XIV

Cuba, Scotland, and Europe under the Bayonet
1849
(LETTERS 667 TO 712)

In 1849, at fifty-five, Bryant had served for twenty years as principal editor of the Evening Post. No longer president of the American Art-Union, he was, nevertheless, more intimate than ever with many of the artists who had given it success, and whom he often saw at meetings of the Sketch Club, the Century Association, and the National Academy. He had become a “fireside poet” whose verses drew parody and satire as well as imitation and adulation. In his A Fable for Critics in 1848 young James Russell Lowell had conceded Bryant to be “first bard of your nation,” but saw him standing “in supreme ice-olation.” A Lowell imitator complained, “I like friend Bryant, / But as a man;—I can’t endure a giant.” A less jocular critic commented that, on reading “Thanatopsis,” “one seems to be on the mount of contemplation, elevated above the manifold influences of a striving world, and breathing a purer air.”

The Evening Post was in good shape. With John Bigelow as its associate editor, and both circulation and the business of the commercial printing office growing, Bryant felt free to travel, and he and Charles Leupp planned two trips abroad that year. On the eve of their departure that spring for the South and Cuba, Bryant reminded his readers of several public issues on which the Evening Post had taken stands over the past twenty years which were later vindicated by public approval: its advocacy of free trade, an independent national treasury, and other reforms, and—in the North, at least—its opposition to slavery in the western territories.

On March 21 Bryant and Leupp sailed for Savannah, landing there on the 25th. After visiting with friends, they took another steamer for Charleston, and on the 28th went by railway to Augusta. Here they were shown an immense plantation, and a cotton mill impressive in its demonstration that poor white girls could find clean and respectable work in an operation previously performed by Negro slaves. After a night with the novelist Simms at Woodlands, they returned to Charleston, and on April 1st sailed for Havana, stopping for an evening at Key West, a community engaged solely in salvaging wrecked vessels and succoring their crews. On April 4 they reached the Cuban capital.

It was Holy Week. Bryant was intrigued by the strange processions and customs of the first Spanish-speaking land he had visited. Noticing the “brilliant languor” of the Cuban ladies who shopped without leaving their carriages, or lolled on sofas in their parlor windows, he felt indolent in this tropical climate. He managed to enter crowded churches on Holy Thursday to watch the worshippers, mostly weeping women, kiss the feet of an image of the Saviour, and on Good Friday saw another image of Christ carried past his window with a military escort and somber music. On Saturday evening, Holy Week over, he
mingled with crowds in the Plaza de Armas. As often before, in Europe, he found his way to the public cemetery, the Campo Santo, to see rudely confined corpses thrown into hastily dug trenches, amid screeches from a nearby madhouse. On Easter Sunday he followed a procession into the cathedral, and that evening attended a masked ball in the vast Teatro Tacón. On Monday he watched the slaughter of gamecocks in cockpits outside the city walls, a "horrid sight," he admitted in his diary.

Bryant's interest in Cuba had arisen during his residence in 1828 with the Salazars, who had introduced him to visiting and exiled Cubans. More recently he had been made aware that American slaveholders were eager to add this lush land to their holdings, by purchase or, if not, by seizure. In 1848 President Polk tried to buy the island from Spain without success. Now, the refugee Narciso López was in New York planning the first of several attempts to seize Cuba and offer it to the United States. Consequently, Bryant inquired into local conditions of race relations and slavery. Leaving Havana on April 10, he and Leupp visited a coffee plantation at San Antonio de los Baños, and at Matanzas inspected the sugar mills and cane fields of an American planter and the plantation, reputed the finest on the island, of an English company. Returning toward Havana, Bryant was drawn, at Güines, to watch the execution of a Negro slave by garroting. The "horror of the spectacle," he confessed later, made him regret having given in to "idle curiosity." Here at Güines he learned of the thriving foreign slave trade which, nominally outlawed forty years earlier, had nevertheless brought nearly half a million Africans to the Western Hemisphere since 1840. A cargo of slaves had been landed near Güines a few days earlier, more than one hundred of whom had died on the voyage. He was further shocked to hear that slaveers were bringing in Indians from Yucatán and natives of eastern Asia.

After three more days at Havana, Bryant and Leupp sailed for Charleston on April 22, returning to New York by way of Wilmington and Richmond, and reaching home on the 28th. Within three weeks of their return, New York suffered two catastrophes. On May 10, as tragedians Edwin Forrest and William Macready gave rival performances of Macbeth, a large mob attacked the Astor Place Opera House, determined to drive the Englishman from the stage, and a small militia unit, mustered to help police, fired on the crowd in self-defense, killing and wounding scores. And on May 15 the first of more than a thousand deaths occurred in the city from Asiatic cholera. The fact that this epidemic originated in Europe seems not to have deterred Bryant, however, from taking his planned excursion across the Atlantic, and on June 13 he and Leupp sailed from New York on the steamship Niagara. Their itinerary:

burgh; 28–31: en route Birmingham, via Melrose, Kelso, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Newcastle upon Tyne, York, Manchester.


Reaching Liverpool on June 25, the travelers stopped briefly with David Christie at Manchester, then went to London. Bryant breakfasted and dined with Samuel Rogers, who had feared in 1845 they might never meet again, and was entertained by publisher John Chapman, whose home in the Strand was a haven for writers. He and Leupp went to music halls and to the theater, where they saw Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews in Charles Dance’s A Wonderful Woman, and Sheridan Knowles’s The Wife. They visited art exhibitions and picture collections at the Royal Academy, Hampton Court, Dulwich College, Sir John Soane’s Museum, the British Museum, the British Institution, the Water-colour Society, and Greenwich. Bryant was invited by John Sheepshanks to see the collection of British paintings which he later gave the National Gallery, and at Robert Thorburn’s studio he saw the miniatures of this artist who was just then a little notorious for having quarreled with Queen Victoria and refusing to see her when sent for.

On this third visit to the Old World, Bryant was most drawn to those areas he had not yet seen, the Scottish Highlands and islands, and Switzerland. At Edinburgh he was again entertained by the Christie family, particularly artist Alexander Christie, who showed him through Chambers’ publishing house, and introduced him to the secretary of the Scottish Society of the Arts, David Hill. Leaving Edinburgh on July 11, the travelers would be in new territory for nearly two weeks. Bryant was impressed by the old capital, Perth, where he lingered at the graves of the tragic maidens Bessie Bell and Mary Gray. He rode a mailcoach on a misty night past Birnham Wood, Dunkeld, and Blair Atholl, and across the moors to Inverness, then through seacoast villages, noting them as “roses without and dirt within,” to Wick, where a little steamer took the companions to Lerwick in the Shetlands. On these windswept, treeless islands, he was intrigued by the little ponies, sheep, and cattle, and supposed their diminutive size, similar to that of the Picts, the original islanders, due to malnutrition.

Returning to the mainland, after a stop at Kirkwall in the Orkneys, the companions visited Aberdeen, where they found amusement at a concert of “Female American Serenaders in the picturesque costumes of their country, six
English women singing negro songs, with faces painted red, short dull red petticoats, and strings of beads round their necks." Crossing again to Inverness, they traveled up the Strathglass to an immense estate in the Guisachan Forest belonging to a descendant of Simon Fraser, the violent seventeenth-century Baron Lovat. Here they traveled on ponies with the present owner, an acquaintance of Leupp's, to the top of Ben Sassenach, to see a broad panorama of the Highlands. After observing an isolated community of cottagers who spoke only Gaelic, they took a little steamer down the Caledonian Canal and the lochs to Oban, whence they visited the caves on Staffa, and Iona, the shrine of early Christianity in Britain. From Oban they went on to Glasgow, "tired," Bryant noted, "of bare mountains." Here they saw James Lawson's family, and went through the great Napier iron foundry. At Edinburgh Bryant learned of a fire which had destroyed the old mill at Cedarmere, and corresponded regarding the insurance. Before leaving he enjoyed an afternoon with Francis, Lord Jeffrey, famous literary critic and jurist.

On July 28 the travelers started southward, stopping at Melrose Abbey and at Walter Scott's home, Abbotsford, where, Bryant recorded disgustedly, "The fellow at the gate, tipsy and crusty, the woman at the house flushed and peremptory would not allow us to see the inside. . . . The house an ugly piece of architecture." But they saw Scott's tomb at Dryburgh Abbey, and at Sandy-Knowe his boyhood home. Passing through Berwick-upon-Tweed, Newcastle upon Tyne, and York, they reached David Christie's in Manchester on July 30. Here they went with geologist Edward Binney to tea with the radical weaver-poet Samuel Bamford. After three days with Ferdinand Field in Birmingham, while Leupp lingered at Christie's, Bryant went on with his companion to London. Here Bryant saw Edwin Field and Reginald Parker, and breakfasted and dined twice with Rogers. At Parker's he met naturalist William Benjamin Campbell and philanthropist Edward Enfield; at Rogers', artist Charles Eastlake, soon to be president of the Royal Academy and director of the National Gallery, and his bride, Elizabeth, who had lately published a bitter criticism of Jane Eyre, and Amelia Murray, maid of honor to the queen and writer on the United States; at Field's, artists Clarkson Stanfield and George Fripp, and Rowland Hill, inventor of the adhesive postage stamp. Leaving Rogers' home after dinner one evening, Bryant was touched when his eighty-six-year-old host overtook him and walked with him through St. James's Park and on to his hotel on Grosvenor Street.

Crossing the Channel on August 9, Bryant and Leupp passed three days in Paris, during which they went with John Gadsby Chapman to the Louvre, and Bryant had his first sight of "Europe under the Bayonet"—soldiers everywhere, as the city still suffered under the "convenient fiction," as Bryant called it, of a state of siege following the crushing of the workers' revolution of 1848. Passing quickly through Belgium and up the Rhine, they reached Heidelberg on the 15th. Here they found the streets full of drunken Prussian soldiers, the city in another state of siege—"an invention," Bryant noted, "for exercising a military despotism." His friend Professor Hagen, lately a member of the short-lived revolutionary Diet, despaired that, in this most democratic of German states, the intellectuals had failed the revolution. Bryant was glad to escape from what he had once thought a delightful old city. But as he made his way
toward Munich he saw soldiers lounging everywhere, while women worked in
the fields, and in Bavaria he was disappointed by the omnipresent military.
And he was lonely among scenes he had visited in Munich with his wife and
children fourteen years earlier, when, he wrote Frances, "we were all so much
farther from the grave than now—and perhaps so much more innocent."

With relief, Bryant escaped the "perpetual sight of the military uniform"
as he crossed Lake Constance to Switzerland on August 25, and he wrote to the
Evening Post, "I could almost have kneeled and kissed the shore of the hospi-
table republic." He visited nearly all its principal towns, from St. Gall and
Zurich to Lausanne and Geneva, traveling through its mountains and across
its lakes. His respect for the Swiss and their open society was heightened by
contrast with the despotisms he had passed through; he praised their freedom
from passport and customs barriers, their architecture, their sturdy self-reliance,
their generosity toward political refugees.

Pausing overnight at Geneva, the two friends pushed on to Paris, reaching
there on September 5; during the ensuing fortnight they shopped and dined
often with fellow-Sketch Club members Albinola, Chapman, Seymour, and
Wright, and at the Théâtre Français they saw Rachel in Racine's Phèdre;
Bryant thought her acting "as perfect as ever." The American inventor Rich-
ard March Hoe showed Bryant through the plant of the newspaper La Patrie,
where he had installed one of his high-speed rotary presses. The Count Cir-
court called on the American poet, whose verses he had rendered into French
prose. The picture dealer Adolph Goupil introduced Bryant to the Dutch re-
ligious painter Ary Scheffer.

Here at Paris Bryant heard that the cholera was raging in London, and he
was reluctant to go there directly, particularly since he had suffered during the
early part of his journey from diarrhea, then considered a common symptom of
the disease. But now, he wrote Fanny Godwin, his health was very good, though
he was "becoming a florid old gentleman." The disease soon subsided in Lon-
don, and after a week's diversion through Belgium and Holland, seeing pictures
and meeting artists Louis Robbe and Jakob Eeckhout at Brussels, Bryant and
Leupp crossed from Ostend to Dover on September 28 for a third visit to Lon-
don. Again, Rogers was attentive. At his home Bryant met the Irish poet and
wit Henry Luttrell; Mrs. Fox Lane, "a clever masculine woman"; and a son of
Lord Littleton, first Baron Hatherton, "a gambler, with a young and very
pretty wife." Leaving the capital on October 2, the travelers visited David
Christie in Manchester, and sailed from Liverpool October 6.

Reaching home on the 20th, Bryant found his wife rather disconsolate and
sick of Roslyn—a disappointment, since he had anticipated happy autumn days
at Cedarmere. But, he wrote Leonice Moulton, he succeeded so far in recon-
ciling Frances to the country "that she passed a whole day with me in planting
and transplanting trees shrubs and roses." The newspaper was prospering; he
and Bigelow were soon engaging new correspondents and reporters and an-
nouncing two new "Extras" for California, Oregon, the Sandwich Islands, and
Central America, with a "full chronicle of European and domestic news—
of peculiar interest to the inhabitants of the Pacific." The Bryants took new
rooms in town, where Dana visited them and urged Bryant to put into book
form his travel letters of the past fifteen years.
To Frances F. Bryant

Savannah March 25, 1849.

My dear Frances.

I arrived here this morning about half past eight o'clock after a very pleasant passage. We did not leave the port of New York on Wednesday evening; our steamer, the Tennessee, a capital vessel, as tight and staunch as oak timbers can make her with a good natured and very careful captain ran down to the Quarantine Ground and remained there anchored all night, with the rain beating on the deck. In the morning the wind had chopp'd about from the south east to the northwest, and was sweeping with a good deal of strength over the waters, but as it came from the land it raise'd no swell; the light of the sun was white and cold and the decks slippery with ice. As the day advanced we seemed to have glided into a warmer temperature; Friday was milder yet, and when the sun rose on Saturday morning it rose like a sun in June, with orange coloured beams too warm to stand in with comfort. An awning was stretched over one third of the deck and all the passengers, except one or two who decline'd leaving their berths, on pretence of not being quite recovered from seasickness came up from below and sat in the shade enjoying as pleasant an air it seemed to me as ever blew. Our captain gave a wide berth to all the shallows,—being as I have said extremely careful, and not being as I was told well acquainted with the coast,—which probably prolong'd the passage somewhat. Last night about twelve o'clock we made the Tybee or Savannah light house, and if we had had a pilot might have come in immediately. As there was no pilot we were obliged to wait till this morning. I have of course had my share of sea sickness and my head swims yet with the motion of the vessel.

