

New Feb. 24th - 1887 -

My dear Sue,

My days go on in quiet monotony - Dr. Gray is off to work before 9, & does not come home till 6, when we dine - He generally reads aloud to me part of the Evening, & then occupies himself with bundles of duplicates - I think sometimes it would be a luxury to have some old, familiar friend to have a little chat with, but I am always busy, always undertaking more than I can accomplish, so that I have not time to get home sick - But I think in time I shall acquire a great habit, if not taste for solitude - We occasionally diversify it with a trip to London - And about twice a week Mrs. Crook comes up stairs, & with due solemnity, announces, "Miss Hooker & another lady." & Miss Hooker & Miss Bendish come in to make a call for a few minutes; & about once a week I walk up to West Park, & am similarly announced by John (fat, solemn & dark, in black small clothes & stockings) And about once a week I dine there, on which occasions Dr. Gray instead of going home at 6, comes down stairs to tea, (they dine all, being all invalids) & returns to the study until he comes down to escort me home - The ladies pass the time working & talking - And these are the amounts of my ordinary dissipation - But it seems as if a week ago today people were determined to do something extraordinary - After returning from our attempt to see the Queen, I thought I would use the hour when I knew none of the Hookers would come, as it was their dinner time, in a necessary work of the toilette, namely washing my hair - So when I was naturally therefore doing what in dwabittle, I heard someone rushed into the sitting-room, & Mrs. Crook came in, ^{to the chamber} & said "Mr. Ward!" So I had to make a hasty toilette & go in; he stood some time, & came to ask us over to Colerham today - When he was gone I was making another attempt, when Mrs. Crook brought in a card, & said, "Seeing I was busy, she told the lady I was engaged" - Miss Hallit, the lady of the door in the dark - Before I had my dress on there was another piskering up stairs, & "Miss Hooker & another lady." So I had to hurry on Cap, paraphernalia, (does it not seem endless, what with belt, pin, collar, &c. when one is in a hurry?) & go in to see them - So that day was quite marked in its experiences -

Tuesday we had been invited to dine with Mrs. Fay of the British Museum - So I was busy with making some little alterations necessary in some of my finery. The weekly letters came from you, & from Lizzy - And Dr. Fay got one from Dr. Lyman containing quite a promising account of students in the Scientific School. - As we were to take a carriage into London, we proposed to Miss Wendlow to dine with us, & pass the evening with her parents in London. - He had a pleasant drive in, for she is a lively & agreeable companion. - We stopped at Dr. Booth's, that I might stop only half an hour on my way. - I was arranged in the elegance of my new watered silk, low neck & short sleeves, this waist is made with a cape behind coming down like a petticoat to a point in front, the panels of cotton with rows in the middle, above the front between the capes & sleeves are trimmed with two rows of lace, real, don't think me extravagant, but Aunt Lizzy said it must be so, & that the lace would always be useful; & they seem all imitation in Paris. Then I wore my new French black dress, de Valliere's, Old velvet & lace, & a great quantity of drops of beads of various sizes, old velvet ribbons, & then was very startled I wore a lot of Old things I got in Geneva, & reported my new spiders with I think very justice; at least so I think. - My heart failed a little as I drew near the door, for I had never seen either velvet or ribbons, & had no idea what we should meet, but on arrival just in, & the door was thrown open, & the room suddenly announced, Dr. & Mrs. ^{Miss} Fay, & I was always introduced, viz. & that I had come from Paris. There, Sunday old ladies, one only then when we went in; one in velvet, but on space arms & shoulders covered with a lace mantle lined with amber silk, a pure velvet dress, & a cab with pink flowers, & abundance of jewelry. - Mrs. Blane, the wife of the architect of the new portion of Buckingham Palace, & Mrs. B. also. By her I sat down. - Mrs. Fay was a nice, comfortable, looking person in figured black silk, mourning. - The other side of the room was Mrs. T. Lamb Hill, in a rich damask with high waist & open sleeves, remarkably round. - I am giving a very long account, but it is my first dinner party. I am quite disappointed in the eyes of the English ladies, I see as many thin people as at home, I am sure - There was of course Mrs. Rowland Hill, of cheap portion memory, then a Mrs. Marchale of the Bank of England, & some other gentlemen I don't know. - Then arrived Mr. & Mrs. Smith. - He is an M. P. - She was a splendor! Her dress purple velvet, & high necked lace with a Cap à la Marise Stuart, & loose lace sleeves, a very pretty dress - And here, this were wonderfully kind in being generally covered. - Dinner was on the table, & after waiting until the last couple, Mrs. & Mrs. Brown were announced, & the afterwards that old lady in Old velvet, but with a handsome, sweet face. - Mrs. Brown was appointed to hand me down to dinner, & I immediately began informing her, as the occasion occurred, how cheap the American dresses were going to run this

