Lord Brougham and the Duke of Wellington speak, and had an excellent view of both of them.

The House appeared to me too minutely ornamented; it is rich, elaborate, but all in small detail, too subdivided and intricate and overwrought to be as imposing and good in effect as if it were more simple.

I took my American friend to the Zoological Gardens, and to the Botanical Gardens, in the Regent's Park, which are very charming, and for which I have a private ticket of admission.

This morning I have been with him to Stafford House, to show him the pictures, which are fine, and the house itself, which I think the handsomest in London. To-morrow I take him to the opera, and I have given him a breakfast, a lunch, and a dinner, and feel as if I had discharged the duty put upon me, especially as it involved what I have no taste for, *i.e.* sight-seeing.

The Elgin Marbles I was glad enough to see again—one has never seen them too often,—and was sitting down to reflect upon them at my leisure, when my American friend, to

whom, doubtless, they seemed but a parcel of discolored, dirty, decapitated bodies, proposed that we should pass on, which we accordingly did.

I am struck with the spirit of conformity by which this gentleman seems troubled, and which Adelaide tells me the young American people they saw in Rome constantly expressed,—the dread of appearing that which they are, foreigners; the annoyance at hearing that their accent and dress denote them to be Americans. They certainly are not comfortable people in this respect, and I always wish, for their own sakes as well as mine, that they had more or less self-love.

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I was impelled to say to my young clergyman, whose fear of trespassing against English usages seemed to leave him hardly any other idea, "Sir, are you not a foreigner, an American? May I ask why it is to be considered incumbent upon you, either by yourself or others, to dress and speak like an Englishman?" ...

Good-bye, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

18, ORCHARD STREET, November 18th.

I do not know that I ever slept so near the sea as to hear it discoursing as loudly as you describe, though I have been where its long swelling edge was heard rolling up and tearing itself to ribbons on the shingly beach like distant thunder. As for night-sounds of any sort, you know my *sound* sleep is the only one I am familiar with.

In the hotel at Niagara, the voice of the cataract not only roared night and day through every chamber of the house, but the whole building vibrated incessantly with the shock of the mighty fall. I have still health and nerve and spirits to cope with the grand exhibitions of the powers of Nature: the majesty and beauty of the external world always acts as a tonic on me, and under its influence I feel as if a strong arm was put round me, and was lifting me over stony places; and I nothing doubt that the great anthem of the ocean would excite rather than overpower me, however nearly it sounded in my ears.

Your description of the terrace, or parade walk, covered with my fellow-creatures, appals my imagination much more. My sympathies have never been half human enough, and in the proximity of one of nature's most impressive objects I shrink still more from contact with the outward forms of unknown humanity. However, this is merely an answer to your description; I shall find, by creeping down the shingles, some place below, or, by climbing the cliff, some place above, these dear men and women, where I can be a little alone with the sea.

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I observed nothing peculiar about the direction of any letter that I have recently received from you; but then, to be sure, I am not given to the general process, which, general as it is, always astonishes me, of examining the direction, the date, the postmark, the signature, of the letter I receive (as many of these, too, as possible, before opening the epistle); I hasten to read your words as soon as I have them, and seldom speculate as to when or where they were written, so that I really do not know whether I have received your Hull letter or not. I do not go thither until Monday next, and return to town the following Sunday....

Oh, my dear, what a world is this! or rather, what an unlucky experience mine has been—in some respects—yes, in *some* respects! for while I write this, images of the good, and true, and excellent people I have known and loved rise like a cloud of witnesses to shut out the ugly vision of the moral deformity of some of those with whom my fate has been interwoven....

I have agreed with Mrs. Humphreys to take the apartments that T— M— had in King Street, from the beginning of January till the beginning of May. She says she cannot let me have them longer than that, but I shall endeavor for at least a month's extension, for it will be so very wretched to turn out and have to hunt for new lodgings, for a term of six weeks.

My success at Leeds was very good, considering the small size of the theatre.... I am not

YOUNG
AMERICANS.

SUCCESS AT
LEEDS.

exempt from a feeling about "illustrious localities," but the world seems to me to be so absolutely Shakespeare's domain and dwelling-place, that I do not vividly associate him with the idea of those four walls, between which he first saw the light of an English day. If the house he dwelt in in the maturity of his age, and to which he retired to spend the evening of his life, still existed, I should feel considerable emotion in being where his hours and days were spent when his mind had reached its zenith.

A baby is the least intelligent form of a rational human being, and as it mercifully pleased God to remove His wonderfully endowed child before the approach of age had diminished his transcendent gifts, I do not care to contemplate him in that condition in which I cannot recognize him—that is, with an undeveloped and dormant intelligence.

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We know nothing of his childhood, nothing of the gradual growth and unfolding of his genius; his acknowledged works date from the season of its ripe perfection.

You know I do not regret the dimness that covers the common details of his life: his humanity was allied to that of its kind by infirmities and sins, but I am glad that these links between him and *me* have disappeared, and that those alone remain by which he will be bound, as long as this world lasts, to the love and reverence of his fellow-beings. Shakespeare's childhood, boyhood, the season of his moral and intellectual growth, would be of the deepest interest could one know it: but Shakespeare's mere birthplace and babyhood is not much to me; though I quite agree that it should be respectfully preserved, and allowed to be visited by all who find satisfaction in such pilgrimage.

He could not have been different from other babies you know; nor, indeed, need be,—for a *baby—any* baby—is a more wonderful thing even than Shakespeare.

I have told you how curiously affected I was while standing by his grave, in the church at Stratford-upon-Avon: how I was suddenly overcome with sleep (my invariable refuge under great emotion or excitement), and how I prayed to be allowed to sleep for a little while on the altar-steps of the chancel, beside his bones: the power of association was certainly strong in me then; but his bones *are* there, and above them streamed a warm and brilliant sunbeam, fit emblem of his vivifying spirit;—but I have no great enthusiasm for his house....

Does not the power of conceiving in any degree the *idea* of God establish some relation between Him and the creature capable of any approach by thought to Him? Do we not, in some sense, possess mentally that which we most earnestly think of? is it not the possession over which earthly circumstances have the least power? The more incessantly and earnestly we think of a thing the more we become possessed *by* and *of* it, and in some degree assimilated to it; and can those thoughts which reach towards God alone fail to lay hold, in any sort or degree, of their object?...

Surely, whether we are, or are not, the result of an immense chain of material progression, we have attained to that idea which preserves alive to all eternity the souls upon which it has once dawned. We have caught hold of the feet of the omnipotent Creator; and to the spirit that once has received the conception, however feeble or remote, of His greatness and goodness, there can be no cessation of the bond thus formed between itself and its great Cause. I cannot write about this; I could not utter in words what I think and feel about it: but it seems to me that if organization, mere development, has reached a pitch at which it becomes capable of *divine* thoughts, it thenceforth can never be anything *less* than a creature capable of such conceptions; and if so, then how much *more*?

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Farewell. Love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,

F. A. K.

ORCHARD STREET, Monday, 18th.

I arrived yesterday in town, my dearest Hal, and found your letter waiting for me. The aspect of these, my hired Penates, is comfortable and homelike to me, after living at inns for a fortnight; and the spasmodic and funereal greetings of the nervous Mulliner, and the lugubrious Jeffreys, *gladden* my spirits with a sense of returning to *something* that

expects me.

About Lady Emily — and her *ethereal* confinement: did I not tell you that Mrs. C— wrote me word from America that Fanny Longfellow had been brought to bed most prosperously under the beneficent influence of ether? at which my dear S— C— expresses some anxiety touching the authority of the Book of Genesis, which she thinks may be impaired if women continue, by means of ether, to escape from the special curse pronounced against them for their share in the original sin.

For my part I am not afraid that the worst part of the curse will not abide upon us, in spite of ether; the woman's desire will still be to her husband, who, consequently, will still rule over her. For these (curses or not, as people may consider them), I fear no palliating ether will be found; and till men are more righteous than they are, all creatures subject to them will be liable to suffer misery of one sort or another....

I wonder if I have ever spoken to you of Lady Morley—a kind-hearted, clever woman (who, by the bye, always calls men "the softer sex"), a great friend of Sydney Smith's, whom I have known a good deal in society, and who came to see me just before I left town. In speaking of poor Lady Dacre, and the difficulty she found in accepting her late bereavement, Lady Morley said, "I think people should be very grateful whose misfortunes fall upon them in old age rather than in youth: they're all the nearer having done with them." There was some whimsical paradox in this, but some truth too. An habitual saying of hers (not serious, of course, but which she applies to everything she hears) is: "There's nothing new, nothing true, and nothing signifies." The last time I dined at Lady Grey's a discussion arose between Lady Morley, myself, and some of the other guests, as to how much or how little truth it was *right* to speak in our usual intercourse with people. I maintained that one was bound to speak the whole truth; so did my friend, Lady G—; Lady F— said, "Toute verité n'est pas bonne à dire;" and Lady Morley told the following story: "I sat by Rogers at dinner the other day (the poet of memory was losing his, and getting to repeat the same story twice over without being aware that he did so), and he told me a very good story, which, however, before long, he began to repeat all over again; something, however, suggesting to him the idea that he was doing so, he stopped suddenly, and said, 'I've told you this before, haven't I?' And he had, not a quarter of an hour before. Now, ladies, what would you have said? and what do you think I said? 'Oh yes,' said I, 'to be sure: you were beginning to tell it to me when the fish came round, and *I'm dying to hear the end of it.*'" This was on all hands allowed to have been a most ingenious reply; and I said I thought she deserved to be highly complimented for such graceful dexterity in falsehood: to which she answered, "Oh, well, my dear, it's all very fine; but if ever you get the truth, depend upon it you won't like it"—a retort which turned the laugh completely against me, and sent her ladyship off with flying colors; and certainly there was no want of tolerably severe sincerity in that speech of hers.

LADY
MORLEY.

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Lady Morley's great vivacity of manner and very peculiar voice added not a little to the drollery of her sallies.

A very conceited, effeminate, and absurd man coming into a room where she was one evening, and beginning to comb his hair, she exclaimed, "La! what's that! Look there! There's a mermaid!"

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Frederick Byng told me that he was escorting her once in a crowded public assembly, when she sat down on a chair from which another woman had just risen and walked away. "Do you know whose place you have just taken?" asked he. Something significant in his voice and manner arrested her attention, when, looking at him for an instant with wide-open eyes, she suddenly jumped up, exclaiming, "Bless my heart, don't tell me so! *Predecessor!*" Lord Morley, before marrying her, had been divorced from his first wife, who had just vacated the seat taken by his second, at the assembly to which they had both gone.

On the occasion of my acting at Plymouth, Lady Morley pressed me very kindly to go and stay some days with her at Soltram, her place near there: this I was unable to do, but drove over to see her, when, putting on a white apron, to "sustain," as she said, "the character," she took me, housekeeper fashion, through the rooms; stopping before her own charming watercolor drawings, with such comments as, "Landscape,—capital performance, by Frances Countess of Morley;" "Street in a foreign town, by Frances

Countess of Morley,—a piece highly esteemed by *connyshures*;" "Outside of a church, by Frances Countess of Morley,—supposed by good judges to be her *shiff duver*," etc....

I have just had a visit from that pretty Miss Mordaunt who acted with me at the St. James's Theatre, and who tells me that her sister, Mrs. Nisbett, was cheated at the Liverpool theatre precisely as I was; but she has a brother who is a lawyer, who does not mean to let the matter rest without some attempt to recover his sister's earnings....

I went this morning to inquire at the St. George's Workhouse for the unfortunate girl I took out of the hands of the police in the park the other day (her offence was being found asleep at early morning, and suspected of having passed the night there), and found, to my great distress and disappointment, that she was in the very act of starting for Bristol.

AN
UNFORTUNATE.

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I had, as I told you, interested dear Mr. Harness, and Mr. Brackenbury, the chaplain of the Magdalen, about her, and when I went out of town she seemed fully determined to go into that asylum. The chaplain of the workhouse in Mount Street, however, has dissuaded her from doing so, told her she would come out worse than she went in; in short, they have despatched her to Bristol, to the care and guardianship of a poor young sister, only a year older than herself, who earns a scanty support by sewing; and all that remained for me to do was to pay her expenses down, and send her sister something to help her through the first difficulties of her return. I am greatly troubled about this. They say the poor unfortunate child is in the family-way, and therefore could not be received at the Magdalen Asylum; but it seems to me that there has been some prejudice, or clerical punctilio, or folly, or stupidity at work, that has induced the workhouse officials thus to alter the poor girl's determination, and send her back whence she came, no doubt to go through a similar experience as soon as possible again. God help her, and us all! What a world it is!...

The clergyman of the workhouse called upon me to explain why he had so advised the girl, but I did not think his reasons very satisfactory....

God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

ORCHARD STREET.

The houses at Plymouth and Exeter were wretched.... These gains, my dearest Hal, will not allow of my laying up much, but they will prevent my being in debt, that horror of yours and mine. I paid my expenses, besides bringing home something, and a considerable increase of health and strength—which is something more....

I remain in town till the end of next week, then go to Norwich, Ipswich, and Cambridge, my midland circuit, as I call it; after which I shall return to London. Towards the middle of August I go to York, Leeds, Sheffield, and Newcastle, thence to visit Mrs. Mitchell at Carolside; after which I shall take my Glasgow and Edinburgh engagements, and then come back to London. There is a rumor of Macready being about to take Drury Lane for the winter, but I have no idea whether it is true or not.

I am sure I don't know what is to become of my poor dog Hero [a fine Irish retriever given me by my friend]. I am almost afraid that Mrs. Humphreys will not take him into her nice lodging. If I can't keep him with me till I go away to America, I should beg you in the interim to receive him, for my sake, at Ardgillan.

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You cannot think with what a sense of relief at laying hold of something *that could not lie* I threw my arms round his neck the other day, after — had left me. This is melancholy, is it not? but I believe many poor human creatures whose hearts have been lacerated by their (un)kind have loved brutes for their freedom from the complicated and reflected falsehood of which the nobler nature is, alas! capable and guilty.

Tell me if it will be inconvenient to you to take charge of Hero when I go away. In a place where he had a wider range than this narrow little dwelling of mine, and where his defects were not incessantly ministered to by the adulation of an idiotical old maid

besotted with the necessity of adoring and devoting herself to something, he would be very enduring....

[I injured one of my hands in getting out of a pony-carriage at Hawick.] Touching my broken finger, my dear, I am sure I did take off the splints too soon, and the recovery has been protracted in consequence; but as I knew it would recover anyhow, and that the splints were inconvenient in acting, and, moreover, expensive, as they compelled me to cut off the little finger of all my white gloves, I preferred dispensing with them. The pain, inflammation, and stiffness are almost gone, and nothing remains but the thickening of the lower part of the finger, which makes it look crooked, and I think may continue after the injury is healed. I did not, I believe, break the bone at all, but tore away the ligament on one side, that keeps the upper joint in its socket. The cold water pumping is a capital thing, and I give it a douche every time I take my bath. It might, perhaps, be a little better for bandaging, but will get well without it.... A healthy body, with common attention to common-sense, will recover, undoctored, from a great many evils. In almost all cases of slight fractures, cuts, bruises, etc., if the patient is temperate and healthy, and has no constitutional tendency to fever or inflammation, the evil can be remedied by cold water bandages and rest.

A BROKEN
FINGER.

Give my dear love to my dear Dorothy and your dear Dorothy. I shall be happy with you both, for she is quite too good to be jealous of.

God bless you, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

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ORCHARD STREET, Sunday, 4th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

First of all let me tell you, what I am sure you will be glad to learn, that E— S— is in England. You will imagine how glad I was to see him. I am very fond of him, have great reliance on his mind as well as his heart; and then he seems like something kind and dependable belonging to me—the only thing of the kind that I possess, for my sister is a woman, and you know I am heartily of opinion that we are the weaker sex, and that an efficient male protector is a tower of strength.

In seeing E—, too, I saw, as it were, alive again the happy past. He seemed part of my sister and her children, and the blessed time I spent with them in Rome, and it was a comfort to me to look at him....

Charles Greville had been out of town, and found the letter announcing E—'s advent, and came up, very good-naturedly, dinnerless, to bring me word of the good news. The next day, however, he was as cross as possible (a way both he and his brother Henry have, in common with other spoiled children) because I expressed some dismay when he said E—'s obtaining a seat in Parliament was quite an uncertainty (I think Mr. S— contemplated standing for Kidderminster). Now, from all he had said, and the letter he had written about it, I should have supposed E—'s return to have been inevitable; but this is the sort of thing people perpetually do who endeavor to persuade others that what they themselves wish is likely to happen. E— seems quite aware himself that the thing is a great chance, but says that even if he does not get a seat in Parliament, he shall not regret having come, as he wanted change of air, is much the better for the journey, and has had the satisfaction of seeing his sister in Paris. Nevertheless, if this effort to settle himself to his mind in England proves abortive, I do not think the Grevilles will get him back in a hurry again....

I am surprised by the term "worthless fellow" which A— applies to ---. I think him selfish and calculating, but I am getting so accustomed to find everybody so that it seems to me superfluous fastidiousness to be deterred from dealings with any one on that account....

I do not write vaguely to my sister about my arrangements; but you know I have no certain plans, and it is difficult to write with precision about what is not precise.

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I am not going to Norwich just yet; the theatre is at present engaged by the Keeleys, and

the manager's arrangements with them and Mademoiselle Celeste are such that he cannot receive me until August. I may possibly act a night or two at Newcastle in Staffordshire, and at Rochdale, but this would not take me away for more than a week.

In answer to your question of what "coarsenesses" L— finds in my book ["A Year of Consolation"], I will give you an extract from her letter. "There are a few expressions I should like to have stricken out of it; *par exemple*, I hate the word *stink*, though I confess there is no other to answer its full import; and there are one or two passages the careless manner of writing which astonished me in you. You must have caught it from what you say is my way of talking." Now, Hal, I can only tell you that more than once I thought myself actually to blame for not giving with more detail the disgusting elements which in Rome mingle everywhere with what is sublime and exquisite; for it appeared to me that to describe and dilate upon one half of the truth only was to be an unfaithful painter, and destroy the merit, with the accuracy, of the picture. I remember, particularly, standing one morning absorbed in this very train of reflection, in the Piazza del Popolo, when on attempting to approach the fine fountains below the Pincio I found it impossible to get near them for the abominations by which they were surrounded, and thought how unfaithful to the truth it would be to speak of the grace and beauty of this place, and not of this detestable desecration of it. The place and the people can only be perfectly described through the whole, as you know. Farewell.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

SUNSHINE
AND
SHADOW.

RAILWAY STATION, HULL, Friday, 4th.

I have been spending the afternoon crying over the tender mercies of English Christians to their pauper population, till my eyes smart, and itch, and ache, and I shall have neither sight nor voice to read "Coriolanus," which I must do this evening. To this Hull Railway Hotel is attached a magnificent Railway Station (or rather *vice versa*), shaped like a horseshoe, with a spacious broad pavement, roofed with a skylight all round, making a noble ambulatory, of which I have availed myself every day since I have been here for my walking exercise....

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I was just starting for my walk to-day, when in came old Mr. Frost, my Hull employer, President of the Literary and Scientific Institution, before which I am giving my present readings, the principal lawyer, and, I believe, Mayor of Hull,—a most charming, accomplished, courteous old gentleman of seventy years and upwards, who, finding that I was about to walk, proposed to accompany me, and we descended to the Station.

As we paced up and down, I remarked, lying in a corner, what I took at first for a bundle of rags. On looking again, however, I perceived there was a live creature in the rags—a boy, whose attitude of suffering and weariness, as he crouched upon the pavement, was the most wretched thing you can imagine. I knelt down by him, and asked him what ailed him: he hardly lifted his face from his hands, and said, "Headache;" and then, coughing horribly, buried his miserable face again. Mr. Frost, seeing I still knelt by him, began to ask him questions; and then followed one of those piteous stories which make one smart all over while one listens to them; parental desertion, mother marrying a second time, cruelty from the step-father, beating, starving, and final abandonment. He did not know what had become of them; they had gone away to avoid paying their rent, and left this boy to shift for himself. "How long ago is that?" said Mr. Frost. "Before snow," said the lad,—the snow has been gone a fortnight and more from this neighborhood, and for all that time the child, by his own account, has wandered up and down, living by begging, and sleeping in barns and stables and passages. The interrogatory was a prolonged one: my friend Mr. Frost is slow by age, and cautious by profession, and a man by nature, and so not irresistibly prompted to seize up such an unfortunate at once in his arms and adopt it for his own. In the course of his answers the boy, among other things, said, "I wouldn't mind only for little brother." "How old is he?" "Going on two year." "Where is he?" "Mother got him." "Oh, well, then, you needn't fret about him; she'll take care of him." "No, she won't; he won't be having nothing to eat, I know he won't." And the boy covered his face again in a sullen despair that was pitiful to see. Now, you know, Hal, this boy was not begging; he did not come to us with a

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pathetic appeal about his starving little brother: he was lying starving himself, and stupefied, with his head covered over, buried in his rags when I spoke to him; and this touching reminiscence of his poor little step-brother came out in the course of Mr. Frost's interrogatory accidentally, and made my very heart ache. The boy had been in the workhouse for two years, with his mother, before she married this second husband; and, saying that he had been sent to school, and kindly treated, and well fed in the workhouse, I asked him if he would go back thither, and he said yes. So, rather to Mr. Frost's amazement I think, I got a cab, and put the child in, and with my kind old gentleman—who, in spite of evident repugnance to such close quarters with the poor tatterdemalion, would by no means leave me alone in the adventure—we carried the small forsaken soul to the workhouse, where we got him, with much difficulty, *temporarily* received. The wife of the master of the poor-house knew the boy again, and corroborated much of what he had told us, adding that he was a good boy enough while he was there with his mother; but—would you believe it, Hal?—she also told us that this poor little creature had come to their gate the night before, begging admittance; but that, because he had not a *certain written order* from a certain officer, the rules of the establishment prevented their receiving him, and he had been turned away *of course*. I was in a succession of convulsions of rage and crying all this time, and so adjured and besought poor old Mr. Frost to take instant measures for helping the little outcast, that when we left him by the workhouse fire, the woman having gone to get him some food, and I returned blaspheming and blubbering to my inn, he—Mr. Frost—went off in search of a principal police-officer of Hull, from whom he hoped to obtain some further information about the child, which he presently brought back to me. "Oh yes, the magistrate knew the child; he had *sent him to prison* already several times, for being found lying at night on the wharves and about the streets." So this poor little wretch was *sent to prison* because literally he had not where to lay his head!... I wouldn't be a man for anything! They are so cruel, without even knowing that they are so: the habit of seeing sin and suffering is such a *heart-hardener*.

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Well, the boy is safe in the workhouse now, and is, according to his own wish and inclination, either to be sent to sea or put out apprentice to some trade. I have pledged one of my readings for purposes of outfit or entrance-fee, and Mr. Frost has promised me not to lose sight of the child, so I hope he is rescued from sin and suffering for the present, and perhaps for the future.

RELIEF AT
HAND.

Do you remember what infinite difficulty I told you I had had in rescuing that poor little wretch out of the streets of Glasgow? But then she had the advantage of a *mother*, who drove her into them day after day, to sing her starvation in the miserable mud and rain,—luckily this poor Hull boy's mother had not this *interest* in him.

I have come home, dear Hal, after my reading, and resume my letter to you, though I am very tired, and shall go to bed before I have finished it.

I do remember Robertson's sermon about Jacob wrestling with the angel, and I remember the passage you refer to. I remember feeling that I did not agree with it. The solemnity of night is very great; and the aspect of the star-sown heavens suggests the idea of God, by the overpowering wonder of those innumerable worlds by which one then *sees* one's self surrounded,—which affect one's imagination in a reverse way from the daylight beauty of the earth, for that makes God seem as if He were *here*, in this world, which then is all we see (except its great eye, the sun) of these multitudinous worlds He has created, and that are hanging in countless myriads round us. Night suggests the vastness of creation, as day can never do; and darkness, silence, the absence of human fellowship, and the suspension of human activity, interests, and occupations, leave us a less disturbed opportunity of meditating on our Creator's inconceivable power. The day and the day's beauty make me feel as if God were very near me; the night and the night's beauty, as if I were very far off from Him.

But, dear Harriet, do not, I entreat you, challenge me to put into words those thoughts which, in us all, must be unutterable. If I can speak of nothing that I feel deeply but with an indistinctness and inefficiency that make me feel sick as with a bodily effort of straining at what I cannot reach, how can I utter, or write, upon such a subject as this! Do not, I beg, ask me such questions, at least in writing; speaking to you, there might be times—seldom, indeed, but some—when I might stammer out part of what I felt on such a subject; but I *cannot* write about it—it is impossible.

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I have many things to tell you, for which I am too tired to-night, but I will tell you them to-morrow. God bless you. It has just occurred to me that I have a morning reading to-morrow, and some visits to pay first, and I must go to the workhouse and see that boy once more, and satisfy myself that whatever he is put to hereafter is his own choice; and so I shall have no time to write to you to-morrow, and therefore I will finish my letter to-night.... I had an application from Dr. Hawtrey, the Provost of Eton, through Mary Ann Thackeray, the other day, to give some readings to the Eton boys, which I have delightedly agreed to do—but of course refused to be paid for what will be such a great pleasure to me; whereupon Dr. Hawtrey writes that my "generosity to his boys takes his breath away." I think *I* ought to pay for what will be so very charming as reading Shakespeare to those children....

I had a letter from Mrs. Jameson yesterday, from whom I have heard nothing since she left my house....

And now, dear Hal, I have told you all my news,—oh no, I haven't either:—I went last night, it being my holiday, to hear Mr. Warren, the author of "Ten Thousand a Year," and the Recorder of Hull, address the members of the Mechanics' Institute on the duties, privileges, difficulties, dignity, and consolations of labor. I was greatly delighted. I sat on the platform, opposite that large concourse of working men and women—laborers well acquainted by daily experience with the subject of the eloquent speaker's discourses,—and was deeply touched by the silent attention and intelligent interest with which, for two hours, they listened to his admirable address.

I have got it, and shall bring it down and read it to you. Good-bye. Do not fail to let me know what I can do for Dorothy. Good-night.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

HULL, Thursday, December 2nd, 1847.

My chest and throat, my dear Hal, are well. I have still a slight cough, but nothing to signify....

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I never acted in all Yorkshire before. I do not know why, during my "first theatrical career," I did not, but so it was. My harvest now is not likely to be very great, for the prices at the theatres in Leeds and Hull are very low, the theatres not large, and so habitually deserted that an occasional attraction of a few nights hardly has time to rouse the people from their general indifference to these sorts of exhibitions. However, I am both living and saving, and am content.