I have seen Mr. and Mrs. Tefft and have been to church with them. They inquired about you with much interest and chid me for not bringing you. I have seen also Dr. Arnold whose wife is still comfortable though not well, and Mr. and Mrs. Padelford, all of whom inquired if I had not brought you. I told them I wished I had.

We shall run out on the rail road tomorrow I think to Macon, and then to Charleston taking Midway and Mr. Simms in our way. On Saturday the Isabel, a fine staunch, tight steamer departs from Charleston for Havana. She touches at Key West where she makes a stop of some ten hours and completes the passage to Cuba in about three days. I expect therefore to be in Cuba as early as the fourth of April.

The grass is green here in the squares, the locust trees are in leaf, and the peach trees and flowering almonds in blossom. I wish you could have seen what a beautiful aspect the groves on some of the slopes presented, as we came up to the city this morning; the willows in full leaf, and other trees in their bright new green. The temperature is very agreeable, and we have no occasion for fires.
I shall write to you again very soon. Pray ask the men to water the asparagus plants with sea-water, and let Hermann\(^8\) read a book on American Agriculture by Fleischmann,\(^6\) which you will find among the books brought from town, an octavo volume in light coloured covers.

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR.

1. Israel Keech Tefft and his wife, whom the Bryants had met in 1843. See Letters 454, 463.

2. Dr. Richard Dennis Arnold; see 462.3.

3. Padelford was a Savannah merchant whom the Bryants had met on their visit to that city in April 1843.

4. At Woodlands, William Gilmore Simms's plantation in the Barnwell District, about 100 miles northwest of Charleston, South Carolina. See 453.1.

5. Bryant's new German gardener. See Frances to Cyrus Bryant, April 17, 1849, BCHS.


668. *To* Frances F. Bryant

Augusta, Georgia  March 29, 1849.

My dear Frances.

We did not go to Macon by railway, as we intended when I wrote to you last, and a project which we next contemplated of coming to this place by water was also abandoned; the reason in both cases was the want of time. After I wrote you, Mr. Leupp and myself went with Mr. Tefft and Dr. Arnold to Bonaventure, where we had another sight of the grand old avenues of live oaks, with their cloudy drapery of moss. The solitude of the place is at an end, in consequence of a house being built close to it, and the oaks are enclosed to form a cemetery. Still they are a very remarkable object and Leupp said they were worth coming five hundred miles to see.

Mr. Tefft and his wife and Dr. Arnold desired me to present you their very particular regards.

We took passage in the steamer General Clinch, for Charleston on Monday evening, commanded by the same Captain Peck with whom we went from St. Augustine to Savannah when the sand-fleas stung us so at St. Mary's.\(^1\) On Tuesday morning we landed about eleven o'clock. In the evening I called on Mr. and Mrs. Gilman who inquired after you with much interest.\(^2\) The next morning at nine o'clock we took the railway to this [city?]\(^3\) which is pleasantly situated on the Savannah river 138 miles from Charleston.

We passed by Midway where Mr. Roach lives,\(^4\) and through Aiken famous as a resort for the planters during the hot months. Midway looks...
much as it did, a very small village in the midst of a boundless waste of forest; indeed the whole state, to one who passes on this railway seems little else but woods. Aiken is the largest place before you reach Augusta, and it had a pleasant look, consisting as it does of cottages dispersed among the trees. It stands on high ground and immediately west of it begin the declivities by which the country descends to the valley of the Savannah.

We arrived here between five and six o’clock in the afternoon and started out to look at the place; the evening was uncommonly beautiful, though the morning had been chilly. The air was soft like that of an evening with us in early June, and the sun in the midst of purple clouds and making a glorious set. Augusta consists of broad unpaved streets parallel with the river and planted with trees. Some of these are very pleasant, particularly Green Street and Marbury Street where the shade in summer must be quite dense, and where the houses are surrounded with gardens and shrubbery. We walked out into the country; the fields were green and though the season is later here than at Savannah, many of the trees had on their new leaves. A party were returning homeward over the fields, perhaps from a picnic; a gentleman passed us with a fowling piece on his shoulder followed by a little negro boy who trotted after his master carrying his fishing rod and a string of small fish. Negroes with horse-carts and waggons were driving in from the country, raising prodigious clouds of dust; for the soil here is light, and rises in the air as soon as disturbed.

At this place the banks of the river are dry and firm, on the Georgia side stretching away in broad meadows, and on the Carolina side rising in woody declivities, where the dog wood and the thorn trees are in flower, and the azalea shows its pink blossoms through the budding thickets. As I looked at them I thought of Roslyn, and wished that I had one with me for whom I might gather these flowers I saw.

Tomorrow we return to Charleston, taking the Woodlands in our way where we expect to pass a night with Mr. Simms. I have seen much at this place to interest me—more than I have space or time to speak of. I shall write to you from Charleston.

Yours ever,
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island
DOCKETED: Augusta.

1. In April 1843; see Letter 459.
2. Samuel Foster Gilman (1791–1858, Harvard 1811, D.D. 1837) and his wife, Caroline Howard Gilman (1794–1888). Since 1819 he had been pastor of the Second Independent Church of Charleston, the earliest Unitarian congregation in South Carolina. Both he and Mrs. Gilman were popular writers.
3. Word omitted.
669. To the Evening Post

Augusta, Georgia, March 29, 1849.

A quiet passage by sea from New York to Savannah would seem to afford little matter for a letter, yet those who take the trouble to read what I am about to write, will, I hope, admit that there are some things to be observed, even on such a voyage. It was indeed a remarkably quiet one, and worthy of note on that account, if on no other. We had a quiet vessel, quiet weather, a quiet, good-natured captain, a quiet crew, and remarkably quiet passengers.

When we left the wharf at New York last week, in the good steamship Tennessee, we were not conscious, at first, as we sat in the cabin, that she was in motion and proceeding down the harbor. There was no beating or churning of the sea, no struggling to get forward; her paddles played in the water as smoothly as those of a terrapin, without jar or noise. The Tennessee is one of the tightest and strongest boats that navigate our coast; the very flooring of her deck is composed of timbers instead of planks, and helps to keep her massive frame more compactly and solidly together. It was her first voyage; her fifty-one passengers lolled on sofas fresh from the upholsterer's, and slept on mattresses which had never been pressed by the human form before, in staterooms where foul air had never collected. Nor is it possible that the air should become impure in them to any great degree, for the Tennessee is the best-ventilated ship I ever was in; the main cabin and the state-rooms are connected with each other and with the deck, by numerous openings and pipes which keep up a constant circulation of air in every part.

I have spoken of the passengers as remarkably quiet persons. Several of them, I believe, never spoke during the passage, at least so it seemed to me. The silence would have been almost irksome, but for two lively little girls who amused us by their prattle, and two young women, apparently just married, too happy to do any thing but laugh, even when suffering from seasickness, and whom we now and then heard shouting and squealing from their state-rooms. There were two dark-haired, long-limbed gentlemen, who lay the greater part of the first and second day at full length on the sofas in the after-cabin, each with a spittoon before him, chewing tobacco with great rapidity and industry, and apparently absorbed in the endeavor to fill it within a given time. There was another, with that atra-bilious complexion peculiar to marshy countries, and circles of a still deeper hue about his eyes, who sat on deck, speechless and motionless, wholly indifferent to the sound of the dinner-bell, his countenance fixed in an expression which seemed to indicate an utter disgust of life.

Yet we had some snatches of good talk on the voyage. A robust old gentleman, a native of Norwalk, in Connecticut, told us that he had been reading a history of that place by the Rev. Mr. Hall.¹
"I find," said he, "that in his account of the remarkable people of Norwalk, he has omitted to speak of two of the most remarkable, two spinsters, Sarah and Phebe Comstock, relatives of mine and friends of my youth, of whom I retain a vivid recollection. They were in opulent circumstances for the neighborhood in which they lived, possessing a farm of about two hundred acres; they were industrious, frugal, and extremely charitable; but they never relieved a poor family without visiting it, and inquiring carefully into its circumstances. Sarah was the housekeeper, and Phebe the farmer. Phebe knew nothing of kitchen matters, but she knew at what time of the year greensward should be broken up, and corn planted, and potatoes dug. She dropped Indian corn and sowed English grain with her own hands. In the time of planting or of harvest, it was Sarah who visited and relieved the poor.

"I remember that they had various ways of employing the young people who called upon them. If it was late in the autumn, there was a chopping-board and chopping-knife ready, with the feet of neat-cattle, from which the oily parts had been extracted by boiling. 'You do not want to be idle,' they would say, 'chop this meat, and you shall have your share of the mince-pies that we are going to make.' At other times a supply of old woollen stockings were ready for unravelling. 'We know you do not care to be idle,' they would say, 'here are some stockings which you would oblige us by unravelling.' If you asked what use they made of the spools of woollen thread obtained by this process, they would answer: 'We use it as the weft of the linsey-woolsey with which we clothe our negroes.' They had negro slaves in those times, and old Tone, a faithful black servant of theirs, who has seen more than a hundred years, is alive yet. 2

"They practiced one very peculiar piece of economy. The white hickory you know, yields the purest and sweetest of saccharine juices. They had their hickory fuel cut into short billets, which before placing on the fire they laid on the andirons, a little in front of the blaze, so as to subject it to a pretty strong heat. This caused the syrup in the wood to drop from each end of the billet, where it was caught in a cup, and in this way a gallon or two was collected in the course of a fortnight. With this they flavored their nicest cakes.

"They died about thirty years since, one at the age of eighty-nine, and the other at the age of ninety. On the tomb-stone of one of them, it was recorded that she had been a member of the church for seventy years. Their father was a remarkable man in his way. He was a rich man in his time, and kept a park of deer, one of the last known in Connecticut, for the purpose of supplying his table with venison. He prided himself on the strict and literal fulfillment of his word. On one occasion he had a law-suit with one of his neighbors, before a justice of the peace, in which he was cast and ordered to pay ten shillings damages, and a shilling as the fees of the
court. He paid the ten shillings, and asked the justice whether he would allow him to pay the remaining shilling when he next passed his door. The magistrate readily consented, but from that time old Comstock never went by his house. Whenever he had occasion to go to church, or to any other place, the direct road to which led by the justice's door, he was careful to take a lane which passed behind the dwelling, and at some distance from it. The shilling remained unpaid up to the day of his death, and it was found that in his last will he had directed that his corpse should be carried by that lane to the place of interment."

When we left the quarantine ground on Thursday morning, after lying moored all night with a heavy rain beating on the deck, the sky was beginning to clear with a strong northwest wind and the decks were slippery with ice. When the sun rose it threw a cold white light upon the waters, and the passengers who appeared on deck were muffled to the eyes. As we proceeded southwardly, the temperature grew milder, and the day closed with a calm and pleasant sunset. The next day the weather was still milder, until about noon, when we arrived off Cape Hatteras a strong wind set in from the northeast, clouds gathered with a showery aspect, and everything seemed to betoken an impending storm. At this moment the captain shifted the direction of the voyage, from south to southwest; we ran before the wind leaving the storm, if there was any, behind us, and the day closed with another quiet and brilliant sunset.

The next day, the third of our voyage, broke upon us like a day in summer, with amber-colored sunshine and the blandest breezes that ever blew. An awning was stretched over the deck to protect us from the beams of the sun, and all the passengers gathered under it; the two dark-complexioned gentlemen left the task of filling the spittoons below, and came up to chew their tobacco on deck; the avaricious passenger was seen to interest himself in the direction of the compass, and once was thought to smile, and the hale old gentleman repeated the history of his Norwalk relatives. On the fourth morning we landed at Savannah. It was delightful to eyes which had seen only russet fields and leafless trees for months, to gaze on the new and delicate green of the trees and the herbage. The weeping willows drooped in full leaf, the later oaks were putting forth their new foliage, the locust-trees had hung out their tender sprays and their clusters of blossoms not yet unfolded, the Chinese wisteria covered the sides of houses with its festoons of blue blossoms, and roses were nodding at us in the wind, from the tops of the brick walls which surround the gardens.

Yet winter had been here, I saw. The orange-trees which, since the great frost seven or eight years ago, had sprung from the ground and grown to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, had a few days before my arrival felt another severe frost, and stood covered with sere dry leaves in the gardens, some of them yet laden with fruit. The trees were not killed, however, as
formerly, though they will produce no fruit this season, and new leaf-buds were beginning to sprout on their boughs. The dwarf-orange, a hardier tree, had escaped entirely, and its blossoms were beginning to open.

I visited Bonaventure, which I formerly described in one of my letters.\(^{3}\) It has lost the interest of utter solitude and desertion which it then had. A Gothic cottage has been built on the place, and the avenues of live-oaks have been surrounded with an inclosure, for the purpose of making a cemetery on the spot. Yet there they stand, as solemn as ever, lifting and stretching their long irregular branches overhead, hung with masses and festoons of gray moss. It almost seemed, when I looked up to them, as if the clouds had come nearer to the earth than is their wont, and formed themselves into the shadowy ribs of the vault above me. The drive to Bonaventure at this season of the year is very beautiful, though the roads are sandy; it is partly along an avenue of tall trees, and partly through the woods, where the dog-wood and azalea and thorn-trees are in blossom, and the ground is sprinkled with flowers. Here and there are dwellings beside the road. "They are unsafe the greater part of the year;" said the gentleman who drove me out, and who spoke from professional knowledge, "a summer residence in them is sure to bring dangerous fevers." Savannah is a healthy city, but it is like Rome, imprisoned by malaria.