summer. - I did not know what Mrs. Brown was. - He quickly remarked to have heard nothing about it. And on my proceeding to enlighten him, he just leaned over to me & said Mrs. Brown would be likely to know better than I did. - It was not until some time after, introduced by saying that it was Brown, of the firm of Brown & Siddley & Co. Stockport, & therefore of course (what of the fellow) line & he is also M. P. - He had a pleasant time. - And the dinner affected not from the speaking of dinner parties with us, except on the same course, same, puddings, jellies & patines, or "sweets," make one circle, & are put on at the same time. - You have shall sit upon the other side of me at dinner, & kindly offered us tickets to visit the Bank of England. - I must tell you a thing I saw there, left by a gentleman with Mrs. Fay to decide what might be the material of the crucifix, it was a cross, Penches long, made of the stem of a fossil palm - the trunk of our Saviour's body was a pearl of enormous size, & is singularly distorted as to form a close resemblance to a human trunk; the shoulders, arms, head, & thighs, legs feet were like. - There was a scroll with the moral inscription, "Behold, and pity; & below the feet a crucifix of gold for the holy water, it was beautiful as well as curious. - They said they loved to the unfortunate inmates of Madras. - There were two sweet Charles Keble in the room by some English children. - After dinner Mrs. Smith took me under her charge until the gentlemen came, & such a talker. - I could only dash about ahead; & am afraid I was not sufficiently conversant with her eloquence, her enthusiasm, her benevolence, & her courage, nor by the way either that she looked at me with her great black eyes. - And I very much. - When at last she was gone Mrs. Brown kindly came over & sat down by me - she had a sweet face. - At length our carriage was announced & after picking up Miss Wendlow, we had a pleasant drive back to New in the moonlight. - That I have pretty much decided not to try to go in to London parties again while at New. - The same conversationally & introduced in the morning to rail-road, & a carriage is very expensive, to say nothing of the trouble of a 12 miles drive before & after - For an evening party it is quite out of the question - I no longer will think of going till after 11 or 12, and that, keep them up, dance especially, tremendously late. - Until 4, 5, or even 12. - Most absurd! - Then we got home, which was sometime after 11, Dr. Fay had to be my femme de chambre in getting me out of my dress, as well as in having put me in. - I believe he was half an hour fastening it, when I went - It was laced behind, & what with strings, & hooks, & the facing, which he said does exactly like sewing European fashion, & the business-like way he went to work, & the purple which faced him to tightness, for it did not meet very readily being new & a little tight, & then the mystery what it is with the end of the laces, one both felt the godmother, both was advised. - He said we were much up and down with our little maid, & I repeat some

Feb. 29 -

I must tell you a story Mr. Brown told of Sir Charles Napier who is an Admiral, because they say it is so very characteristic - It seems they have made a good deal of stir about a large quantity of gunpowder, which they found was stored near Liverpool - Mr. Brown wrote to Sir Charles saying where this powder was, & asking, as he had been at the siege of Acre & could therefore somewhat judge, what would be the effect on Liverpool of the ignition of 500 tons there - Sir Charles wrote back in answer "My dear Sir, It would blow you all to the devil; how much farther I cannot say. Yours truly, C. Napier" (Dr. Gray quietly remarked they couldn't go further to face worse!) Mr. Brown on meeting him afterwards, said he should like a letter from him which he could read in the house, as he wished to bring the matter up - Sir Charles asked to see the letter he had written before, & on Mr. Brown's handing it, "Oh," said he, "read that it will do very well!"

Wednesday I believe was only marked by call No. 2 from "Miss Hooker & another lady" - Thursday I went up there to call before 1, & Miss Hooker would not let me go but said I must stay till lunch, though I told her I had some letters to write for the Post - Miss Weston proposed walking down with me, & was to borrow our key for the private gate to the gardens - As we drew near our lodgings the clock struck 1/4 to 3, & I then knew I could not get my letters in by 1/2 past, so I thought it as well to put it off till next day, & enjoy the walk with Miss W. We had a nice walk over the gardens together & into the great store - And I tried to master some botanical names - Friday was as usual writing day & Dr. Gray brought back a delightful account at night; Miss Hooker was in her room with a severe cold, coughing sadly, & Lady H. poorly - Saturday I went up to see how they were, & found Miss Weston out, but met her as I was returning, & walked a short way with her. The invalids here improving; but I did not improve my own cold, I found in the evening, for the wind was cold & sharp; so Sunday I staid at home - Dr. Gray went to London to church, & returned with Prof. Cooke, who came down to pass the afternoon & dine with us - What a queer little way he has of making little exclamations & asking to himself all the time! He told us one of his adventures which amused us not a little - Sunday last broke the dinner with the Geological Society - Some great men is present, & sat at the head with Sir Charles Lyell on one side, & sundry other learned men around, Sedgwick, &c. Cooke was in a corner seated next Addison the astronomer; talking quietly with him, he suddenly heard as a toast, some compliment to the Scientific men of America, & their congratulations on having me present, Professor Cooke! There was no getting away, he must get up & make a speech! Before all the great dons & some 100 beside! - Before Cooke left us we made an agreement to meet in town Wednesday - We had a ticket admitting to