We have in our last letters got upon those subjects which, upon principle and by choice, I avoid,—bottomless speculations, wherein the mind, attempting to gaze, falls from the very brink and is drowned, as it were, at the very surface of them.

Your theory of *partial immortality* is abhorrent to me—I can use no other term. Pray conceive me rightly—'tis an abhorrence of the opinion, which does not include you for holding it; for though my whole being, moral and mental, revolts from certain notions, this is a mere necessity of my nature, as to contemplate such issues is the necessity of certain others, differently organized from mine.

I would rather disbelieve in the immortality of my own soul than suppose the boon given to me was withheld from any of my fellow-creatures. Besides, I did not, in the position I placed before you, suggest the efficacy of *any special kind of idea* of God, as connecting the holder of it with Him.

For aught I can tell, the noble conception of the Divinity, formed out of the extension of the noble qualities of his own soul by the noblest man, may be further from any adequate idea of God than the gross notion of a log-worshipper is from the spiritual conception of the most spiritually minded man (only remember *I don't believe this*). But, inasmuch as it is something out of himself, beyond himself, to which the religious element of his nature aspires—that highest element in the human creature, since it combines the sense of reverence and the sense of duty, no matter how distorted or misapplied—it *is* an idea of a God, it *is* a manifestation of the germ of those capacities

which, enlightened and cultivated, have made (be it with due respect spoken) the God of Fénelon and of Channing. I do not believe that any human creature, called by God into this life, is without some notion of a Divinity, no matter how mean, how unworthy, how seldom thought of, how habitually forgotten.

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Superstition, terror, hope, misery, joy—every one of these sentiments brings paroxysms in every man's life when *some* idea of God is seized upon, no matter of what value, no matter how soon relinquished, how evanescent. Eternity is long enough for the progress of those that we see lowest in our moral scale. You know I believe in the progress of the human race, as I do in its immortality; and the barbarous conception of the Divinity of the least advanced of that race confirms me in this faith as much as the purest Christianity of its foremost nations and individuals. Revelation, you say, alone gives any image of God to you; but which Revelation? When did God begin, or when has He ceased, to reveal Himself to man? And is it in the Christian Revelation that you find your doctrine of partial immortality and partial annihilation? I believe I told you once of my having read in America a pamphlet suggesting that sin eventually *put out*, destroyed, annihilated, and did away with, those souls of which it took possession; this is something like your present position, and I do not know when I received so painful an impression as from reading that pamphlet, or a profound distress that lasted so long, from a mere abstract proposition addressed to my imagination.

CONCEPTIONS
OF GOD'S
DEALINGS
WITH US.

I believe all God's creatures have known Him, in such proportion as He and *they* have chosen; *i.e.*, to none hath He left Himself utterly without witness; to some that witness has been the perfect life and doctrine of Jesus Christ, the most complete revelation of God that the world has known.

All have known Him, by His great grace, in some mode and measure; and therefore I believe all are immortal: none have known Him as He is, and but few in any age of the world have known Him as they might; and an eternity of progress holds forth, to my mind, the only hope large enough to compensate for the difference of advantages here, and to atone for the inadequate use of those advantages.

Dearest Harriet, I hate not to make an effort to answer you, and you like, above all things, this species of questioning, speculating, and discussing. But there is something to me almost irreverent in thus catching up these everlasting themes, as it were, in the breathing-time between my theatrical rehearsals and performances. You will not mistake me. I know that the soul may be about its work (does not George Herbert say

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"Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine"?)

even at such times, but a deep and difficult mental process should not be snapped at thus.

You know I never can *think*, and to think on such subjects to any purpose would almost necessarily involve thinking on none others; and but for my desire to please you, and not put aside with apparent disregard your favorite mental exercises, I should be as much ashamed as I am annoyed by the crude utterance of crude notions upon such subjects to which you compel me.

You say our goodness and benevolence are not those of God: in *quantity*, surely not; but in *quality*? Are there two kinds of positive goodness? I read this morning the following passage in a book by an American, which has been lent to me by a young Oxford man whom I met, and fell much in love with, at Carolside—he is a great friend of Dr. Hampden's: "The greater, purer, loftier, more complete the character, so is the inspiration; for he that is true to conscience, faithful to reason, obedient to religion, has not only the strength of his own virtue, wisdom, and piety, but the whole strength of Omnipotence on his side; for goodness, truth, and love, as we conceive them, are not one thing in man and another in God, but the same thing in each." I agree with this, dear Hal, and not with you, upon this point.

These speculations are a severe effort to my mind, and, besides shrinking from the mere mental labor of considering them, I find it difficult, in the rapid and desultory manner in which I must needs answer letters, to place even the few ideas that occur to me upon them clearly and coherently before you.

Did I tell you that that impudent—— I've no more room, I'll tell you in my next. Give my love to Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

HULL, Saturday, December 4th, 1847.

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I did tolerably uncomfortably without Jeffreys [a man-servant who had left me], and that, you know, was very well. I paid old Mrs. Dorr something extra for doing all the work in the rooms upstairs, had a fire made in the little man-servant's room in the hall, and, after twelve o'clock, established Hayes therein to attend to my visitors. My table was laid for dinner in the front drawing-room, and at dinner-time wheeled into the back drawing-room, where, you know, I always sit; and after my dinner wheeled out again, and the things all removed in the other room by Hayes. The work is really nothing at all, and it would have been most unnecessary to have hunted up a man-servant for a couple of weeks, for last and next week are the only two that I expect to pass in Orchard Street, before I remove to my King Street lodgings.

You speculate more, dear Hal, than I do, and among all things on that Covent Garden performance, that "Series of Scenes from various Plays of Shakespeare, to be given in his honor, and towards the purchase of his house at Stratford-on-Avon." I suppose it will be a very protracted exhibition, but my only reflection upon the subject was, that I was glad to perceive that my share of it came early in the course of events.

I had no idea of proposing Hero [my dog] as your sister's inmate, but supposed he would be harbored in the stables, the kennels, or some appropriate purlieu, be sufficiently well fed, and take his daily exercise in your society. This was my vision of Hero's existence under your auspices, and, as you may readily believe, I had no idea of quartering him on the reluctant *dogmanity* of anybody....

DOGMANITY.

I have just had a charming letter from Charles Sedgwick; if I can remember, I will keep it to show it to you.

Order your boots, or anything else, to be sent to me, dear Hal, but you know I shall not be with you yet for a month, and possibly not then; for though no *pleasant* engagement (how nice it is of you to suggest that!) would interfere with my coming to St. Leonard's, *unpleasant* ones might; any opportunity of making money certainly would, and such may occur to interfere with my present plans, which stand thus: I return to town to-morrow (there is but one evening train, so I must travel all night to rehearse on Monday morning for the "Shakespeare Memorial Night," on Tuesday); I shall remain in London a week, and on the following Monday go down to Bannisters for a fortnight, which will bring me within a few days of the expiration of my term in Orchard Street, and I shall return from Bannisters to move myself; on the following Monday, the 3d of January, I will, please God and you, come down to St. Leonard's....

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I was so ill in spirit yesterday that I could not write to you. I am better to-day. Thank God, my patience and courage do not often or long forsake me!...

—— has written again to borrow money of me; and that impudent Liverpool manager, who *borrowed*, *i.e.* did not pay me, my last night's earnings, when you were there with me, has written to say that, if I will go to Liverpool *and act for his benefit*, he will pay me what he owes me; to which I have replied that, when he *has* paid me what he owes me, we will see about further transactions with each other. Certainly "Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time."

Oh, my dear! in Parker's "Discourse upon Religion"—the book I told you I was reading—I light upon this passage: "The indolent and the sensual love to have a visible master in spiritual things, who will spare them the *agony* of thought." Is not that definition of thought after my own heart, and just as I should have written it?

God bless you. Give my love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

DEAR HARRIET,

I have not yet read either of Mrs. Gaskell's books, but I mean to do so. I have just got through, with unbounded amazement, a book called "Realities," written by a Miss L—, for whom Lady M— has taken a great fancy. A more extraordinary production—realities with a vengeance—I certainly have seldom read; and the book is in such contrast with the manner and appearance of the authoress that it will be a long time before I get over my surprise at both.

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Imagine this lady having thought proper to introduce in her story an eccentric vagabond of a woman, whom she has called "Fanny Kemble." Upon Lady M—'s asking her—I think with some pardonable indignation, considering that I am her intimate friend—how she came to do such an unwarrantable thing; if she was not aware that "Fanny Kemble" was the real name of a live woman at this moment existing in English society, Miss L— ingenuously replied, "Oh dear! that she'd never thought of that: that she only knew it was a celebrated dramatic name, and so she had put it into her book." *Sancta Simplicitas!* I should think I might sue her for libel and defamation.

The books that women write now are a curious sign of the times, and an indication of great changes in opinion, as well as alteration in practice.

After all, women are *part* men, "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." As long as they benefited—and they did highly—by the predominance of the conservative spirit in civilized society, they were the most timid and obstinate of conservatives. But emancipation, or, to speak more civilly, freedom, is dawning upon them from various quarters; Democracy is coming to rule the earth; and women are discovering that in *that* atmosphere they must henceforth breathe, and live, and move, and have their being.

But the beginning of a great deal of male freedom is mere emancipation; and so it will be, I suppose, with women. The drunken exultation of Caliban is no bad illustration of the emancipation of a slave; and the ladies, more gracefully intoxicated with the *elixir vitæ* of liberty, may rejoice no more to "scrape trencher or wash dish," but write books (more or less foolish) instead.

NIGGER'S
PARADISE.

Do you remember that delightful negro song, the "Invitation to Hayti," that used to make you laugh so?

"Brudder, let us leave
Buckra land for Hayti:
Dar we be receive'
Grand as Lafayette!
Make a mighty show,
When we land from steamship,
You be like Monroe,
And I like Louis Philip!"

And when, anticipating the elevation of his noble womankind to the elegant and luxurious *idlesse* of the favored white female, the poet sings:—

"No more dey dust and scrub,
No more dey wash and cookee;
But all day long we see
Dem read the nobel bookee."

(For *read*, read *write*.)

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I am beset with engagements; and, though I am very anxious to get away abroad and rest, it would be both foolish and wrong to reject these offers of money, tendered me on all sides, *speciously* with such *borrowing* relations as I enjoy. Good-bye, dear.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[My reading at Eton was a memorably pleasant incident of my working days. Dr. Hawtrey at first proposed to me to read "Coriolanus;" but I always read it very ill, and petitioned for some other play, giving the name of a tragedy, "Macbeth;" a comedy, the "Merry Wives of Windsor;" and one of the more purely poetical plays, "The Tempest;" suggesting that the "boys" should vote, and the majority

determine the choice. This seemed a mighty innovation on all received customs, and was met with numerous objections, which, however, did not prove insuperable; and "The Tempest," my own favorite of all Shakespeare's dramas, was chosen by my young auditors.

A more charming audience to look at I never had than this opening flower of English boyhood, nor a more delightfully responsive one.

The extraordinary merriment, however, invariably caused by any mention of the name of Stefano whenever it occurred puzzled me not a little; and when, in the last scene, I came to the lines, "Is not this Stefano your drunken butler? Why, he's drunk now!" I was interrupted with such a universal shout of laughter that I couldn't help inquiring the cause of it; when Mr. Stephen Hawtrey, Dr. Hawtrey's brother and one of the masters, told me that Stephano was the nickname by which he was habitually designated among the lads, which sufficiently accounted for their ecstasy of amusement at all the ludicrous sayings and situations of the Neapolitan "drunken butler." The Eton young gentlemen addressed me with a kind and flattering compliment through their captain, and rewarded whatever pleasure I had been able to give them by a very elegant present, which I hope my children will value, but which, upon the whole, is less precious to me than the recollection of their young faces and voices while I read to them.]

ORCHARD STREET, December 8th.

DEAREST HAL,

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I was better than I expected to be after my night journey from Hull. Hayes and I had a carriage to ourselves after ten o'clock, and I took advantage of that circumstance to lie on the floor and get some rest. Of course I woke from each of my short naps aching rather severely, but I did sleep the greater part of the night; and the two hours I spent in bed before beginning the day unstiffened my bones and body. The night was beautifully fine when we left Hull, and continued so more than half-way. We made our entrance into London, however, in wretched rain and wind; but the weather has again become fine, and to-day is beautiful....

The detached stanza of French poetry you send me is a rather exaggerated piece of enthusiasm as it stands thus alone; though, incorporated in the poem to which it belongs, the effect of it may be striking. Some of the stanzas of Manzoni's "Ode to Napoleon" (a very noble poem), detached from their context, might appear strained and exaggerated. That which has real merit as a whole seldom gains by being disconnected.

Trouble yourself no more about poor Hero, my dear Hal; I am afraid he is lost. Mrs. Mulliner left him in the area this morning, and as for nearly four hours now we have seen and heard nothing of him, there is no doubt that he has made his escape into the wide world of London, and I fear there is no chance of his finding his way back again. I should not have liked his being at Jenny Wade's [a cottager at Ardgillan, whom Miss S — pensioned]. In the present condition of Ireland, I should scruple to quarter a dog in a poor person's cabin, giving them for his support what they must needs feel might go some way towards the support of some starving human being. In the stable or kennel of a rich house there is sure to be that much spent, if not wasted, which may warrant the addition of such another member to the establishment; and in your sister's stables and offices there can be no wretch who would look with envy upon the meal eaten by my dog. I would rather a great deal have carried him to America, if I could have managed it, than left him with any one but yourself. At Lenox everything, as well as everybody, has plenty to eat; and he would have been cared for, for his own sake by the young folks, and for mine by the old. But I fear he is so far provided for that I shall never see him again, for his uneducated senses will surely never suffice to guide him back to Orchard Street....

A FAVORITE
DOG.

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You will be glad, because I am very glad, that poor Hero has come back; and I think his doing so exhibits considerable *nous* in a brute so brutally brought up as he has been. He returned with a bit of broken string round his neck; so somebody had already appropriated him, and tied him up, and he had effected his escape, and come home—

much, I think, to his credit. I was delighted to see him, and poor Mulliner almost did a fit.

Good-bye, dearest Hal. Give Dorothy my best love. You shall have your boots before I come, if Mr. W— should call for them.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

BRADFORD, YORKSHIRE, Thursday, 10th.

It is my opinion, my dear Hal, that you will see me again and again, and several times again, before I leave England. I have just come to this place from Manchester, and have to-day received offers of three new engagements, and have every prospect therefore of being detained until the beginning of next month, and so beholding your well-beloved visage before I set off on my travels; though, whenever I do go, it will certainly be from Folkestone, and not Dover.

I left the Scotts this morning with deep regret. Mr. Scott has not been well during this last visit I have paid them, and I was much shocked to hear that he is threatened with disease of the heart, sudden death at any moment. His wife and her sisters are excellently kind to me; she has but two faults, an excessive *humility* and an excessive *conscientiousness*; they wouldn't be bad for virtues, would they?

Mr. Scott's intercourse is delightful to me; his mind is deep and high, logical and practical, humorous and tender, and he is as nearly *good* as a man can be. He has a still, calm manner and slow, quiet speech, very composing to me. I wish it might be my good fortune to see more of him.

Farewell, my dear. I begin to feel as if I never should get off; and instead of the pathetic uncertainty as to when we might meet again, which was beginning to affect me with melancholy, have fallen into a sort of reckless indifference about you: so sure am I that we shall see each other, maybe, *ad nauseam* mutually, before I go. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

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[The remarkable man of whom I have spoken in this letter, John Alexander Scott, was one of the most *influential* persons I have ever known, in the strongest sense of the word. I think the term, "an important human being," by which Sydney Smith described Francis Horner, might justly have been applied to Mr. Scott. The intimate friend of Edward Irving, Carlyle, and Maurice, he affected, to an extraordinary degree, the minds and characters of all those who were familiar with him; and his influence, like all the deepest and most powerful human influence, was personal.

He delivered various courses of lectures, principally, I think, in Edinburgh—Dante being one of his favorite themes; and "Three Discourses" upon religious and moral subjects are, I think, all that remain in printed form of many that he delivered at various times and at various places. They are, as is always the case in the instance of his order of mind and character, though striking and powerful, very inadequate samples of his spirit and intellect.

A very just tribute to his uncommon qualities and extraordinary power of influence appeared, after his death, in the *Spectator*. It was undoubtedly written by one who knew Mr. Scott well, and bore testimony, as all who ever had that privilege have done, to the singular force and virtue of his nature, and its penetrating and vivifying power over others.

My last intercourse with *him* was a letter from *her*, hailing in his name the hope of seeing me at Montreux, in Switzerland, whither I was going in the expectation of finding them. The letter broke off in the middle, and ended with the news, calamitous to me, as to all who knew him, of his death. At the time when I visited

JOHN
ALEXANDER
SCOTT.

them at Manchester, he had accepted some Professorship in the then newly established Owen's College.]

WOODSLEY HOUSE, Leeds.

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I think, my dear Hal, your wish that I might see more of Mr. Scott and his family is likely to be realized. To my great pleasure, I received a note from him the other day, telling me that there was a general desire in Manchester to have the "Midsummer Night's Dream" given with Mendelssohn's music. He wrote of this to me, expressing his hope that it might be done, and that so I might be brought to them again; adding the kind and cordial words, "All here love you"—which expression touched and gratified me deeply; and I hope that the reading may take place, and that I shall have the privilege of a few days' more intercourse with that man.

The name of the noble woman whose impulse of humanity so overcame all self-considerations, of whom he told me, was Miss Coutts-Trotter. [Nursing a person who was in a state of collapse in the last stage of cholera, she had sought to bring back the dying woman's vitality by embracing her closely, and breathing on her mouth her own breath of life and love.] ...

I can tell you of no other publications of Mr. Scott. It is the despair of his wife, sisters, friends, and admirers that so few of his good words have been preserved. But in these days of printing and publishing, proclaiming and producing, I am beginning to have rather a sympathy with those who withhold, than with those who utter, all their convictions.... I have always held that what people could put forth from them in any kind was less valuable than what they could not—what they were compelled to retain—the reserve force of their mind and nature; and thinking this, as I do, more and more, I regret less and less such instances as this of Mr. Scott's apparently circumscribed sphere, by the non-publication of his lectures and discourses. He is daily teaching a body of young men; and to such of them as are able to receive his teaching, he will bequeath some measure of his spirit. It is doubtless a pleasure, and a help too, to read the good books of good men; but there are many good men who write good books, and he is among the few who cannot. He has suffered from ill health, particularly difficulties in the head; and though his gift of extemporaneous speech is remarkable, he cannot compose for printing without labor of the brain which is injurious to him. In this he also resembles Dr. Follen, of whom he reminds me, who wrote little, and published less.

I do not know anything of Miss Muloch—that, I think, is the name of the writer whose book you mention as having notices of my uncle and aunt introduced into it....

[Pg 575]

Publicity is the safest of all protections, as in some sense freedom is also. Women, I suppose, will find this out, as the people are finding it out; but in the beginning of their working out their newly discovered theories into rational practice, people in general, and women in particular, will do some wonderful things. The women especially, having for the most part had hitherto little positive or practical knowledge of life, will be apt "to make all earth amazed" with the first performances of various kinds of their new experience; but it is all in the day's work of the good old world, which is ordained to see reasonable and good men and women upon its ancient, ever-blooming surface, in greater numbers henceforward than hitherto: but the beginnings are strange....

Yours ever,

FANNY.

2, PARK PLACE, HALIWELL LANE, MANCHESTER.

MY DEAREST HAL,

At the conclusion of my reading yesterday evening, letters were put into my hands containing no fewer than six offers of new engagements; and, situated as I am, I cannot reject this money. I have endeavored, in answering these invitations, to get the readings all as close to each other as possible, and I now think that I may get off about the 22d; but the same sort of interruption to my plans may occur again, and thus I may be delayed, though I have got my passport and have even written to bespeak rooms at an

hotel....

CALVINISM.

My dearest Hal, you have written to me three days running, and good part of each of your letters is disquisition on *Calvinism*.... Thus I have here lying by my side nine pages of your handwriting. I have just swallowed my dinner, after travelling from London, and sit down to discharge part of my debt, and in half an hour (I look at the watch, and it says ten minutes) I must go and dress myself for my reading, and here still will be the nine pages unanswered to-morrow morning, when I must set off for Manchester.

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You talk of the logic of my mind, my dear friend, but my mind has no logic whatever; and in so far as that is concerned, Calvinism need look for as little help as hindrance from me. I do not believe I can *think*; and from the difficulty, not to say impossibility, I find in doing so, I don't think I would if I could; and if that is not logical, neither is that most admirable of all chains of reasoning, "Je n'aime pas les épinards," etc. There, now, here comes my maid to interrupt me, and there's an end of epistolary correspondence; I must go and dress.

Now it is to-morrow morning, dear Hal, and until the breakfast comes I can talk a few more words with you.... But don't you know that one reason why I appear to you to have positive mental results, is because I have no mental processes? I never think; for, as a lawyer would say, whenever I do, it seems to me as if there was no proposition (a few arithmetical and scientific ones excepted *perhaps*, like two and two are four) which does not admit of its own reverse. I don't say this is so, but it seems so to me; and whenever I attempt to put the notions that float through my brain, on which I float comfortably enough over infinite abysses of inconclusion, into precise form and shape, there is not one of them that does not seem to be quite controvertible; nor did I ever utter or assume a position of which I felt most assured while uttering it, without perceiving almost immediately that it was assailable on many sides. This is extremely disagreeable to me; the labor necessary to establish any mental or moral proposition simply on intellectual grounds, appears to me so great that I hate the very idea of it, and then I hate myself for my laziness, and wonder if some "judgment" does not await wits that will not work because work is tiresome. But if I appear to you to have strong convictions, it is because I have strong mental and moral impulses, instincts, intuitions, and never allow myself to weaken them by that most debilitating process, long-continued questioning, leading to no result.

You ask me what book I read now to put me to sleep—why, Murray's "Handbook for France;" ditto, for Savoy, Switzerland, and Piedmont; ditto, for the North of Italy, and the foreign "Bradshaw." These furnish my lullaby now-a-nights.

I read yesterday, in the railroad carriage, a little story translated from the French by Lady (Lucy) Duff Gordon, with which I was greatly touched and delighted. It costs one shilling, and is called "The Village Doctor," and is one of those pale green volumes headed, "Reading for Travellers," to be found on all the railroad bookstands. I thought it charming, and a most powerful appeal to the imagination in behalf of Roman Catholicism.

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I have already told you what route I intend to take, and I think we shall be a week or ten days going from Paris to Turin, coasting all the way from Marseilles, as I wish to do.

I do not read at Manchester to-day, but Hallé, who conducts the music, wishes me to attend a rehearsal, which, of course, I am anxious to do at his request. On Monday I read the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and on Tuesday "Macbeth," at Mr. Scott's desire. To-morrow I shall, I hope, hear Mr. Scott read and comment again on the Bible, and I am looking forward with great pleasure to being with him and Mrs. Scott again.

No doubt there are several more direct ways of getting to Nice than coasting round, as I propose doing, but I wish to see that Mediterranean shore, and have no desire to travel hard....

Adelaide Procter [the daughter of my friends was to be my companion in this journey] has no enthusiasm whatever for me; she does not know me at all, and I do not know her at all well; and I do not think, when we know each other more, that she will like me any better. Her character and intellectual gifts, and the delicate state of her health, all make her an object of interest to me.... I love and respect Mr. Procter very much; and her mother, who is one of the kindest-hearted persons possible, has always been so good to

THE
PROCTERS.

me, that I am too glad to have the opportunity of doing anything to oblige them. I am going to Turin because, as they have entrusted their daughter to me, I will not leave her until I see her safe in the house to which she is going; I owe that small service to the child of her parent.... Dear Harriet, if you will come to Switzerland this summer, nothing but some insuperable impediment shall prevent my meeting you there. If you are "old and stiff," I am *fat, stuffy, puffy, and old*; and you are not of such proportions as to break a mule's back, whereas if I got on one I should expect it to cast itself and me down the first convenient precipice, only to avoid carrying me to the next.

I spent Thursday evening with Mrs. Jameson; she had a whole heap of people at her house, and among them the American minister and his niece—Philadelphians....

[Pg 578]

I do not pity Mrs. Jameson very much in her relations with Lady Byron. I never thought theirs a real attachment, but a connection made up of all sorts of motives, which was sure not to hold water long, and never to hold it after it had once begun to leak. It was an instance of one of those relationships which are made to *wear out*, and as it always appeared so to me, I have no great sympathy with either party in this foreseen result.

I pity Mrs. Jameson more because she is mortified than because she is grieved, and I pity Lady Byron because she is more afraid of mortifying than of giving her pain. It is all very *uncomfortable*; but real sorrow has as little to do with it now as real love ever had.... I am writing to you at Mr. Scott's, where I arrived yesterday afternoon, the beginning of my letter having been written in London, the middle at Bradford, and the end here.

It is Sunday afternoon: our morning service is over. I am sorry to say I find both Mr. and Mrs. Scott quite unwell, the former with one of those constitutional headaches from which he has suffered so much for many years. They incapacitate him for conversation or any mental exertion, and I am a great loser by it, as well as grieved for his illness.... Farewell.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[Lucy Austin, the clever and handsome daughter of a cleverer and handsomer mother—Mrs. John Austin, wife of the eminent lawyer and writer—excited a great deal of admiration, as the wife of Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, in the London society of my day. Loss of health compelled her to pass the last years of her life in the East; and the letters she wrote during her sojourn there are not only full of charm and interest, but bear witness to a widespread personal influence over the native population among whom she lived, the result of her humane benevolence towards, and kindly sympathy for, them.

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One or two amusing incidents occurred with regard to my reading of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" at Manchester. The gentleman who had the management of the performance wrote to me offering me forty pounds for my share of it—a very liberal price, which I declined, my price for one of my readings being invariably *twenty* pounds. At the end of the performance one of the gentlemen of the committee came to pay me my salary, which having done, he expressed himself, in his own behalf and that of his fellow-managers, greatly obliged to me for the liberality I had exhibited (honesty, it seems to me) in not accepting double my usual terms when they offered it to me. "And," said he, drawing a five-pound note from his pocket-book, "I really—we really—if you would—if you could—allow us to offer you five pounds in addition——" The gentleman's voice died away, and he seemed to be becoming nervous, under the effect of the steadfast seriousness with which, in spite of the greatest inclination to burst out laughing, I listened to this strange proposal. The five-pound note fluttered a little between his finger and thumb, and for one moment I had a diabolical temptation to twitch it from him and throw it into the fire. This prompting of Satan, however, I womanfully resisted, and merely civilly declined the gratuity; and the gentleman left me with profuse acknowledgments of the service I had rendered them and my "extreme liberality."

My friend Charles Hallé, coming in just at this moment, was thrown into fits of

CHARLES
HALLÉ.

laughter at the transaction, and my astonishment at it.