The city of Savannah, since I saw it six years ago, has enlarged considerably, and the additions made to it increase its beauty. The streets have been extended on the south side, on the same plan as those of the rest of the city, with small parks at short distances from each other, planted with trees; and the new houses are handsome and well-built. The communications opened with the interior by long lines of railway have, no doubt, been the principal occasion of this prosperity. These and the Savannah river send enormous quantities of cotton to the Savannah market. One should see, with the bodily eye, the multitude of bales of this commodity accumulating in the warehouses and elsewhere, in order to form an idea of the extent to which it is produced in the southern states—long trains of cars heaped with bales, steamer after steamer loaded high with bales coming down the rivers, acres of bales on the wharves, acres of bales at the railway stations—one should see all this, and then carry his thoughts to the millions of the civilized world who are clothed by this great staple of our country.

I came to this place by steamer to Charleston and then by railway. The line of the railway, one hundred and thirty-seven miles in length, passes through the most unproductive district of South Carolina. It is in fact nothing but a waste of forest, with here and there an open field, half a dozen glimpses of plantations, and about as many villages, none of which are considerable, and some of which consist of not more than half a dozen houses. Aiken, however, sixteen miles before you reach the Savannah river, has a pleasant aspect. It is situated on a comparatively high tract of coun-
try, sandy and barren, but healthy, and hither the planters resort in the hot months from their homes in the less salubrious districts. Pretty cottages stand dispersed among the oaks and pines, and immediately west of the place the country descends in pleasant undulations towards the valley of the Savannah.

The appearance of Augusta struck me very agreeably as I reached it, on a most delightful afternoon, which seemed to me more like June than March. I was delighted to see turf again, regular greensward of sweet grasses and clover, such as you see in May in the northern states, and do not meet on the coast in the southern states. The city lies on a broad rich plain on the Savannah river, with woody declivities to the north and west. I have seen several things here since my arrival which interested me much, and if I can command time I will speak of them in another letter.


2. Although a legislative act of 1784 provided for the emancipation of all Negroes at the age of twenty-five, slavery was not abolished in Connecticut until 1848.

670. To Frances F. Bryant

Charleston March 31, 1849.

My dear Frances.

I passed one day at Augusta very pleasantly, walking about the city and driving out to see the environs. I was much interested in going over a cotton mill where the sallow complexioned girls of the pine woods and some of the young men find an employment where they are not obliged to work with the blacks. They are scoured, put into shoes and stockings, and taught to read in the Sunday schools and in a short time their whole appearance and demeanor undergoes a favorable change. There are many of these establishments at the south; they weave coarse cloths cheaper than the mill owners at the north can do, and they are effecting immense good by reclaiming from idleness and ignorance a large and degraded class of the whites in South Carolina and Georgia.

In the course of the day I fell in with Mr. Gould who has a law school here; he is a son of the late Judge Gould of Litchfield;¹ he told me that he remembered me at Judge Howe’s,² and inquired about my mother. We went to the plantation of Mr. De l’aigle, who received us with great hospitality and insisted on opening a bottle of Heidsick before he would allow us to go upon his grounds.³ The plantation was in excellent order; the garden, full of flowers and shrubs in bloom well-kept; the negro houses comfortable, the fences in perfect repair, and hedges of the Cherokee rose
well-pleached, surrounding the enclosures near the dwelling. They were in full fresh leaf and their white flowers were just beginning to open. Southward from the house stretched fields of maize, just beginning to peep above the ground, fields which seemed almost boundless, it would have seemed so but for the distant forests beyond them. The plantation consists of ten thousand acres.

We drove thence to the Sand Hill, or Somerville as it is called lying west of Augusta and overlooking the city. Here is a drier atmosphere than on the river side, and cooler evenings in the hot months. The more opulent people of the place have their cottages here, dispersed among the oaks and pines, and hither they retire from the extreme heat; some pass the whole year here. The place is of considerable extent, and very pretty with its neat white houses about which the shade is as dense as possible, and its embowered paths leading from one to the other. There is no danger that the shade will cause dampness, the soil is so sandy and porous. In some places however they have gardens, which in so barren a tract must be done with a good deal of expense.

We called on a Mr. Robinson a native of Exeter in New Hampshire, reported to be very rich, who has for many years passed his winters here. He lives in a low cottage, but it is furnished with such elegance and neatness that I almost thought I had committed a desecration by entering it with my boots on. He asked me my opinion of slavery which I gave frankly. I agree with you, said he, but you shall see my negroes. He passed out at the back door, showing us the bedrooms as he went, and then entered a negro house, where sat a lady like—if I may say so—coloured woman neatly dressed, in an apartment floored with oaken plank as clean as scouring could make it, surrounded with her woolly headed children, engaged in sewing. Her bedroom was hung with engravings, and if I had been asked to say who was most elegantly lodged, she or her master and mistress it would have been hard for me to say.

Yesterday morning at six o'clock we left Augusta by the railway for Midway and the Woodlands. We found Mr. and Mrs. Simms quite well. Augusta, become a housekeeper is greatly improved in health. Mr. Roach does not look a day older than when we saw him six years ago. They all chid me for not having brought you with me. Mary Steele is married to a man named Rivers, concerned in the management of the railway, and living somewhere near it. Washy as they used to call her was on a visit to her sister. Miss Kellogg—Nancy—was there, better in health, and looking very bright. They all desired to be particularly remembered to you. We had a pleasant day with them. We sat under the brick portico till we were refreshed and then had some long walks through the forests now beautiful with various shrubs in blossom, and over the fields.

I arrived here today about half past five. I have been obliged to make some additions to my wardrobe of thin clothes for the hot climate of Ha-
vana. Tomorrow we sail in the Isabel, at ten o'clock. I wish you were my companion for the voyage. Your prayers, I am sure, will go with me.

April 1st. I wish you would write to me at Charleston. The probability is that we shall not go to New Orleans but return to this place. Good bye—God Bless you

W C Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island
DOCKETED: Charleston.

2. This was probably James Gould's eldest son, William Tracy Gould, later a justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. Bryant had studied law with Samuel Howe in Worthington, Massachusetts, from 1811 to 1814; see Letters 4–8.
3. De l'aigle has not been further identified.
4. Probably William Robinson, through whose bequest the Robinson Seminary for girls was founded at Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1867.
5. William Gilmore Simms's daughter by his first wife was then about twenty-two years old. See 395.1.
6. For these cousins of Mrs. Simms, see Letter 460.
7. Of Great Barrington, Massachusetts; see 316.15.

671. To the Evening Post

Barnwell District, South Carolina,
March 31, 1849.

I promised to say something more of Augusta if I had time before departing for Cuba, and I find that I have a few moments to spare for a hasty letter.

The people of Augusta boast of the beauty of their place, and not without some reason. The streets are broad, and in some parts overshadowed with rows of fine trees. The banks of the river on which it stands are high and firm, and slopes half covered with forest, of a pleasant aspect, overlook it from the west and from the Carolina side. To the south stretches a broad champaign country, on which are some of the finest plantations of Georgia. I visited one of these, consisting of ten thousand acres, kept throughout in as perfect order as a small farm at the north, though large enough for a German principality.

But what interested me most, was a visit to a cotton mill in the neighborhood,—a sample of a class of manufacturing establishments, where the poor white people of this state and of South Carolina find occupation. It is a large manufactory, and the machinery is in as perfect order as in any of the mills at the north. "Here," said a gentleman who accompanied us, as we entered the long apartment in the second story, "you will see a sample of the brunettes of the piny woods."
The girls of various ages, who are employed at the spindles, had, for the most part, a sallow, sickly complexion, and in many of their faces, I remarked that look of mingled distrust and dejection which often accompanies the condition of extreme, hopeless poverty. "These poor girls," said one of our party, "think themselves extremely fortunate to be employed here, and accept work gladly. They come from the most barren parts of Carolina and Georgia, where their families live wretchedly, often upon unwholesome food, and as idly as wretchedly, for hitherto there has been no manual occupation provided for them from which they do not shrink as disgraceful, on account of its being the occupation of slaves. In these factories negroes are not employed as operatives, and this gives the calling of the factory girl a certain dignity. You would be surprised to see the change which a short time effects in these poor people. They come barefooted, dirty, and in rags; they are scoured, put into shoes and stockings, set at work and sent regularly to the Sunday-schools, where they are taught what none of them have been taught before—to read and write. In a short time they become expert at their work; they lose their sullen shyness, and their physiognomy becomes comparatively open and cheerful. Their families are relieved from the temptations to theft and other shameful courses which accompany the condition of poverty without occupation."

"They have a good deal of the poke-easy manner of the piny woods about them yet," said one of our party, a Georgian. It was true; I perceived that they had not yet acquired all that alacrity and quickness in their work which you see in the work-people of the New England mills. In one of the upper stories I saw a girl of a clearer complexion than the rest, with two long curls swinging behind each ear, as she stepped about with the air of a duchess. "That girl is from the north," said our conductor; "at first we placed an expert operative from the north in each story of the building as an instructor and pattern to the rest."

I have since learned that some attempts were made at first to induce the poor white people to work side by side with the blacks in these mills. These utterly failed, and the question then became with the proprietors whether they should employ blacks or whites only; whether they should give these poor people an occupation which, while it tended to elevate their condition, secured a more expert class of work-people than the negroes could be expected to become, or whether they should rely upon the less intelligent and more negligent services of slaves. They decided at length upon banishing the labor of blacks from their mills. At Graniteville, in South Carolina, about ten miles from the Savannah river, a neat little manufacturing village has lately been built up, where the families of the crackers, as they are called, reclaimed from their idle lives in the woods, are settled, and white labor only is employed. The enterprise is said to be in a most prosperous condition.
Only coarse cloths are made in these mills—strong, thick fabrics, suitable for negro shirting—and the demand for this kind of goods, I am told, is greater than the supply. Every yard made in this manufactory at Augusta, is taken off as soon as it leaves the loom. I fell in with a northern man in the course of the day, who told me that these mills had driven the northern manufacturer of coarse cottons out of the southern market.

“The buildings are erected here more cheaply,” he continued, “there is far less expense in fuel, and the wages of the workpeople are less. At first the boys and girls of the cracker families were engaged for little more than their board; their wages are now better, but they are still low. I am about to go to the north, and I shall do my best to persuade some of my friends, who have been almost ruined by this southern competition, to come to Augusta and set up cotton mills.”

There is water-power at Augusta sufficient to turn the machinery of many large establishments. A canal from the Savannah river brings in a large volume of water, which passes from level to level, and might be made to turn the spindles and drive the looms of a populous manufacturing town. Such it will become, if any faith is to be placed in present indications, and a considerable manufacturing population will be settled at this place, drawn from the half-wild inhabitants of the most barren parts of the southern states. I look upon the introduction of manufactures at the south as an event of the most favorable promise for that part of the country, since it both condenses a class of population too thinly scattered to have the benefit of the institutions of civilized life, of education and religion—and restores one branch of labor, at least, to its proper dignity, in a region where manual labor has been the badge of servitude and dependence.

One of the pleasantest spots in the neighborhood of Augusta is Somerville, a sandy eminence, covered with woods, the shade of which is carefully cherished, and in the midst of which are numerous cottages and country seats, closely embowered in trees, with pleasant paths leading to them from the highway. Here the evenings in summer are not so oppressively hot as in the town below, and dense as the shade is, the air is dry and elastic. Hither many families retire during the hot season, and many reside here the year round. We drove through it as the sun was setting, and called at the dwellings of several of the hospitable inhabitants. The next morning the railway train brought us to Barnwell District, in South Carolina, where I write this.

I intended to send you some notes of the agricultural changes which I have observed in this part of South Carolina since I was last here, but I have hardly time to do it. The culture of wheat has been introduced, many planters now raising enough for their own consumption. The sugar cane is also planted, and quantities of sugar and molasses are often made sufficient to supply the plantations on which it is cultivated. Spinning-wheels
and looms have come into use, and a strong and durable cotton cloth is woven by the negro women for the wear of the slaves. All this shows a desire to make the most of the resources of the country, and to protect the planter against the embarrassments which often arise from the fluctuating prices of the great staple of the south—cotton. But I have no time to dwell upon this subject. Tomorrow I sail for Cuba.


1. The printed text mistakenly has “from.”
2. The printed text mistakenly has “became.”

672. To the Evening Post

Havana, April 7, 1849.

It was a most agreeable voyage which I made in the steamer Isabel, to this port, the wind in our favor the whole distance, fine bright weather, the temperature passing gradually from what we have it in New York at the end of May, to what it is in the middle of June. The Isabel is a noble sea-boat, of great strength, not so well ventilated as the Tennessee, in which we came to Savannah, with spacious and comfortable cabins, and, I am sorry to say, rather dirty state-rooms.

We stopped off Savannah near the close of the first day of our voyage, to leave some of our passengers and take in others; and on the second, which was also the second of the month, we were running rapidly down the Florida coast, with the trade-wind fresh on our beam, sweeping before it a long swell from the east, in which our vessel rocked too much for the stomachs of most of the passengers. The next day the sea was smoother; we had changed our direction somewhat and were going before the wind, the Florida reefs full in sight, with their long streak of white surf, beyond which, along the line of the shore, lay a belt of water, of bright translucent green, and in front the waves wore an amethystine tint. We sat the greater part of the day under an awning. A long line, with a baited hook at the end, was let down into the water from the stern of our vessel, and after being dragged there an hour or two, it was seized by a king-fish, which was immediately hauled on board. It was an elegantly shaped fish, weighing nearly twenty pounds, with a long head, and scales shining with blue and purple. It was served up for dinner, and its flavor much commended by the amateurs.

The waters around us were full of sails, gleaming in the sunshine. “They belong,” said our Charleston pilot, “to the wreckers who live at Key West. Every morning they come out and cruise among the reefs, to discover if there are any vessels wrecked or in distress—the night brings them back to the harbor on their island.”

