

New April 13th 1857

Dear papa &amp; mother,

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

Devere, speaker of the house of Commons, and Montague Woodhouse, <sup>Kent</sup>  
Lady this & that, the Prussian minister, &c. &c. After awhile Dr. Gray  
grew impatient & went up & down the lines & into side streets & could see  
nothing of our carriage, & said he was sure the man was gone - Other  
people had taken the place of the first crowd, Mrs. B. & Misses  
came down, she looks quite handsome, & is certainly English stock?  
she was glad to get her carriage & be back to her baby after a long waiting,  
but still nothing was to be found of our man. Dr. Gray & allied out & police-  
men were commissioned in vain - Mans who were waiting about  
so patiently (or impatiently) as we, refreshed themselves in the supper-  
room, for there is our regular going down to supper, but the refreshment  
room is open all the Evg. - At last after 12 1/2 & another investigation  
of the main line & side branches, Dr. Gray said the man must have  
gone home, & we must go to an hotel: that idea I scouted, for how  
could I breakfast next morning in full dress, & how get back to Kent  
well then, he said, we must take a street Cab & go home. I still  
had faith Curtis would appear would we wait to the end, but  
compassionate Dr. G. despair, & willing to save him from making  
himself any longer a public monument of it, consented, & we  
succeeded at once by getting one by stepping in advance of the line,  
& after driving up & down the lines to, we our unfortunate trouflem.  
(which looks very genteel & private,) another chance, we at length  
turned our faces towards Kent. Was there ever any body who goes  
a pleasing, genteel & pretty, & how to return dignifiedly to converse  
with just little Dr. Well, we got some towards her, our poor Cant.  
lady waiting all this time, & quite frightened lest some accident  
had befallen us, we were "generally so regular" just as we were in-  
deed, Curtis came with Mrs. Wood & warm shawl. It seems as if  
to the door about 10 1/2, & we not being ready must of course drive  
on; so he went & took his station in a side street too far off to hear  
any cries, & stupid man, never came down to take his turn again  
until about 1, when he saw the carriages were getting thin! - However  
all my trouble was well repaid in the amusement, though  
whether I would ask Dr. Gray to go through it again is another  
thing - And it costs something, more especially if you hire another  
Cab to come home in, & run the risks of its dirt & other dangers -  
My spouse, she, makes a very respectable femme de chambre, & sticks a pin  
quite handily! Ah! he's a man! Love!

Thursday Miss Hooker had sent for us to dine there, but there was no such  
letter intimating that week & Dr. Gray too, that I went up in the evening to  
call & say we could not come. But Miss Hooker insisted, upon it  
that I had to yield, particularly as she had a friend with her she  
wished us to meet, a Scotch lady, Miss Davidson. So after returning & working  
over my writing until the last minute, I hadened up Miss Davidson  
was very pleasant, with a manner perhaps a little brusque, but so sincere  
& cordial, & so much good sense & quick wit, that I liked her very much,  
she has a good deal of Scotch accent, which is as if she gave every word  
a trill, & sounds the as very much, with a burr though more than the  
French roll. She paints miniatures beautifully; & there were three three  
of her paintings, two copies from different pictures of Mary Stuart; very  
sweet & lovely, & another from an old picture of some Scotch lady.  
Friday I had just despatched Mrs. Wood to the O.C. with our  
mail, & flung myself on the sofa to rest, when on her coming back  
she escorted in Sir Wm. & Miss Davidson - They had come for me to  
walk with them in the pleasure grounds - In the Museum we  
joined Miss Hooker, & then strolling past the pond where the  
male swan made great demonstrations towards us for our  
near the nest where is male is sitting, we passed through the  
iron gates & were in the pleasure ground which is some 100 acres,  
& when Sir Wm. is now improving by cutting down <sup>the</sup> ~~old~~ <sup>new</sup> ~~wood~~ <sup>planting</sup>  
shrubs, &c. & in fact making it a fine arboretum - It had been  
much neglected since Queen Charlotte's time, when it was over-  
gilted with temples, mosques, palaces, &c. &c. in miniature, accord-  
ing to the taste of that period, as an appendage to the garden.  
Of these buildings only a few temples are left still scattered about  
the garden & grounds, & the Pagoda which is quite a structure  
some 10 stories high, & up which Sir Wm. now kindly took us to  
see the fine view from the top - It was beautiful, & the moon shone  
a shower which wrapped us for awhile & brought out gleams of sun  
shine in the distance; there are many beautiful cedars of Lebanon  
around, & we could look directly down up their tops & so get new  
revelations of their exceeding & unusual beauty. Miss Hooker did  
(not try to mount the weary stairs - It was a real walk for her to  
come so far & walk as ~~we then did~~ <sup>we went</sup> ~~around~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~grounds~~ <sup>past</sup> the  
little cottage built for Queen Charlotte as a ruined chapel, & which is  
now pretty & rustic looking - Inside it is in nice order & the Queen