Hallé was a friend of ours, an admirable musician, and a most amiable man, and one of the best masters of our modern day. His style was more remarkable for sensibility, delicacy, and refinement, than for power or brilliancy of execution; but I preferred his rendering of Beethoven to that of all the other virtuosi I ever heard; and some of the hours of greatest musical enjoyment I have had in my life I owe to him, when he and his friend Joachim, playing almost, as it seemed, as much for their own delight as ours, enchanted a small circle of enthusiastic and grateful listeners, gathered round them in my sister's drawing-room.

Mr. Scott's comment upon my reading gave me great pleasure. "It was good," he said, "from beginning to end; but you *are* Theseus." Oddly enough, a similar compliment was paid me in the same words at the end of a reading that I gave for the Working Men's Institute in Brighton, when my friend, Mr. R—, kindly complimenting me on the performance, said, "It was all delightful: but you *are* Henry V.," and whatever difference of opinion may have existed among my critics as to my rendering the tragic and comic characters of Shakespeare's plays, I think the heroic ones were those in which I ought to have succeeded best, for they were undoubtedly those with which I had most sympathy.]

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FULFORD, YORK, Saturday, 3d.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I am amused at your gasping anxiety to be told where I am going, as if I was about to depart into some non-postal region, where letter of yours should never reach me more, instead of spending the next week in Edinburgh, which surely you did know.... My dearest Hal, J— W— has just come into my room, bringing the news of the Emperor of Russia's death. It has seized me quite hysterically, and the idea of the possible immediate cessation of carnage and desolation, and war and wickedness (in that peculiar shape), has shaken me inexpressibly, and I am shocked at the tears of joy that are raining from my eyes, so that I can't see the paper on which I am writing to you; and if I can thus weep my thanksgivings for the news of this man's death, who have no dear son, or brother, or husband on that murderous Crimean soil, think of the shout of rejoicing which will be his only dirge throughout France and England. I am shocked at the exclamation of gratitude which escaped my lips when I heard the announcement. Poor human soul, how terrible that its sudden summons from its heavy and difficult responsibilities should thus be hailed by any other human creature! and yet how many will draw a long breath, as of a great deliverance, at this news!

I can hardly write at all, my hand shakes so, and I cannot think of anything else; and yet I had purposed to send dear Dorothy some account of her family here, who are all well and most kind to me. I will wait a while....

DEAREST DOROTHY,

I sit here in this pleasant room [I was in Miss Wilson's home], the prospect from which is improved by the rising of the river, which presents the appearance of a lake. The snowdrops hang their white clusters above the brown mould of the garden beds, and watery rays of sunshine slant shyly across the meadows: the whole is very sweet and peaceful, and I was enjoying it extremely, when the report of this imperial death broke like a peal of thunder over it all, as unexpectedly as terribly.

To-morrow I am to go and hear afternoon service at the minster, which I have never seen. Everything is done for my pleasure and satisfaction that can be thought of, and I feel very grateful for it. The thought of the old love and friendship between my dead kindred and the former owners of this house makes the place pleasant with a saddish pleasantness to me.

[Pg 581]

Dear Dorothy, I wish you were here; I write you a very affectionate kiss, and am

Yours,

GEORGE HOTEL, BANGOR, Monday, 20th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

If you had given way to your impulse of accompanying us to Wales, I do not think you could have returned under three days, or that even by that time you could in any degree have recovered from the effect of our to-day's passage. Every creature on board was sick except M—— and myself....

"A quelque chose malheur est bon," and the indisposition I was suffering all yesterday preserved me from the lesser evil of sea-sickness. This was my experience the last time I crossed the Atlantic, when my voyage was preceded by a week of serious illness, and during the whole passage I did not suffer from sea-sickness....

On our arrival here, we found that the excellent Miss Roberts [mistress of the charming hotel at Bangor] had treated us exactly as the last time; *i.e.*, "A party were just finishing dinner in our sitting-room. She was very sorry, very sorry indeed; but it would be ready for us in less than a quarter of an hour;" and we were thrust provisionally into another, where letters, books, workboxes, india-rubber shoes, and smoking-caps attested that we had no business, and suggested that their owners were in all probability the "party" finishing off their dinner in our bespoken apartment, which gave me an inclination to toss all the things in the room about, and poke the smoking-caps into the india-rubber shoes; but I didn't. What innumerable temptations I do resist! I assured Miss Roberts I was very ill-tempered, and proceeded to make assurance doubly sure by blowing her up sky-high, to which she merely replied with a Welsh "Eh! come si ha da far?" and declared that if I was in her place I should do just the same, which excited my wrath to a pitch of fury.

AT BANGOR.

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We had some lunch, and then set off to the quarries. The afternoon was bright and beautiful, and we were charmed with the drive and all we saw, M—— never ceasing to exclaim with fervent satisfaction at the comfortable, cheerful, healthy, well-to-do appearance of the people and their habitations—a most striking and suggestive contrast to all we had seen in poor Ireland, certainly....

We have just done dinner, and M—— is fast asleep on the sofa, with "Pilgrim's Progress" in her arms. My head aches, and my nerves twitch with fatigue and pain, but I am better than I was yesterday.

The trains from this place are very inconvenient. The one we have to go by starts from here at nine, and does not reach London till half-past seven in the evening, so we shall have a wearisome day of it....

Give my kindest love to dear Mrs. Taylor and "the girls." I shall think of them with infinite anxiety, and pray, "whenever I remember to be holy," that this dreadful war may now soon come to a close, and they be spared further anguish. [Colonel Richard Taylor, Miss S——'s nephew, was with the army in the Crimea.]

I am ever most affectionately yours,

FANNY.

BATH, Monday, December 9th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

... You cannot think how forlorn I feel, walking in and out of our room here without farewell or greeting from you; and yet the place where you have been with me has a remembered presence of your affectionate companionship that makes it pleasant, compared to those where I go for the first time and have no such friendly association to cheer me. My disposition, as you know, is averse to all strangeness, and takes little delight in novelty; and the wandering life I lead compels me to both, forbidding all custom and the comfortable feeling of habit and use, which make me loath to leave a place where I have stayed only three days, for another where I have never stayed at all.

I was not very happy at Oxford. The beautiful place impressed me sadly; but that was because I was very unwell and sad while I was there. The weather was horrible; a dark greasy fog pervaded the sky the whole time. The roads were so muddy as to render riding odious, and the streets so slimy that walking was really dangerous as well as disagreeable. Still, I saw some things with which I was much charmed, and have no doubt that, if I could but have had an hour's daylight, I should have been delighted with the place altogether.

E— S— came down from London on Thursday morning, and took me to see the fine collection of drawings by Raphael and Michael Angelo at the Taylor Institute, and I spent three hours there in a state of great enjoyment. I wandered in ignorant wonderment through the Bodleian Library and the Ashmolean Museum, with A— M—, who seemed quite as little familiar with the learned treasures of the place as myself. He took me to see his own college, Christ Church, with which, especially the great dining-hall, I was enchanted; and with the fine avenue at the back of the colleges, and the tower and cloisters of Magdalen.

VISIT TO
OXFORD.

I have no doubt I should enjoy another visit to Oxford very much; but I was miserable while I was there, and could not do justice to the beauty of the place. The inn where I stayed was dirty and uncomfortable, and dearer than any I have yet stayed at. My sitting-room was dingy and dark, and I was glad when I came into this large light sitting-room of ours again, out of which, however, they have removed the piano—a loss I have not thought it worth while to replace, as I go to Cheltenham on Wednesday afternoon.... You ask what I would sell my "English Tragedy" for. Why, anything anybody would give me for it. It cannot be acted, and nobody reads nowadays—small blame to them....

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

CHELTENHAM, Thursday, 12th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I found your loving greeting on my arrival here yesterday evening. I am troubled at your account of yourself.... What *things* these bodies of ours are! I sometimes think that, when we lay them down in the earth, we shall have taken leave of all our sinfulness; and yet there are sins of the soul that do not lodge in the flesh, though the greater proportion of our sins, I think, do: and when I reflect how little control we have over our physical circumstances, what with inherited disease and infirmity, and infirmity and disease incurred through the ignorant misguidance of others during our youth, and our own ignorant misdirection afterwards, I think the miseries we reap are punishment enough for much consequent sin; and that, once freed from the "body of this death," we shall cease to be subject to sin in anything like the same degree.... It is very muddy underfoot; but if the sky does not fall, I shall ride out on my old post-horse at twelve o'clock.

Certainly your question, as to where the wise men are who are to encounter the difficulties of legislation for this country next spring, was an exclamation—a shriek—and not an interrogation, addressed to *me* at any rate; for though I suppose God's quiver is never empty of arrows, and that some *are* always found to do His work, it may be that saving this country from a gradual decline of greatness and decay of prosperity may not be work for which He has appointed hands, and which therefore will not be done....

I declined being in the room we formerly occupied in this house, because I feared, now the days are so much shorter, that it would be inconveniently dark. I am in a charming light room, with three windows down to the ground, and a bewitching paper of pale green, with slender gold rods running up it, all wound round with various colored convolvuli. It's one of the prettiest papers I ever saw, and makes me very happy. You know how subject I am even to such an influence as that of a ridiculous wall-paper....

I have had no conversation with Mr. Churchill; but, in spite of my requesting him not to be at the trouble of moving the piano into my present sitting-room, as I am here for so short a time, I find it installed here this morning. He certainly is the black swan of hotel-keepers; and how kind and indulgent people are to me everywhere!... My young devotee,

Miss A—, acquiesced very cordially in all my physical prescriptions for mental health, and did not seem to take at all amiss my plunging her hysterical enthusiasm first into perspirations, and then into cold baths.

Her maid has been with me this morning, with lovely fresh flowers—a bunch of delicious Persian lilac, and two flower-pots full of various mosses, smelling so fragrantly of mere earthy freshness that no perfume ever surpassed it.

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The only other greeting she sent me was some pretty lines of Victor Hugo's, with which I was unacquainted, and which I send you, not for their singular inappropriateness as applied to me, but for their graceful turn:

VICTOR
HUGO.

"Tu es comme l'oiseau posé pour un instant
Sur des rameaux trop frêles,
Que sent ployer la branche, et qui chante pourtant
Sachant qu'il a des ailes;"

which I translate impromptu thus:

Thou art like the bird that alights, and sings
Though the frail spray bends, for he knows he has wings.

God bless you, my dear. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

WORCESTER, Tuesday, 17th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Those pretty French lines I sent you are by Victor Hugo, a man of great genius, but almost the most exaggerated writer of the exaggerated modern school of French style. Some of his poems, in spite of this, are fine and charming; and, indeed, there is not much better French to be found than the prose of some of the French writers of novels and essays. Madame George Sand, Merimée, Ste. Beuve, write with admirable simplicity and force.

I sent my young adorer back, in return for her quatrain, Millevoeye's lines on the withered leaf—a far more appropriate image of my peregrinations. These, no doubt, you know, ending with four pretty lines—

"Je vais où va toute chose,
Sans me plaindre, ou m'inquiéter
Où va la feuille de rose,
Et la feuille de laurier."

... You ask after my audiences. At Bath the same singular-looking gentleman, who is beautiful as well as singular looking, and wonderfully like my uncle John, came and sat at my last morning reading in the same conspicuous place. He is a helpless invalid, and was wheeled in his chair through my private room, to the place which he occupied near my reading-stage. His name is C—, and he and his wife were intimate friends of John Kemble's, and sent to beg I would see them after the reading. As I had to start immediately for Cheltenham, this was impossible, which I was very sorry for, as I should like to have spoken to that beautiful face.

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You impress upon me the value of the blessing of health, and I think I estimate it duly; for although I said it mattered little how I was, I meant that, isolated as I am, my ill health would affect and afflict fewer persons than that of some one who had bonds and ties of one sort and another.... My work goes on without interruption, and I think with little variation in my mode of performing it; and I make efforts of this kind, sometimes under such circumstances of physical suffering and weakness, that I am almost hardheartedly incredulous about the difficulty of doing *anything* that one *has to do*—which is not very reasonable either, for the force of will, the nervous energy, which carries one through such efforts, depends itself on physical conditions, which vary in different temperaments, and in the same temperament at different times.

The first day of my arrival in Cheltenham I received a note from Miss A—'s mother—a

very touching expression of thanks for what she calls my kindness to her child, full of anxiety about the training and guiding of her mind and character, accepting with much gratitude my offer of personal acquaintance with her daughter (personal acquaintance is an excellent antidote to enthusiasms), whom she brought herself the next day to see me.... In our conversation I insisted much on the importance of physical training, and commended to her, after the highest of all help (without which, indeed, none other can avail), systematic and regular exercise, and systematic and sedulous occupation, both followed as a positive duty; all possible sedatives for the mind and imagination; and the utmost attention and care to all the physical functions. I gave her the wisdom which I have bought; but she will buy her own, or I am much mistaken.... I went on Sunday to the cathedral to hear afternoon service, but was late, and did not get within the choir, but sat on a chair in a lonely corner of the transept, and followed the service from without the pale. Yesterday, at my usual hour for exercise, I went to walk by the river; but rain came on, and I finished my walk under the cloisters, which rang from end to end with the shrill shouts of a parcel of school-boys, let out for their noon-day recess. Last night the weather was fearful, a perfect storm of wind and rain, so that, though my audience was small, I was agreeably surprised to find I had any at all.

I have not seen the letter you refer to in the *Times*, but think it very likely Charles Greville should write such a one, as I heard him say he should give the public a piece of his mind on the subject, and he occasionally does write in the *Times*, and his views are precisely what you describe those of "Carolus" to be.

Good-bye, dear. I have a *bundle* of violets from you this morning, for which many thanks. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

18, ORCHARD STREET, December 7th.

I have no patience with letters at all, my dear Hal. I am conscious half the time I write that I don't say clearly what I mean, and when I get your answers, I have that disagreeable conviction confirmed. Perhaps it is just as well, however; for the sort of feverish impatience I have very often while writing, because of the insufficiency of the process to express, as rapidly and distinctly as I wish, my thoughts, is so excessive, as to be childish. I am content, henceforth, to answer you to the best of my *circumstances* (for it is not to the best of my ability, really) on any subject you please. It is enough that my words are of use to you, and God knows it signifies nothing at all that I cannot conceive how they should be so. You have misunderstood me, or I misexpressed myself, with regard to the ground of my objecting to write upon the subjects we have lately discussed in our letters. I do not think it irreverent to advert to the highest subjects at any time. That which is most profoundly serious to me, is always very near my thoughts—so much so that it mingles constantly with them and my words in a manner rather startling and shocking, I think, to people whose minds are parcelled out into distinct and detached divisions—pigeon-holes, as it were—for the sacred and profane, and whose seriousness never comes near their mirth. This is not at all the case with me, with whom they are apt to run into each other very frequently; seriousness is perhaps more habitual to my mind than folly, but my laughter and jests are not very remotely allied to my deepest convictions.

CLOSE
RELATIONS
OF GRAVE
AND GAY.

My instincts of vital truth being a very essential part of me, *must* go with me to the playhouse, rehearsals, and performances, and all the intermediate time of various occupations, so that it is not my "veneration" which is shocked at the superficial mode in which I have handled these themes, while writing of them to you, but my "conscientiousness," which suggests the whole time that such matters should not be spoken of without sufficient previous process of reflection, and that it is behaving irreverently to *anything* that requires consideration to talk of it crudely without any. If the sincerest and most strenuous mental application can hardly enable us to arrive at glimpses of the truth upon those subjects, there is an impertinent levity in uttering mere *notions* about them which have been submitted to no such test. You do *think*, and though you come to no conclusions, are perfectly entitled to utter your *non-*

conclusiveness; but I have a cowardly dread of the labor of thinking steadily and consecutively upon these difficult subjects, and I have certainly not at present the proper leisure or opportunities for doing so, and therefore but for your last letter I should say it was a *shame* to speak upon them. But since the vague suggestions which arise in my mind upon these only important matters comfort and are of any use to you, then, my beloved friend, they have a value and virtue, and I shall no longer feel reluctant to utter them.

I have written this last page since my return from Covent Garden Theatre, where I have been enacting the dying scene of Queen Katharine, and doing what I am as sorry for as I can be for anything of that kind.

At the conclusion of my performance the audience called for me, but I was seized with a perfect nervous terror at the idea of going on, and left the house as quickly as possible.

All the other actors will be called for, and will go on, and I shall incur unpleasant comments and probably have very untrue motives attributed to me for having, as it must appear, ungraciously withdrawn myself from the public call. This does not trouble me very deeply, but I am sorry for it because I am afraid it will be misinterpreted and noticed, and considered disrespectful, which it was not....

Give my dear love to Dorothy. I hope to be with you on the 3d of January.

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

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18, ORCHARD STREET, Tuesday, 8th.

Now I must lump my answer to you, my dearest Hal—a thing that I hate doing; but here are three unanswered letters of yours on my table, and I shall never get through the payment of them if one letter may not do for the three, for every day brings fresh claims of this sort, and I feel a kind of smothering sensation as they accumulate round me, such as might attend one's gradually sinking into a well: what though Truth were at the bottom—if one was drowned before one got to her?...

Send the pamphlet on "Bread" to Lenox, and write to Elizabeth Sedgwick about it—that is pure humanity, and I see you do not think I shall copy the recipe and measurements correctly. (It's pouring with rain, and thundering as loud as it knows how in England)....

My spirits are fair enough, though the first evening I spent alone here, after I came back, tried them a little, and I had a cowardly impulse to rush in next door [my friends the Miss Hamiltons, Mrs. Fitzhugh's sisters, were my neighbors] to be with some friendly human beings; but I reflected that this would never do—those who are alone must learn to be lonely.... This was the only *black* hour I have had since my return to London....

I have finished the first volume of Grote's "History of Greece." O ye gods, ye beautiful gods of Greece, that ever ye should have lived to become such immortal bores through the meritorious labors of an eminent English historian! Thank Heaven, I have done with what has hitherto been always the most attractive part of history to me—its legendary and poetical prologue (I hate the history of my dear native land the moment the Commons begin to vote subsidies), and I do not think I ever before rejoiced in passing from tradition to matter-of-fact in an historical work. I have no doubt, now we have come down from Olympus, I shall enjoy Mr. Grote's great work much more.

GROTE'S
GREECE.

I have read through Morier's "Hadji Baba in England," while eating my dinner, in order not to eat too fast, a precaution I learned years ago while eating my lonely dinners at Butler Place day after day. (Of course Grote was too heavy as sauce for eating.) At other seasons I have read through another number of the *Dublin Magazine*, and during my hair-combings continue to enchant myself with "Wilhelm Meister." I am reading the "Wanderjahr," having finished the "Lehrjahr." I never read the former in German before; it is altogether a wonderful book. I practise before breakfast, and I have drawn for two hours every day lately. I have received and returned visits, and when my daily exercise takes its place again among my occupations, my time will be full, and I hope to bless God for my days, even now.... This answers you as to my spirits....

[Pg 590]

I had a letter from E—— yesterday, desiring me to forward my book to them, and talking of still remaining where they are, as long as the heat is endurable and the children continue well.

I had a note from Lady Duff Gordon yesterday, who is just returned from Rome, where she saw my sister frequently and intimately; and she seems to think Adelaide very tolerably resigned to remain where she is, especially as she has found a cupboard in her palazzo, which has so delighted her that she is content to abide where such things are rare and she has one, rather than return home where they are common and she might have many. In the mean time, seats in the next Parliament are, it seems, to go begging, and Charles Greville has written to E—— again to come over and stand.... I disapprove of this incessant urging E—— to return, especially as the Grevilles only want him to become a British legislator in order that she may open a pleasant house in London and amuse them....

You ask me what I shall do with regard to America. If I act there, I shall do so upon the plan I started with here; *i.e.*, a nightly certainty, to be paid nightly: it is what the managers send to offer me, and is, without doubt, the safest, if not the most profitable plan....

I am diverted with your rage at Liston [the eminent surgeon under whose care I had been]. I must say, I wish he had been a little more attentive to me professionally....

My singing neighbors—I suppose lodgers for the season—have departed, or, at any rate, become silent; I hear them no more, and make all my own music, which I prefer, though sometimes of an evening, when I am not singing, the lonely silence round me is rather oppressive. But my evenings are short; I dine at seven, and go to bed at ten; and in spite of my endeavors to achieve a better frame of mind, I do look with positive joy at my bed, where, lying down, the day will not only be past, but forgotten.... It is difficult for me not to rejoice when each day ends....

[Pg 591]

Dear Hal, I dined with the Horace Wilsons, and in the evening my father came there. He said Miss Cottin, with whom he was to have dined, was ill, and had put him off; that he had only come up from Brighton the day before, and was going back to-morrow—to-day, *i.e.*; that he was not well, but that Brighton agreed with him, and that he should steam about from Brighton to Havre and Dieppe and Guernsey and Jersey, as that process suits him better than abiding on dry land....

ORCHARD STREET, Thursday, June 10th.

Of course, dear Harriet, I know that the officials of our public charities cannot be thrown into paroxysms of pity by every case of misery brought before them; they would soon cease to be relieving officers, and have to be relieved themselves. But "there is reason in roasting of eggs," whatever that may mean: our forefathers knew, and so did Touchstone, for he talks of "an ill-roasted egg, done all o' one side." I assure you when I went to the workhouse to see after that wretched young girl who was taken up for sleeping in the park because she had nowhere else to sleep in, though I cried like a Magdalene, and talked like a magpie, I felt as if I was running my head against a stone wall all the time I appealed to the authorities to save her from utter ruin. The only impression I seemed to make upon them was that of surprise that any one should take to heart in such wise the case of some one not belonging to them. Perhaps the worthy overseer thought me her sister in another sense from that in which I am so, from the vehemence with which I urged upon him the imperative duty of snatching so young a creature from the doom to which she seemed inevitably delivered over. All their answers reminded me of Mephistopheles' reply to Faust's frantic pity for Gretchen, "She is not the first."

OFFICERS
OF
CHARITIES.

Now to answer your last question. I do not intend to cut the manager of the Princess's Theatre; but I do not intend either to make any application to him. If he offers me a reasonable weekly engagement, I will take it, and make him a curtsy; if he does not, I will do without it, and live as I best may on what I have already earned, and what I can earn in the provinces, till the spring....

[Pg 592]

C—— came up from Bath to London with me, and after talking politics, art, and

literature, began upon religion, which, not being controversially disposed, I declined, commending him to the study of the newspaper, and, curling myself up in one of those charming long seats of the Great Western railroad coaches, went to sleep, and so accomplished the latter part of my journey, in spite of that dangerous proximity, an unconverted heterodox Protestant. Farewell, my dearest Hal.

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

18, ORCHARD STREET, December 10th.

DEAREST HAL,

... I had a horrible day yesterday, from which I am not yet recovered this morning. It wound up by the shock of hearing of Liston's death. There was something in my last intercourse with him that made this unexpected intelligence very painful; and then his wonderful strength, his great, noble frame, that seemed to promise so long and vigorous a hold on life, made his sudden death very shocking. When I met him last in the park, he told me he was very ill, and had been spitting up a quart of blood after walking twenty-five miles, and that there was something all wrong with his throat; in spite of which, I was greatly shaken by the news of his death, which was occasioned by aneurism in the throat.

I am marking "Wilhelm Meister" for you; it is a book that interests me almost more than any other I could name; it is very painful, and I know nothing comparable to the conception and execution of Mignon. The whole book is so wise, so life-like, so true, and so merciless in its truth, that it is like life itself, endured by a stoic, an illustration of what existence would be to a thoughtful mind without faith in God—that faith which alone can bear us undespairing over the earth, where the mere doom of inevitable change would be enough to fill the human soul with amazement and anguish.

Goethe's books always make me lay a terrified and aching hold on my religious faith; they show me, even as life itself does, the need of steadfast belief in something better, if one would not lie down and die from the mere sense of what has been endured, what is endured, and what must be endured.

[Pg 593]

I forgot to tell you that I have had proposals again from the Norwich manager, and from Bath and Bristol; and yesterday the Princess's Theatre potentate called upon me; but upon my telling him that I should prefer transacting my arrangements with him in writing rather than *vivâ voce*, he took himself off....

God bless you, dear. Give my dear love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

18, ORCHARD STREET, December 11th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not feel sure, from the tenor of your letter, that you do not wish to have my dog Hero boarded at Jenny Wade's; if you do, he shall go there. You are a far better judge than I am of the propriety of keeping a well-fed dog among your starving people. That they themselves would do so, I can believe; for they are impulsive and improvident, and more alive to sentiments of kindness and generosity than to the dictates of common sense and prudence, or of principles of justice. Hero has been used to luxury, both in his lodging and board; but human hearts have to do without their food, and shall not his dog's body? I am fond of him, poor fellow, and would fain have him kindly cared for.... I do not consider your parallel a just one—between the bestowing of existence upon flies and the withholding immortality from a portion of the human race, except, indeed, that both may be exercises of arbitrary will and power. It is perfectly true that the clay has no right to say to the Potter, "Wherefore hast Thou fashioned me thus?" or "Why am I a man, and not a beast?" But as regards the Creator's dealings with the human race, inscrutable as His designs are to mortal intelligence, the moral nature of man demands

IMMORTALITY
AND
PARTIAL
IMMORTALITY.

certain conditions in the conditions of his Maker, higher and better than his own; and the idea of a partial immortality seems to me repugnant to the highest human conception (and we have none other) of God's mercy and justice, and that simply because all men, no matter how little advanced in the scale, appear to have some notion of a Divinity and a Deity of some sort, to possess a *germ* of spiritual progress capable of development beyond the term and opportunities afforded by this existence; and if, as I believe, the progressive nature belong to all, then it seems to me a moral inconsistency to allow its accomplishment only to a few. If you say that whole nations and races formerly and now, and innumerable individuals in our own Christian communities, hardly achieve a single step in this onward career of moral development, I should reply that the progress of the most advanced is but comparative, and far from great, and that chiefly on this account the belief in a future existence appears rational, indeed the only rational mode of accounting for our achieving so much and so little—our advancing so far and no further here. The boon of mere physical existence is great, but if there were none greater, we should not surely possess faculties which suggest that to make some of His moral and rational children immortal, and others not, was not in accordance with the perfect goodness and justice of our Father. This life, good as He pronounced it to be, and as it surely is, would not be worth enjoying but for those nobler faculties that reach beyond it, and even here lay hold of the infinite conception of another after death. To have given these capabilities partially, or rather their fulfilment unequally, seems to me a discord in the divine harmony of that supreme Government, the inscrutability of which does not prevent one seeing and believing, beyond sight, that it is perfectly *good*. To have bestowed the idea of immortality upon some and not others of his children, seems to me impossible in our Father; and since (no matter how faint in degree or unworthy in kind) this idea appears to be recognized as universal among men, the fulfilment of it only to some favored few seems still more incredible, since 'tis a *yearning* towards Him felt by all His human creatures—a capacity, no matter how little or erroneously developed, possessed by all.