Your readers know, I presume, that at Key West is a town containing
nearly three thousand inhabitants, who subsist solely by the occupation of relieving vessels in distress navigating this dangerous coast, and bringing in such as are wrecked. The population, of course, increases with the commerce of the country, and every vessel that sails from our ports to the Gulf of Mexico, or comes from the Gulf to the North, every addition to the intercourse of the Atlantic ports with Mobile, New Orleans, the West Indies, or Central America, adds to their chances of gain. These people neither plant nor sow; their isle is a low barren spot, surrounded by a beach of white sand, formed of disintegrated porous limestone, and a covering of the same sand, spread thinly over the rock, forms its soil.

"It is a scandal," said the pilot, "that this coast is not better lighted. A few light-houses would make its navigation much safer, and they would be built, if Florida had any man in Congress to represent the matter properly to the government. I have long been familiar with this coast—sixty times, at least, I have made the voyage from Charleston to Havana, and I am sure that there is no such dangerous navigation on the coast of the United States. In going to Havana, or to New Orleans, or to other ports on the gulf, commanders of vessels try to avoid the current of the gulf-stream which would carry them to the north, and they, therefore, shave the Florida coast, and keep near the reefs which you see yonder. They often strike the reefs inadvertently, or are driven against them by storms. In returning northward the navigation is safer; we give a good offing to the reefs and strike out into the gulf-stream, the current of which carries us in the direction of our voyage."

A little before nine o'clock we had entered the little harbor of Key West, and were moored in its still waters. It was a bright moonlight evening, and we rambled two or three hours about the town and the island. The hull of a dismasted vessel lay close by our landing-place; it had no name on bow or stern, and had just been found abandoned at sea, and brought in by the wreckers; its cargo, consisting of logwood, had been taken out and lay in piles on the wharf. This town has principally grown up since the Florida war. The habitations have a comfortable appearance; some of them are quite neat, but the sterility of the place is attested by the want of gardens. In some of the inclosures before the houses, however, there were tropical shrubs in flower, and here the cocoanut-tree was growing, and other trees of the palm kind, which rustled with a sharp dry sound in the fresh wind from the sea. They were the first palms I had seen growing in the open air, and they gave a tropical aspect to the place.

We fell in with a man who had lived thirteen years at Key West. He told us that its three thousand inhabitants had four places of worship—an Episcopal, a Catholic, a Methodist, and a Baptist church; and the drinking-houses which we saw open, with such an elaborate display of bottles and decanters, were not resorted to by the people of the place, but were the haunt of English and American sailors, whom the disasters, or the regular
voyages of their vessels had brought hither. He gave us an account of the hurricane of September, 1846, which overflowed and laid waste the island.

"Here where we stand," said he, "the water was four feet deep at least. I saved my family in a boat, and carried them to a higher part of the island. Two houses which I owned were swept away by the flood, and I was ruined. Most of the dwellings were unroofed by the wind; every vessel belonging to the place was lost; dismasted hulks were floating about, and nobody knew to whom they belonged, and dead bodies of men and women lay scattered along the beach. It was the worst hurricane ever known at Key West; before it came, we used to have a hurricane regularly once in two years, but we have had none since."

A bell was rung about this time, and we asked the reason. "It is to signify that the negroes must be at their homes," answered the man. We inquired if there were many blacks in the place. "Till lately," he replied, "there were about eighty, but since the United States government has begun to build the fort yonder, their number has increased. Several broken-down planters, who have no employment for their slaves, have sent them to Key West to be employed by the government. We do not want them here, and wish that the government would leave them on the hands of their masters."

On the fourth morning when we went on deck, the coast of Cuba, a ridge of dim hills, was in sight, and our vessel was rolling in the unsteady waves of the gulf stream, which here beat against the northern shore of the island. It was a hot morning, as the mornings in this climate always are till the periodical breeze springs up, about ten o'clock, and refreshes all the islands that lie in the embrace of the gulf. In a short time, the cream-colored walls of the Morro, the strong castle which guards the entrance to the harbor of Havana, appeared rising from the waters. We passed close to the cliffs on which it is built, were hailed in English, a gun was fired, our streamer darted through a narrow entrance into the harbor, and anchored in the midst of what appeared a still inland lake.

The city of Havana has a cheerful appearance seen from the harbor. Its massive houses, built for the most part of the porous rock of the island, are covered with stucco, generally of a white or cream color, but often stained sky-blue or bright yellow. Above these rise the dark towers and domes of the churches, apparently built of a more durable material, and looking more venerable for the gay color of the dwellings amidst which they stand. The extensive fortifications of Cabañas crown the heights on that side of the harbor which lies opposite to the town; and south of the city a green, fertile valley, in which stand scattered palm-trees, stretches towards the pleasant village of Cerro.

We lay idly in the stream for two hours, till the authorities of the port could find time to visit us. They arrived at last, and without coming on board, subjected the captain to a long questioning, and searched the news-
papers he brought for intelligence relating to the health of the port from which he sailed. At last they gave us leave to land, without undergoing a quarantine, and withdrew, taking with them our passports. We went on shore, and after three hours further delay got our baggage through the custom-house.


1. The Seminole War; see Letter 459.

### 673. To Frances F. Bryant

*Havana April 8, 1849.*

My dear Frances.

I have been here four days and it seems almost as many weeks. The steamer Isabel in which we came departs today for Charleston, and I send this by one of my fellow passengers who returns in her. In a fortnight the Isabel will leave this port again for the United States when we mean to take passage in her. To New Orleans we shall not go—the cholera is too rife there.

We left Charleston on the first of April on a morning as mild as summer. Several of the passengers who came on in the Tennessee were with us—a Mr. Morris, brother of the postmaster of New York and his wife, a Mr. Warren and his wife and sister of Troy, and one or two others. At six o’clock we went up a little way towards Savannah, where we received some passengers on board and sent on shore others. The next day we were off the Florida coast and about noon saw land; the sea was rough and several of the passengers sick. The third day we kept near the Florida reef, in a smooth sea, with a belt of light green water of a glittering translucent appearance close to the land, and nearer to the vessel a tract of amethystine tint. We sat on deck the great part of the day in an atmosphere of most agreeable temperature. A long line with a baited hook at the end, was thrown out from the stern which after some time was seized by a fine king fish, resembling a mackerel in shape and colour. We had him on deck—he weighed nearly twenty pounds, and was served up for our dinner. All about us we saw white sails glittering in the sunshine; they were the vessels of the wreckers who inhabit Key West and who cruise every day about this dangerous coast, to discover any vessels that may have suffered wreck or damage on the reefs, returning at night to their little island.

A little before nine o’clock we were moored in the harbour of Key West. It was a bright moonlight night and we went on shore, to ramble over the town and island. The town contains two or three thousand inhabitants and is built on a rock of porous limestone, apparently of coral formation, with a beach of white sand formed of the disintegrated rock.
Large cocoa nut-trees—a kind of palm—made a loud and sharp rustling in
the fresh trade wind that blew from the east; there were other trees of the
palm kind which were pointed out to us in the gardens, and various
strange shrubs in flower. Yet the isle is a barren place with very little
verdure; its people subsist by the allowances which the admiralty court
established here makes them for saving and bringing in wrecked vessels.

At twelve o'clock we resumed our voyage and when I went on deck
the next morning—a hot morning—the coast of Cuba was in sight. Our
vessel rolled from side to side in the restless waves of the Gulf Stream,
which beat against the northern coast of the island. The white houses of
Havana at length appeared in sight guarded by the lofty castle of the
Morro, from which we were hailed as we passed, and entering into one of
the finest bays in the world by a narrow passage we anchored in what
seemed the quiet waters of an inland lake.

It was now nine o'clock—the hottest part of the day in Cuba, for the
sea-breeze had not yet risen. Boats came about us rowed by dark looking
men in Panama hats, but nobody could come on board till we were visited
by the Health Authorities. These came about eleven o'clock—every thing
proceeds slowly in Cuba—They demanded our newspapers and after long
questioning the Captain, and consulting long among themselves, con-
sented to admit us without quarantine, and withdrew taking our pass-
ports. We then went on shore, engaged rooms in an hotel kept by Fulton
an American\(^2\) near the water, and got our baggage on shore about two
o'clock.

The sea wind was now sweeping gratefully through the streets and
we dined with great comfort and appetite, in an open gallery of our posada
[inn]. In the afternoon we drove out to the Paseo or Park, Isabel, just
without the walls, the Paseo Tacon, and the Tacon gardens, planted with
palms, mamey trees, papayas, and other trees of the tropics. We climbed
the hill on which stands the fortress of Principe and overlooked the town
of Havana and its fortifications, its harbor, the green valley of the Cerro
and the sea. At eight o'clock the sound of music from the Plaza de Armas
drew us again from our hotel. The Plaza is planted with the beautiful
royal palm and other trees intersected by broad flagged stone walks. Here
the Creoles and their families sit or walk on fine evenings, and listen to
the airs played by a military band. The men were all in white pantaloons
with here and there an exception, and the women without bonnets—dark
eyed women, with jetty hair and dusky cheeks, their negro servants often
sitting on the benches by their sides, and here and there was a group of
negro women, occupying as conspicuous and convenient a position as their
white sisters, and almost as well dressed. A row of volantes,—the two
wheeled carriage of the country—almost the only carriage used—sur-
rrounded the plaza, in which ladies were sitting, enjoying the music, the
fresh wind and the moonlight, occasionally greeted by some friend who
passed. At nine the music ceased and the volantes turned away from the Plaza and gradually the crowd dispersed.

We came to Havana in the midst of the Holy Week, and have seen enough, not without entertainment, however, of Spanish religious processions and ceremonies. We have visited most places in the neighbourhood worth seeing and are thinking of proceeding to Matanzas soon. I wish you could have seen the crowds thronging to kiss the toe of the figure of our Savior bearing his cross, black and white pell-mell—the women returning from the ceremony with their eyes red with tears. I wish you could have beheld with me the procession, which with wailing music and muffled drums bore the effigy of the dead Christ around the city on Good Friday. I wish you could have visited with me the Quinta del Obispo [bishop's country seat], with its rows of palms, and alleys of mangos and thickets of bamboos and beds of roses in bloom. I wish—no I do not wish—that you could have accompanied me yesterday to the Campo Santo,—where I saw the dead lowered in coarse coffins by stout negroes into fresh dug tranches, and the mould, mingled with human bones, human hair and fragments of garments shoveled upon them. I have a thousand things to write if I had time—Goodby—love to the children.

W. C. BRYANT.

P. S. The weather is delightful—the temperature warm, but not hot—the sea wind, which blows the greater part of the day, seems health itself and the weather is constantly fine.

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. The New York City postmaster was then William V. Brady. Perhaps Bryant had in mind William L. Morris, a lawyer and commissioner, of 6 Broad Street. Rode’s New York City Directory for 1849–1850, pp. 3, 305. Warren is unidentified.


674. To the Evening Post

Havana, April 10, 1849.

I find that it requires a greater effort of resolution to sit down to the writing of a long letter in this soft climate, than in the country I have left. I feel a temptation to sit idly, and let the grateful wind from the sea, coming in at the broad windows, flow around me, or read, or talk, as I happen to have a book or a companion. That there is something in a tropical climate which indisposes one to vigorous exertion I can well believe, from what I experience in myself, and what I see around me. The ladies do not seem to take the least exercise, except an occasional drive on the Paseo, or public park; they never walk out, and when they are shopping, which is
no less the vocation of their sex here than in other civilized countries, they never descend from their volantes, but the goods are brought out by the obsequious shopkeeper, and the lady makes her choice and discusses the price as she sits in her carriage.

Yet the women of Cuba show no tokens of delicate health. Freshness of color does not belong to a latitude so near the equator, but they have plump figures, placid, unwrinkled countenances, a well-developed bust, and eyes, the brilliant languor of which is not the languor of illness. The girls as well as the young men, have rather narrow shoulders, but as they advance in life, the chest, in the women particularly, seems to expand from year to year, till it attains an amplitude by no means common in our country. I fully believe that this effect, and their general health, in spite of the inaction in which they pass their lives, is owing to the free circulation of air through their apartments.

For in Cuba, the women as well as the men may be said to live in the open air. They know nothing of close rooms, in all the island, and nothing of foul air, and to this, I have no doubt, quite as much as to the mildness of the temperature, the friendly effect of its climate upon invalids from the north is to be ascribed. Their ceilings are extremely lofty, and the wide windows, extending from the top of the room to the floor and guarded by long perpendicular bars of iron, are without glass, and when closed are generally only closed with blinds which, while they break the force of the wind when it is too strong, do not exclude the air. Since I have been on the island, I may be said to have breakfasted and dined and supped and slept in the open air, in an atmosphere which is never in repose except for a short time in the morning after sunrise. At other times a breeze is always stirring, in the day-time bringing in the air from the ocean, and at night drawing it out again to the sea.

In walking through the streets of the towns in Cuba, I have been entertained by the glimpses I had through the ample windows, of what was going on in the parlors. Sometimes a curtain hanging before them allowed me only a sight of the small hands which clasped the bars of the grate, and the dusky faces and dark eyes peeping into the street and scanning the passers by. At other times, the whole room was seen, with its furniture, and its female forms sitting in languid postures, courting the breeze as it entered from without. In the evening, as I passed along the narrow sidewalk of the narrow streets, I have been startled at finding myself almost in the midst of a merry party gathered about the window of a brilliantly lighted room, and chattering the soft Spanish of the island in voices that sounded strangely near to me. I have spoken of their languid postures: they love to recline on sofas; their houses are filled with rocking-chairs imported from the United States; they are fond of sitting in chairs tilted against the wall, as we sometimes do at home. Indeed they go beyond us in this respect; for
in Cuba they have invented a kind of chair which, by lowering the back and raising the knees, places the sitter precisely in the posture he would take if he sat in a chair leaning backward against a wall. It is a luxurious attitude, I must own, and I do not wonder that it is a favorite with lazy people, for it relieves one of all the trouble of keeping the body upright.