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

Sunday Dr. Gray & I in going to Church at Kew met Sir Wm. Hooker  
turning their steps in the same direction, & we joined them,  
before parting with them we agreed to go with them next day to  
see a superb *Camelia*. In the afternoon Dr. Gray & I had a de-  
lightful walk through the gardens & houses. The orchid house has  
some splendid things. One plant has 8 superb great bunches  
of flowers, each bunch  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a foot long, hanging down from it.

The flowers are a superb yellow shaded with a deeper colour -  
 The next day in Am., Miss Wether, Dr Gray & I went to Mr. Martin's  
 to see the *Camellia reticulata*; he is a gentleman living at Kings-  
 ton in a beautiful villa on the bank of the Thames, <sup>which</sup> being placed  
 in a bend of the river is most admirably planned so that each room  
 has a view of the river, if its own. The house is in a style of archi-  
 tecture, but an admirable taste without striking effect. We were  
 shown into a large handsome room, another circular room open-  
 ing into it, & on the opposite side you looked into a most charming  
 green-house, the view or trained that they met the lean-to roof  
 from the other side, & thus made a pretty arch, & entirely taking off  
 the effect of awkwardness which the one slant is apt to give; we  
 passed through this house, where <sup>were</sup> some beautiful flowers, Camellias,  
 an acacia trained as a vine, &c. &c. out doors on to the lovely lawn  
 leading down apparently - to the water's edge, & beautiful trees  
 scattered over it. Thence passing round the house & through a  
 sort of shrubbery of roses, which in the season they say are superb,  
 we came to a green house, semi circular in the centre & wings  
 on each side - The whole of the centre was filled with this mag-  
 nificent plant, a huge tree-like bush, reaching to the roof & spread-  
 ing in all directions! Mr. Martin said they had taken off 3,000  
 buds & there were 3,200 on! About half were out. Each flower  
 measures more than 6 inches across, & they are not perfectly  
 double, & of a rich cherry red shading with the warmth & softness  
 of a rose! - I never saw anything more magnificent in the  
 vegetable kingdom - Mr. Martin then took us into his paper house  
 not very large, but admirably arranged, & several in succession -  
 When we got back he carried <sup>took</sup> us up upstairs to see the view from  
 a charming room arranged as a library, just the beau ideal  
 of one's heart for a "morning room". Altogether the house is I think  
 the handsomest gentleman's house I have seen in England -  
 There was more elegance throughout the arrangements & more  
 in keeping - I have been in larger & more pretentious looking  
 ones - Mr. Martin is an East Indian nabob - He drove back  
 through Richmond, & saw what was left of Queen Elizabeth's  
 famous Green Palace, viz. an old gateway, & a portion of the  
 wall which has been built in to some modern houses -

In reaching New Trip Hooker, I went to call on Mrs. Combe, & Dr. just  
left us to go down to Sunham Green to call on Dr. Lindley, he re-  
turned in the E.C. with a most extraordinary & peculiar favour  
in the shape of an invitation to go in with Dr. Lindley next day  
& see the interior of the Crystal Palace. He went to keep the secret  
however as a secret, for visitors by rule are excluded, but Dr. Lindley is  
+ one of the Commissioners & said he thought he could pass us in  
So we were off to town early Tuesday morn. Dr. Hooker met us on the  
way to the Station, having returned from Hitcham the E.C. before he  
was on his way to London on business. I was surprised to see him so  
young & looking so man (He will be 34 in June) and he has made a famous  
voyage to the South Pole, been some years in the Himalayas, &c. & has  
already so much fame! - He is very different in appearance & manner  
from Sir Wm. Not so tall, & very slightly made, but spry & active.  
He has not the courteous manner of his father, but has a quick ab-  
rupt way of speaking, but so much sincerity & seems so good natured  
that you cannot but like him. He seems full of life & energy. &  
On reaching London my first movements were to buy a new bonnet,  
I got a straw very prettily trimmed with white & with lavender  
cold bunches of lilies inside - Then after a little more shopping,  
during which Dr. Gray's patience, & wonder that I did not think the  
belt near enough in colour, were quite exhausted, (though I told  
him he would be the first to notice the deficiency of harmony  
when I put it on,) we went to Marlborough House to see the Bernini  
Gallery - It is a collection of paintings by English artists - There  
were some landscapes by Constable & Gainsborough that pleased  
me much - some paintings by Landseer, but engravings give a  
very good idea of him, & got some of the other artists I must say  
I prefer the engravings as better adapted to the subjects <sup>rather</sup> ~~rather~~  
of treating them - A great many have been engraved, & most of them  
in that collection of prints, Dear Papa, which Mrs. Kimmy gave you.  
are from this gallery - "Happy as a King" is I think a rather cur-  
prising than picture. - Now for the first time some of Turner's  
landscapes, they are very striking, but I want to see more of them.  
Then from the gallery we took our way to Charing Cross, where taking  
a cab we were dropped in front of our way is Dr. Booth's, where