Admitting God's absolute power over matter, there surely is a moral law which *He* cannot infringe, for it is Himself; and though I do not know what He can do with the creatures He has made, I know He cannot do Wrong; and if you tell me that my wrong may be His right, I can only reply to that, *He is my Right*, the only true, real, absolute Right, of which I have any conception, and that to propose that which seems to me wrong as an attribute or proceeding of His seems to me nonsense....

Of course, a good beginning is an especially good thing in education; but I think we are apt to place too much faith, upon the whole, in what we can do with children's minds and souls. Perhaps it is well we should have this faith, or we might do less than we ought, whereas we not unfrequently do a good deal that is without result that we can perceive; nevertheless, the world goes on, and becomes by slow degrees wiser and better.... I met Macready while I was riding to-day; and though I could not stop to say much to him, I told him that I particularly wished to act with him. He has been told, I understand, that I have positively refused to do so; and though his acquaintance with me is slight, I should feel grateful to him if he would believe this, in spite of what representations to the contrary he might have heard. He said that my honesty and truth were known to him, though he had had but little intercourse with me, and that he entirely believed what I said. I was glad of this accidental opportunity of saying this to him, as I would not have sought him for the especial purpose. Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

BANNISTERS, SOUTHAMPTON, Thursday, 16th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

... Mrs. Fitzhugh does not appear to me in her usual vivacious state of mind, and I am afraid I shall not contribute much to her enlivenment, being rather out of spirits myself, and, for the first time in my life, finding Bannisters melancholy.... Walking up a small back street from Southampton the other day, I saw a little child of about five years old standing at a poor mean kind of pastry-cook's window, looking, with eyes of poignant longing, at some baked apples, stale buns, etc. I stopped and asked him if he wished

A CHILDISH
LONGING.

very much for some of those things. He said yes, he wished very much for some baked apples for his *poor little brother who was sick*. I wish you could have seen the little creature's face when I gave him money to buy what he wanted, and he carried off his baked apples in his arms; that look of profound desire for the sake of his brother, on the poor little childish face has haunted me. I went to see his people, and found them poor and ill, in much distress; and the mother, looking at her youngest child, a sickly, wasted, miserable little object, lamented bitterly that she did not belong to such and such associations, for then, "if it should please God to take the child, she should have five pounds to bury it" (I wonder if these wretches are never killed for the sake of their burial money?); "but now she hadn't so much as would buy a decent rag of mourning"—a useless solicitude, it seemed to me, who think mourning attire a superfluity in all classes.

I have had a letter from the Leamington manager, desiring me to act there, which I will do, some time or other.

I have a riding-habit of my own, and need not hire one at Hastings; but I shall be glad to hire a horse while I am with you, as, you know, I do not mind riding alone.... I feel intensely stupid, which makes me think I must be ill (admire, I beg, the conceit of that inference), as I have no other symptoms of indisposition. Farewell. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BANNISTERS, SOUTHAMPTON, Friday, December 17th.

I have spoken with even more than my usual carelessness and inaccuracy upon the subject of my readiness to comply with other people's wishes, but I seriously think one ought to comply with a request of *anybody's* that was not an impertinent or improper one. I suppose everybody is inclined to fulfil the wishes of persons they love.... But I am not given to the "small attentions," *les petits soins* of affection, and therefore am always particularly glad to know of any special desire of a friend's that I can comply with; a special wish, too, is a saving of trouble, like the questions in your letters which are equivalent to wishes in another way, and indicate the particular thing you want to know....

I have been out of spirits and much depressed during the first days of my stay at Bannisters, but this gloom passing off, and I am resuming my more habitual buoyancy of temper....

BANNISTERS, December 22d.

If you don't promise me good, I mean wholesome, food, when I come to St. Leonard's, I won't stay with you a minute. I have, for some years past, considered that there was an important deficiency in my human nature, which instead of consisting, like that of most people, of three elements, is wanting in what I should call the middle link between its lowest and highest extremities. Thus, for some time now, I have felt intimately convinced that I had senses and a soul, but no heart; but I have now further come to the conclusion that I have neither sense, soul, nor heart, and am, indeed, nothing but a stomach.... Now, don't retort upon me with starving populations, in and out of poor-houses; and your grand national starving experiment in Ireland; neither try to make me adopt it when I come to St. Leonard's, for I won't....

You will be glad to hear that poor old Mrs. Fitzhugh is better these two or three last days, and, except for the weakness and irritation in her eyes, is tolerably well and comfortable; and I, having recovered from the blue devils, am able to amuse her a little better than I did when first I came. I am glad you mentioned that your comment on my health was meant for *fun*. A man sat by me in Edinburgh at dinner one day, and asked me if I had ever read Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," which frightened me into an indigestion; and when I told Mr. Combe of it, he gave a sad Scotch laugh, like a postman's knock, "Ha! ha! just like Farquharson's dry humor!"

You say that, as far as my own constitution is concerned, you believe my theories are right. Pray, my dear, did I ever attempt to meddle with your constitution? Permit me to say that the hygienic faith I profess has this in common with my other persuasions, that I am no propagandist, and neither seek nor desire proselytes. No, my dear friend, it is the orthodox medicine-takers, not the heterodox medicine-haters, who are always thrusting their pill-boxes and physic-bottles into their friends' bodies, and dragging or driving their souls to heaven or hell. If my physical doctrine saves my body, and my religious doctrine my soul, alive, it is all I ask of it; and you, and all other of my fellow-creatures, I deliver over to your own devices, to dose, drug, and "oh, fie!" yourselves and each other, according to your own convictions and consciences.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Pg 598]

18, ORCHARD STREET, December 28th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I would rather have the "garret" looking towards the sea than the "bedroom" looking over houses, provided I can have a fire in said garret; and pray, since I can have my choice of the two rooms, may I inquire why the one that I do not occupy may not be appropriated to Hayes's use? It seems to me that if there are two empty rooms for me to choose from, I may likewise hire them both if I choose, and give one to my maid, and keep whichever I like best for myself. *Che ti pare, figlia mia?* Have the goodness, if you can, to take both the vacant rooms for me, and I will inhabit the garret, if, as I said before, it is susceptible of a fire.

I left Mrs. Fitzhugh a little more quiet and composed, in spite of her having just received the news of Lord Harrowby's being at the point of death.... She has had much to try her in the melancholy events at Sandon, and she persists in looking over a whole collection of old letters, among which she found the other day a miniature of her boy, Henry, the sailor who died, which she had forgotten that she possessed; and she comes down from this most trying task of retrospection in a state of nerves so lamentable that no ingenuity of affection, or utmost desire to cheer and relieve her, can suggest a sufficiently soothing process for that purpose. She cannot be amused at all now by anything that does not excite her, and if she is, over-excited she suffers cruelly from it. Thus, the reading of "Jane Eyre," which, while I continued it, kept her in a state of extreme expectation and interest, appeared to me, upon the whole, afterwards, to have affected her very unfavorably....

I will bring you Charles Greville's book about your most painful country, and some music....

Good-bye, dearest Hal. My affectionate love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

18, ORCHARD STREET.

[Pg 599]

... You ask me for my impression of Déjazet, and the piece I went to see her in; and here they are. The piece in which she came out was called "Vert Vert." You remember, no doubt, Gresset's poem about the poor parrot, so called; well, instead of a bird, they make this Vert Vert a young boy of sixteen, brought up in a girls' convent, and taken out for a week, during which he goes to Nevers, falls in with garrison officers, makes love to actresses, sups and gets tipsy at the mess, and, in short, "gets ideas" of all sorts, with which he returns again to his convent. If you can conceive this part, acted to the life by a woman, who moves with more complete *disinvoltura* in her men's clothes than most men do, you may imagine something of the personal exhibition at which we assisted. As for me, my eyes and mouth opened wider and wider, not so much at the French actress, as at the well-born, well-bred English audience, who, women as well as men, were in a perfect ecstasy of amusement and admiration. I certainly never saw more admirable

DÉJAZET.

acting, but neither did I ever see such uncompromising personal exposure and such perfect effrontery of demeanor. I do not think even ballet-dancers more indecent than Mademoiselle Déjazet, for their revelations of their limbs and shapes are partial and momentary, while hers were abiding and entire through the whole of her performance, which she acted in tight-fitting knee-breeches and silk stockings; nor did I ever see such an unflinching representation of unmitigated audacity of carriage, look, and manner, in any male or female, on or off the stage....

She always wears men's clothes, and is seldom seen without a cigar in her mouth. She is extremely witty, and famous for her powers of conversation and pungent repartees. She is plain, and has a disagreeable harsh shrill voice in speaking; her figure is thin, but straight, and well made, and her carriage and movements as graceful as they are free and unembarrassed; her singing voice is sweet, and her singing charming, and her spirit and talent as an actress incomparable. But if I had not seen it, I should not have believed that so impudent a performance would have been tolerated here: tolerated it not only was, but applauded with enthusiasm; and Mademoiselle Déjazet carries the town before her, being the least decent actress of the most indecent pieces I ever saw.

Good-bye. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Offenbach's burlesque Operas were still in the future.]

[Pg 600]

29, KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S, January 14th.

I have not heard again from Bath, and so have answered your two questions, dearest Hal, and will tell you what little I have to tell of my installation in my new lodging here.

I read the *Times*, *studiously*, all the way up to town, and was alone in my railroad carriage. As soon as we reached King Street, I sent Hayes off to Orchard Street, to see for letters, cards, etc. On entering my room (you will remember the upper front room, where we visited Lady W— together), I saw a beautiful white hyacinth, standing in the window, and knew directly that Emily had sent it to me. I found, too, a most kind and affectionate letter from her.... Fanny Wilson and Mrs. Mitchell had called while I was away, and two gentlemen who had not left their names—probably the Grevilles.... I don't like either my room or my furniture, I am sorry to say; but I shall get attached to both in a couple of days.... At a little after four, Henry Greville called and stayed some time, telling me as usual all manner of gossip—among other things that his brother Charles was supposed to be *the author of Jane Eyre!* I wonder by whom?

Lord Ellesmere's gout is better, and they have been able to get him down to Hatchford—their place near Weybridge. Henry Greville complained bitterly of Adelaide's not writing to him about their new house in Eaton Place, which she wants him to get papered and prepared for them—a job he is very willing to undertake, provided she will send him detailed and specific instructions, which he is now waiting for in vain, and in great disgust at her laziness.... I worked at my translation of "Mary Stuart" till bedtime.... It is impossible to say how much I miss you and dear Dorothy, and how chilled to the marrow I felt when I had left the warm and kind atmosphere of your affectionate companionship.... However, an additional oppressive sense of my loneliness was the price I was sure to pay for my week's happy fellowship with you and Dorothy. And, after all, it was worth the price.

I wrote this much yesterday, dear Hal; and yesterday is over, and has carried with it my cowardly fit of despondency, and I am already back in the harness of my usual lonely life, and feel the galling on the sore places of my spirit less; ... and every hour will bring occupation and business (such as they are, as Hamlet very contemptuously observes), and I shall have something to do—if not to think of....

[Pg 601]

I have heard from Norwich, and find I shall have less to prepare than I expected for two nights, Friday and Saturday. I shall act at Yarmouth, and repeat what I play at Norwich.

Mrs. Jameson has taken rooms in this house, I find, and comes here to-night, and I shall

be very glad of some of her company.... Certainly London, much as I hate it, agrees better with me than St. Leonard's; either the air or the water there are bad for me. I am much better than when I was there....

God bless you. Kiss your Good Angel for me—how much I love and revere her, and how I rejoice that you have such an inestimable friend and companion! I have been very happy with you, my dear and good and kind friends.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

29 KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S, Saturday, January 15th.

I dined at home yesterday, dear Hal, and spent the evening in reading "Vanity Fair." It is extremely clever, but hitherto I do not like it very much. I began it at Bannisters last Winter, and then I did not like it, wonderfully clever as I thought it. Lord Ellesmere says it is better than anything of the kind (novels of manners and morals) since Fielding; but as far as I have yet gone in it, it seems to me to have one very disagreeable quality—the most prominent people in it are thorough worldlings, and though their selfishnesses, and meannesses, and dirtinesses, and pettinesses, are admirably portrayed—to the very life, indeed—I do not much rejoice in their company. It is only within the last year that I have been able to *get through* "Gil Blas," for the same reason; and though I did get through, I never got *over* the odiousness of the people I lived with during the four volumes of his experiences of life.

"VANITY
FAIR."

Is not Shakespeare *true* to human nature? Why does he never disgust one with it? Why does one feel comparatively clean in spirit after living with his creatures? Some of them are as bad as real men and women ever were, but some of them are as good as real men and women ever are; and one does not lose one's respect for one's kind while reading what he writes of it; and his coarse utterances, the speech of his time, hurt one comparatively little in the midst of his noble and sweet thoughts....

[Pg 602]

I am going with Henry Greville to Drury Lane to-night, and perhaps he will eat his dinner here. He has a perfect mania for playhouses, and cannot keep out of them, and I would as lief spend my evening in hearing pretty music as alone here....

I drove up and down Regent Street three times in vain to find your identical cutler, Mr. Kingsbury: perhaps he has left off business, and some one else has taken his shop. *So* what shall I do with your scissors? Do you think if I talk to them they will be sharpened?...

I have not heard again from Bath, and have seen nobody but Fanny Wilson, with whom I dine to-morrow, and Mrs. Mitchell's two boys....

I shall get through my packing very well. Hayes is greatly improved, and really *begins* now to be useful to me. Thus we most of us begin only just as we come to the *end* and leave off.

I was driving about all yesterday, doing commissions; to-day the sun shines, and I am going to wade in the mud for my health.

God bless you. Kiss dear Dorothy for me.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

NORWICH, Wednesday, January 20th.

I have found your cutler, Kingsbury; and very glad I was to find him, for I hate not being able to execute a commission exactly as I am desired to do....

When I said that people never love others better than themselves, I did not mean *more*, but in a better way than they love themselves. I mean that those who are conscientious in their self-regard will be conscientious in their regard for others, and that it takes

good people to make good friends; and I do not consider this a "paradox of mine," as you uncivilly style it. It is a *conviction* of mine, and I feel sure that you agree with it, whatever your first impression of my meaning may have been when I said that people never loved others better than themselves (*i.e.*, with a better kind of love). I know that very unprincipled people are capable of affection, and their affection partakes of their want of principle: people have committed crimes for the sake of the love they bore their wives, mistresses (oftener), and children; and half the meannesses, pettinesses, and selfishnesses of which society is full, have their source in unprincipled affection as much as in unprincipled self-love.

I had already taken to my King Street lodging when I left it for this place. You know I have a horror of new places and a facility in getting over it, which is a double disadvantage in this wandering life of mine; for I am perpetually undergoing the process of feeling miserable and lonely in a new place, and more miserable and lonely still when I leave it. The room I have here is gloomy, but opens into my bedroom, which is comfortable, and I shall soon attain the easy liking of habit for it.

Mrs. —, dear Harriet, is without tact, and learns nothing, which is one reason why, in spite of her many good qualities and accomplishments, I cannot get on with her. I breakfasted with her on Sunday morning, and she abused A— to me—not violently, of course, but very foolishly. She is wanting in perception, and is perpetually committing sins of bad taste, which provoke people—and me "much more than reason." I do not suppose I shall see enough of her to admit of her "drying me up" (as the Italians say for boring), but I always find it difficult to get on with her, even for a short time.

There is an element of *ungenuineness* about her, I believe quite involuntary; ... and it does not so much consist in telling stories, though I believe she would do that on proper occasions, like everybody else (but you, who never would know which were proper occasions), as in a crooked or indirect moral vision, an incapacity for distinguishing what is straight from what is not, which affects me very unpleasantly.

On Saturday evening I went to Drury Lane, with Henry and Charles Greville, the latter having invited himself to join us. I spent a rather dolorous three hours hearing indifferent music, indifferently sung, and admiring compassionately the mental condition of such a man as my friend Henry, who must needs divert himself with such an entertainment, having, moreover, taste enough to know what is really good, and yet persuading himself that this was not bad, only because to him anything is better than spending an evening quietly alone at home.... On the other hand, several things struck me a good deal. The music of the opera was poor, but it was not worse than much of Donizetti's music, and it was composed by an Englishman. It was put together with considerable skill and cleverness, but was far less agreeable than the poorest Italian music of the same order; and it was well executed, by a good orchestra, chiefly composed of English musicians. The principal singers were all English, and some of them had fine voices, and though they seldom used them well, they did so occasionally; and, upon the whole, did not sing much worse than Italian performers of the same class would have done. The choruses and concerted pieces, also all given by English people, were well executed, though stupid and tiresome in themselves; and certainly the progress our people have made in music in my time, to which the whole opera testified, is very great. The audience was very numerous, and though the galleries were crowded, and it is Christmas-time, and the after-piece was the pantomime, there was not the slightest noise, or riot, or disturbance, even among "the gods," and the pieces in the opera which were encored, were redemanded in the polite fashion of the Queen's Theatre, by a prolonged, gentle clapping, without a single shout or shriek of "Hangcor!" or "Brayvo!" This is a wonderful change within my recollection, for I remember when, during the run of a pantomime, the galleries presented a scene of scandalous riot and confusion; bottles were handed about, men sat in their shirt-sleeves, and the shouting, shrieking, bawling, squalling, and roaring were such as to convert the performance of the first piece into mere dumb show.

All this is well, and testifies to an improved civilization, and not to a mere desire to ape those above them in society; for that could hardly suffice to persuade these Drury Lane audiences that they are amused by a tiresome piece tiresomely acted, and tedious musical strains, of which they cannot carry away a single phrase, which sets nobody's foot tapping or head bobbing with rhythmical sympathy, being all but devoid of melody.

I am very fond of music, but I would rather have sat out the poorest play than that imitation opera; the scenery, dresses, decorations, etc., were all very good, and testified to the much more cultivated taste of the times in all these matters.

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On Sunday I dined with the Horace Wilsons, whom I had not seen for some time, and for whom I have a very great regard, ... Returning home, I stopped at dear old Miss Cottin's.... I am much attached to her, and think, next to my own dear Aunt Dall, she is one of the sweetest and most unselfish creatures I have ever known, and love her accordingly....

I left London for this place on Monday morning, and having a sulky deliberate cab-driver, arrived at the station just five minutes after the train had departed. This kept me waiting from 11.30 till 3.30, during which time Hayes, thinking I should be hungry, went out privately, and coming back with a paper of biscuits, pointed out a raspberry tart at the bottom of it, and said, "Here is a little tart I have got on purpose for you." Was not that courtly and kind of her?

A KINDLY
SERVANT.

I act here till Thursday. Friday and Saturday I act at Yarmouth; and I shall return to town on Sunday, unless the Vice-Chancellor should allow the manager to open the Cambridge Theatre, which is not generally allowed during term; if he should, I shall act there on Monday night, and only return to town Tuesday morning.

I have promised Mrs. Grote to go down to the Beeches on Saturday, 29th, and shall only stay there till Monday, 31st. This is all I know of myself at present, except that I am

Affectionately yours,

FANNY.

DEAR DOROTHY,

Here is my love with my pen and ink, which I flatter myself are as wretchedly bad as those of any gentlewoman in the universe, and St. Leonard's.

You may be impertinent to Hal; she is only a bully, and will give in if you try: if you don't like to try, as you are meek and lowly, I'll try for you, when I come down, if you'll give me your power-of-attorney and instructions, without which I don't suppose I should know how to be impertinent. Farewell, dearest Dorothy. I love you entirely for your own sake; I don't like mixing up matters, and thank God for you, for Harriet's sake, as often as I think of you both.

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BEGUN AT NORWICH, FINISHED AT YARMOUTH, Friday, 21st.

I do but poorly at Norwich, my dearest Hal, in body and estate, having a wretched influenza, sore throat, sore chest, and cold in my head, through which I am obliged to stand bare-necked and bare-armed, bare-headed and almost bare-footed (for the thin silk stockings and satin shoes are a poor protection), on the stage, to houses, I am sorry to say, as thin as my stockings; so that the money return for all this fatigue, discomfort, and expense is but inconsiderable, *i.e.* by comparison, for undoubtedly it is a fair harvest for such grain as I sow.

My mind rather thrives upon this not too prosperous condition of my body and estate, inasmuch as I naturally make some effort to be courageous and cheerful, and therefore do better in that respect than when I was cheerful and needed no courage, while you were spoiling me at St. Leonard's with all your love for me, and Dorothy with all her love for you.

In half an hour I leave this place for Yarmouth, where I act to-night and to-morrow. The manager has made an arrangement with me to act at his theatres at Lynn and Cambridge next week, so that instead of returning to London the day after to-morrow, I shall not do so until Friday, 28th....

We have dismal weather, snow on the ground, and blackness in the skies. My poor Hayes has got the influenza too, and goes hacking and snivelling at my heels like an

unpleasant echo. I shall be thankful for both our sakes when our winter work is over, for the exposure is very great; and though, of course, she has much less of it than I have, she bears it worse, catches colds oftener, and keeps them longer than I do....

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I should, I believe, find it very difficult indeed to be economical, and yet I suppose that if I felt the duty and necessity of it I should be more so than I am. The saving of money without any special motive for it does not appear to me desirable, any more than self-denial without a sufficient motive—and I do not call mere mortification such—appears to me reasonable. I do not feel called upon to curtail the comforts of my daily life, for in some respects it is always miserable, and in many respects often inevitably very uncomfortable; and while I am laboring to spare sacrifice and disgrace to others, I do not see any very strong motive for not applying a sufficient portion of the money I work so hard for, to make my wandering and homeless life as endurable as I can....

Your mode of living is without pretension, and without expenditure for mere appearances; and I feel certain that appearances, and not the positive and necessary comforts of life, such as sufficient firing and food, are the heaviest expenses of gentlefolks.... If the life is more than meat or raiment, which I quite agree to, meat and raiment are more than platters and trimmings; and it is the style that half the time necessitates the starvation....

Now I am at Yarmouth; though t'other side the page I was at Norwich. The earth is white, the sea is black, the sky gray, and everything most melancholy. I act here to-night, and to-morrow and on Sunday go on to Lynn, where I act Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; and Thursday at Cambridge. On Friday I go back to town, and on Saturday to Mrs. Grote's. I am in just such a little room as those we used to pass in walking along the Parade at St. Leonard's—a small ground-floor room, about sixteen feet square, the side facing the sea, one large bow-window in three compartments; just such a gravel terrace before it as the one we walked up and down together; and the very same sea, dark, neutral-tinted, with its frothing edge of white, as if it was foaming at the mouth in a black convulsion, that your eyes look upon from your window. It is in some respects exactly like St. Leonard's, and again as much the reverse as sad loneliness is to loving and delightful companionship.

MY LOOK-
OUT.

I have a sort of lost-child feeling whenever I go to a strange place, that very few people who know me would give me credit for; but that's because they don't know me.

God bless you, dear. Kiss dear Dorothy for me.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

YARMOUTH, 22d.

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My very dear and most sententious friend, I never *do* run the time of my departure for railroad trains "to the chances of free streets and fast-driving cabmen;" I always allow amply for all accidents, as I have a greater horror of being hurried and jostled even than of being too late. But my driver, the day I left town, was, I think, inexperienced as well as sulky. He was very young, and though I was too ignorant of city localities to direct him positively, my recollection of the route which I had traversed before seemed to me to indicate that he did not take the most direct way.

You ask me what I think of E—'s note, and if it seems "wonderfully aristocratic" to me. Aristocratic after the English fashion, which, thank God, is far from being a very genuine fashion—their "airs" being for the most part *adulterated* by the good, sound, practical common sense of the race, as their blood is *polluted* with the wholesome, vigorous, handsome, intelligent vital fluid of the classes below them. No real aristocrat would have mentioned Miss —'s maiden name as if she was a woman of family—(*née* —*gebörne*; that was a delightful German woman who said she wasn't *gebörne* at all)—for Miss —, being only a banker's daughter, was, of course "nobody."

The real aristocratic principle is not—I say again, thank God!—often to be found among us islanders of Britain. In Austria, where the Countess Z— and the Princess E— are looked upon as the earth under the feet of the Vienna nobility, the one being Lord S

—'s daughter and the other Lord J—'s, they have a better notion of the principle of the question. There were only four families in all the British peerage who could have furnished their daughter with the requisite number of quarterings for one of those Austrian alliances.

In folly, as in wisdom, a principle is at least consistent; but that the aristocratic pretensions of our upper class can never be: for our gentry is of more ancient date in a great many instances, and our nobles are, fortunately for themselves and us, a mixed race, admitting to the temporary fellowship of social companionship and the permanent alliance of matrimony, wealth, influence, beauty, and talent from every grade beneath them; therefore they are fit to endure, and will endure longer than any other European aristocracy, in spite of Prince Puckler Muskau's epigram against the most "mushroom of nobilities."

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The "airs" they do give themselves are, therefore, very droll, whereas the similar pretensions of an Austrian *crème de la crème* are comprehensible and consistent—folly without a flaw, and rather admirable in its kind as a specimen of human absurdity.... I have the honor of being slightly acquainted with E—'s portrait painter. He is a Scotch gentleman, of very great merit as an artist. He was in Rome the winter I was there, and I met him in society, and saw several of his pictures. He was rather injured artistically, I think, by living with mad lords and silly ladies who used to pet and spoil him, which sort of thing damages our artists, who become bitten with the "aristocratic" mania, and destroy themselves as fine workmen in their desire to become fine gentlemen.

There was a story in Rome about Lady C— and the German princess, Lady D—, going one day to Mr. —'s studio and finding his fire out, falling down on their own fair knees, and with their own fair hands kindling it again for him. After this, how could he paint anything less than a countess? Jesting apart, however, my dear Hal, the terms Mr. — asks are very high; and though he is a very elegant and graceful portrait-painter, I would rather, upon the whole, sit to Richmond, whose chalk drawings are the same price, and whose style is as good and more vigorous.

You ask me why Mrs. —, who is undoubtedly a clever woman, is also undoubtedly a silly one?

If I wished to be saucy, which I never do and never am, I should tell you, being an Irishwoman, that it was because she was Irish, and, therefore, capable of a sort of intellectual bull; but, unluckily, though ingenious, this is not true. The sort of ability or abilities, to which we give the ill-defined name of "cleverness," is entirely distinct from common sense, judgment, discretion; so distinct as to be almost their opposite. I think a clever woman requires quite an unusual portion of the above qualities not to be silly, *because* she is clever. This may sound paradoxical, but if you think it worth examining, you will find it true.

A CLEVER
WOMAN.