It is the women who form the large majority of the worshippers in the churches. I landed here in Passion Week, and the next day was Holy Thursday, when not a vehicle on wheels of any sort is allowed to be seen in the streets; and the ladies, contrary to their custom during the rest of the year, are obliged to resort to the churches on foot. Negro servants of both sexes were seen passing to and fro, carrying mats on which their mistresses were to kneel in the morning service. All the white female population, young and old, were dressed in black, with black lace veils. In the afternoon, three wooden or waxen images of the size of life, representing Christ in the different stages of his passion, were placed in the spacious Church of St. Catharine, which was so thronged that I found it difficult to enter. Near the door was a figure of the Saviour sinking under the weight of his cross, and the worshippers were kneeling to kiss his feet. Aged negro men and women, half-naked negro children, ladies richly attired, little girls in Parisian dresses, with lustrous black eyes and a profusion of ringlets, cast themselves down before the image, and pressed their lips to its feet in a passion of devotion. Mothers led up their little ones, and showed them how to perform this act of adoration. I saw matrons and young women rise from it with their eyes red with tears.

The next day, which was Good Friday, about twilight, a long procession came trailing slowly through the streets under my window, bearing an image of the dead Christ, lying upon a cloth of gold. It was accompanied by a body of soldierly, holding their muskets reversed, and a band playing plaintive tunes; the crowd uncovered their heads as it passed. On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock, the solemnities of holy week were over; the bells rang a merry peal; hundreds of volantes and drays, which had stood ready harnessed, rushed into the streets; the city became suddenly noisy with the rattle of wheels and the tramp of horses; the shops which had been shut for the last two days, were opened; and the ladies, in white or light-colored muslins, were proceeding in their volantes to purchase at the shops their costumes for the Easter festivities.

I passed the evening on the Plaza de Armas, a public square in front of the Governor's house, planted with palms and other trees, paved with broad flags, and bordered with a row of benches. It was crowded with people in their best dresses, the ladies mostly in white, and without bonnets, for the bonnet in this country is only worn while travelling. Chairs had been placed for them in a double row around the edge of the square, and a row of volantes surrounded the square, in each of which sat two or more
ladies, the ample folds of their muslin dresses flowing out on each side over the steps of the carriage. The Governor's band played various airs, martial and civic, with great beauty of execution. The music continued for two hours, and the throng, with only occasional intervals of conversation, seemed to give themselves up wholly to the enjoyment of listening to it.

It was a bright moonlight night, so bright that one might almost see to read, and the temperature the finest I can conceive, a gentle breeze rustling among the palms overhead. I was surprised at seeing around me so many fair brows and snowy necks. It is the moonlight, said I to myself, or perhaps it is the effect of the white dresses, for the complexions of these ladies seem to differ several shades from those which I saw yesterday at the churches. A female acquaintance has since given me another solution of the matter.

"The reason," she said, "of the difference you perceived is this, that during the ceremonies of holy week they take off the cascarrilla from their faces, and appear in their natural complexions."

I asked the meaning of the word cascarrilla, which I did not remember to have heard before.

"It is the favorite cosmetic of the island, and is made of egg-shells finely pulverized. They often fairly plaster their faces with it. I have seen a dark-skinned lady as white almost as marble at a ball. They will sometimes, at a morning call or an evening party, withdraw to repair the cascarrilla on their faces."

I do not vouch for this tale, but tell it "as it was told to me." Perhaps, after all, it was the moonlight which had produced this transformation, though I had noticed something of the same improvement of complexion just before sunset, on the Paseo Isabel, a public park without the city walls, planted with rows of trees, where, every afternoon, the gentry of Havana drive backward and forward in their volantes, with each a glittering harness, and a liveried negro bestriding, in large jack-boots, the single horse which draws the vehicle.

I had also the same afternoon visited the receptacle into which the population of the city are swept when the game of life is played out—the Campo Santo, as it is called, or public cemetery of Havana. Going out of the city at the gate nearest the sea, I passed through a street of the wretch-edest houses I had seen; the ocean was roaring at my right on the coral rocks which form the coast. The dingy habitations were soon left behind, and I saw the waves, pushed forward by a fresh wind, flinging their spray almost into the road; I next entered a short avenue of trees, and in a few minutes the volante stopped at the gate of the cemetery. In a little inclosure before the entrance, a few starveling flowers of Europe were cultivated, but the wild plants of the country flourished luxuriantly on the rich soil within. A thick wall surrounded the cemetery, in which were rows of openings for coffins, one above the other, where the more opulent of the dead
were entombed. The coffin is thrust in endwise, and the opening closed with a marble slab bearing an inscription.

Most of these niches were already occupied, but in the earth below, by far the greater part of those who die at Havana, are buried without a monument or a grave which they are allowed to hold a longer time than is necessary for their bodies to be consumed in the quicklime which is thrown upon them. Every day fresh trenches are dug into which their bodies are thrown, generally without coffins. Two of these, one near each wall of the cemetery, were waiting for the funerals. I saw where the spade had divided the bones of those who were buried there last, and thrown up the broken fragments, mingled with masses of lime, locks of hair, and bits of clothing. Without the walls was a receptacle in which the skulls and other larger bones, dark with the mould of the grave, were heaped.

Two or three persons were walking about the cemetery when we first entered, but it was now at length the cool of the day, and the funerals began to arrive. They brought in first a rude black coffin, broadest at the extremity which contained the head, and placing it at the end of one of the trenches, hurriedly produced a hammer and nails to fasten the lid before letting it down, when it was found that the box was too shallow at the narrower extremity. The lid was removed for a moment and showed the figure of an old man in a threadbare black coat, white pantaloons, and boots. The negroes who bore it beat out the bottom with the hammer, so as to allow the lid to be fastened over the feet. It was then nailed down firmly with coarse nails, the coffin was swung into the trench, and the earth shovelled upon it. A middle-aged man, who seemed to be some relative of the dead, led up a little boy close to the grave and watched the process of filling it. They spoke to each other and smiled, stood till the pit was filled to the surface, and the bearers had departed, and then retired in their turn. This was one of the more respectable class of funerals. Commonly the dead are piled without coffins, one above the other, in the trenches.

The funerals now multiplied. The corpse of a little child was brought in, uncoffined; and another, a young man who, I was told, had cut his throat for love, was borne towards one of the niches in the wall. I heard loud voices, which seemed to proceed from the eastern side of the cemetery, and which, I thought at first, might be the recitation of a funeral service; but no funeral service is said at these graves; and, after a time, I perceived that they came from the windows of a long building which overlooked one side of the burial ground. It was a mad-house. The inmates, exasperated at the spectacle before them, were gesticulating from the windows—the women screaming and the men shouting, but no attention was paid to their uproar. A lady, however, a stranger to the island, who visited the Campo Santo that afternoon, was so affected by the sights and sounds of the place, that she was borne out weeping and almost in convulsions. As we left the place, we found a crowd of volantes about the gate; a pompous
bier, with rich black hangings, drew up; a little beyond, we met one of another kind—a long box, with glass sides and ends, in which lay the corpse of a woman, dressed in white, with a black veil thrown over the face.

The next day the festivities, which were to indemnify the people for the austerities of Lent and of Passion Week, began. The cock-pits were opened during the day, and masked balls were given in the evening at the theatres. You know, probably, that cock-fighting is the principal diversion of the island, having entirely supplanted the national spectacle of bull-baiting. Cuba, in fact, seemed to me a great poultry-yard. I heard the crowing of cocks in all quarters, for the game-cock is the noisiest and most boastful of birds, and is perpetually uttering his notes of defiance. In the villages I saw the veterans of the pit, a strong-legged race, with their combs cropped smooth to the head, the feathers plucked from every part of the body except their wings, and the tail docked like that of a coach horse, picking up their food in the lanes among the chickens. One old cripple I remember to have seen in the little town of Guines, stiff with wounds received in combat, who had probably got a furlough for life, and who, while limping among his female companions, maintained a sort of strut in his gait, and now and then stopped to crow defiance to the world. The peasants breed game-cocks and bring them to market; amateurs in the town train them for their private amusement. Dealers in game-cocks are as common as horse-jockies with us, and every village has its cock-pit.

I went on Monday to the Valla de Gallos, situated in that part of Havana which lies without the walls. Here, in a spacious inclosure, were two amphitheatres of benches, roofed, but without walls, with a circular area in the midst. Each was crowded with people, who were looking at a cock-fight, and half of whom seemed vociferating with all their might. I mounted one of the outer benches, and saw one of the birds laid dead by the other in a few minutes. Then was heard the chink of gold and silver pieces, as the betters stepped into the area and paid their wagers; the slain bird was carried out and thrown on the ground, and the victor, taken into the hands of his owner, crowed loudly in celebration of his victory. Two other birds were brought in, and the cries of those who offered wagers were heard on all sides. They ceased at last, and the cocks were put down to begin the combat. They fought warily at first, but at length began to strike in earnest, the blood flowed, and the bystanders were heard to vociferate, “ahi están peleando”*—“mata! mata! mata!”† gesticulating at the same time with great violence, and new wagers were laid as the interest of the combat increased. In ten minutes one of the birds was dispatched, for the combat never ends till one of them has his death-wound.

[Bryant's notes]
* “Now they are fighting!”
† “Kill! kill! kill!”
In the mean time several other combats had begun in smaller pits, which lay within the same inclosure, but were not surrounded with circles of benches. I looked upon the throng engaged in this brutal sport, with eager gestures and loud cries, and could not help thinking how soon this noisy crowd would lie in heaps in the pits of the Campo Santo.

In the evening was a masked ball in the Tacon Theatre, a spacious building, one of the largest of its kind in the world. The pit, floored over, with the whole depth of the stage open to the back wall of the edifice, furnished a ballroom of immense size. People in grotesque masks, in hoods or fancy dresses, were mingled with a throng clad in the ordinary costume, and Spanish dances were performed to the music of a numerous band. A well-dressed crowd filled the first and second tier of boxes. The Creole smokes everywhere, and seemed astonished when the soldier who stood at the door ordered him to throw away his lighted segar before entering. Once upon the floor, however, he lighted another segar in defiance of the prohibition.

The Spanish dances, with their graceful movements, resembling the undulations of the sea in its gentlest moods, are nowhere more gracefully performed than in Cuba, by the young women born on the island. I could not help thinking, however, as I looked on that gay crowd, on the quaint maskers, and the dancers whose flexible limbs seemed swayed to and fro by the breath of the music, that all this was soon to end at the Campo Santo, and I asked myself how many of all this crowd would be huddled uncoffined, when their sports were over, into the foul trenches of the public cemetery.

**Manuscript:** Unrecovered text: *LT I*, pp. 358–369; first published in *EP* for May 19, 1849.

675. *To the Evening Post*  
Matanzas, April 16, 1849.

My expectations of the scenery of the island of Cuba and of the magnificence of its vegetation, have not been quite fulfilled. This place is but sixty miles to the east of Havana, but the railway which brings you hither, takes you over a sweep of a hundred and thirty miles, through one of the most fertile districts in the interior of the island. I made an excursion from Havana to San Antonio de los Baños, a pleasant little town at nine leagues distance, in a southeast direction from the capital, in what is called the Vuelta Abajo. I have also just returned from a visit to some fine sugar estates to the southeast of Matanzas, so that I may claim to have seen something of the face of the country of which I speak.

At this season the hills about Havana, and the pastures everywhere, have an arid look, a russet hue, like sandy fields with us, when scorched by a long drought, or like our meadows in winter. This, however, is the dry
season; and when I was told that but two showers of rain had fallen since October, I could only wonder that so much vegetation was left, and that the verbenas and other herbage which clothed the ground, should yet retain, as I perceived they did, when I saw them nearer, an unextinguished life. I have, therefore, the disadvantage of seeing Cuba not only in the dry season, but near the close of an uncommonly dry season. Next month the rainy season commences, when the whole island, I am told, even the barrenest parts, flushes into a deep verdure, creeping plants climb over all the rocks and ascend the trees, and the mighty palms put out their new foliage.

Shade, however, is the great luxury of a warm climate, and why the people of Cuba do not surround their habitations in the country, in the villages, and in the environs of the large towns, with a dense umbrage of trees, I confess I do not exactly understand. In their rich soil, and in their perpetually genial climate, trees grow with great rapidity, and they have many noble ones both for size and foliage. The royal palm, with its tall straight columnar trunk of a whitish hue, only uplifts a Corinthian capital of leaves, and casts but a narrow shadow; but it mingles finely with other trees, and planted in avenues, forms a colonnade nobler than any of the porticoes to the ancient Egyptian temples. There is no thicker foliage or fresher green than that of the mango, which daily drops its abundant fruit for several months in the year, and the mamey and the sapote, fruit-trees also, are in leaf during the whole of the dry season; even the Indian fig, which clasps and kills the largest trees of the forest, and at last takes their place, a stately tree with a stout trunk of its own, has its unfading leaf of vivid green.

It is impossible to avoid an expression of impatience that these trees have not been formed into groups, embowering the dwellings, and into groves, through which the beams of the sun, here so fierce at noonday, could not reach the ground beneath. There is in fact nothing of ornamental cultivation in Cuba, except of the most formal kind. Some private gardens there are, carefully kept, but all of the stiffest pattern; there is nothing which brings out the larger vegetation of the region in that grandeur and magnificence which might belong to it. In the Quinta del Obispo, or Bishop’s Garden, which is open to the public, you find shade which you find nowhere else, but the trees are planted in straight alleys, and the water-roses, a species of water-lily of immense size, fragrant and pink-colored, grow in a square tank, fed by a straight canal, with sides of hewn stone.

Let me say, however, that when I asked for trees, I was referred to the hurricanes which have recently ravaged the island. One of these swept over Cuba in 1844, uprooting the palms and the orange groves, and laying prostrate the avenues of trees on the coffee plantations. The Paseo Isabel, a public promenade, between the walls of Havana and the streets of the new
town, was formerly over-canopied with lofty and spreading trees, which
this tempest levelled to the ground; it has now been planted with rows of
young trees, which yield a meagre shade. In 1846 came another hurricane,
still more terrific, destroying much of the beauty which the first had spared.