we had a pleasant call and our lunch. Thence we walked, intending  
to take an omnibus, but some passed us, to the Horticultural Board  
Report & here we found Miss Hooker & Sir Wm. who were going with  
us, & presently Dr. Lindley came in with another gentleman who was  
to be of the party, & in the Hooker's carriage, & a cab we were all-  
+ slowed away, & drove to Hyde Park - Dr. Lindley readily passed  
us in, but to give you a description of the interior as quite impossible,  
I will bring home a print - They have colored the inside with  
work, blue & white, certain bars red, & others yellow, but the whole effect  
on seeing such a great mass is not gaudy but soft & good - One of  
the managers of the interior shewed us about, through the galleries  
where we could look down, & below, & I wondered almost as much  
at the man's memory in knowing what was to be here & what  
there as at anything else - There were but few things unpacked,  
but extensive preparations in cases glass fronted, stands of every  
possible shape, &c. &c. in every direction. In one place they were put  
ting up an immense organ, in another were huge specimens of  
chemicals, an enormous hemi sphere of carbonate of soda, & tubes of  
tartaric acid - It seemed hopeless that all could be finished,  
but they speak very confidently that it will be opened the 1st of  
May - Down the centre are to be statuary & fountains the fountain  
will be all glass! There was one statue one of the most admirable  
things I ever saw; an Amazon on horseback attached by a tiger; the  
tiger rests entirely on the horse, & its claws are planted in the  
frightened creature's sides, while its fierce jaws seize its throat -  
The expression of <sup>utter</sup> terror in the horse, its quivering shrieking, & the  
look in the Amazon's face of dead extremity, & yet the soul that  
rises to meet it as she draws back to <sup>plunge</sup> ~~plant~~ her spear, are very  
grand. I was never more impressed by statuary. - The Austrians  
are fitting up their compartment as four rooms and such  
superb furniture I never saw before. A bedstead of locust wood  
is most exquisitely carved with pretty devices all over, it is a beautiful  
dark veined wood; & there is a book-case of two sorts of oak, almost  
the colour of our curled maple, superbly carved. The only thing  
disappointing was the American or rather 'States' department, for  
they seemed to be doing nothing, & a few boxes in their great space  
seemed as if their contents could not half fill it! The general  
opinion seems to be that they have too much room. And of all

Exhibitions it is one we could least hope to rival, for as yet we import  
almost all manufactured things, or if we make them only  
imitate the foreign - It was certainly a most wonderful & interest-  
ing sight, & curious to see in its days of preparation - The manager  
(I have forgotten his name) told his one of the hardest things was  
to persuade the foreigners they really would open on the 1st of May.  
They advertised that after such a day no more carts would be al-  
lowed to enter the building; he said the next morning there were  
quite a number of foreigners assembled early to see if they would keep  
their word - But he said at 10 o'clock the Ex. before they had had a  
gang of men ready, & by morning some acres of flooring were already  
down to the <sup>east</sup> entrance quite closed. He said it had. Packed  
them in their preparations more than <sup>the building covers 10 acres</sup> any thing else. - Dr.  
Gray & I begin to congratulate ourselves on being abroad to see this  
great show & I advise everyone to come that can.

When I got back Tuesday Ex. I found the sweets letters I ac-  
knowledged last week - And today (Friday, April 10th) I am to thank  
Luc, Patrick & Charlie for their sweets - How glad I was to hear  
Mary's happen was better -

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

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

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