I am very cold and very comfortless in these horrible theatres, and shall be glad to get back to King Street, and as soon as I am there will take measures about my readings, which I think I had better begin in earnest with.

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There are no rocks on the beach here, like that pretty little reef that runs right out before your windows, but three miles from the shore there is a fatal stretch of sand where wrecks are frequent, and all along which ominous white clouds are springing up from the inky surface of the wintry sea, like warning ghosts. It is very dreary and dismal looking; but, nevertheless, as I have no rehearsal, I am going out to walk. Kiss Dorothy for me. I am yours and hers most affectionately,

FANNY.

I have had another foolish note from Lady — about "Jane Eyre"—the universal theme of conversation and correspondence—in which, speaking of herself, she says that she is "*dished and done for, and gone to the dogs*;" and then accuses the writer of "Jane Eyre" of not knowing how ladies and gentlemen talk—which I think, too; but the above expressions are a peculiar example of refined conventional language, which perhaps the author of that very remarkable book would have hesitated to ascribe to a lady—or a gentleman.

Now I have two long letters of yours to answer, and my own opinion is that they will not be answered until I get to the Beeches, and have a few hours' breathing-time, for I am just now setting off for Cambridge, where I act to-night. To-morrow I travel to Bury St. Edmund's, and act there the same night; and Friday I shall just get to London in time for my dinner, and the next morning I go down to Birnham.... The air of St. Leonard's, though you call it cold and sharp, was mild compared with the raw, sunless climate I have since *enjoyed* at Lynn and Yarmouth; a bracing climate always suits me better than a relaxing one.... I cannot, however, agree with you that there is more "excitement" in rehearsing every morning, and sitting in a dull, dirty, hired room, and acting that everlasting "Hunchback" every evening, than in being your mounted escort to Bex Hill and Fairlight church, and reading to you either "Mary Stuart" or "Jane Eyre." I am glad to see that L— and I agree about what always seems to me the most improbable part of the latter very remarkable book. I am slow in determining in my own mind the course that other women would pursue in exceptionally difficult circumstances; many of them would doubtless display an amount of principle of which I should be quite incapable; and so I am glad that L— thinks, as I do, that Jane Eyre's safest course would have been to have left Thornfield without meeting her lover's despair.

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Fever at the gates of Ardgillan, my dear Hal, must indeed make you anxious; but as your family have moved thence, I suppose they will not return while there is any danger to be apprehended from doing so.

And now, dear Hal, from the Beeches, where I arrived yesterday afternoon, and am now writing to you.... I have really kept both cold and cough down wonderfully, considering the horrible weather and exposure I have gone through travelling, and in those damp barns of theatres. Hayes will certainly not recover as soon as I do, for she has all the aversion of her class to physic and spare diet....

Charles Greville is here, and I asked him your question, if he had ever published any other book but the one upon Ireland you are reading. He said no. He has, however, written pamphlets and newspaper articles of considerable ability upon political subjects. I have been taking a long walk, and will now resume my letter to you. I perceive I have brought Charles Greville and his book into the middle of what I was telling you about those poor young Norwich actors.

A very pretty and charming niece of my dear friend, Mr. Harness, is married and living within a short distance of Lynn, and as I had not time to stay with her now, I have promised to go back into Norfolk to visit her, and at the same time I have promised to act a night for these poor people if they can get their manager's leave for me to do so.

My dear Hal, this letter seems destined to pass its unfinished existence on the railroads. I am now at this present moment finishing it in my King Street lodging, to which I returned yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Grote being seized in the morning with one of her attacks of neuralgia, for which she is obliged to take such a quantity of morphine that she is generally in a state of stupor for four and twenty to thirty hours. The other guests departed in the morning, and I in the afternoon, after giving her medicine to her, and seeing her gradually grow stupid under its effect. Poor woman, she is a wretched sufferer, and I think these attacks of acute pain in her head answerable for some of the singularity of her demeanor and conversation, which are sometimes all but unaccountably eccentric.

MRS.
GROTE.

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You ask me if I saw anything on that bitter cold journey, as I went along, to interest me. You know I am extremely fond of the act of travelling: being carried through new country excites one's curiosity and stimulates one's powers of observation very agreeably, even when nothing especially beautiful or noteworthy presents itself in the landscape. I had never seen the east counties of England before, and am glad to have become acquainted with their aspect, though it is certainly not what is usually called picturesque. The country between Norwich and Yarmouth is like the ugliest parts of Holland, swampy and barren; the fens of Lincolnshire flat and uninteresting, though admirably drained, cultivated, and fertile. Ely Cathedral, of which I only saw the outside, is magnificent, and the most perfect view of it is the one from the railroad, as one comes from Lynn.

Lynn itself is a picturesque and curious old town, full of remains of ancient monastic buildings. The railroad terminus is situated in a property formerly part of a Carthusian convent, and the wheelwrights' and blacksmiths' and carpenters' cottages are built partly in the old monkish cells, of which two low ranges remain round a space now covered with sleepers, and huge chains, and iron rails, and all the modern materials of steam travel.

Cambridge, of course, I saw nothing of. On the road between it and Bury St. Edmund's one passes over Newmarket heath, the aspect of which is striking, apart from its "associations." Bury St. Edmund's—which is famous, as you know, for its beautiful old churches and relics of monastic greatness—I saw nothing of, but was most kindly and hospitably sheltered by Mr. Donne, who, being now the father of sons, is living in Bury in order to educate them at the school where he and my brothers were as boys under Dr. Malkin. [William Bodham Donne, my brother John's school and college mate, for more than fifty years of this changeful life the unchanged, dear, and devoted friend of me and mine—accomplished scholar, elegant writer, man of exquisite and refined taste, and such a *gentleman* that my sister always said he was the *original* of the hero of Boccaccio's story of the "Falcon."]

God bless you, my dear. I have a pain in my chest, and bad cough, which don't prevent my being

Yours most truly,

FANNY.

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29, KING STREET, Thursday, 3d.

It is no longer the bitter cold morning on which you asked me how I was, and now I cannot for the life of me remember how or where I was on that said 26th. Oh, it was last Wednesday, and I was travelling from Lynn to Cambridge, and I was pretty well, and had a pleasant railroad trip, the gentlemen in the railroad carriage with me being intelligent and agreeable men, and one of them well acquainted with my brother John, and all his Cambridge contemporaries. Though it was cold, too, the sun shone, and threw long streaks of brightness across the fens of Lincolnshire, producing effects on the unfrequent and in themselves unpicturesque farm-houses, with their groups of wintry skeleton-trees exactly like those in the Dutch pictures, which are, for the most part, representations of just such landscapes.

Mitchell sent me yesterday a box at the French theatre for a morning performance of the "Antigone," with Mendelssohn's choruses. Previous to the performance of the Greek drama, they played, very inappropriately it seems to me, his music of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and the effect of it upon my nerves was such that, though screened by the curtain of the box, and my sobs drowned by the orchestra, I thought I should have been obliged to leave the theatre. It is the first time that I have heard a note of Mendelssohn's music since his death.

MENDELSSOHN

How thankful I am I did not attempt that reading at the Palace! What should I have done there, thus convulsed with pain and sorrow, in the midst of those strange people, and the courtly conventions of their condition! Oh, what a bitter, bitter loss to the world, and all who loved him, has been the death of that bright and amiable great genius!

The Greek play was given in the true Grecian fashion, and was interesting and curious as a spectacle. The French literal translation of the grand old tragedy seemed at once stilted and bald, and yet I perceived and felt through it the power of the ancient solemn Greek spell; and though strange and puppet-like in its outward form, I was impressed by its stern and tragic simplicity. It is, however, merely an archæological curiosity, chiefly interesting as a reproduction of the times to which it belongs. To modern spectators, unless they are poets or antiquarians, I should think it must be dull, and so I find it is considered, in spite of Mendelssohn's fine music, which, indeed, is so well allied in spirit to the old tragedy, that to most listeners I dare say it has something of the dreamy dreariness of the drama itself.

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Mrs. Jameson was with me, and it was chiefly on her account that I did not give way to my impulse to leave the theatre.

Good-bye. God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The foregoing letter refers to my having declined to read the "Antigone" at Buckingham Palace, under the following circumstances. My father was desired to do so, but his very serious deafness made his reading anything to which there was an occasional accompaniment of music difficult to him, and he excused himself; at the same time, unfortunately for me, he suggested that I should be applied to to read the play. Accordingly, I received a message upon the subject, but was obliged to decline the honor of reading at the Palace, for reasons which had not occurred to my father when he answered for my accepting the task he had been unable to undertake. I had never yet read at all in public, and to make my first experiment of my powers before the queen, and under circumstances calculated to increase my natural nervousness and embarrassment, seemed hardly respectful to her, and almost impossible to me.

Then, for my first attempt of the kind, to select a play accompanied by Mendelssohn's music, of which I had not heard one bar since the shock of his death, was to incur the almost certain risk of breaking down in an uncontrollable paroxysm of distress, and perhaps being unable to finish my performance.

What I endured at the St. James's Theatre, on the occasion I have spoken of in this letter, confirms me in my conviction that I couldn't have attempted what was proposed to me with a reasonable chance of being able to fulfil my task.

I was told afterwards that I had been guilty of "disloyal disobedience to a royal command,"—a severe sentence, which I do not think I had deserved, and found it painful to bear.]

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KING STREET, Saturday, February 9th, 1848.

Mrs. Jameson is no longer in the house with me, dearest Hal. She went away the other day from the theatre, where we were hearing Mendelssohn's "Antigone" together, and will probably not return for some time; when she does, I shall most likely be out of town.

I saw Mitchell yesterday, and he entirely declines to have anything whatever to do with my readings—*ainsi me voilà bien!* I cried like a baby the whole of the day afterwards; of course my nerves were out of order, or I should have chosen some less rubbishy cause among the various excellent reasons for tears I have to select from.

Mr. Harness and Charles and Henry Greville came to see me in the course of the day. The latter rather bullied me, said I behaved like a child: and so I certainly did; but, oh, my dear Hal, if you knew how little these, my most intimate friends, know about me, and how much more able and fit they think me to fight and struggle for myself than I am! They are all very kind in suggesting many things: Henry Greville is urgent with me to undertake the speculation of giving readings at my own risk—hiring a room, and sending out advertisements, etc.; but this I will not do, as I am willing' to work hard for very small gains, but not to jeopardize any portion of the small gains for which I have worked hard. Am I right in your opinion and that of dear Dorothy? In the mean time, I have written off to the Secretary of the Collegiate Institution at Liverpool, who proposed to me last year to give readings there, and have told him that I shall be glad to do so now if it still suits the purposes of the Institution. He, however, may have changed his mind, as Mitchell has done, and in that case I must sit down and eat my present savings, and thank God that I have savings for the present to eat....

Dear old Rogers came yesterday, and sat with me some time; and talking over my various difficulties with me, said I had much better go and live with him, and take care of his house for him. It's a pretty house, but I'm afraid it would be no sinecure to be his housekeeper....

How *is* your poor knees and wrists, and all your rheumatical fastenings and hinges, and Dorothy's *intérieur*? I hope she is not tyrannizing over you with unnecessary questions

and inquiries, which merely serve to trammel your free-will, by asking you where you have been walking, or if it rained while you were out.

I send you a kiss, which I beg you will give each other for me, or otherwise divide without quarrelling, and believe me

Very affectionately yours,

FANNY.

29, KING STREET.

... Oh yes, my dear Hal, I hear abundance of discussion of the present distracted aspect of public affairs, abroad and at home; but for the most part the opinions that I hear, and the counsels that are suggested to meet the evils of the times, seem to me as much indications of the faithlessness and folly of men, as the great movements of nations are of the faithfulness and wisdom of God.

Still, when I hear clever, practical politicians talk, I always listen with keen interest; for the details in which they seem to me too much absorbed, are a corrective to my generalizing tendency on all such subjects.

Moral principles are the *true* political laws (mere abstract truisms, as they are held, and accordingly overlooked, by *working* statesmen) by which the social world is kept in cohesion, just as the physical world is kept in equilibrium by the attracting and repelling forces that control its elements.

You ask me how many letters I am in your debt. When I shall have finished this, only one. I have worked very hard this past week to keep your claims down, but have only just now got my head above water with you.

There was nothing to like at Lynn. The weather was gloomy and cold, and I was only there two days. There seemed to be a good many curious remains of antiquity in and about the town—old churches, houses, gateways, and porches—but I had no leisure to look at these, and indeed the weather was almost too severe to admit of standing about sight-seeing, even under the warmest zeal for instruction.

I did not find the sea air make me sleep at Lynn, and incline to think that it is you, more than the climate that affects me so soporifically at St. Leonard's.

God bless you, dear.

Your affectionate,

FANNY.

29, KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S.

I do not know how right I am in saying Lady — married because she was jilted, inasmuch as of my own personal knowledge I do not *know* it; but that she was much attached to Lord —, whose father would not permit the marriage, I have heard repeatedly from people who knew both the families; and Rogers, who was very intimate with hers, told me that he considered her marrying as she did the result of mere disappointment, saying, "She could not have the man she loved, so she gave herself to the man who loved her." So much in explanation of my rather rash statement about that most beautiful lady I ever saw.

I have seen a good many handsome people, but there was a modesty, grace, and dignity, and an expression of deep latent sentiment in that woman's countenance, that, combined with her straight nymph-like figure, and the sort of chastity that characterized her whole person and appearance, fulfilled my ideal of female beauty. You will perhaps wonder at my use of the word "chastity," as applied merely to a style of beauty; but "chaste" is the word that describes it properly. Of all the Venuses of antique art, the Venus of Milo, that noble and keenly intellectual goddess of beauty, is the only one that I admire.

THE VENUS
OF MILO.

The light, straight-limbed Artemis is lovelier to me than the round soft sleepy Aphrodite; and it was to the character of her figure, and the contour of her head and face, that I applied the expression "chaste" in speaking of Lady ——. Her sister, who is thought handsomer, and is a lovely creature (and morally and mentally as worthy of that epithet as physically), has not this severely sweet expression, or sweetly stern, if you prefer it, though this implies a shade of volition, which falsifies the application of it. This is what I especially admire in Lady —, who adds to that faultless Greek outline, which in its integrity and justness of proportion seems the type of truth, an eye whose color deepens, and a fine-textured cheek, where the blood visibly mantles with the mere emotion of speaking and being listened to.

The first time I met her was at a dinner-party at Miss Berry's, before her marriage. She sat by Landseer, and her great admiration for him, and enthusiastic devotion to his fine art, in which she was herself a proficient, lent an interest to their conversation, which exhibited itself in her beautiful face in a manner that I have never forgotten....

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You bid me tell you how I am in mind, body, and estate. My mind is in a tolerably wholesome frame, my body not so well, having a cold and cough hanging about it, and suffering a good deal of pain the last few days. My estate is so far flourishing that I brought back a tolerable wage and earnings from my eastern expedition, and so shall not have to sell out any of my small funded property for my daily bread yet a while.

You say that tact is not necessarily insincerity. No, I suppose not: I must say I suppose, because I have never known anybody, eminently gifted with tact, who appeared to me perfectly sincere. I am told that the woman I have just been writing about, Lady C—, of whom my personal knowledge is too slight to judge how far she deserves the report, never departs from the truth; and yet is so gentle, good, and considerate, that she never wounds anybody's feelings. If this is so, it deserves a higher title than tact, and appears to me a great attainment in the prime grace of Christianity. I have always believed that where love—charity—abounded, truth might, and could, and would abound without offence. Which of the great French divines said, "Quand on n'est point dans les bornes de la charité, on n'est bientôt plus dans celles de la vérité"? It sounds like Fénelon, but I believe it is Bossuet. Tact always appears to me a sort of moral elegance, an accomplishment, rather than a virtue; dexterity, as it were, doing the work of sensibility and benevolence.

I think it likely that Mitchell will call in the course of the morning, and I may still possibly make some arrangement with him about my readings....

I have had a pressing invitation from Mrs. Mitchell, who is staying at Brighton with her boys, to go down there and visit her. It would be very nice if I could go thence to 18, Marina, St. Leonard's, and pay a visit to some other friends of mine. Your lodgings will, however, I fear, be full; and then, too, you may not want me, and it is as well not to be too forward in offering one's self to one's dearest friends, for fear of the French "Thank you," which with them, civil folk that they are, means, "No, they'd rather not." With us, it would imply, "Yes, gratefully;" otherwise, it is, "Thank you for nothing."

Kiss Dorothy for me.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[Pg 619]

29, KING STREET, Sunday, 5th.

I am afraid my pretty plot of coming to you is at an end, and I am afraid all my chances of coming to you are at an end. I wrote you yesterday that I was beginning to be doubtful about my further engagements in London, and was indeed discouraged and troubled at the aspect of my affairs. This morning, however, comes an express from M —, beginning a new negotiation with me, and wanting me to open with Macready at his theatre on the 21st of this month, to act four weeks, and then renew the engagement for four weeks more.... I do not wish to depart from the terms I have asked, but am extremely glad of the offer, and hope he will agree to them. I think it probable that he will, because my engagement with Macready has been so much talked about, and he has himself applied to me three several times about it. This puts an end to all visiting

prospects, for Brighton or St. Leonard's, and in March you will be leaving the latter place. This is a sad disappointment, but perhaps Mr. M—— will not, after all, give me my terms, and I ought to be sorrier for that, but I shan't....

I had a visit the other morning from Mr. Blackett—John Blackett. I don't know if I have spoken of him to you. I met him at Mrs. Mitchell's in Scotland, while I was staying with her at Carolside, and liked him very much. He is a great friend of Dr. Hampden's and of Stanley, Arnold's biographer. He brought me, the other day, a volume of sermons by Stanley, of which I have just read the first, and have been delighted with it. How surely does such a spirit as Arnold's beget its own fit successors!... I think I have not read anything, since his own *Life*, that has given me the same deep satisfaction that these sermons of his pupil have....

That music of Mendelssohn's had a horrid effect upon my nerves; I mean the emotion and distress it caused me. I suffered a great deal of pain, and was quite unwell for several days after it. Will it not be a pity if I can't come and be spoilt any more by you and Dorothy at St. Leonard's? It was so pleasant and good for you.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[Pg 620]

KING STREET, Monday, 7th.

I do very, very well this morning, my dear Hal: this is in answer to your affectionate inquiry of the 1st; but if you wanted to know then, of course you will want to know just as much now....

My time at the Beeches was not very pleasant to me. The weather was horrible, cold, wet, and dismal; the house is wretchedly uncomfortable; and Mrs. Grote always keeps me in a rather nervous state of breathless apprehension as to what she may say or do next. I cannot talk much, either to her or Charles Greville; neither of them understands a word that I say. Her utter *unusualness* perplexes me, and his ingrain worldliness provokes me; but I listened with great pleasure to some political talk between Charles Greville, Mr. Grote, and the Italian patriot, Prandi. You know that, fond as I am of talking, I like listening better, when I can hear what I think worth listening to. I was delighted with their clear, practical, comprehensive, and liberal views of the whole state of Europe, especially Italy, so interesting in her present half-roused attitude of returning national vitality. They talked a great deal, too, upon the West India sugar question; and I listened with interest to all they said, struck the whole time with their entirely ignoring the deepest sources whence national troubles and their remedies flow, of which the wisest working politicians and statesmen take apparently (very foolishly) little heed; I suppose they do not acknowledge them, which is why their government and statescraft is so apt to be mere temporary empirical expediency.

I had a very full and lively audience at Cambridge, and remarked with especial satisfaction a young man sitting in the stage box with one of the sweetest countenances I ever saw. I sincerely hope, for his beauty's sake, that he was amused. He reminded me of the line in *King John*, describing the young gentlemen in the English army—the lads "with ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens." They were very attentive, and very enthusiastic, and I was very well pleased with them, and I hope they were with me....

[Pg 621]

There is nothing in the supernatural part of "*Jane Eyre*" that disturbs me at all; on the contrary, I believe in it. I mean, there is nothing in my mode of thinking and feeling that denies the possibility of such a circumstance as *Jane Eyre* hearing her distant lover call upon her name. I have often thought that the power of intense love might very well work just such a miracle as that. God bless you, dear. Kiss dearest Dorothy for me, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

29, KING STREET, Tuesday, 8th.

Yesterday I had plenty of questions to answer in my letter to you; to-day I have not one.... My beloved friend, I know that if your power to serve me equalled your desire to do so, I should be borne in the arms of angels, "lest at any time I struck my foot against a stone." But do not, my dearest Harriet, let your love for me forget that faith without which we could neither bear our own trials nor the trials of those we love. "In the great hand of God we all stand," and are fitly cared for by Him, our Father. I should be much ashamed of the sudden flood of cowardice that overwhelmed me two days ago at the difficult and cheerless prospect before me, but that it was, I am sure, the result of nervous disorder, and the jarring I got the other day from that dreadful Antigone.

You know I seldom waste time in blaming myself, and tarry but a brief space in the idle disconsolateness of repentance. I must try to be less weak, and less troubled about my prospects. I wrote you yesterday of the proposal I had received from Mr. Maddox. He made no offer of terms. I have heard nothing further from him, and augur ill from his silence. I suppose he will not pay me what I ask, and thinks it useless to offer me less. I shall be very sorry for this; but if I find it so, will apply to Mr. Webster, or some other manager, for employment; and if I fail with them, must make a desperate effort about my readings.

But for my sister's entreaty that I would remain here till she returns from Italy, and my own great desire to see her again, I would *confront* the winter passage across the Atlantic, in hopes of finding work in America, and living without using up the little I have already gathered together. But I cannot bear to go before she comes to England.... I was surprised by a visit from Lord Hardwicke yesterday; it is years since I have seen him. I knew and liked him formerly, as Captain Yorke. He is as blunt and plain-spoken as ever, and retains his sailor-like manner in spite of his earldom, which he hadn't when I met him last.... Henry Greville is coming to tea with me this evening, and I promised to read him my translation of "Mary Stuart." I hope he may like it as well as you did. Lady Dacre was here this afternoon; she has been dreadfully ill, and looks an old woman now, for the first time, at eighty—that is not too soon to begin.

LORD
HARDWICKE.

[Pg 622]

I think I shall take Mr. Maddox's last offer, and if so, dear Hal, farewell to my visit to St. Leonard's. But I am of the poor author's mind, "Qu'il faut bien qu'on vive," and do not suppose that you will answer me *à la Voltaire*, "Ma foi, je n'en vois pas la nécessité."

It is very odd that it should seem so natural to one to live, and so strange to die, since it is what everybody does. The fact is, habit is the strongest thing in the world; and living is simply the oldest habit we have, and so the strongest.

Good-bye, my dear, and believe me

Respectfully yours,

FANNY.

KING STREET, St. James's, Thursday, 10th.

... Mr. Maddox comes here, and worries my life out with haggling and bargaining, but has not yet agreed to any terms, and I am half distracted with all the various advice tendered me.... In the mean time, I am much comforted about my readings; for I received yesterday morning a very courteous letter from the Secretary of the Collegiate Institution at Liverpool, offering me twenty guineas a night if I would go down and read there six nights at the end of March. This I shall be thankful to do, if my engagement at the Princess's Theatre falls through, and if it does not I shall hope to be able to accept the Liverpool invitation later in the season. I have had a visit, too, from one of the directors of the Highgate Institute, to beg I would go and read there. They cannot afford to give me more than ten guineas a night, the institute being a small and not very rich one; but of course I do not expect to be paid for reading as I am for acting, and therefore, whenever I can, shall accept the Highgate offer.

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These various proposals have put me in heart once more about the possible success of this reading experiment, and I am altogether much comforted at seeing that employment is not likely to fail me, which I was beginning to fear it might.... Of course, if I apply for engagements to managers, I must expect to take their terms, not to make my own—for beggars must not be choosers, as I learnt long ago; and when I solicit an

engagement, I must be prepared to sell myself cheap—and I will. If Maddox won't pay me what I ask, and Webster won't have me at any price, I shall come to you and Dorothy, who, I "reckon," will take me on my own terms: which in these my days of professional humiliation (not personal humility, you know), is quite kind of you.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

KING STREET, Friday, 28th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You will be glad to hear that Mr. Maddox has at length come into my terms.... For the next two months this is some anxiety off my mind, and I trust will be off yours for me; and the last two days have shown me that my chance of getting employment, either acting or reading, is likely to last—at any rate till my sister returns, when I shall probably stay with her till my departure for America.... I am most thankful that the depression and discouragement under which I succumbed for a while has been thus speedily relieved. It is a curious sensation to have a certain consciousness of power (which I have, though perhaps it is quite a mistaken notion), and at the same time of absolute helplessness. It seems to me as if I had some sort of strength, and yet I feel totally incapable of coping with the small difficulties of circumstance under which it is oppressed; it's like a sort of wide-awake nightmare. I suppose it's because I am a woman that I am so idiotic and incompetent to help myself.

STRENGTH
AND
WEAKNESS.

But when one thinks of it, what a piteous page in the history of human experience is the baffling and defeat of real genius by the mere weight of necessity, the bare exigencies of existence, the need to live from day to day. Think of Beethoven dying, and saying to Hummel, with that most wonderful assertion of his own great gifts, "Pourtant, Hummel, j'avois du génie!"—such transcendent genius as it was too! such pure and perfect and high and deep inspiration! which had, nevertheless, not defended him from the tyranny of poverty, and the petty cares of living, all his life.

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Is it not well that people of great genius are always *proud as well as humble*, and that the consciousness of their own nobility spreads, as it were, the wings of an angel between them and all the baseness and barrenness through which they are often compelled to wade up to the lips? Whenever I think of Burns, my heart tightens itself, to use a French expression, for a most painful *physical emotion*. Do you know Schiller's exquisite poem of the "Division of the Earth"? I will send you a translation, if you do not—a rough one I made of it when it was one of my German lessons. My version is harsh and poor enough, but the thoughts are preserved, and *the* thought is worthy of that noble poet....

29, KING STREET, Saturday, 12th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

How many pleasant things I might lament over *if I might!* I shall not see St. Leonard's again with you. Emily has misunderstood in saying that my engagement at the Princess Theatre does not begin till the 27th; it begins on the 21st, next Monday week, and I shall only just have time to get my wardrobe ready and study Desdemona and Cordelia, which I am asked to play, and re-learn the music of Ophelia, which I have quite forgotten....

I have an engagement offered me in Dublin, and it is rather provoking that I cannot accept it now, for this, I believe, is the height of the gay season there. As it is, I fear I shall not be able to go over there till May; but perhaps then you will go with me, or be there, and that will be some compensation for the less money I shall make.

It's curious all these engagements offering now within these few days: to be sure, it never rains but it pours, so that accounts for it philosophically.

Did I tell you what a nice long visit I had from Thackeray the other day? Oh, have you read that "Vanity Fair" of his? It is wonderful! He was a schoolfellow of my brother John's, you know, and is a very old friend of mine, but I had not seen him for some time.