Of late years, also, such of the orange-trees as were not uprooted, or
have recently been planted, have been attacked by the insect which a few
years since was so destructive to the same tree in Florida. The effect upon
the tree resembles that of a blight, the leaves grow sere, and the branches
die. You may imagine, therefore, that I was somewhat disappointed not to
find the air, as it is at this season in the south of Italy, fragrant with the
odor of orange and lemon blossoms. Oranges are scarce, and not so fine, at
this moment, in Havana and Matanzas, as in the fruit-shops of New York.
I hear, however, that there are portions of the island which were spared by
these hurricanes, and that there are others where the ravages of the insect
in the orange groves have nearly ceased, as I have been told is also the case
in Florida.

I have mentioned my excursion to San Antonio. I went thither by
railway, in a car built at Newark, drawn by an engine made in New York,
and worked by an American engineer. For some distance we passed through
fields of the sweet-potato, which here never requires a second planting,
and propagates itself perpetually in the soil, patches of maize, low groves
of bananas with their dark stems, and of plantains with their green ones,
and large tracts producing the pine-apple growing in rows like carrots.
Then came plantations of the sugar-cane, with its sedge-like blades of pale-
green, then extensive tracts of pasturage with scattered shrubs and tall
dead weeds, the growth of the last summer, and a thin herbage bitten close
to the soil. Here and there was an abandoned coffee-plantation, where
cattle were browsing among the half-perished shrubs and broken rows of
trees; and the neglected hedges of the wild pine, piña raton, as the Cubans
call it, were interrupted with broad gaps.

Sometimes we passed the cottages of the monteros, or peasants, built
mostly of palm-leaves, the walls formed of the broad sheath of the leaf,
fasted to posts of bamboo, and the roof thatched with the long plume-
like leaf itself. The door was sometimes hung with a kind of curtain to ex-
clude the sun, which the dusky complexioned women and children put
aside to gaze at us as we passed. These dwellings were often picturesque in
their appearance, with a grove of plantains behind, a thicket of bamboo by
the door, waving its willow-like sprays in the wind; a pair of mango-trees
near, hung with fruit just ripening and reddish blossoms just opening,
and a cocoa-tree or two lifting high above the rest its immense feathery
leaves and its clusters of green nuts.

We now and then met the monteros themselves scudding along on
their little horses, in that pace which we call a rack. Their dress was a
Panama hat, a shirt worn over a pair of pantaloons, a pair of rough cow-
skin shoes, one of which was armed with a spur, and a sword lashed to the
left side by a belt of cotton cloth. They are men of manly bearing, of thin
make, but often of a good figure, with well-spread shoulders, which, how-
ever, have a stoop in them, contracted, I suppose, by riding always with a
short stirrup.

Forests, too, we passed. You, doubtless, suppose that a forest in a soil
and climate like this, must be a dense growth of trees with colossal stems
and leafy summits. A forest in Cuba—all that I have seen are such—is a
thicket of shrubs and creeping plants, through which, one would suppose
that even the wild cats of the country would find it impossible to make
their way. Above this impassable jungle rises here and there the palm, or
the gigantic ceyba or cotton-tree, but more often trees of far less beauty,
thinly scattered and with few branches, disposed without symmetry, and
at this season often leafless.

We reached San Antonio at nine o'clock in the morning, and went to
the inn of La Punta, where we breakfasted on rice and fresh eggs, and a
dish of meat so highly flavored with garlic, that it was impossible to dis-
tinguish to what animal it belonged. Adjoining the inn was a cockpit, with
cells for the birds surrounding the inclosure, in which they were crowing
lustily. Two or three persons seemed to have nothing to do but to tend
them; and one, in particular, with a gray beard, a grave aspect, and a solid
gait, went about the work with a deliberation and solemnity which to me,
who had lately seen the hurried burials at the Campo Santo, in Havana,
was highly edifying. A man was training a game-cock in the pit; he was
giving it lessons in the virtue of perseverance. He held another cock before
it, which he was teaching it to pursue, and striking it occasionally over the
head to provoke it, with the wing of the bird in his hand, he made it run
after him about the area for half an hour together.

I had heard much of the beauty of the coffee estates of Cuba, and in
the neighborhood of San Antonio are some which have been reputed very
fine ones. A young man, where, in a checked blue and white shirt, worn like a
frock over checked pantaloons, with a spur on one heel, offered to procure
us a volante, and we engaged him. He brought us one with two horses, a
negro postillion sitting on one, and the shafts of the vehicle borne by the
other. We set off, passing through fields guarded by stiff-leaved hedges of
the ratoon-pine, over ways so bad that if the motion of the volante were
not the easiest in the world, we should have taken an unpleasant jolting.
The lands of Cuba fit for cultivation, are divided into red and black; we
were in the midst of the red lands, consisting of a fine earth of a deep brick
color, resting on a bed of soft, porous, chalky limestone. In the dry season
the surface is easily dispersed into dust, and stains your clothes of a dull
red.

A drive of four miles, through a country full of palm and cocoanut
trees, brought us to the gate of a coffee plantation, which our friend in the checked shirt, by whom we were accompanied, opened for us. We passed up to the house through what had been an avenue of palms, but was now two rows of trees at very unequal distances, with here and there a sickly orange-tree. On each side grew the coffee shrubs, hung with flowers of snowy white, but unpruned and full of dry and leafless twigs. In every direction were ranks of trees, prized for ornament or for their fruit, and shrubs, among which were magnificent oleanders loaded with flowers, planted in such a manner as to break the force of the wind, and partially to shelter the plants from the too fierce rays of the sun. The coffee estate is, in fact, a kind of forest, with the trees and shrubs arranged in straight lines. The mayoral, or steward of the estate, a handsome Cuban, with white teeth, a pleasant smile, and a distinct utterance of his native language, received us with great courtesy, and offered us cigarillos, though he never used tobacco; and spirit of cane, though he never drank. He wore a sword, and carried a large flexible whip, doubled for convenience in the hand. He showed us the coffee plants, the broad platforms with smooth surfaces of cement and raised borders, where the berries were dried in the sun, and the mills where the negroes were at work separating the kernel from the pulp in which it is inclosed.

"These coffee estates," said he, "are already ruined, and the planters are abandoning them as fast as they can; in four years more there will not be a single coffee plantation on the island. They can not afford to raise coffee for the price they get in the market."

I inquired the reason. "It is," replied he, "the extreme dryness of the season when the plant is in flower. If we have rain at this time of the year, we are sure of a good crop; if it does not rain, the harvest is small; and the failure of rain is so common a circumstance that we must leave the cultivation of coffee to the people of St. Domingo and Brazil."

I asked if the plantation could not be converted into a sugar estate.

"Not this," he answered; "it has been cultivated too long. The land was originally rich, but it is exhausted"—tired out, was the expression he used—"we may cultivate maize or rice, for the dry culture of rice succeeds well here, or we may abandon it to grazing. At present we keep a few negroes here, just to gather the berries which ripen, without taking any trouble to preserve the plants, or replace those which die."

I could easily believe from what I saw on this estate, that there must be a great deal of beauty of vegetation in a well-kept coffee plantation, but the formal pattern in which it is disposed, the straight alleys and rows of trees, the squares and parallelograms, showed me that there was no beauty of arrangement. We fell in, before we returned to our inn, with the proprietor, a delicate-looking person, with thin white hands, who had been educated at Boston, and spoke English as if he had never lived anywhere else. His manners, compared with those of his steward, were exceedingly
frosty and forbidding, and when we told him of the civility which had been shown us, his looks seemed to say he wished it had been otherwise.

Returning to our inn, we dined, and as the sun grew low, we strolled out to look at the town. It is situated on a clear little stream, over which several bathing-houses are built, their posts standing in the midst of the current. Above the town, it flows between rocky banks, bordered with shrubs, many of them in flower. Below the town, after winding a little way, it enters a cavern yawning in the limestone rock, immediately over which a huge ceyba rises, and stretches its leafy arms in mid-heaven. Down this opening the river throws itself, and is never seen again. This is not a singular instance in Cuba. The island is full of caverns and openings in the rocks, and I am told that many of the streams find subterranean passages to the sea. There is a well at the inn of La Punta, in which a roaring of water is constantly heard. It is the sound of a subterranean stream rushing along a passage in the rocks, and the well is an opening into its roof.

In passing through the town, I was struck with the neat attire of those who inhabited the humblest dwellings. At the door of one of the cottages, I saw a group of children, of different ages, all quite pretty, with oval faces and glittering black eyes, in clean fresh dresses, which, one would think, could scarcely have been kept a moment without being soiled, in that dwelling, with its mud floor. The people of Cuba are sparing in their ablutions; the men do not wash their faces and hands till nearly mid-day, for fear of spasms; and of the women, I am told that many do not wash at all, contenting themselves with rubbing their cheeks and necks with a little aguardiente; but the passion for clean linen, and, among the men, for clean white pantaloons, is universal. The montero himself, on a holiday or any public occasion, will sport a shirt of the finest linen, smoothly ironed, and stiffly starched throughout, from the collar downward.

The next day, at half-past eleven, we left our inn, which was also what we call in the United States a country store, where the clerks, who had just performed their ablutions and combed their hair, were making segars behind the counter from the tobacco of the Vuelta Abajo, and returned by the railway to Havana. We procured travelling licenses at the cost of four dollars and a half each, for it is the pleasure of the government to levy this tax on strangers who travel, and early the following morning took the train for Matanzas.


676. To the Evening Post

Los Guines, April 18, 1849.

In the long circuit of railway which leads from Havana to Matanzas, I saw nothing remarkably different from what I observed on my excursion
to San Antonio. There was the same smooth country, of great apparent fertility, sometimes varied with gentle undulations, and sometimes rising, in the distance, into hills covered with thickets. We swept by dark-green fields planted with the yuca, an esculent root, of which the cassava bread is made, pale-green fields of the cane, brown tracts of pasturage, partly formed of abandoned coffee estates where the palms and scattered fruit-trees were yet standing, and forests of shrubs and twining plants growing for the most part among rocks. Some of these rocky tracts have a peculiar appearance; they consist of rough projections of rock a foot or two in height, of irregular shape and full of holes; these are called *diente de perro*, or dog's teeth. Here the trees and creepers find openings filled with soil, by which they are nourished. We passed two or three country cemeteries, where that foulest of birds, the turkey-vulture, was seen sitting on the white stuccoed walls, or hovering on his ragged wings in circles above them.

In passing over the neighborhood of the town in which I am now writing, I found myself on the black lands of the island. Here the rich dark earth of the plain lies on a bed of chalk as white as snow, as was apparent where the earth had been excavated to a little depth, on each side of the railway, to form the causey on which it ran. Streams of clear water, diverted from a river to the left, traversed the plain with a swift current, almost even with the surface of the soil, which they keep in perpetual freshness. As we approached Matanzas, we saw more extensive tracts of cane clothing the broad slopes with their dense blades, as if the coarse sedge of a river had been transplanted to the uplands.

At length the bay of Matanzas opened before us; a long tract of water stretching to the northeast, into which several rivers empty themselves. The town lay at the southwestern extremity, sheltered by hills, where the San Juan and the Yumuri pour themselves into the brine. It is a small but prosperous town, with a considerable trade, as was indicated by the vessels at anchor in the harbor.

As we passed along the harbor I remarked an extensive, healthy-looking orchard of plantains growing on one of those tracts which they call *diente de perro*. I could see nothing but the jagged teeth of whitish rock, and the green swelling stems of the plantain, from ten to fifteen feet in height, and as large as a man's leg, or larger. The stalks of the plantain are juicy and herbaceous, and of so yielding a texture, that with a sickle you might entirely sever the largest of them at a single stroke. How such a multitude of succulent plants could find nourishment on what seemed to the eye little else than barren rock, I could not imagine.

The day after arriving at Matanzas we made an excursion on horseback to the summit of the hill, immediately overlooking the town, called the Cumbre. Light hardy horses of the country were brought us, with high pommels to the saddles, which are also raised behind in a manner making it difficult to throw the rider from his seat. A negro fitted a spur
to my right heel, and mounting by the short stirrups, I crossed the river Yumuri with my companions, and began to climb the Cumbre. They boast at Matanzas of the perpetual coolness of temperature enjoyed upon the broad summit of this hill, where many of the opulent merchants of the town have their country houses, to which the mosquitoes and the intermittent tints that infest the town below, never come, and where, as one of them told me, you may play at billiards in August without any inconvenient perspiration.

From the Cumbre you behold the entire extent of the harbor; the town lies below you with its thicket of masts, and its dusty paseo, where rows of the Cuba pine stand rooted in the red soil. On the opposite shore your eye is attracted to a chasm between high rocks, where the river Canimar comes forth through banks of romantic beauty—so they are described to me—and mingles with the sea. But the view to the west was much finer; there lay the valley of the Yumuri, and a sight of it is worth a voyage to the island. In regard to this my expectations suffered no disappointment.

Before me lay a deep valley, surrounded on all sides by hills and mountains, with the little river Yumuri twining at the bottom. Smooth round hillocks rose from the side next to me, covered with clusters of palms, and the steeps of the southeastern corner of the valley were clothed with a wood of intense green, where I could almost see the leaves glisten in the sunshine. The broad fields below were waving with cane and maize, and cottages of the monteros were scattered among them, each with its tuft of bamboos and its little grove of plantains. In some parts the cliffs almost seemed to impend over the valley; but to the west, in a soft golden haze, rose summit behind summit, and over them all, loftiest and most remote, towered the mountain called the Pan de Matanzas.

We stopped for a few moments at a country seat on the top of the Cumbre, where this beautiful view lay ever before the eye. Round it, in a garden, were cultivated the most showy plants of the tropics, but my attention was attracted to a little plantation of damask roses blooming profusely. They were scentless; the climate which supplies the orange blossom with intense odors exhausts the fragrance of the rose. At nightfall—the night falls suddenly in this latitude—we were again at our hotel.

