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Vienna, 29th May, 1839, Wednesday Evening. 30

It rained all day yesterday, so Schönbrunn was out of the question, and I spent the morning again at the Cabinet of Botany, and after dinner Philip and myself, in spite of the rain, sat out to visit the Imperial Picture gallery in the Upper Belvedere Palace, which is finely situated in one of the suburbs. The gallery is very extensive, and excellent, especially in the Dutch School, and we had barely time to finish our hasty reconnaissance before it closed for the night. I had a fine view of the city from the windows of the upper story. We stopped at a Café on our way home, took some lemonade and ice-cream, while I read

This morning Galignani's messengers for English news. I went to the gallery as usual, and after working for a little time, Mr. Pouterlich, the sub-assistant, went with me to see the famous Mineralogical Cabinet, the finest in the world. A most splendid affair it is. It occupies a suite of quite ordinary rooms, but is excellently arranged and shows to great advantage. Here are all the fine gems, diamonds, emerald, topaz, and all sorts of precious stones, both polished and natural. I saw also the boquet of precious stones made for Maria Theresa, a most brilliant affair. The collection of aerolites is unique. I intend to visit it again on Saturday. I obtained some useful information here as to the mode of constructing the shelves &c in a mineralogical cabinet; their plan here is the best I have seen. If I knew what I now do I could have given a plan for the ~~arrangement~~ construction of the Cabinets at the Lyceum infinitely better than the present. Returning to the Botanical Gallery I occupied myself in selecting specimens for myself from Hügel's New Holland Collections. Endlicher offers me there and other plants as many as I like. He also has offered to send to Hamburg for me a copy of the *Iconographia Generis Plantarum*, the *Annals of the Vienna Botanical Garden*, and some other of his works. After dinner, finding nothing else to do for a few moments, I went into a book seller's & the Publisher of Endlicher's *Generis Plantarum*

This day we had a fete in Vienna: it is some Catholic holy day, I scarcely know what. But there was a grand procession in the morning, of all the priestlings in the city, nearly all the soldiers, the officers of government, the Imperial family &c. which I endured a good squeezing in the crowd to get a sight of. We expected to see the Empress, but the day was not very fine and she did not make her appearance; neither did Prince Metternich, whom I was much more desirous to see than all the rest; but he is old and infirm, and is seldom seen in public. I saw the Emperor and the Princes but not very distinctly. The procession was a very fine one; but they say it was less splendid than usual upon such occasions. The shops were all closed during the day, and so were all the institutions, so we were obliged to keep a holiday. After dinner Philip and myself walked out on the glacis, and down to the Prater, the celebrated Park or pleasure-ground of Vienna, which upon such occasions is always thronged if the weather be favorable. It occupies an island in the Danube, four miles long; it is partly wooded, fine drives are laid out through it, and pedestrians can run about on the grass as they like. We spent most time in the portion where the common people resort, where there are crowds of Cafes, show-rooms, music of every sort, mountebanks, clowns, and everything you can imagine. Later the ~~drives~~ carriage-roads began to be filled with equipages of every kind, some of them aristocratic and splendid, others ordinary, even the common hackney carriages of the town, all filled with gentlemen and ladies, and affording a very lively scene, which we enjoyed until sunset. We stopped at a Cafe on the glacis, took some ice-cream which is here both good and cheap, not half the New-York price. — and then returned home. I must discard this wretched Austrian paper, which I can scarcely write upon: it is like a blanket.



Gray, Asa. 1839. "Gray, Asa May 29, 1839 [to Torrey]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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