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I wrote to ask him for his autograph for Henry Greville, and he wrote me an extremely kind note, and came himself after it, and sat with me a very long time, and was delightful.

Lady Charlotte Greville, who has just removed into a beautiful new house she has arranged for herself, wrote to say she was coming to town immediately, and hoped I would give my first London reading in her drawing-room. Was not that nice and kind and good-natured of her, dear old lady? But of course I declined, at any rate for the present, as I mean to exhaust my natural enemies, the managers, before I have recourse to my friends, in any way whatever. Kiss Dorothy for me, and don't let her break your spirit with inquisitorial and vexatious supervision of your actions. A timely resistance to friendly tyranny is a great saving of trouble.

Good-bye, you bad dear.

I am yours ever,

FANNY.

[I wish to record a slight anecdote of my friend William Thackeray, which illustrates his great kindness and amiability, his *sweetness* of temper and disposition.

THACKERAY.

I met him at Miss Berry's at dinner, a few days before he began his course of lectures on the English essayists, and he asked me to come and hear him, and told me he was so nervous about it, that he was afraid he should break down.

I had an engagement which prevented my hearing his first lecture, but I promised him to go and see him at his room before he began it, to cheer him.

He was to lecture at Willis Rooms, in the same room where I read, and going thither before the time for his beginning, found him standing like a forlorn disconsolate giant in the middle of the room, gazing about him. "Oh, Lord," he exclaimed, as he shook hands with me, "I'm sick at my stomach with fright." I spoke some words of encouragement to him, and was going away, but he held my hand, like a scared child, crying, "Oh, don't leave me!" "But," said I, "Thackeray, you mustn't stand here. Your audience are beginning to come in," and I drew him from the middle of his chairs and benches, which were beginning to be occupied, into the retiring-room adjoining the lecture-room, my own readings having made me perfectly familiar with both. Here he began pacing up and down, literally wringing his hands in nervous distress. "Now," said I, "what shall I do? Shall I stay with you till you begin, or shall I go, and leave you alone to collect yourself?" "Oh," he said, "if I could only get at that confounded thing" (his lecture), "to have a last look at it!" "Where is it?" said I. "Oh, in the next room on the reading-desk." "Well," said I, "if you don't like to go in and get it, I'll fetch it for you." And remembering well the position of my reading-table, which had been close to the door of the retiring-room, I darted in, hoping to snatch the manuscript without attracting the attention of the audience, with which the room was already nearly full. I had been used to deliver my reading seated, at a very low table, but my friend Thackeray gave his lectures standing, and had had a reading-desk placed on the platform, adapted to his own very tall stature, so that when I came to get his manuscript it was almost above my head. Though rather disconcerted, I was determined not to go back without it, and so made a half jump, and a clutch at the book, when every leaf of it (they were not fastened together), came fluttering separately down about me. I hardly know what I did, but I think I must have gone nearly on all-fours, in my agony to gather up the scattered leaves, and retreating with them, held them out in dismay to poor Thackeray, crying, "Oh, look, look, what a dreadful thing I have done!" "My dear soul," said he, "you couldn't have done better for me. I have just a quarter of an hour to wait here, and it will take me about that to page this again, and it's the best thing in the world that could have happened." With which infinite kindness he comforted me, for I was all but crying, at having, as I thought, increased his distress and troubles. So I left him, to give the first of that brilliant course of literary historical essays with which he enchanted and instructed countless audiences in England and America.

The last time I saw Thackeray, was at a dinner at my dear friend, Mr. Harness'. As we were about to seat ourselves at table, I being between Mr. Harness and Thackeray, his daughter Annie (now Mrs. Ritchie) was going to place herself on the other side of her father. "No, no," said our dear host, "that will not do. I cannot have the daughter next the father." And Miss Thackeray was invited to take another place. She had just published her story, "The History of Elizabeth," in which she showed herself to have inherited some of the fine elements of her father's literary genius. As we sat down, I said to him, "But it appears very evident, I think, that the daughter *is* to be *next* to the father." He looked at me for a moment with a beaming face, and then said, "Do you know, I have never read a word of that thing?" "Oh," cried I, "Thackeray! Why don't you? It is excellent! It would give you so much pleasure!" "My dear lady, I couldn't, I couldn't!" said he with tears in his eyes. "It would *tear my guts out!*"—which powerful English description of extreme emotion would have startled me less in French or Italian; "Cela m'arracherait les entrailles," or "mi sois-cerebero."

In the evening, he talked back to our early times, and my coming out at Covent Garden, and how, "We all of us," said he (and what a noble company of young brains and hearts they were!), "were in love with you, and had your portrait by Lawrence in our rooms"—which made me laugh and cry, and abuse him for tantalizing me with the ghost of a declaration at that late hour of both our days. And so we parted, and I never met him again. On his way home that evening, his daughter told me that he had spoken kind compassionate words of commendation of me. I have kept them in grateful remembrance. Fine genius! and tender gentle heart! the classic writer of the keenest and truest satire of the social vices of our day; the master of English style, as powerful and pure as that of the best models, whose works he has so admirably illustrated.

"Vanity Fair" will, I suppose, be always considered Thackeray's masterpiece—though everybody loves, beyond all his other portraits, the exquisite one of Colonel Newcome—but it seems to me that "Esmond" is a more extraordinary literary feat than any other of his works—except, indeed, "Lyndon of Barry Lyndon," which is even a more remarkable production of the same order.]

KING STREET, Monday, 14th.

If you begin your letter with such questions as "What do you think of me?" I do not know any reason in life why my answer should ever have an end, even within the liberal limits of the two pages which you extort from me daily. That is a question I cannot answer; although, I must say, I should have expected from you rather more of that constancy and consistency (a male rather than a female quality, however), which, having determined on a certain course as best, does not lament having abided by it when the issue appears unprosperous. I think women are seldom of a sufficiently determined mind to make their opinion or resolution itself their consolation under defeat. They are more liable to mental as well as moral misgivings and regrets than men, and an unfortunate result easily induces them to repent a course they deliberately adopted.

Sole vales Veritas is the motto upon a little pencil-case contained in the small work-case Emily has given me. She had it engraved on the seal, and though it is not altogether so congenial a motto to me as Arnold and Robertson's Christian device "Forward!" (and is moreover axiomatic rather than hortatory), I use it partly for her sake, and partly because it is undeniable.

Pilate wished to know what is truth—or rather pretended that he did—and I have a very general conviction that "What is truth?" is the speech of Pilate to this day; *i.e.*, of those who know, but will not do, what they know to be right. It is very seldom, indeed, that the mind earnestly desires a conviction, strives for one, prays for one, and labors to attain one, that it does not acquire what, to all intents and purposes, *is* truth for that individual soul.

God's perfect and absolute Truth remedies in a thousand ways the defectiveness of the partial truth that we arrive at; and so that the *endeavor* after truth be true, the highest result of all is reached, *truth towards God*, though, humanly speaking, the mental result

may be a failure. What *absolute truth* is, my dearest Hal, you will certainly not know before you die, and possibly not then. In the mean time, I take it, you have, or may have if you will, that which will serve your turn. At any rate, I have—which is not at all the same thing—but that don't signify.

I am very glad I was welcome in Bedford Place, and that Miss —— was good enough to be pleased with me.

There is great goodness in her voice and manner, and to have kept her face unwrinkled and her hair unblanched till the present age (as it is no result of selfish insensibility in her), bespeaks a virtuous life, and sweet serene temper.

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I wonder more women to whom their good looks are precious, do not ponder upon the *beauty* of holiness.... I have not heard from Adelaide or E—— for some time, but of them, that they and the children are well; that she is in good looks, and admirable voice; that their house is the pleasantest in Rome, and their parties *the* thing to which everybody is anxious to be admitted: so all is prosperous and pleasant with them. I have told you of her nice new house in Eaton Place. It is in a considerable state of forwardness, the bedrooms being all papered, and the drawing-rooms nearly painted. Henry Greville has had it all done for her, and in very good taste; the grates are all up, and I should think in another fortnight they might take possession if they were here.

I have read more of Stanley's sermons, and am struck with their resemblance, in tone and spirit, to that book of my friend Mr. Furness, which I do not know if I ever gave you to read, called, "Jesus and His Biographers."

Stanley's sermons are excellent, but they seem to me curiously unorthodox. There is an inletting of new views upon the subject of the Christian Revelation, against which the Protestantism of the Church of England—in many respects illogical and anomalous, as it appears to its opponents—will have to fight a hard and difficult battle.

DEAN
STANLEY.

Lady Ellesmere was absolutely in despair about the bill for admitting the Jews to Parliament, and had influence enough with Lord Ellesmere to make him vote against it. This is sad enough; but she is so excellent that her influence over him, in one case where it is bad is good in a great many others....

God bless you, my dear. Give my love to Dorothy: I am both yours, but yours most particularly,

FANNY.

P.S. My course with regard to my engagement at the Princess Theatre was determined by my father's opinion, and confirmed by the advice of all my friends who spoke to me upon the subject—Emily, Harness, the Grevilles, and others; and all that Mr. Maddox said in his various conversations with me upon the subject, enabled the best experienced among us to form a very fair idea of what he could afford to give, and what I was justified in asking.

29, King Street, Friday, February 18th, 1848.

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I have been this morning to a rehearsal of Macbeth, at which Macready did not attend; so that in point of fact, as far as I was concerned, it was *nil*. He is, I believe, finishing some country engagements, and I suppose had not returned to town. I have another rehearsal to-morrow, at which it is to be hoped he will attend, as otherwise my being there is really quite a work of supererogation.

My men friends—among whom I include my father—one and all, did what I think women would not have done. The minute Mr. Maddox agreed to the terms I had demanded, they lamented bitterly (even my dear Mr. Harness—who is a good man) that I had not stood out for higher ones, feeling quite sure I should have got them. Now, this I think quite as contemptible, and a great deal more dishonest, than the womanly process (Emily's and yours) of lamenting that I had not taken less than I had demanded, because you feared my doing so had broken off the negotiation altogether. I think, upon the whole, it behoves people to know what they mean, and to abide by it, without either weak regrets at an ill result, or selfish ones that it is not better than what one had made up

one's mind to—when it seems that it might have been so. I do wish people would learn to be like my aunt's cook, and "stand upon their own bottom, with fortitude and similarity." (A woman that Mrs. Siddons was engaging as cook, replied to the question, "Can you make pastry?" "Well, no, ma'am—not exactly to say, the very finest of pastry. I can make plain puddings and pies, but—I am not a professed puff pastry cook, and I think it best to say so, as every one should stand upon their own bottom, with fortitude and similarity, I think.")

I act Lady Macbeth on Monday, on Wednesday Queen Katharine, and on Friday Desdemona, for the first time in my life. I have a beautiful and correct dress for her (you know I always liked my clothes), for which, nevertheless, I expect to be much exclaimed against, as our actresses have always thought proper to dress her in white satin. I have arrayed her in black (the only habit of the noble Venetian ladies) and gold, in a dress that looks like one of Titian's pictures.

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That smothering scene, my dear Harriet, is most extremely horrible, and like nothing in the world but the catastrophe of poor Madame de Praslin. I think I shall make a desperate fight of it, for I feel horribly at the idea of being murdered in my bed. The Desdemonas that I have seen, on the English stage, have always appeared to me to acquiesce with wonderful equanimity in their assassination. On the Italian stage they run for their lives round their bedroom, Pasta in the opera (and Salvini in the tragedy, I believe), clutching them finally by the hair of the head, and then murdering them. The bedgown in which I had arrayed Desdemona for the night would hardly have admitted of this flight round the stage; besides that, Shakespeare's text gives no hint of any such attempted escape on poor Desdemona's part; but I did think I should like not to be murdered, and therefore, at the last, got up on my knees on my bed, and threw my arms tight round Othello's neck (having previously warned Mr. Macready, and begged his pardon for the liberty), that being my notion of the poor creature's last appeal for mercy.

What do you think of our fine ladies amusing themselves with giving parties, at which they, and their guests, take chloroform as a pastime? Lady Castlereagh set the example, and was describing to me her sensations under the process. I told her how imprudent and wrong I thought such experiments, and mentioned to her the lecture Brand gave upon the subject, in which the poor little guinea-pig, who underwent his illustrations for the benefit of the audience, died on the table during the lecture; to which she replied, "Oh yes; that she knew that, *for she was present.*" Can you conceive, after such a spectacle, trying similar experiments upon one's ignorant self? Is it not very brave? or is it only idiotical?...

I have been making a desperate struggle, *giving my reasons* (four pages of them—think of it!) to the committee of the Liverpool Institution, to induce them to let me read Shakespeare *straight through* to them; at least, each play I read, divided into two readings, and with only the omissions required by modern manners: but I fear they will not let me. I shall be grievously disappointed....

Was there ever such a to-do as that woman Lola Montez is kicking up? Everybody is turning Catholic as fast as possible, and the good Churchwomen are every way in despair. They already see their sons all circumcised, and their daughters refusing to eat ham, and their brothers and husbands confessing the Real Presence. The lady members of the Established Church, especially the more serious ones, are in great tribulation at all that is going on. Lady Ellesmere is desperate at the Jews coming into Parliament, and Lord Ellesmere has voted against them. He, poor man, has been, within the last few days, all but at death's door with the gout, and perhaps near finding out how different, or *indifferent*, these differences *really* are. It is wonderful to hear everybody talk.

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LOLA
MONTEZ.

Good-bye. I am yours and Dorothy's

Most respectfully,

FANNY.

[My first intention in undertaking my readings from Shakespeare was to make, as far as possible, of each play a thorough study in its entirety; such as a stage representation cannot, for obvious reasons, be. The dramatic effect, which of course suffers in the mere delivery from a reading-desk, would, I hoped, be in

some measure compensated for by the possibility of retaining the whole beauty of the plays as poetical compositions. I very soon, however, found my project of making my readings "studies of Shakespeare" for the public quite illusory.

To do so would have required that I should take two, and sometimes three, evenings to the delivery of one play; a circumstance which would have rendered it necessary for the same audience, if they wished to hear it, to attend two and three consecutive readings; and in many other respects I found the plan quite incompatible with the demand of the public, which was for a dramatic entertainment, and not for a course of literary instruction.

My father had found it expedient, in this mode of illustrating Shakespeare, to make one play the subject of each reading; taking two hours for the performance, and dividing the piece as fairly as possible in two parts; retaining the whole *story* of the play, and so much only of the wisdom and beauty bestowed on its development by the author, as could be kept well within the two hours' delivery, and make the reading resemble as nearly as possible, in dramatic effect, the already garbled and coarsely mutilated stage plays the general public are alone familiar with. I was grievously disappointed, but could not help myself. In Germany I should have had no such difficulty; but the German public is willing to take its amusements in earnest.

The readings were to be my livelihood, and I had to adapt them to the audiences who paid for them—

"For those who live to please, must please to live."

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I gladly availed myself of my father's reading version of the plays, and read those he had delivered, cut and prepared for the purpose according to that. When I came to cut and prepare for reading the much greater number which I read, and he did not, I found the task a very difficult one; and was struck with the judgment and taste with which my father had performed it. I do not think it possible to have adapted these compositions better or more successfully to the purposes for which he required them. But I was determined, at least, not to limit my repertory to the few most theatrically popular of Shakespeare's dramas, but to include in my course *all* Shakespeare's plays that it was possible to read with any hope of attracting or interesting an audience. My father had limited his range to a few of the most frequently acted plays. I delivered the following twenty-four: King Lear, Macbeth, Cymbeline, King John, Richard II., two parts of Henry IV., Henry V., Richard III., Henry VIII., Coriolanus, Julius Cæsar, Anthony and Cleopatra, Hamlet, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, The Winter's Tale, Measure for Measure, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, Midsummer Night's Dream, Merry Wives of Windsor, and The Tempest.

These plays I read invariably through once before repeating any of them; partly to make such of them as are seldom or never acted, familiar to the public, by delivering them alternately with those better known; and partly to avoid, what I much dreaded, becoming mechanical or hackneyed myself in their delivery by perpetual repetition of the same pieces, and so losing any portion of the inspiration of my text by constant iteration of those garbled versions of it, from which so much of its nobler and finer elements are of hard necessity omitted in such a process as my reading of them. I persisted in this system for my own "soul's sake," and not to debase my work more than was inevitable, to the very considerable detriment of my gains.

READING
SHAKESPEARE.

The public *always* came in goodly numbers to hear "Macbeth," "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "The Merchant of Venice;" and Mendelssohn's exquisite music, made an accompaniment to the reading of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," rendered that a peculiarly popular performance. But to *all* the other plays the audiences were considerably less numerous, and to some few of them I often had but few listeners. Mr. Mitchell, who for a considerable length of time *farmed* my readings, protested bitterly against this system, which involved, of course, less profits than he might have made by repeating only the most popular plays; and my own agents, when I was reading on my own account, did not fail to represent to me that I was what they called sacrificing my interests, *i.e.* my

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receipts, to this plan of operations; but man does not live by bread alone, and for more than twenty years that I followed the trade of a wandering rhapsodist, I never consciously sacrificed my sense of what was due to my work, for the sake of what I could make by it. I have wished, and hoped, and prayed, that I might be able to use my small gift *dutifully*; and to my own profound feeling of the *virtue* of these noble works, have owed whatever power I found to interpret them. My great reward has been, passing a large portion of my life in familiar intercourse with that greatest and best English mind and heart, and living almost daily in that world above the world, into which he lifted me. One inspiration alone could have been purer or higher; and to that, my earthly master's work, done as well as it was in me to do it, often helped, and from it, never hindered me.]

29, KING STREET, Saturday, February 19th.

Imprimis, will you and Dorothy fasten your dinner-napkins with these things, or rings, which I have made for you? for my imagination is sick with the memory of those bits of strings you use. I have made these too short, and so have been obliged to put strings to them, having originally intended them to be complete rounds; but my needle performances are always ill-managed and untidy, and as such I commend these to your indulgent acceptance. I wrought at them those bitter evenings that I spent in those barns of theatres in Norfolk, where the occupation contributed to entertain the warmth of my heart, which was all the heat I had to keep me alive....

I must tell you rather a droll observation of the worthy Hayes. When I explained to her that I had made those worsted bands to fasten your dinner-napkins, for which you had nothing but strings, she said, "Dear me! I wonder at that! And Miss S— seemed so fond of clever, curious contrivances, for everything." I screamed with delight when she said that, for hadn't I cursed that "curious contrivance" of an inkstand you gave me (Dorothy cursed hers too, no doubt, after her own blessed fashion)? and didn't I curse that execrable "curious contrivance" of a taper you gave me at St. Leonard's, with which I was so enchanted *before I used it*, and which wasted me by its own small fire every time I did use it, and for the final burning out of which I was so thankful? But are not Hayes's comments on your character comical?

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I am sorry to say I have not the same dressing-room I had before at the Princess's Theatre. Mr. Macready is quite too great a man to give it up to anybody, and my attiring apartment now is up a steep flight of stairs, which is a great discomfort to me on several grounds, for I fear the call-boy will hardly come so far out of his way to summon me, and I shall have to sit in the greenroom, which, however, I won't, if I can by any means avoid it; but the proximity of the other room to the stage, and its being on the same level with it, was a great advantage.

MACREADY.

I am going to dine with Lady Grey (the Countess, widow of *the* Lord Grey), and after that to the opera with Henry Greville and Alfred Potocki, who have a box, and have given me a ticket, which I am very glad of.

I had a three hours' rehearsal this morning, and Macready was there. As far as I could judge, he was less unfair in his mode of acting than I had been led to expect. To be sure, at night, he may stand two yards behind me while I am speaking to him, as I am told he often does. He is not courteous or pleasant, or even well-bred; remains seated while one is standing talking to him; and a discussion having arisen as to the situation of a table, which he wished on the stage, and I wished removed, he exhibited considerable irritability and ill-humor.

He is unnecessarily violent in acting, which I had always heard, and congratulated myself that in Lady Macbeth, I could not possibly suffer from this; but was much astonished and dismayed when at the exclamation, "Bring forth men-children only," he seized me ferociously by the wrist, and compelled me to make a demivolte, or pirouette, such as I think that lady did surely never perform before, under the influence of her husband's admiration.

God bless you, dear,

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[I have always had a cordial esteem and respect for Mr. Macready's character, which has been increased by reading the record he has himself left of his life. Of his merits as an actor, I had not a very high opinion, though in one or two parts he was excellent, and in the majority of the tragical ones he assumed, better than his contemporaries, my father, Charles Young, and Charles Kean. He was disqualified for sentimental tragedy by his appearance, and he was without comic power of any kind. *Parts* of his Macbeth, Lear, Othello, and King John, were powerful and striking, but his want of musical ear made his delivery of Shakespeare's blank-verse defective, and painful to persons better endowed in that respect. It may have been his consciousness of his imperfect declamation of blank-verse that induced him to adopt what his admirers called the natural style of speaking it; which was simply chopping it up into prose—a method easily followed by speakers who have never learned the difference between the two, and that blank-verse demands the same care and method that music does, and when not uttered with due regard to its artificial construction, and rules of rhythm and measure, is precisely as faulty as music sung out of time.

The school of "natural speaking" reached its climax, I presume, in the performance of a charming young actress, of whose delivery of the poetry of Portia it was said in high commendation, by her admirers, that she gave the blank verse so *naturally* that it was impossible to tell that it was not *prose*. What she did with Shakespeare's *prose* in the part these judicious critics did not mention.

Mr. Macready's eye was as sensitive and cultivated as his ear was the reverse. He had a painter's feeling for color and grouping and scenic effect; was always picturesque in his appearance, dress, attitudes, and movements; and all the pieces that were put upon the stage under his supervision were admirable for the appropriate harmony of the scenery, decorations, dresses, and whole effect; they were carefully accurate, and extremely beautiful. "Acis and Galatea," as produced under his direction, was one of the most exquisite dramatic spectacles I ever saw, in spite of the despair to which he reduced the chorus and ballet nymphs by rigorously forbidding all padding, bustle, crinoline, or other artificial adjunct to their natural graces, in the severely simple classical costume of the Greek mythological opera.

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Mr. Macready's great parts were Virginius, in Knowles's play of that name; Werner, in Lord Byron's romantic drama; and Rob Roy, in the melodrama taken from Scott's novel. These were original performances, in which nobody has surpassed or equalled him; genuine artistic creations, which, more than his rendering of Shakespeare's characters, entitled him to his reputation as a great actor.

He was unpopular in the profession, his temper was irritable, and his want of consideration for the persons working with him strange in a man of so many fine qualities. His artistic vanity and selfishness were unworthy of a gentleman, and rendered him an object of dislike and dread to those who were compelled to encounter them.

UNPOPULARITY
OF
MACREADY.

He was quite aware of this himself, for once, when he came to see me, while the negotiation was pending about my engagement to act with him, he alluded to his own unpopularity, said he was sure I had heard all sorts of disagreeable stories about him, but assured me, laughing, that "the devil was not nearly so black as he was painted."

It was quite impossible for me to tell Mr. Macready that I had heard he was *pleasant* to act with, remembering, as I did while he spoke to me, the various accounts I had received of actors whose eyes had been all but thrust out by his furious fighting in Macbeth; of others nearly throttled in his paternal vengeance on Appius Claudius; of actresses whose arms had been almost wrenched out of their sockets, and who had been bruised black and blue, buffeted alike by his

rage and his tenderness. One special story I thought of, and was dying to tell him, of one pretty and spirited young woman, who had said, "I am told Mr. Macready, in such a part, gets hold of one's head, and holds it in chancery under his arm, while he speaks a long speech, at the end of which he releases one, more dead than alive, from his embrace; but I shall put so many pins in my hair, and stick them in in such a fashion, that if he takes me by the head, he will have to let me instantly go again."

My personal experience of Macready's stage temper was not so bad as this, though he began by an act of unwarrantable selfishness in our performance of "Macbeth."

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From time immemorial, the banquet scene in "Macbeth" has been arranged after one invariable fashion: the royal dais and throne, with the steps leading up to it, holds the middle of the stage, sufficiently far back to allow of two long tables, at which the guests are seated on each side, in front of it, leaving between them ample space for Macbeth's scene with Banquo's ghost, and Lady Macbeth's repeated rapid descents from the dais and return to it, in her vehement expostulations with him, and her courteous invitations to the occupants of both the tables to "feed, and regard him not." Accustomed to this arrangement of the stage, which I never saw different anywhere in all my life for this scene, I was much astonished and annoyed to find, at my first rehearsal, a long banqueting-table set immediately at the foot of the steps in front of the dais, which rendered all but impossible my rapid rushing down to the front of the stage, in my terrified and indignant appeals to Macbeth, and my sweeping back to my place, addressing on my way my compliments to the tables on either side. It was as much as I could do to pass between the bottom of the throne steps and the end of the transverse table in front of them; my train was in danger of catching its legs and my legs, and throwing it down and me down, and the whole thing was absolutely ruinous to the proper performance of my share of the scene. If such a table had been in any such place in Glamis Castle on that occasion, when Macbeth was seized with his remorseful frenzies, his wife would have jumped over or overturned it to get at him.

All my remonstrances, however, were in vain. Mr. Macready persisted in his determination to have the stage arranged solely with reference to himself, and I was obliged to satisfy myself with a woman's vengeance, a snappish speech, by at last saying that, since it was evident Mr. Macready's Macbeth depended upon where a table stood, I must contrive that my Lady Macbeth should not do so. But in that scene it undoubtedly did.

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As I had been prepared for this sort of thing in Macready, it didn't surprise me; but what did was a conversation I had with him about "Othello," when he expressed his astonishment at my being willing to play Desdemona; "For," said he, "there is absolutely nothing to be done with it, nothing: nobody can produce any effect in it; and really, Emilia's last scene can be made a great deal more of. I could understand your playing that, but not Desdemona, out of which nothing really can be made." "But," said I, "Mr. Macready, it is Shakespeare, and no character of Shakespeare's is beneath my acceptance. I would play Maria in 'Twelfth Night' to-morrow, if I were asked to do so." Whereupon he shrugged his shoulders, and muttered something about "all that being very fine, no doubt," but evidently didn't believe me; and as I should have given him credit for my own feeling with regard to any character in Shakespeare's plays, I was as much surprised at his thinking I should refuse to act any one of them as I was at his coarse and merely technical acting estimate of that exquisite Desdemona, of which, according to him, "nothing could be made;" *i.e.*, no violent stage effect could be produced. Is not Shakespeare's refusing to let Desdemona sully her lips with the coarse epithet of reproach with which her husband brands her, and which no lady in England of his day would have hesitated a moment to use, a wonderful touch of delicacy?