We passed our Sunday on a sugar estate at the hospitable mansion of a planter from the United States about fifteen miles from Matanzas. The house stands on an eminence, once embowered in trees which the hurricanes have leveled, overlooking a broad valley, where palms were scattered in every direction; for the estate had formerly been a coffee plantation. In the huge buildings containing the machinery and other apparatus for making sugar, which stood at the foot of the eminence, the power of steam, which had been toiling all the week, was now at rest. As the hour of sunset approached, a smoke was seen rising from its chimney, presently
puffs of vapor issued from the engine, its motion began to be heard, and
the negroes, men and women, were summoned to begin the work of the
week. Some fed the fire under the boiler with coal; others were seen rush-
ing to the mill with their arms full of the stalks of the cane, freshly cut,
which they took from a huge pile near the building; others lighted fires
under a row of huge cauldrons, with the dry stalks of cane from which the
juice had been crushed by the mill. It was a spectacle of activity such as I
had not seen in Cuba.

The sound of the engine was heard all night, for the work of grinding
the cane, once begun, proceeds day and night, with the exception of Sun-
days and some other holidays. I was early next morning at the mill. A
current of cane juice was flowing from the rollers in a long trunk to a vat
in which it was clarified with lime; it was then made to pass successively
from one seething cauldron to another, as it obtained a thicker consistence
by boiling. The negroes, with huge ladies turning on pivots, swept it from
cauldron to cauldron, and finally passed it into a trunk, which conveyed it
to shallow tanks in another apartment, where it cooled into sugar. From
these another set of workmen scooped it up in moist masses, carried it in
buckets up a low flight of stairs, and poured it into rows of hogheads
pierced with holes at the bottom. These are placed over a large tank, into
which the moisture dripping from the hogheads is collected and forms
molasses.

This is the method of making the sugar called Muscovado. It is
drained a few days, and then the railways take it to Matanzas or to Ha-
vana. We visited afterward a plantation in the neighborhood, in which
clayed sugar is made. Our host furnished us with horses to make the ex-
cursion, and we took a winding road, over hill and valley, by plantations
and forests, till we stopped at the gate of an extensive pasture-ground. An
old negro, whose hut was at hand, opened it for us, and bowed low as we
passed. A ride of half a mile further brought us in sight of the cane-fields
of the plantation called Saratoga, belonging to the house of Drake & Com-
pany, of Havana, and reputed one of the finest of the island. It had a dif-
ferent aspect from any plantation we had seen. Trees and shrubs there
were none, but the canes, except where they had been newly cropped for
the mill, clothed the slopes and hollows with their light-green blades, like
the herbage of a prairie.

We were kindly received by the administrator of the estate, an intelli-
gent Biscayan, who showed us the whole process of making clayed sugar.
It does not differ from that of making the Muscovado, so far as concerns
the grinding and boiling. When, however, the sugar is nearly cool, it is
poured into iron vessels of conical shape, with the point downward, at
which is an opening. The top of the sugar is then covered with a sort of
black thick mud, which they call clay, and which is several times renewed
as it becomes dry. The moisture from the clay passes through the sugar, carrying with it the cruder portions, which form molasses. In a few days the draining is complete.

We saw the work-people of the Saratoga estate preparing for the market the sugar thus cleansed, if we may apply the word to such a process. With a rude iron blade they cleft the large loaf of sugar just taken from the mould into three parts, called first, second, and third quality, according to their whiteness. These are dried in the sun on separate platforms of wood with a raised edge; the women standing and walking over the fragments with their bare dirty feet, and beating them smaller with wooden mallets and clubs. The sugar of the first quality is then scraped up and put into boxes; that of the second and third, being moister, is handled a third time and carried into the drying-room, where it is exposed to the heat of a stove, and when sufficiently dry, is boxed up for market like the other.

The sight of these processes was not of a nature to make one think with much satisfaction of clayed sugar as an ingredient of food, but the inhabitants of the island are superior to such prejudices, and use it with as little scruple as they who do not know in what manner it is made.

In the afternoon we returned to the dwelling of our American host, and taking the train at Caobas, or Mahogany Trees—so called from the former growth of that tree on the spot—we were at Matanzas an hour afterward. The next morning the train brought us to this little town, situated half-way between Matanzas and Havana, but a considerable distance to the south of either.


**677. To the Evening Post**

Havana, April 22, 1849.

The other day when we were at Guines, we heard that a negro was to suffer death early the next morning by the *garrote*, an instrument by which the neck of the criminal is broken and life extinguished in an instant. I asked our landlady for what crime the man had been condemned.

"He killed his master," she replied, "an old man, in his bed."

"Had he received any provocation?"

"Not that I have heard; but another slave is to be put to death by the *garrote* in about a fortnight, whose offense had some palliation. His master was a man of harsh temper, and treated his slaves with extreme severity; the negro watched his opportunity, and shot him as he sat at table."

We went to the place of execution a little before eight o'clock, and found the preparations already made. A platform had been erected, on which stood a seat for the prisoner, and back of the seat a post was fixed,
with a sort of iron collar for his neck. A screw, with a long transverse handle on the side of the post opposite to the collar, was so contrived that, when it was turned, it would push forward an iron bolt against the back of the neck and crush the spine at once.

Sentinels in uniform were walking to and fro, keeping the spectators at a distance from the platform. The heat of the sun was intense, for the sea-breeze had not yet sprung up, but the crowd had begun to assemble. As near to the platform as they could come, stood a group of young girls, two of whom were dressed in white and one was pretty, with no other shade for their dusky faces than their black veils, chatting and laughing and stealing occasional glances at the new-comers. In another quarter were six or eight monteros on horseback, in their invariable costume of Panama hats, shirts and pantaloons, with holsters to their saddles, and most of them with swords lashed to their sides.

About half-past eight a numerous crowd made its appearance coming from the town. Among them walked with a firm step, a large black man, dressed in a long white frock, white pantaloons, and a white cap with a long peak which fell backward on his shoulders. He was the murderer; his hands were tied together by the wrists; in one of them he held a crucifix; the rope by which they were fastened was knotted around his waist, and the end of it was held by another athletic negro, dressed in blue cotton with white facings, who walked behind him. On the left of the criminal walked an officer of justice; on his right an ecclesiastic, slender and stooping, in a black gown and a black cap, the top of which was formed into a sort of coronet, exhorting the criminal, in a loud voice and with many gesticulations, to repent and trust in the mercy of God.

When they reached the platform, the negro was made to place himself on his knees before it, the priest continuing his exhortations, and now and then clapping him, in an encouraging manner, on the shoulder. I saw the man shake his head once or twice, and then kiss the crucifix. In the mean time a multitude, of all ages and both sexes, took possession of the places from which the spectacle could be best seen. A stone-fence, such as is common in our country, formed of loose stones taken from the surface of the ground, upheld a long row of spectators. A well-dressed couple, a gentleman in white pantaloons, and a lady elegantly attired, with a black lace veil and a parasol, bringing their two children and two colored servants, took their station by my side—the elder child found a place on the top of the fence, and the younger, about four years of age, was lifted in the arms of one of the servants, that it might have the full benefit of the spectacle.

The criminal was then raised from the ground, and going up the platform took the seat ready for him. The priest here renewed his exhortations, and, at length, turning to the audience, said, in a loud voice, "I believe in God Almighty and in Jesus Christ his only Son, and it grieves me to the heart to have offended them." These words, I suppose, were meant,
as the confession of the criminal, to be repeated after the priest, but I heard no response from his lips. Again and again the priest repeated them, the third time with a louder voice than ever; the signal was then given to the executioner. The iron collar was adjusted to the neck of the victim, and fastened under the chin. The athletic negro in blue, standing behind the post, took the handle of the screw and turned it deliberately. After a few turns, the criminal gave a sudden shrug of the shoulders; another turn of the screw, and a shudder ran over his whole frame, his eyes rolled wildly, his hands, still tied with the rope, were convulsively jerked upward, and then dropped back to their place motionless forever. The priest advanced and turned the peak of the white cap over the face to hide it from the sight of the multitude.

I had never seen, and never intended to see an execution, but the strangeness of this manner of inflicting death, and the desire to witness the behavior of an assembly of the people of Cuba on such an occasion, had overcome my previous determination. The horror of the spectacle now caused me to regret that I made one of a crowd drawn to look at it by an idle curiosity.

The negro in blue now stepped forward and felt the limbs of the dead man one by one, to ascertain whether life were wholly extinct, and then returning to the screw, gave it two or three turns more, as if to make his work sure. In the mean time my attention was attracted by a sound like that of a light buffet and a whimpering voice near me. I looked, and two men were standing by me, with a little white boy at their side, and a black boy of nearly the same age before them, holding his hat in his hand, and crying. They were endeavoring to direct his attention to what they considered the wholesome spectacle before him. "Mira, mira, no te hará daño,"* said the men, but the boy steadily refused to look in that direction, though he was evidently terrified by some threat of punishment and his eyes filled with tears. Finding him obstinate, they desisted from their purpose, and I was quite edified to see the little fellow continue to look away from the spectacle which attracted all other eyes but his. The white boy now came forward, touched the hat of the little black, and good-naturedly saying "pontelo, pontelo,"† made him put it on his head.

The crowd now began to disperse, and in twenty minutes the place was nearly solitary, except the sentinels pacing backward and forward. Two hours afterward the sentinels were pacing there yet, and the dead man, in his white dress and iron collar, was still in his seat on the platform.

It is generally the natives of Africa by whom these murders are committed; the negroes born in the country are of a more yielding temper.

[Bryant's notes]
* "Look, look, it will do you no harm."
† "Put it on, put it on."
They have better learned the art of avoiding punishment, and submit to it more patiently when inflicted, having understood from their birth that it is one of the conditions of their existence. The whip is always in sight. "Nothing can be done without it," said an Englishman to me, who had lived eleven years on the island, "you can not make the negroes work by the mild methods which are used by slaveholders in the United States; the blacks there are far more intelligent and more easily governed by moral means." Africans, the living witnesses of the present existence of the slave-trade, are seen everywhere; at every step you meet blacks whose cheeks are scarred with parallel slashes, with which they were marked in the African slave-market, and who can not even speak the mutilated Spanish current in the mouths of the Cuba negroes.

One day I stood upon the quay at Matanzas and saw the slaves unloading the large lighters which brought goods from the Spanish ships lying in the harbor—casks of wine, jars of oil, bags of nuts, barrels of flour. The men were naked to the hips; their only garment being a pair of trowsers. I admired their ample chests, their massive shoulders, the full and muscular proportions of their arms, and the ease with which they shifted the heavy articles from place to place, or carried them on their heads. "Some of these are Africans?" I said to a gentleman who resided on the island. "They are all Africans," he answered, "Africans to a man; the negro born in Cuba is of a lighter make."

When I was at Guines, I went out to look at a sugar estate in the neighborhood, where the mill was turned by water, which a long aqueduct, from one of the streams that traverse the plain, conveyed over arches of stone so broad and massive that I could not help thinking of the aqueducts of Rome. A gang of black women were standing in the secadero or drying-place, among the lumps of clayed sugar, beating them small with mallets; before them walked to and fro the major-domo, with a cutlass by his side and a whip in his hand. I asked him how a planter could increase his stock of slaves. "There is no difficulty," he replied, "slaves are still brought to the island from Africa. The other day five hundred were landed on the sea-shore to the south of this; for you must know, Señor, that we are but three or four leagues from the coast."

"Was it done openly?" I inquired.

"Publicamente, Señor, publicamente;* they were landed on the sugar estate of El Pastor, and one hundred and seven more died on the passage from Africa."

"Did the government know of it?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Of course the government knows it," said he; "every body else knows it."

[Bryant's note]

* "Publicly, sir, publicly."
The truth is, that the slave-trade is now fully revived; the government conniving at it, making a profit on the slaves imported from Africa, and screening from the pursuit of the English the pirates who bring them. There could scarcely be any arrangement of coast more favorable for smuggling slaves into a country, than the islands and long peninsulas, and many channels of the southern shore of Cuba. Here the mangrove thickets, sending down roots into the brine from their long branches that stretch over the water, form dense screens on each side of the passages from the main ocean to the inland, and render it easy for the slaver and his boats to lurk undiscovered by the English men-of-war.

During the comparative cessation of the slave-trade a few years since, the negroes, I have been told, were much better treated than before. They rose in value, and when they died, it was found not easy to supply their places; they were therefore made much of, and every thing was done which it was thought would tend to preserve their health, and maintain them in bodily vigor. If the slave-trade should make them cheap again, their lives of course will be of less consequence to their owners, and they will be subject again to be overtasked, as it has been said they were before. There is certainly great temptation to wear them out in the sugar mills, which are kept in motion day and night, during half the year, namely, through the dry season. "If this was not the healthiest employment in the world," said an overseer to me on one of the sugar estates, "it would kill us all who are engaged in it, both black and white."

Perhaps you may not know that more than half of the island of Cuba has never been reduced to tillage. Immense tracts of the rich black or red mould of the island, accumulated on the coral rock, are yet waiting the hand of the planter to be converted into profitable sugar estates. There is a demand, therefore, for laborers on the part of those who wish to become planters, and this demand is supplied not only from the coast of Africa, but from the American continent and southwestern Asia.

In one of the afternoons of Holy Week, I saw amid the crowd on the Plaza de Armas, in Havana, several men of low stature, of a deep-olive complexion, beardless, with high cheek-bones and straight black hair, dressed in white pantaloons of cotton, and shirts of the same material worn over them. They were Indians, natives of Yucatan, who had been taken prisoners of war by the whites of the country and sold to white men in Cuba, under a pretended contract to serve for a certain number of years. I afterward learned, that the dealers in this sort of merchandise were also bringing in the natives of Asia, Chinese they call them here, though I doubt whether they belong to that nation, and disposing of their services to the planters. There are six hundred of these people, I have been told, in this city.

Yesterday appeared in the Havana papers an ordinance concerning the "Indians and Asiatics imported into the country under a contract to
labor.” It directs how much Indian corn, how many plantains, how much jerked-pork and rice they shall receive daily, and how many lashes the master may inflict for misbehavior. Twelve stripes with the cowskin he may administer for the smaller offenses, and twenty-four for transgressions of more importance; but if any more become necessary, he must apply to a magistrate for permission to lay them on. Such is the manner in which the government of Cuba sanctions the barbarity of making slaves of the freeborn men of Yucatan. The ordinance, however, betrays great concern for the salvation of the souls of those whom it thus delivers over to the lash of the slave-driver. It speaks of the Indians from America, as Christians already, but while it allows the slaves imported from Asia to be flogged, it directs that they shall be carefully instructed in the doctrines of our holy religion.