the Bank of England - And he had a ticket admitting the same number
Is the Queen's News so we agreed to join forces. - I had written to Mr. Marc
shall asking him to fulfil his kind offer, (think of the bold-faced thing!)
I had had a very polite answer. - My cold was so heavy Monday
that as it looked showery I gave up all idea of going to Clapham, & staid
quietly at home. - Imagine me as in days some 9 years ago, with mouth
open, swollen lip & nose of a fiery red, & eyes streaming, & feeling as Charles
Lamb said, that my brains were as empty as a barrel in Dorchester.
Charwoman out for the day, & you have a picture of your sweet sister.
Dr. Gray went to Clapham in the evening, so I was solitary from 9 till 11 1/2 P.M.
Tuesday morning brought me such a rich bundle of letters from you
dear Sue, from Charles, from John, & pleasure rare, from Brother - I am
afraid, mother, I shall not let you off from writing to me if you write
such pleasant letters! - But how one writes a thing, & then the next
steamer brings a reproof for it! - Thank you Sue for the list of passengers -
no matter if they are late, I like them - Your note shall go in an epistle
to Dr. Harvey today - but the postage need not trouble you, for it will
all come within my 1/2 of which goes for a penny! - I wish indeed I could
join a weekly meeting - But was sadly sorry they are not on the same
day. For I fear I can never persuade this man of mine to give two days
with his Cambridge engagements too - And we are not yet so Exquisite
that I can travel about alone evening - Thank you, Charlie, for the politics;
for we do not get our Travellers very regularly, they are often missed,
And we do not care to keep on when our year's subscription is up - I am
sorry Mr. Bowen's is rejected - But I cannot feel so sorry as if I did not
feel he had reaped somewhat as he has sowed, & that the world may
see that a bitter spirit does as man himself haron. - But I am sorry
for him privately, for I suppose the pecuniary loss is great to him - And
I believe he does not carry his worldly spirit into private life, but is
there kind & generous - As for the party who did it I have very little
respect ^{for} them, or indeed for any political party just now - I should
be in despair did I judge of the way things were managed by the
political ^{parties} with their mutual abuse, misrepresentation, prejudice, un-
fairness & deceipts - But I see that on the whole things go on well, & on
the whole advance in honesty, justice, fairness; so I take hope in a bet-
ter future & a moral reform in the political world - There is one point
in which they have decidedly the advantage of us in England - They are
vastly more tolerant of political differences - People are as good friends

& mingle easily in private, though they may be ever so widely separated in public. — And they seem to be able to respect each other's differences, to think a man may be mistaken, but not necessarily a rogue a man political demagogue, because he differs from them. — I have seen with real pleasure this mutual difference & mutual respect, & longed for a little of it with us, where if a man differs from you politically, he is blackened all over, & one cannot expect anything but bad from him. — We need to learn with us more than any other social circle I think, that people can conscientiously, patiently, righteously differ in religion & politics. — And one sees when away what foreigners mean by our want of toleration, & the tyranny of party spirit.

I am sorry father is working so long, & so hard. — And how sorry I am to hear Aunt Sally says family have had so much sickness! — It seems so strange to hear it as so cold with you. — When I walked in the park Tuesday off. They were cutting the grass! — Wednesday morning, my cold was much better, so at 10 o'clock Dr. Gray & I took our way to the R. E., where we met Miss Newell, who brought a pleasant report of the invalids, though neither of them are yet down stairs. It was one of the coldest days we have had. Not pretty, but such a raw, cold wind, like one of our chilly, diabolical, Northwest winds, only drier, & they say these east winds are common in England in the Spring. If so I shall not regret the one beautiful evening of my life which I have looked upon this year as giving me. — He took a fly from Waterloo Station to the Bank. — When is a lady like a tourist? — When she takes a fly to go to the Bank! —