Macready certainly was aware of the feeling of his fellow-actors about his violence and want of personal self-control on the stage; for as he stood at the side scene by me, in the last act of "King Lear," ready to rush on with me, his

ACTING IN
KING LEAR
WITH
MACREADY.

Cordelia, dead in his arms, he made various prefatory and preparatory excuses to me, deprecating beforehand my annoyance at being dragged and pulled about after his usual fashion, saying that necessarily the scene was a disagreeable one for the "poor corpse." I had no very agreeable anticipation of it myself, and therefore could only answer, "Some one must play it with you, Mr. Macready, and I feel sure that you will make it as little distressing to me as you can;" which I really believe he intended to do, and thought he did.]

I have received this morning from Liverpool, in answer to my letter about my readings, a very earnest request that I would give *lectures* upon Shakespeare. This I have declined doing, not having either the requisite knowledge or ability nor the necessary time properly to prepare a careful analysis of the smallest portion of such over-brimming subjects as those plays. I should like to study again Hazlitt's and Coleridge's comments upon Shakespeare; the former I used to think excellent.

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Mrs. Grote herself wrote those stanzas upon Mendelssohn which you saw in the *Spectator*. She urged me vehemently, while I was with her at the Beeches, to do something of the kind; but I could not. She then showed me her verses, which please me better now than they did then; for then the painful association of his former existence in that place, and the excitement of his beautiful music, which she plays extremely well, had affected my imagination and feelings so much that I should have found it very difficult to be satisfied with any poetical tribute to him that was not of the very highest order.

She and I walked together to the spot in the beautiful woodland where he had lain down to rest, and where she wishes to erect a monument; and I cannot tell you how profoundly I was touched, as we stood silently there, while the great heavy drops, melting in the winter evening's sunshine, fell from the boughs of the beech-trees like slow tears upon the spot where he had lain.

I have read more of Stanley's "Sermons," and quite agree with you in the difference you draw between them and Mr. Furness's book; the spirit of both is kindred....

I don't know anything about the income-tax. I am getting frightfully behind the times, having read no *Times* for a long time; but as regards income-tax, or any other tax, there is no telling how long one may be free from such galls in America. If they indulge in a few more such national diversions as this war in Mexico, they will have to pay for their whistle, in some shape or other, and in more shapes than one.

It is deplorable to hear the despondency of all public and political men that I see, with regard to the condition of the country. With the Tories, one has long been familiar with their cries that "the sky is falling:" but now the Liberals, at least those who all their lives have been professing Liberals, seem to think "the sky is falling" too; and their lamentable misgivings are really sad to listen to.

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I dined on Saturday at Lady Grey's, with the whole Grey family. Lord Dacre, and all of them, spoke of Cobden and Bright as of another Danton and Mirabeau, likened their corn-law league, and peace protests, to the first measures of the first leaders of the French Revolution; and predicted with woful headshakings a similar end to their proceedings. I do not know whether this is an injustice to the individuals in question, but it seems to me an injustice to the whole people of England collectively, and to their own class, the aristocracy of England, which has incurred no such retribution, but which has invariably furnished liberal and devoted leaders to every step of popular progress—their own father an eminent instance of devotion to it. Such misgivings seem to me, too, quite unjust to the powerful, enlightened, and wealthy class which forms the sound body of our sound-hearted nation: and equally unjust to those below it, in whom, in spite of much vice and more ignorance, of poverty and degradation, the elements of evil do not exist in the degree and with the virulence that spawned that hideous mob of murderers who became at last the only government of revolutionary France. The antecedent causes have not existed here for such results; and it is an insult to the whole English people to prophesy thus of it.

[Lord Dacre, because of his devotion to the agricultural interest, as he conceives it, and being himself a great practical farmer, seemed to me at once, at the time

of the repeal of the corn laws, to renounce his Liberalism; and though one of the most enlightened, generous, and broad-minded politicians I have ever known, *till then*, to become suddenly timid, faithless, and almost selfish, in his fear of the consequences of Sir Robert Peel's measures.]

What a fine thing faith in God is, even when one's own individual interests must perish, even though the temporary interests of one's country may appear threatened with adversity! What an *uncommonly* fine thing it is under such circumstances to do right, and to be able to believe in right doing!... As I listened to the persons by whom I was surrounded, and considered their position and circumstances—their forks and spoons, their very good dinner, and all their etceteras of luxury and enjoyment,—I thought that, having all they have, if they had faith in God and in their fellow-creatures besides, they would have the portion of those who have none of the good things of this world—they would have too much.

Will the days ever come when men will see that *Christ* believed in humanity as none of His followers has ever done since; that *He*, knowing its infirmity better than any other, trusted in its capacity for good more than any other? We are constantly told that people can't be taught this, and can't learn that, and can't do t'other; and *He* taught them nothing short of absolute perfection: "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Are we to suppose He did not mean what he said?

BELIEF IN
HUMANITY.

"I must eat my dinner," as Caliban says, and, therefore, farewell.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

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P.S.—I did not impart these sentiments of mine to my fellow-guests at Lady Grey's, but kept them in my bosom, and went to the opera, and saw little Marie Taglioni dance, in a way that clearly shows that she is *la nièce de sa tante*, and stands in that wonderful dancer's shoes.

KING STREET, Wednesday, 23d, 1848.

The staircase I have to go up to my dressing-room at the Princess's Theatre is one with which you are unacquainted, my dearest Hal, for it is quite in another part of the house, beyond the green-room, and before you come to the stage.... Not only had I this inconvenient distance and height to go, but the dressing-room appointed for me had not even a fireplace in it; at this I remonstrated, and am now accommodated decently in a room with a fire, though in the same inconvenient position as regards the stage.... Mr. Maddox assured me that Macready poisoned every place he went into, to such a degree, with musk and perfumes, that if he were to give up his room to me I should not be able to breathe in it. With my passion for perfumes, this, however, did not appear to me so certain; but the room I now have answers my purpose quite well enough....

Macready is not pleasant to act with, as he keeps no specific time for his exits or entrances, comes on while one is in the middle of a soliloquy, and goes off while one is in the middle of a speech to him. He growls and prowls, and roams and foams, about the stage, in every direction, like a tiger in his cage, so that I never know on what side of me he means to be; and keeps up a perpetual snarling and grumbling like the aforesaid tiger, so that I never feel quite sure that he *has done*, and that it is my turn to speak. I do not think fifty pounds a night would hire me to play another engagement with him; but I only say, I don't think,—fifty pounds a night is a consideration, four times a week, and I have not forgotten the French proverb, "Il ne faut pas dire, fontaine jamais de ton eau je ne boirai."

I do not know how Desdemona might have affected me under other circumstances, but my only feeling about acting it with Mr. Macready is dread of his personal violence. I quail at the idea of his laying hold of me in those terrible passionate scenes; for in "Macbeth" he pinched me black and blue, and almost tore the point lace from my head. I am sure my little finger will be rebroken, and as for that smothering in bed, "Heaven have mercy upon me!" as poor Desdemona says. If that foolish creature wouldn't persist in *talking* long after she has been smothered and stabbed to death, one might escape by

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the off side of the bed, and leave the bolster to be questioned by Emilia, and apostrophized by Othello; but she will uplift her testimony after death to her husband's amiable treatment of her, and even the bolster wouldn't be stupid enough for that.

Did it ever occur to you what a witness to Othello's agony in murdering his wretched wife his inefficient clumsiness in the process was—his half smothering, his half stabbing her? *That* man not to be able to kill *that* woman outright, with one hand on her throat, or one stroke of his dagger, how tortured he must have been, to have bungled so at his work!

OTHELLO'S
AGONY.

I wish I was with you and Dorothy at St. Leonard's, instead of struggling here for my life—livelihood, at any rate—with Macready; but that's foolish. He can't *touch* me to-night, that's one comfort, for I am Queen Katharine.

Farewell, believe me

Ever yours most respectfully,

FANNY.

[It was lucky for me, under the circumstances, that my notion of Queen Katharine's relations with Cardinal Wolsey were different from those of a lady whom I saw in the part, who at the end of the scene where he finds her working among her women affably gave him her hand. Katharine of Arragon would have been more likely (though not likely) to give him her foot.]

KING STREET, Friday, 23d.

DEAR HAL,

... I had heard a very good summary of D'Israeli's speech from Lord Dacre, the day I dined at Lady Grey's, and know why he said Cobden was like Robespierre. Here's goodly work in Paris now! What wonderful difficult people to teach those French are! However, their lesson will, of course, be set them over and over again, till they've learnt it. Henry Greville had a letter from Adelaide the day before yesterday, in which she says that the people had risen *en masse* at Rome, and, with the Princes Borghese and Corsini at their head, had gone to the Quirinal, and demanded of the pope that no ecclesiastic (himself, I suppose, excepted) should have any office in the government, and the pope *had consented*.

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She gave a most comical account of the King of Naples, who, it seems, during the late troubles walked up and down his room, wringing his hands, and apostrophizing a figure of the Virgin with "Madonna mia! Madonna mia! ma che imbroglia che m'ha fatto quel Vicario del figlio tuo!" Isn't that funny?

In a letter posted this morning I have told you my general impression of Macready's Macbeth. It is generally good,—better than good in parts,—but nowhere very extraordinary. It is a fair, but not a fine, performance of the part.

I cannot believe that he is purposely unjust to his fellow-actors: but he is so absorbed in himself and his own effects as to be absolutely regardless of them; which, of course, is just as bad for them, though the *guilt* of his selfishness must be according to its being deliberate or unconscious.

I played the first scene in Lady Macbeth fairly well; the rest hardly tolerably, I think. Macready's stage arrangements destroyed any possible effect of mine in the banquet scene, and his strange demeanor disturbed and distracted me all through the play. The terrible, great invocation to the powers of evil, with which Lady Macbeth's part opens, was the only thing of mine that was good in the whole performance.

Dear Harriet, I have no time to prepare lectures on Shakespeare, and it makes me smile, a grim, verjuice smile, when you, sitting quietly down there at St. Leonard's, propose to me such an addition to my present work. I have been three hours and a half at rehearsal to-day; to-morrow I act a new part; this evening I try on all my new dresses; Saturday I shall be three hours at rehearsal again; and, meantime, I must study to recover Ophelia and her songs, which I have almost forgotten.

A commentary upon Shakespeare deserves rather more leisure and quiet thought than I can now bestow upon it; even such an inadequate one as I am capable of would require much preparatory study, had I the ability which the theme demands, and which no amount of leisure Of study would give me.... I have been in a state of miserable nervousness for the last two days—in terror during my whole performance of Queen Katharine, lest I should forget the words, and yet, while laboring to fix all my attention upon them, distracted with the constant recurrence of *bits* of Desdemona to my mind, which I fancied I was not perfect in, and then *bits* of Ophelia's songs, which I had forgotten, and have been trying to recover. The mere apprehension of having to sing that music turns me dead sick whenever I think of it; in short, a perfect nightmare of fright present and future, through which I have had to act every night, *tant bien que mal*, but naturally *bien plus mal que bien*.... I do really believe, as my dear German master used to insist, that people can *prevent themselves* from going mad.

My dearest Harriet, Arnold believed in eternal damnation; and those who do so must have one very desperate corner in their mind—which, however, reserved for the wicked in the next world, must, I should think, sometimes throw lurid reflections over people and things in this. Whoever can conceive that idea has certainly touched the bottom of despair. "Lasciate ogni speme voi ch'entrate;" and I do not see why those who despair of their fellow-creatures in the next world should not do so in this. I can do neither—believe in hell hereafter, or a preparation for it here.

EVERLASTING
PUNISHMENT.

I am sorry to say that, yesterday, Mr. Ellis, who sat by me at dinner at Lady Castlereagh's, said that the poorer class in this country was about to be worse off, presently, than it had been yet; and hoped the example of this new uprising in Paris would not be poisonous to them. It is sad to think how much, how many suffer; but by the mode of talking and going on of those who are well off and do not suffer, in England, it seems to me as if the condition of the poor must become such as to threaten them with imminent peril, before they will alter either their way of talking or of going on. Poor people all! but the rich are poorest, for they have something to lose and everything to fear, which is the reverse of the case of the poor.

My staircase at the theatre troubles me but little, and I do not sit in the green-room, which would have troubled me much more. My rehearsal of Desdemona tried me severely, for I was frightened to death of Macready, and the horror of the play itself took such hold of me that at the end I could hardly stand for shaking, or speak for crying; and Macready seemed quite mollified by my condition, and promised not to rebreak my little finger, *if he could remember it*. He lets down the bed-curtains before he smothers me, and, as the drapery conceals the murderous struggle, and therefore he need not cover my head at all, I hope I shall escape alive.

Please tell dear Dorothy that Miss —— called here the day before yesterday, and left Miss B——'s songs for me. They are difficult, beyond the comprehension and execution of any but a very good musician; they show real genius, and a taste imbued with the inspiration of the great masters, Handel and Beethoven. The only one of them that I could sing is the only one that is in the least commonplace, "The Bonnet Blue;" the others are beyond my powers, but I shall get my sister to sing them for me. They are very remarkable as the compositions of so young a woman. Did she write the words as well as the music of "The Spirit of Delight"? [The musical compositions here referred to were those of Miss Laura Barker, afterwards Mrs. Tom Taylor, a member of a singularly gifted family, whose father and sisters were all born artists, with various and uncommon natural endowments, cultivated and developed to the highest degree, in the seclusion of a country parsonage.] ...

I wish it was "bedtime, Hal," and I was smothered and over!

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

KING STREET, Friday, February 28th.

DEAR HAL,

... I got through Desdemona very well, as far as my personal safety was concerned; for though I fell on the stage in real hysterics at the end of one of those horrible scenes with Othello, Macready was more considerate than I had expected, did not rebreak my little finger, and did not really smother me in bed. I played the part fairly well, and wish you had seen it. I was tolerably satisfied with it myself, which, you know, I am not often, with my own theatrical performances....

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Faith in God, according to my understanding of it, my dearest Hal, implies faith in man; and have we not good need of both just now? You can well imagine the state of perturbation and excitement London is in with these Parisian events. The universal cry and question is, "What is the news?" People run from house to house to gather the latest intelligence. The streets are filled with bawling paper-vendors, amidst whose indistinct vociferations the attractively appalling words, "Revolution! Republic! Massacre! Bloodshed!" are alone distinguishable. The loss of Saturday night's packet between Calais and Dover, besides the horror of the event itself, is doubly distressing from the intense anxiety felt to receive intelligence of how matters are going on.

Thus far yesterday, dear Hal; but as every hour brings intelligence that contradicts that of the hour before, it is now known that the small boat, going from the shore to the packet, was capsized and lost, and not the steamer itself. Henry Greville belongs to the party of Terrorists, and believes the worst of the worst rumors: but I have just seen his mother, and Lady Charlotte says that Charles is almost enthusiastic in his admiration of the conduct of the French people *hitherto*; but then there is never any knowing exactly how long any fashion, frenzied or temperate, moral or material, may last in France.

In the mean time, the condition of that unfortunate Royal Family is worthy of all compassion, especially the women, who are involved in the retributions of the folly or wickedness of the men they belong to.

It is not known where the Duchesse de Nemours is. Her husband has arrived safely here with one of the children; but neither he nor any one else knows what has become of his wife and the other two children. Of the Duchesse d'Orléans and her two babies nothing is known; and Lady Normanby wrote a letter to the Queen, saying that Louis Philippe and the Queen of France were in safety, but, as her letter would be sure to be opened, she could say no more.

ESCAPE OF
THE ROYAL
FAMILY.

Only think of the Princesse Clémentine making her escape from France on board the same packet with her brother, the Duc de Nemours, and neither of them knowing the other was on the same vessel! The suddenness of the whole catastrophe makes it seem like some outrageously impossible dream. What a troubled dream must that king and queen's life seem to them, beginning and ending in such national convulsions!...

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I really believe Macready cannot help being as odious as he is on the stage. He very nearly made me faint last night in "Macbeth," with crushing my broken finger, and, by way of apology, merely coolly observed that he really could not answer for himself in such a scene, and that I ought to wear a splint; and truly, if I act much more with him, I think I shall require several splints, for several broken limbs. I have been rehearsing "Hamlet" with him this morning for three hours. I do not mind his tiresome particularity on the stage, for, though it all goes to making himself the only object of everything and everybody, he works very hard, and is zealous, and conscientious, and laborious in his duty, which is a merit in itself. But I think it is rather *mean* (as the children say) of him to refuse to act in such plays as "King John," "Much Ado about Nothing," which are pieces of his own too, to oblige me; whilst I have studied expressly for him Desdemona, Ophelia, and Cordelia, parts quite out of my line, merely that his plays may be strengthened by my name. Moreover, he has not scrupled to ask me to study new parts, in plays which have been either written expressly only for him, or cut down to suit his peculiar requisitions. This, however, I have declined doing. Anything of Shakespeare's I will act with and for him, because anything of Shakespeare's is good enough, and too good, for me.... I shall have a nausea of fright till after I have done singing in Ophelia to-morrow night.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Indeed, my dear Hal, I was not satisfied, but profoundly dissatisfied, with my singing in Ophelia; but am thankful to say that I did not sing out of tune, which I dreaded doing, from the miserable nervousness I felt about it. I am entirely misplaced in the character, and can do nothing with it that might not be better done by almost any younger woman with a sweet voice and that order of fair beauty which one cannot separate from one's idea of Ophelia.

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I have read Stanley's sermon on St. Peter, and am enchanted with it, and more than ever struck with the resemblance, in its general spirit, and even in actual passages, to my friend Mr. Furness's book. The notes and commentary upon the sermon are the part of Stanley's work that show more erudition and literary power than Mr. Furness's treatise contained, but the manner and matter of the writers shows close kindred when treating of the same subjects.

We overflow here with anecdotes of the hairbreadth escapes of the French fugitives. Guizot and Madame de Liéven, his dear friend and evil genius, arrived both in London on the same day, having travelled from Paris in the same railroad train as far as Amiens; she with the painter Roberts, passing as his wife, and Guizot so disguised that she did not recognize him, and would not believe Lord Holland when he called upon her on Saturday and told her that Guizot had arrived like herself, and by the same train, the day before. Hotels and private houses are thronged with French and English tumbling over, a perfect stampede, from the other side of the Channel. Lady Dufferin, who during her long stay in Paris made many French friends, is exercising hospitality to the tune of having thirty people in her house in Brook Street.

ARRIVAL OF
FRENCH
EMIGRANTS.

Charles Greville showed me on Saturday a capital letter of Lord Clarendon's upon the subject of his kingdom [he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at this time], and the probable and possible effects of this French Revolution on your quiet, orderly, well-principled countrymen. He also showed me a letter he had received from E— from Rome, in which, I think, the account of the pope is that of a man being carried off his legs by the popular exigencies, which he *cannot* resist and at the same time remain pope—the head of the priestly Roman Catholic Government.

Yesterday came news that *Metternich had resigned*. If this is true, the forward step Italy is about to take need not, please God! be made in blood and violent social upheaving. I do pray that this news may be true, for it will probably avert a fire-and-sword revolution in the Milanese, and all through Lombardy, in which Piedmont would sympathize too warmly for its own peace and quiet.

Austria, thus deserted by the presiding genius of her hitherto Italian policy, Metternich, will perhaps hesitate to enforce its threatened opposition to the changes which she might have sold at the cost of many lives, but would not have averted, though she overran Italy from end to end with war and desolation.

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This retreat of the great political powers of darkness before the advance of freedom in Italy seems to me like a personal happiness to myself. I rejoice unspeakably in it. It is quite another matter in France. It will be another matter here, whenever our turn to be turned upside down or inside out comes.

In Italy the people are rising against foreign tyranny, to get rid of foreign dominion, and to get rightful possession of the government of their own country. In France the revolution against power is past, but that against property is yet to come. As for us, our revolt against iniquitous power ended with the final expulsion of the Stuarts; but we have sundry details of that wholesale business yet to finish, and there will be here some sort of *property* revolution, in some mode or other, yet.

The crying sin of modern Christian civilization, the monstrous inequalities in the means of existence, will yet be dealt with by us English, among whom it is more flagrant than anywhere else on earth.

It is the one revolution of which our social system seems to me to stand in need, the last that can be directly affected, if not effected, by legislative action upon the tenure of land, the whole system of proprietorship of the soil, the spread of education, and the extension of the franchise: and, as we are the richest and the poorest people in the

world, as the extremes of rampant luxury and crawling poverty are wider asunder here than anywhere else on earth, the force must be great—I pray God it may be gradual—that draws those opposite ends of the social scale into more humane nearness.

I cannot believe that any violent convulsions will attend inevitable necessary change here; for, in spite of the selfish passions of both rich and poor, our people do fear God, more, I think, than any other European nation, and recognize a law of duty; and there is good sense and good principle enough in all classes, I believe, to meet even radical change with firmness and temperance.

The noble body politic of England is surely yet so sound and healthy and vigorous as to go through any crisis for the cure of any local disease, any partial decay, without danger to the whole; though not, perhaps, without difficulty and suffering both to classes and individuals.

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God is over all, and I do not believe that one of the most Christian of nations will perish in the attempt to follow the last of Christ's commandments, "Love one another."

I am painfully impressed with what constantly seems to me the short-sightedness of the clever worldly-wise people I hear talking upon these subjects, and the deep despondence of those who see a great cloud looming up over the land. Our narrow room and redundant population make any sudden violent political movement dangerous, perhaps; but I have faith in the general wholesome spirit of our people, their good sense and good principle. I have the same admiration for and confidence in our national character that I have in the institutions of the United States.

God keep this precious England safe!...

I am ever yours most truly,

FANNY.

KING STREET, Wednesday, March 8th, 1848.

My little finger has recovered from Macready. It is gradually getting much better, but he certainly did it an injury. With regard to his "relenting," he is, I am told, quite uncommonly gracious and considerate to me....

I was told by a friend of mine who was at "Hamlet" the other evening, that in the closet scene with his mother he had literally knocked the poor woman down who was playing the Queen. I thought this an incredible exaggeration, and asked her afterwards if it was true, and she said so true that she was bruised all across her breast with the blow he had given her; that, happening to take his hand at a moment when he did not wish her to do so, he had struck her violently and knocked her literally down; so I suppose I may consider it "relenting" that he never yet has knocked me down....

VIOLENCE
OF
MACREADY.

We are quite lively now in London with riots of our own—a more exciting process than merely reading of our neighbors' across the Channel. Last night a mob, in its playful progress through this street, broke the peaceful windows of this house. There have been great meetings in Trafalgar Square these two last evenings, in which the people threw stones about, and made a noise, but that was all they did by all accounts. They have smashed sundry windows, and the annoyance and apprehension occasioned by their passage wherever they go is very great. Nothing serious, however, has yet occurred; and I suppose, if the necessity for calling out the military can be avoided, nothing serious will occur. But if these disorderly meetings increase in number and frequency the police will not be sufficient to moderate and disperse them, and the troops will have to be called out, and we shall have terrible mischief, for our soldiers will not fraternize with the London mob, the idea of duty—of which the French soldiers or civilians have but a meagre allowance (glory, honor, anything else you please, in abundance)—being the *one* idea in the head of an English soldier and of most English civilians, thank God!

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The riots in Glasgow have been very serious; the population of that city, especially the women, struck me as the most savage and brutal looking I had ever seen in this country; and I remember frequently, while I was there, thinking what a terrible mob the lowest class of its inhabitants would make.

Metternich's resignation, of which I wrote you yesterday, is, alas! uncertain. I had rejoiced at it for the sake of that beautiful Italy, and all her political martyrs past and to come.

Good-bye, God bless you. I shall go and see some of those great mobs of ours. It must be a curious and interesting spectacle.

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

KING STREET, Saturday and Sunday,
March 11th and 12th, 1848.

DEAREST HAL,

The "uses of adversity," which are assuredly often "sweet," should help to reconcile us both to our own sorrows and those which are sometimes harder to bear, the sorrows of those we love.... I have not yet been able to accomplish my intention of seeing anything of our great political mobs; and they are now beginning to subside, having been rather *rackets* than riots in their demonstrations, I am happy to say, and therefore not very curious or interesting in any point of view.

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But there is to be a very large meeting at Kennington on Monday, and Alfred Potocki said he would take me to it, but as I have to act that night I am afraid it would be hardly conscientious to run the risk of an accidental blow from a brickbat that might disable me for my work, which is my duty, though, I confess, it is a great temptation. My friend, Comte Potocki, is young and tall and strong and active, but I would a great deal rather have paid a policeman to look after me, as I did when I went to see a fire, than have depended upon the care of a gentleman who would feel himself hampered by having me to care for. After all, I shall probably give it up, and not go....

My father tells me he has definitely renounced all idea of reading again, so I took heart of grace to ask him to lend me the plays he read from, to mark mine by. The copy he used is a Hanmer, in six large quarto volumes, and belongs to Lane, the artist, who has very kindly lent it to me. My father's marks are most elaborate, but the plays are cruelly sacrificed to the exigencies of the performance—as much maimed, I think, as they are for stage representation. My father has executed this inevitable mangling process with extreme good judgment and taste; but it gives me the heart-ache, for all that. But he was *timed*, and that impatiently, by audiences who would barely sit two hours in their places, and required that the plays should be compressed into the measure of their intellectual *short*-suffering capacity.

However, it was at the Palace that he had to *compress* or rather *compel* the five acts of "Cymbeline" into a reading of three quarters of an hour: and how he performed that feat is still incomprehensible to me....

Everything is black and sad enough as far as I can see, but, thank God, I cannot see far, and every day has four-and-twenty hours, and in every minute of every hour live countless seeds of invisible events. I heard a very good sermon to-day upon Christian liberty, and have been reading Stanley's sermon upon St. Paul, which made my heart burn within me.... I am reading an immensely thick book by Gioberti, one of the Italian reformers, a devout and eloquent Catholic priest, and it enchants me.

STANLEY—
GIOBERTI.

Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

King Street, Wednesday, 16th, 1848.

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Of course you have heard of the murder of the soldier by that poor girl in the park. I have heard nothing more special about it, and have not seen the newspapers lately, so you probably know more about it than I do. Emily tells me this morning that there were some excellent observations upon the circumstance, either in the *Examiner* or

Spectator. It will be long before women are justly dealt with by the social or civil codes of Christian communities to which they belong, longer still before they are righteously dealt with by the individuals to whom they belong; but it will not be *for ever*. With the world's progress that reform will come, too; though I believe it will be the very last before the millennium.

I hope this poor unfortunate will be recommended to the Queen's mercy, and escape hanging, unless, as might be just possible, she prefers depending on a gibbet to the tender mercies of Christian society—especially its women—towards a woman who, after being seduced by a man, murdered him.

Did I never tell you of that unhappy creature in New York, who was in the same situation, except that the villain she stabbed did not die, who was tried and acquitted, and who found a shelter in Charles Sedgwick's house, and who, when the despairing devil of all her former miseries took possession of her, used to be thrown into paroxysms of insane anguish, during which Elizabeth [Mrs. Charles Sedgwick] used to sit by her and watch her, and comfort her and sing to her, till she fell exhausted with misery into sleep? That poor woman used to remind me of my children's nurse....

I receive frequent complaints, not from you only, that I do not write sufficiently in detail about myself. It is on that account that I am always so glad to be *asked questions*, because they remind me of what my friends specially desire to know about me when otherwise I should be apt to write to them about what interested me, rather than what I was doing or saying, and the things and people that surround me, which I do not always find interesting.

You do just the same; your letters are very often indeed discussions upon matters of abstract speculation rather than tidings of yourself,—your doing, being, or suffering,—and I have not objected to this in you, though it has given me a deal of trouble in answering you, because I like people to go their own way in everything; moreover, unless I am reminded by questions of what *is happening to me*, it interests me so little that I should probably forget to mention it....

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If my faith, dearest Hal, depended upon my knowledge of the means by which the results in which I have faith will be achieved, I should have some cause for despondency. Do you suppose I imagine that the sudden violence of a national convulsion will make people Christians who are not so?... My answer to all your questions as to how momentous changes for the better are to be brought about in public affairs, in popular institutions, in governments, can only be—I do not know. I believe in them, nevertheless, for I believe in God's law, and in Christ's teaching of it, and the obviously ordained progress of the human race. True it is that Christ's teaching, ruling in every man's heart, can only be the distant climax of this progress; but when that does so rule, all other "governments" will be unnecessary: but though we are far enough off from that yet, we are nearer than we ever yet have been; and until that has become the supreme government of the world, changes must go on perpetually in our temporary and imperfect institutions, by which the onward movement is accelerated, at what speed who can tell? It seems to me that the geological growth of our earth has been rapid, compared to the moral growth of our race; but so it is apparently ordained. Individual goodness is *the* great power of all,—societies, organizations, combinations, institutions, laws, governments, act from the surface downwards far less efficaciously than from the *root upwards*, and what it does *is done*.

USES OF
REVOLUTION.

Comparatively cheap forms of government are among the most obvious and reasonable changes to be desired in Europe; but you mistake me if you suppose I am looking for instantaneous Utopias born out of national uproar and confusion. But as long as the love of God is not a sufficiently powerful motive with the nations of the earth to make them seek to know and do His will, revolution, outrage, carnage, fear, and suffering are, I suppose, the spurs that are to goad them on to *bettering* themselves; and so national agonies seem to me like individual sorrows—dispensations sent to work improvement.

Fourierism was received with extreme enthusiasm in New England, where various societies have been formed upon the plan of Fourier's suggestions, and this not by the poor or lower classes, but by the voluntary association of the rich with the poor in communities where all worldly goods were in common, and labor, too, so foolishly fairly in common that delicately bred and highly educated women took their turn to stand all

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day at the wash-tub, for the benefit of the society, though surely not of their shirts.

I have conversed much in America with disciples of this school, but am of opinion, in spite of their zeal, that no such scheme of social improvement will be found successful, and that this violent precipitating one's self from the sphere in which one is placed in the scale of civilization is not what is wanted, but much rather the full performance of our several duties at the post where we each of us stand and have been providentially placed. The old English catechism of Christian obligation taught us that we were to do our duty in that state of life into which it had pleased God to call us—and if we did, there would be small need of revolutions.

In America these social experiments were perfectly disinterested and undertaken for the sake of moral good results; for where they were tried, there was neither excessive wealth nor poverty to suggest them, and the excellent and intelligent people thus brought together by pure zeal for social improvement disagreed and grumbled with each other, were so perfectly and uncomfortably unsuccessful in their experiments that their whole scheme collapsed, and dissolved into the older social disorders from which they had thought to raise themselves and others....

MY DEAR HAL,

... I do not see why a much greater subdivision of land would not be beneficial in England. Of course, if to the example of America you retort all its singular and advantageous conditions, I have nothing to say; but how about Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland? where small proprietorship appears to result in prosperity both to the land and its cultivators. I do not believe that the tenure of land will long continue what it is here, nor do I believe, in spite of the warlike notes of preparation from all sides of the Continent just now, that the day of great standing armies can last much longer—neither in France nor England, surely, can the people consent much longer to be taxed as they are for military purposes....

I told you of my having found, in the theatre at Norwich, a couple of young people whose position had interested me much. They were very poor, but gentlefolks, and sorely as they needed money, I could not offer it to them, so I promised to go down to Lynn, and act for them whenever they could obtain their manager's leave to have me.... And on Saturday, the 18th, I shall go down to Mrs. H——'s, my dear friend Harness's niece, who lives within seven miles of Lynn, and visit her, while I do what I can for them.

YOUNG
ACTORS.

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Ever yours,

FANNY.

BILNEY, NEAR LYNN, NORFOLK, Monday, March 20th, 1848.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I may or may not be very nervous on the occasion of my Saturday's reading at Highgate. [It was the first I ever gave—a mere experiment to test my powers for the purpose; was in a small room, and before an audience in which were some of my intimate friends.] It will probably depend upon whether I am tolerably well or not, but I trust I shall not annoy you, my dear, if you are with me....

Did I tell you that I met Mr. Swinton at Lady Castlereagh's the other evening, and that he very amiably invited me to go and see his pictures before they went to the exhibition?—so perhaps we may see them together when we come to town. I had an application from an artist the other day, who is painting a picture from "Macbeth," to sit for his Lady for him; and I have undertaken to do so, which is a bore, and therefore very good-natured of me.... This place itself is pretty, though the country round it is not. The weather is cold and rainy and uncomfortable, and I shall be almost glad to get back to London, and to see you. "Now, isn't that strange?" as Benedick says.

I am afraid, moreover, that my errand here, which will cost me both trouble and money, will not answer too well to the poor people I wish to serve. Only think of their manager making them *pay* for the use of the theatre at a rate that will swallow up the best part of

what I can bring into it for them. Isn't it a shame?... This is an out-of-the-way part of the world enough, as I think you will allow, when I tell you that *one* policeman suffices for *three* parishes, and that his authority is oftenest required to reclaim wandering poultry. Moreover, the curate, who does duty in both this and the adjoining parish for sixty pounds a year, preaches against his patron, whose pew is immediately under the pulpit, designating him by the general exemplary and illustrative title of the "abandoned profligate." The latter thus vaguely indicated individual is a middle-aged widower of perhaps not immaculate morals, but who, as lord of the manor and chief landed proprietor in these parts, is allowed to be charitable and kind enough,—which, however, will not, I am afraid, save him—at least in the opinion of his clergyman. The country people are remarkably ignorant, unenlightened, *unpolitical*, unpoetical rustics, but remarkably well off, paying only three pounds a year for excellent four-roomed cottages, having abundance of cheap and good food, and various rights of common, and privileges which help to make them comfortable. It is an astonishingly sleepy and quiet sort of community and neighborhood, and this is a pretty place, on the edge of a wild common, with fine clumps of fir-wood about it, and a picturesquely *colored* district of heath, gorse, broom, and pine growth, extending just far enough round the grounds to make one believe one was in a pretty country.

As I hear no more of the present French Revolution down here, I am reading Lamartine's ("Les Girondins") account of their first one. It's just like reading to-day's Paris newspaper.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

You will be glad to hear that, after encountering every possible let and hindrance from their amiable manager, and being made by him to pay *ten pounds* for the use of the theatre, company, gas, etc, my poor young fellow-actors, for whose sake I came down here, will have cleared a sum that will be an immense help to poor folk living upon £2 a week. I was delighted with having been able to serve them much better than I had feared I might. People's comparative earnings make me reflect. I have been grumbling not a little at my weekly earnings. Thackeray, for that wonderful book, "Vanity Fair," gets £60 a month; the curate who preached to us on Sunday and does duty in two parishes has £60 a year. Perpend! Good-bye, my dear.

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

PORTSMOUTH, Wednesday.

DEAR T—,

What a marvellous era in the world's history is this we are living in! Kings, princes, and potentates flying dismayed to the right and left, and nation after nation rising up, demanding a freedom which God knows how few of them seem capable of using.

The last month in Europe has been like the breathless reading of the most exciting novel, and every day and hour almost teems with events that surpass in suddenness and importance all that has gone before.

The Austrians will not give up Italy without a struggle, and I suppose through that channel the floodgates will be thrown open that will deluge all Europe with blood.

Is not the position of the Emperor of Russia awful in its singularity—the solitary despot of the civilized world?

The great body of the Austrian empire is falling asunder, and all its limbs standing up, separate national bodies. Hungary, Bohemia, Poland will again have individual existence, and the King of Prussia will be undoubtedly hereafter the head of a huge German Confederacy.

In the mean time, I am sure you will rejoice that Metternich was mistaken, and that "it," as he was pleased to designate the existing state of Europe, did not even, as he said it would, "last his time."

Our country is wonderful; I mean this, my blessed England receiving into her bosom the exiled minister and dethroned King of France, and the detested Crown Prince of Prussia, with the dispassionate hospitality of a general house of refuge for ruined royalties.

The spirit and temper of this English people is noble in its steadfastness: with much of national grievance to redress and burdens to throw off, the long habit of comparative freedom, and the innately loyal and conservative character of the nation, have produced a popular feeling that at this time of universal disturbance is most striking in its deliberate adherence to established right and good order. Alone of all the thrones in Europe, that of our excellent queen and her admirable consort stands unshaken; alone of all the political constitutions, that of the country they govern is threatened with no fatal convulsion: in the midst of the failing credit and disturbed financial interests of the Continent, our funds have been gradually advancing in value, and our public credit rises as the aspect of affairs becomes more and more involved and threatening abroad.

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NOBLE
TEMPER OF
THE
ENGLISH IN
1848.

Ireland is our weak point, and, as we have to *atone* there for cruelty, and injustice, and neglect, too long persisted in, that will be the quarter from which we shall receive our share of the national judgments which are being executed all over the world.

A short time ago I saw an admirable letter of Lord Clarendon's, who is now Lord Lieutenant; but though he has hitherto conducted his most difficult government with great ability, there is so much real evil in the condition of the Irish that, combined with their folly, their ignorance, and the wickedness of their instigators, I do not think it possible that the summer will pass over without that wretched country again becoming the theatre of anarchy and turbulent resistance to authority.

My brother-in-law has returned from Rome, and my sister will follow him as soon as the weather will admit of her crossing the Alps with her babies. All his property is in the French funds, that seems an insecure security nowadays....

In England we shall have an extended right of suffrage, a smaller army, a cheaper government, reduced taxation, and some modification of the land tenure,—change, but no revolution, and no fits, I think. This people deserve freedom, for they alone, and you, descended from them, have shown that they know what it means. Considerable changes we shall have, but the wisdom and wealth of our middle classes is a feature in our social existence without European parallel; it is the salvation of the country. I know you hate crossed writing, so good-bye. I am afraid these fantastic French fools will bring Republicanism into contempt. France seems to be threatened with national bankruptcy, *et puis—alors—vous verrez.*

Always affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

COLCHESTER.

I came from Yarmouth to-day, having lodged there in a strange old inn that belonged, in our Republican days, to Judge Bradshaw; in one room of which, they say, Cromwell signed Charles I.'s death-warrant; but this, I think, is a mistake. He is said, however to have lived much in the house, which, at that time, belonged to the Bradshaw family. The house is of a much earlier date, though, than that, and was once, undoubtedly, a royal residence; for in a fine old oak room, the carved panelling of which was as black as ebony, the ceiling was all wrought with the roses and the *fleur-de-lys*. The kitchen and bar-room were both made out of an old banqueting-hall, immensely lofty, and with a very fine carved ceiling, and stone-mullioned windows, of capital style and preservation. The staircase was one of those precious, broad, easy-graded ascents, up which you could almost take a carriage, with a fine heavy oak baluster; and on the upper floor three good-sized rooms made out of one, with another elaborately carved ceiling. It was really a most curious and picturesque place, and is now the "Star Inn" at Yarmouth, and will doubtless become gradually changed and modernized and pulled to pieces, till both its remaining fine old characteristics and its traditions are lost—as, in good measure, they already are, for, as I said before, the house bears traces of having been a royal residence long before Cromwell's time....

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The older English country-houses are full of quaint and picturesque relics of former times; but I think there is a cruel indifference sometimes to their preservation; *e.g.*, think of the Norwich people allowing the house of Sir Thomas Browne to be dismantled of all its wood-carving, which was sent up to London and sold in morsels, I suppose, to the Jews in Wardour Street.

Yours affectionately,

FANNY.

PORTSMOUTH, Friday, March 31st, 1848.

I did not walk on my arrival in Portsmouth, dear Hal, but dined. The day was very beautiful all along, and I enjoyed as much of it as my assiduous study of the *Times* newspaper would allow.

I am glad you saw Mitchell, because now you can conceive what a funny colloquy that was of mine with him, about the price of the seats at my readings. [Mr. Mitchell, court bookseller, queen's publisher, box-letter to the nobility, general undertaker of pleasures and amusements for the fashionable great world of London, was my manager and paymaster throughout all my public reading career in England.] In making the preliminary arrangements for them he had, in my opinion, put the prices too high, demanding ten shillings for them. When I said they were not worth two, and certainly ought not to be charged more than five, he replied, with much feeling for the British aristocracy, whom he idolized, and whom he thought fit on this occasion to designate, collectively, under the title of my friend Lord Lansdowne, that he couldn't think of insulting him by making him pay only five shillings to hear me read. I wonder why poor dear Lord Lansdowne can't be asked five shillings? I would have charged him, and all the smaller and greater nobility of the realm, half a crown, and been rather ashamed of the pennyworth they got for it. But a thing is worth what it will fetch, and no one knows that better than Mr. Mitchell. I should think any sensible being would prefer paying half a crown to the honor and glory of disbursing twice that sum for a two-hours' reading—even by me, even of Shakespeare. I wish, while you were in personal connection with my manager Mitchell, you had remonstrated with him about those ridiculous dandified advertisements. You might have expressed my dislike of such fopperies, and perhaps saved me a few shillings in pink and blue and yellow note-paper; though it really almost seems a pity to interfere with the elegancies of poor Mitchell, who is nothing if not elegant. However, I wish he would not be so at my expense, who have no particle of that exquisite quality in my whole composition, and find the grovelling one of avarice growing daily upon me.

JOHN
MITCHELL.

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I have already had a letter from Henry Greville this morning, telling me the result of *two* interviews *he* has had with Mitchell about the readings; also—which interests me far more than my own interests—of the utter routing of the Austrians in the Milanese—hurrah!—also of his determination to buy the house in Eaton Place.... Adelaide must come home by sea, for it is impossible that she should travel either through France or Germany without incurring the risk of much annoyance, if nothing worse. The S— in the dragoon regiment in Dublin is E—'s younger brother....

Ever yours,

FANNY.

BANNISTERS, Tuesday, 14th, 1848.

Liston's [the eminent surgeon] death shocked me very much, and I felt very certain that he was himself aware of his own condition. I observed, during my intercourse with him latterly, a listless melancholy in his manner, a circumstance that puzzled me a good deal in contrast with his powerful frame, and vigorous appearance, and blunt, offhand manner. I think I understand now, and can compassionate certain expressions in his last note to me, which, when I received it, made a painful and unfavorable impression upon me. I suppose he did not believe in a future state of existence, and have no doubt that, latterly, he had a distinct anticipation of his own impending annihilation. His great

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strength and magnificent physical structure, of course, suggested no such apprehension to persons who knew nothing of his malady [Liston died of aneurism in the throat], but when I saw him last he told me he was much more ill than I was; that he had been spitting up a quantity of blood, and was "all wrong." ...

I cannot take your thanks, my dear Hal, about "Wilhelm Meister." ... I never offer anything to any one; neither would I willingly, when asked for it, withhold anything from any one. I believe the only difference that I really make between my "*friends*" and my "*fellow-creatures*" is one of pure sentiment: I love the former, and am completely indifferent to the latter, but I would *do* as much for the latter as for the former.

WILHELM
MEISTER.

My marks in "Wilhelm Meister" will not, as you expect, "explain themselves," for the passages that I admire for their artistic literary beauty, their keen worldly wisdom, their profound insight, and noble truth, as well as those which charm me only by their brilliant execution, and those which command my whole, my entire feeling of sympathy, are all alike indicated by the one straight line down the side of the text. I think, however, you will distinguish what I agree with from what I only admire. It is a wonderful book, and its most striking characteristic to me is its absolute moral, dispassionate impartiality. Outward loveliness of the material universe, inward ugliness of human nature in its various distortions; the wisdom and the foolishness of man's aims, and the modes of pursuing them; the passions of the senses, the affections of the heart, the aspirations of the soul; the fine metaphysical experiences of the transcendental religionists; the semi-sensual, outward piety of the half-idolatrous Roman Catholic; the great and the little, the shallow and the deep of humanity in this its stage of action and development,—are delineated with the most perfect apparent indifference of sentiment, combined with the most perfect accuracy of observation. He pleads no cause of man or thing, and the absence of all indication of human sympathy is very painful to me in his book. It is only because God is represented as a Being of perfect love that we can endure the idea of Him as also a Being of perfect knowledge. Goethe, as I believe I have told you, always reminds me of Ariel, a creature whose nature—*superhuman* through power and knowledge of various kinds—is *under-human* in other respects (love and the capacity of sympathy), and was therefore subject to the nobler moral nature of Prospero. Activity seems to be the only principle which Goethe advocates, activity and earnestness—especially in self-culture,—and in this last quality, which he sublimely advocates, I find the only *comfortable* element in his wonderful writings. *He is inhuman*, not superhuman.

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God bless you. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

KING STREET, St. James, Friday, 17th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I cannot be making arrangements for going over to Dublin so far ahead as the 22d of May, for by that time Dublin may have been swallowed up by Young Ireland.

Your theory of my reading elegant extracts from Shakespeare is very pretty, but absolutely nothing to the purpose for my purpose.... All that is *merely* especially beautiful is sedulously cut out in my reading version, in order to preserve the skeleton of the story; because the audiences that I shall address are not familiar with the plays, and what they want is as much as possible of the excitement of a dramatic entertainment to be obtained without entering the doors of a theatre....

You forget to what a number of people Lambs and Bullocks give their names; Hog, which, by the bye, is spelt Hogge, has by no means the pre-eminence in that honor.

I saw Lady Lansdowne the other day, who said the ministers were extremely anxious about Ireland, and that the demonstrations with regard to St. Patrick's day kept them in a state of great alarm. Lord Lansdowne is tolerably well just now, but has been quite ill; and Lord John Russell is so ill and worn out that they say he will be obliged to resign: in which case I suppose Lord Lansdowne would be premier. The position of people at the head of governments in this year of grace is certainly not enviable. D'Israeli said, last night, he couldn't see why Dublin should not be burnt to the ground; that he could

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understand the use of London, or even of Paris, but that the *use* of Dublin was a mystery. I suggested its being the spring and source and fountain-head of Guinness's stout, but I don't think he considered even that a sufficient *raison d'être* for your troublesome capital, or porter an equivalent for the ten righteous men who might save a city.

Thackeray tells a comical story of having received a letter from his father-in-law in Paris, urging him by all means to send over his daughter there, and indeed go over himself, for that the frightful riots in England, especially those in London, Trafalgar Square, Kennington, etc., must of course make it a most undesirable residence; and that they would find Paris a much safer and quieter one: which reminds me of the equally earnest entreaties of my dear American friends that I should hasten to remove my poor pennies from the perilous guardianship of the Bank of England and convert them with all despatch to the safe-keeping of American securities!

COMICAL
LETTER TO
THACKERAY.

I have been going out a good deal during the last three weeks, and mean to continue to do so while I am in London, partly because, as I am about to go away, I wish to see as much as I can of its pleasant and remarkable society, and partly, too, from a motive of *policy*, though I hate it almost as much as Sir Andrew Aguecheek did. I mean to read in London before I leave it, and a great many of my fine lady and gentlemen acquaintances will come and hear me, provided I don't give them time to forget my existence, but keep them well in mind of it by duly presenting myself amongst them. "Out of sight, out of mind," is necessarily the motto of all societies, and considerations of interest more than pleasure often induce our artists and literary men to produce themselves in the world lest they should be forgotten by it. Nor, indeed, is this merely the calculation of those who expect any profit from society; the very pleasure-hunters themselves find that they must not get thrown out, or withdraw for a moment, or disappear below the surface for an instant, for if they do the mad tide goes over them, and they are neither asked for, nor looked for, called for, nor thought of, "Qui quitte sa place la perd," and there is nothing so easy as to be forgotten....

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Besides all this, now that my departure from England approaches, I feel as if I had enjoyed and profited too little by the intercourse of all the clever people I live among, and whose conversation you know I take considerable pleasure in. I begin now, in listening, as I did last night, to D'Israeli and Milnes and Carlyle, and E——'s artist friend, Mr. Swinton, to remember that these are bright lights in one of the brightest intellectual centres in Europe, and that I am within their sphere but for a time....

I called at the Milmans' yesterday, and found Mrs. Austin there, whom I listened to, almost without drawing breath, for an hour. She has just returned from Paris, where she lived with all the leading political people of the day, and she says she feels as if she had been looking at a battle-field strewn with her acquaintances. Her account of all that is going on is most interesting, knowing as she does all the principal actors and sufferers in these events, personally and intimately.

To-day the report is that the Bank of France has suspended payment. The ruin of the Rothschilds is not true, though they are great losers by these catastrophes. The Provisional Government has very wisely and wittily devised, as a means of raising money, to lay a tax of six hundred francs a year upon everybody who *keeps more than one servant!* Can folly go beyond that?

Henry Greville showed me yesterday a letter he had received from Paris from Count Pahlen, saying that, though the guillotine was not yet erected, the reign of terror had virtually commenced; for that the pusillanimous dread that kept the whole nation in awe of a handful of pickpockets could be described as nothing else.

I am much concerned about E——'s fortune, the whole of which is, I believe, lodged in French funds. All property there must be in terrible jeopardy, I fear.

Lady G—— F—— went to Claremont two days ago, and says that Louis Philippe's deportment is that of a servant out of place. She did not add, "Pas de bonne maison." ...

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Ever yours,


FANNY.

[On the famous 10th of April, the day of the great Chartist meeting, I drove from King Street to Westminster Bridge in the morning, before the monster demonstration took place; and though the shops were shut and the streets deserted, everything was perfectly quiet and orderly, and nothing that *appeared* indicated the political disturbance with which the city was threatened—the dread of which induced people, as far as the Regent's Park from the Houses of Parliament, to pack up their valuables and plate, etc., and prepare for instant flight from London. In the evening, my friends would hardly believe my peaceful progress down Whitehall, and I heard two striking incidents, among the day's smaller occurrences: that Prince Louis Napoleon had enrolled himself among the special constables for the preservation of peace and order; and that M. Guizot, standing where men of every grade, from dandies to draymen, were flocking to accept the same service of public preservation, kept exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, "Oh, le brave people! le brave people!"—a contrast certainly to his Parisian barricaders.

In the summer of 1848 I returned to America, where my great good fortune in the success of my public readings soon enabled me to realize my long-cherished hope of purchasing a small cottage and a few acres of land in the beautiful and beloved neighborhood of Lenox.]

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THE END.

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Transcriber's note

The following typographical errors have been corrected:

no lady in Philadelphia who then had such an **attendant** (changed from attendant)

and carefully tended **suburban** district (changed from surburban)

Lord and Lady **Lansdowne** (changed from Landsdowne)

MADAME DE **STAËL** (changed from STAEL)

equipments of the northern villages (changed from equipments)

At **the** mouth of the Altamaha (changed from the the mouth)

dark-leaved, **wide-spreading** oaks (changed from wide-speading)

moulder away for **want** of use (changed from waut)

the neighborhood of **Burnham** Beeches (changed from Burnam)

how long do you **think** it took Nebuchadnezzar (changed from thing)

I know your sister is **vastly** clever (changed from vasily)

my determination to defeat his **endeavor** (changed from endeavor)

the **recollection** of the last happy days I spent here (changed from recollectien)

his marvellous **facility** and strength (changed from facilty)

what the French call **saissant** (changed from saissant)

saluting the **approach** of some greatness or other (changed from appoach)

BENDERMAN'S PICTURE (changed from BENDERMANS)

letters will **occasionally** come *to* heaven (changed from occasionally)

that vague love of **excitement** (changed from excitement)

working **heart's ease** into Emily's canvas (changed from heart's seas)

abused by the Opposition, but that is of **course** (changed from couse)

about six hours (changed from about)

and of **course** he persevered (changed from coure)

is a frequent speculation with **me** (changed from ma)

men are capable of recognizing (changed from ment)

To-morrow, at three o'clock (changed from To morrow)

I **think** I have really done my duty (changed from thing)

all their time to mere **amusement** (changed from amusement)

deprecate **our** meeting to part again (changed from out)

I take it **there** is nothing (changed from their)

kept her in a state of extreme **expectation** (changed from expectatation)

the **requisite** number of quarterings (changed from requisite)

I really believe he intended to do, and thought he **did.**] (closing square bracket added)

The following were changed in the index for consistency with the main text:

Buccleuch, Duchess of (changed from Buccleugh)

Crow, Mrs., her book (changed from Crowe)

her opinion of **d'Orsay** (changed from D'Orsay)

deathbed utterances (changed from death-bed)

"**Nature hath** framed strange fellows in her time," (changed from Natur-hath)

Liéven, Madame de (changed from Lièven)

Mussy, Dr. Gueneau de (changed from Musseau)

Normanby, Lord (changed from Normanbury)

Whately, Archbishop, his book (changed from Whateley)

No changes have been made to the following:

if you allude to the mechanical process of **caligraphy** (possible error for calligraphy)

Lamartine's "**Pèlerinage**" (possible error for Pèlerinage)

a **gipsy** complexion doesn't signify (possible error for gypsy)

a sort of **ecstasy** of imbecility (possible error for ecstasy)
Je suis méchante, ma **chère** (possible error for chère)
et **voilà!** (possible error for voilà)
Malbrook s'en **vat' en** guerre (possible error for va t'en or va-t-en)
de corps et **a'âne** (possible error for d'âme)
the attack itself is **not** matter of doubt (possible error for not a)
Balzac's "**Récherche** de l'Absolu," (possible error for Recherche)
Rome, **Trinita** dei Monti. (possible error for Trinità)
as the French say, à **peds joints** (possible error for pieds)
stay some days with her at **Soltram** (possible error for Saltram)
(or rather *vice versa*) (possible error for versâ)
à **la Voltaire** (possible error for là)
"mi **sois-cerelbero.**" (possible error for sviscererebbe)
she gave the **blank verse** so *naturally* (possible error for blank-verse)

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