There we met Coke, & while Dr. Gray went in to get the ticket, we sat with him & then looking for the Ward, who had promised Dr. Gray Monday & to join us; presently they came, then Maria. — And now I must promise that the Bank is one of the most interesting places I have seen, & that if any of you come abroad you must go & see the Bank. — And that there was an enormous deal of wonderful machinery, but how it worked & why it did it, I cannot tell. I like to see machinery, it is beautiful kind of parts, its certain productions, its wonderful perfection, it seems as if it were a thing of life, its undulating, constant labour, all delight me. But I never understand it, & look at it as I would at the wonderful effects of Magic & fairy power, it is as mysterious, except that I know some minds can solve it. — So first we saw ~~the~~ ^{the} printing of the bank notes. — The paper is made purposely, each note

has its own mark, they are counted out in certain numbers & given to the printers. — I should think were a dozen presses side by side in a long row, & as each note is struck the press itself registers it in a locked case at the side of the room. — So that a man cannot strike off a note that is not registered. — Then they go into another room to receive the date & number, & the machine itself changes the number any time. — Then I saw them with its own working the new ^{note} ~~machine~~ which is too. — For each note is a different number, so that with the number & date of a note, you can trace it through the bank for 10 years. — Then we went down stairs where the book binding is done, everything is done in the power, but making the paper. — Then where they printed ^{collieries} ~~collieries~~, each number changed again by machinery. — Then to see the steam engine which does the whole work, & then the boiler. — The furnace is worth seeing for a simple contrivance which saves a man's care of it all day, the hopper above is filled with coals in the morning, & by a simple machinery feeds the fire itself, occasionally dropping a few coals, & that it may be evenly distributed the furnace is made to revolve slowly. — In the yard we saw the great place where every year they burn the notes which 10 years ago, it is of bricks laid with four spaces, 12 feet & more in diameter 11 or 12 high. — 6 feet wide each end of it. — It takes two days to burn it when full, & I don't know how many times full they burn it. — The notes once brought back are never returned. — They are cancelled by island in holes, which when filled are placed in the library, & the pile of notes each day received, are tied in bundles, stored in the library, & after ten years, as I said before, burned. — We went into the room where these operations are performed, & then down into the room below where we saw the days before notes. — I dare not say how many 100,000 pounds. — All nothing now, the yesterday morning, 1 of some them, a fortune! — We saw some of the first bank notes struck; kept as a curiosity. — 182. — And some notes, now nothing for 1,000,000 to. — Then we went to the Bullion vaults. — In the office room there were ^{many} ~~many~~ American dollars by shoals full. — And great ^{and} ~~and were there of silver melted up. — Then in vaults were two trucks in heavy iron wheels filled with masses of gold stamped like bricks, each brick worth 5,000 £. Oh, so heavy! — I lifted one. — Then round the walls little bags of gold piled up, gold, gold, gold! — Then we went up stairs to the treasury, where we kept the money to go out for coin.~~

lation - The room was lined with heavy iron safes from floor to ceiling, & opening one the gentleman in charge gave me to hold in my hand a package of £5,000 notes worth £500,000 - Short lived riches though - A merry old gentleman opened the specie safes & invited us to take as much as we could carry; one bag containing ^{one of} £5,000 was as much as I could lift; but he asked Miss Ward if she could not carry two, & begged her to call some other day - As we went out he said, "it was a bad place to come to; we could not invite our friends to take anything, must send them away as they came!" Each safe has two locks with different keys, & no one person can go to them alone - Then we went to a room where they weigh the sovereigns, a most ingenious little machine, being fed from a trough from which they drop in, weights ^{each} the sovereign as it falls, puts the heavy ones one side, & the light ones, ~~be~~ they light the hundredth of a grain, are thrown aside - Then we went through great rooms filled with clerks where the various kinds of business are transacted - Indeed it was a wonderful place, & worth a journey to see - And I am afraid my sketch is miserably imperfect -

When we left we took an omnibus to Piccadilly, & then walked to the Pews which are directly behind Buckingham Palace - As we went in, we saw two state carriages with blk. horses for the attendants, & one with cream colored horses for the Queen, just leaving the gates to take the Queen to the levee at St. James' - They were gorgeous with gilding & mountings - Little gilt crowns raised high on each corner, & the horses harness was very heavy & covered with gilding, & the coachmen were perfect race-shows with their curled wigs, & gold lace on their coats, & their stockings, & small clothes - And the footmen behind also in crested hats - The Queen always has cream-colored horses on state occasions, & their harness is red morocco with gilt ornaments, the black horses, black leather & gilt - We had met two sheriff's carriages in the City going, I suppose, to carry some sheriffs to the ceremony; & they were gorgeously gay, & looked quite out of place with all their finery in the murky air & crowded streets - But I must wait for another letter to give an account of the Pews (which means stables) as it is too late to take another sheet - So with kisses to the children all round, I am most lovingly, Jane -

Patrick: forgive me that I did not before thank you for your nice envelope -



Gray, Jane Loring. 1851. "Gray, Jane Feb. 24, 1851 [to Loring]." *Asa and Jane Gray travel correspondence*

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