Yet the policy of the government favors emancipation. The laws of Cuba permit any slave to purchase his freedom on paying a price fixed by three persons, one appointed by his master and two by a magistrate. He may, also, if he pleases, compel his master to sell him a certain portion of his time, which he may employ to earn the means of purchasing his entire freedom.

It is owing to this, I suppose, that the number of free blacks is so large in the island, and it is manifest that if the slave-trade could be checked, and these laws remain unaltered, the negroes would gradually emancipate themselves—all at least who would be worth keeping as servants. The population of Cuba is now about a million and a quarter, rather more than half of whom are colored persons, and one out of every four of the colored population is free. The mulattoes emancipate themselves as a matter of course, and some of them become rich by the occupations they follow. The prejudice of color is by no means so strong here as in the United States. Five or six years since the negroes were shouting and betting in the cockpits with the whites; but since the mulatto insurrection, as it is called, in 1843, the law forbids their presence at such amusements. I am told there is little difficulty in smuggling people of mixed blood, by the help of legal forms, into the white race, and if they are rich, into good society, provided their hair is not frizzled.

You hear something said now and then in the United States concerning the annexation of Cuba to our confederacy; you may be curious, perhaps, to know what they say of it here. A European who had long resided in the island, gave me this account:

“The Creoles, no doubt, would be very glad to see Cuba annexed to the United States, and many of them ardently desire it. It would relieve them from many great burdens they now bear, open their commerce to the world, rid them of a tyrannical government, and allow them to manage their own affairs in their own way. But Spain derives from the possession of Cuba advantages too great to be relinquished. She extracts from Cuba
a revenue of twelve millions of dollars; her government sends its needy nobility, and all for whom it would provide, to fill lucrative offices in Cuba—the priests, the military officers, the civil authorities, every man who fills a judicial post or holds a clerkship is from old Spain. The Spanish government dares not give up Cuba if it were inclined.

"Nor will the people of Cuba make any effort to emancipate themselves by taking up arms. The struggle with the power of Spain would be bloody and uncertain, even if the white population were united, but the mutual distrust with which the planters and the peasantry regard each other, would make the issue of such an enterprise still more doubtful. At present it would not be safe for a Cuba planter to speak publicly of annexation to the United States. He would run the risk of being imprisoned or exiled."

Of course, if Cuba were to be annexed to the United States, the slave trade with Africa would cease to be carried on as now, though its perfect suppression might be found difficult. Negroes would be imported in large numbers from the United States, and planters would emigrate with them. Institutions of education would be introduced, commerce and religion would both be made free, and the character of the islanders would be elevated by the responsibilities which a free government would throw upon them. The planters, however, would doubtless adopt regulations insuring the perpetuity of slavery; they would unquestionably, as soon as they were allowed to frame ordinances for the island, take away the facilities which the present laws give the slave for effecting his own emancipation.


678. To Israel K. Tefft

Richmond, Virginia, April 27, 1849.

My dear sir

I found time, during the last four days of my stay in the island of Cuba, after the novelties of Havana had been exhausted, and during the voyage homeward, after I had recovered from the first horrors of seasickness, to read the volume of Stevens's History of Georgia\(^1\) which you were so kind as to put into my hands.

And, I assure you, I read it with great interest. I had no idea that the annals of your state could be presented in a form which could so deeply engage my attention. Dr. Stevens it appears to me, has executed his work with a great deal of historical talent. He has arranged the facts in such a manner as not only to make their order and relation to each other perfectly clear to the reader, but, also to keep the curiosity of the reader continually awake. The narrative is pervaded by a liberal philosophy, the reflec-
tions are just, and often profound, and the characters drawn with
discrimination. The part which relates to the religious history of the colo-
ny I like exceedingly.

The work has some faults, however. Portions of documents or entire
documents are sometimes given in the text when their import might better
have been briefly stated in the author's own language. In that case if there
was any reason for publishing the document it might have been placed in
the appendix. The tedious original minutes of the formalities attending
the surrender of their charter by the original trustees of the colony of
Georgia are an example of what I mean. Sometimes the author allows him-
self to appear too much as the predetermined eulogist of the founders of
the colony and commends in warm language acts for which more measured
praise would have sufficed, or acts so obviously meritorious as to need no
elaborate encomium. In the chapter respecting the slave-trade he begins
by speaking of the African slave trade as criminal and condemning Great
Britain for fastening the institution of slavery upon Carolina Massachu-
setts and other of her colonies, and proceeds in what seems to me an at-
ttempt to justify the settlers of Georgia for extorting by importunity the
consent of the Trustees to introduce slavery within her limits, and after
it was established buying negroes of the African traders. The episode of
Bosomworth and his wife Mary is not as neatly related as the other inci-
dents of Georgia history. The style is sometimes a little too oratorical;
sometimes it bears strong marks of the writer's profession, and now and
then I have met with a tag of commonplace finery which I could wish ex-
changed for simpler and more direct forms of expression. There is my list
of defects; perhaps if I were to read the work over I should reduce it—and
they are nothing in comparison with its great and essential merits. I
promised you to write what I thought of it, and you have just what you
asked.

I am here in four days and a half from Havana—my head yet swims
with the motion of the steamer in which I came out. Mr. Leupp and my-
self have stopped for a days rest. — We were eighteen days in Havana—we
had a prosperous voyage both in going and returning, temperate weather
while there and the opportunity of seeing much that was interesting and
new to us. We often speak of your civility and that of your family while
we were at Savannah.

Give my best regards to Mrs. Tefft and remember me kindly to your
sons.

Yrs truly

W. C. BRYANT

by William Cullen Bryant," The Georgia Historical Quarterly, 26 (September–
December 1942), 288–290.

2. In their *A Popular History of the United States* (New York, 1879), III, 166–168, Bryant and his collaborator, Sydney Howard Gay, told the story of a bizarre episode in the early history of Georgia in which the half-breed Indian Mary Musgrove and her white husband, Rev. Thomas Bosomworth, played a central role. Mary had served for a time as interpreter for James Oglethorpe, founder of the colony, and Bosomworth, a Church of England clergyman, as his chaplain. In 1747, several years after Oglethorpe's final return to England, the two conspired to set themselves up as supreme rulers of the Creek Indian nation, leading an abortive rebellion against the colonial government—which, however, managed to disperse it without bloodshed.

679. To Frances F. Bryant


Dear Frances.

I bought one piece of the paper at Kemp's¹ this morning, and one piece of border. He did not like to cut it, and the price of the piece is but six shillings. So I took it. The package is to be directed to the care of Mr. Julian,² and I spoke to him about it, as I went out. He will bring it to you I doubt not this evening.

All is quiet here. The mobs are over.—³

Yours ever

W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island.


2. Operator of the Roslyn stage; see Letter 651.

3. The long rivalry between the actors Edwin Forrest and William Charles Macready reached a catastrophic climax on May 10, 1849, when a New York mob, determined to drive the British tragedian from the city, disrupted Macready's performance at the Astor Place Opera House so violently that a militia company, called out to disperse the crowd, fired into it with cannon, killing and wounding nearly sixty people. See *EP*, May 9–16, 1849, *passim*; Odell, *Annals*, V, 481–484; 655.2.

680. To Frances F. Bryant


Dear Frances

Will you be so kind as to ask Julia to be so kind as to copy for me that part of Griswold's introduction to my verses in the Poets of America which is strictly biographical—omitting the critical remarks,¹ so that I can have it when I come.

You thought it possible that you might come to town this week. Why not come tomorrow morning and go out with me on Saturday? Mr. and Mrs. Dewey are here, I saw them at the meeting of the Association last evening—they want to see you. Mr. Dewey will preach next Sunday, and
on Tuesday they return to Berkshire. Tomorrow I have appointed to be at Levett's at twelve o' clock and should be glad if you were with me. Del Vecchio will not have his picture frames finished till the beginning of next week, when he will send for the engraving at Mrs. Elwell's. 

Since I wrote thus far I have got your letter of yesterday noon. I am glad to know what you are doing and that there is some prospect that you will have things in tolerable order at last, but I fear that you have so much work laid out for yourself that you will not be able to come to town tomorrow. Remember, however, that if you can, it is better to come now than after the cholera is here, which I suppose will be very soon. There are rumours that it is in town already and I fear they are not without foundation.

As to Forrest and his wife, the matter stands just as it did, at least so far as I can hear. No letters have been written to any body, and of course no answers to them have been given. Miss Robbins has advised Mrs. F. to put her case in the hands of Mr. McCoun. Miss Robbins has just called. She tells me that yesterday Mrs. F. saw her husband and that he promised to call tomorrow, Friday, and talk the matter over and make an arrangement as to the allowance she is to receive.

Yrs ever
W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Mrs. F. F. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island.


2. In 1849 Orville Dewey (307.4, 608.4) resigned his ministry of the Unitarian Church of the Messiah on Broadway and retired from New York City to his family home in Sheffield, Massachusetts. Bryant refers, perhaps, to a meeting of the American Unitarian Association, of which Dewey had previously served as president (1845-1847), and of which Bryant would later be a vice president during the last seven years of his life.

3. Since May 1847 the Bryants had lodged when in town with Mary Elwell at 4 Amity Place; see 615.1. The other references are probably to Morris Levett, a dentist, of 628 Broadway, and James R. Del Vecchio, a picture framer, 495 Broadway. Rode's New York City Directory for 1849-1850, pp. 256, 123.

4. Letter unrecovered.

5. The Asiatic cholera, brought to New York in December 1848 by steerage passengers from Europe, claimed its first victims in the city two days before Bryant wrote this letter. During an epidemic over the course of the next three months, more than one thousand deaths were officially attributed to this disease, and probably many hundreds more resulted from undiagnosed cases. Charles E. Rosenberg, The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press [1962]), pp. 101-114, passim.

6. See Letter 665 for the first intimation of the impending divorce suit between Edwin Forrest and Catherine Sinclair Forrest, into which the Bryants and the Godwins would later be drawn. For Eliza Robbins, see 127.6; for Judge William T. McCoun, 535.6.
LETTERS OF WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

681. To Richard G. Parker
New York May 21, 1849.

Sir.

It seems to me very likely that the change you propose in a line of my little poem, called "The Death of the Flowers," is an improvement. Notwithstanding that I wrote "calls" originally, and notwithstanding a poet's paternal fondness for what he produces, I feel no repugnance to adopting the alteration, which convinces me that the expression you desire to substitute is quite as good, to say the least, as the one I used. The term, moreover, is less general, and therefore more descriptive. I freely consent, therefore, that instead of "calls" you read "caws" in the quotation you do me the honor to make, and I shall seriously consider whether I will not myself make the change in the next edition of my poems, if one should ever be published.  

You are kind enough to ask whether I have not some favorite poem which I would indicate, in order that you might copy it in the work you are preparing for the press. The poem called "the Past," seems to me better than most of my verses, and another entitled "the Dream" is rather a favorite with me. But poets do not always agree with the critics in regard to the comparative merits of their own productions, and I may therefore be mistaken in my preferences.

I am sir
very respectfully yours
WM. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYHS ADDRESS: To Richard G. Parker Esq.

1. Richard Green Parker (1798–1869), a Boston teacher, was a prolific author of elementary and secondary school textbooks. His letter to Bryant which drew this reply is unrecovered.

2. Nevertheless, Bryant kept the original verb in the concluding line of the first stanza of this poem: "And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day." See Poems (1876), p. 132.

3. Probably National Series of Selections for Reading; Adapted to the Standing of the Pupil (New York and Cincinnati, 1851).


682. To Frances F. Bryant
New York, May 24, 1849.

Dear Frances.

Fanny saw the girl of whom I wrote to you yesterday and thinks she may come without her friend. I went to inquire her character. I did not find Mrs. Moran with whom she had lived at home, but a nurse, a respectable looking German girl gave a good account of her and was anxious that
I should see Mrs. Moran, in order that she might confirm it. She had the oversight of every thing in the household, and though a chambermaid could turn her hand to any thing. Fanny will see her again today.

I saw Mrs. Robinson\(^1\) last evening. She will come out on Saturday—She said nothing of Mary, but I will see her again. Nothing whatever has been done for Mrs. Forrest.—

I have written to West\(^2\) as you desire.

Yrs ever

W C Bryant

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**MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS:** Mrs. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island.

1. Probably Therese A. L. von Jacob Robinson; see 399.2.
2. West is unidentified; Bryant's letter to him is unrecovered.

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**683. To Fanny Bryant Godwin**


Dear Fanny,

I called yesterday at Mrs. Moran's but did not find her at home. A German girl, a nurse, gave me such an account of Matilde, that I am perfectly satisfied of her good qualities. She did every thing in his family, though she was chambermaid, and was sehr geschickt [very skillful] &c &c.

Yrs affectionately

W C Bryant

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**MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS:** Mrs. F. Bryant Godwin / Fourth Street.

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**684. To Frances F. Bryant**

New York Friday May 25 1849.

Dear Frances.

I wrote you yesterday that Mrs. Robinson would come out with me tomorrow. I called on her last evening and learned that no other of the family will come with her. Her cook leaves her the sixth of June, a good servant, except that she takes offence too easily. Perhaps you might engage her, if you get nobody else. Mrs. Hoyer\(^1\) is making inquiries and expects to hear something the beginning of next week. Her indisposition the other day was occasioned by a fall which bruised her cheek and loosened her teeth.

You are invited to Lizzy Gray's wedding\(^2\)—you and Julia—on Wednesday at twelve o'clock. I shall bring out the letters. If Miss Robbins comes out, as I hear she may, hold her fast till I come. She is not I know in one of her very gentlest moods about this time, but I am not afraid of her. Tell her so. I have hardly had a good talk with her since my return.
I forgot to say to you, yesterday, that Fanny intended to come out on Monday, and that she would be glad if you could engage somebody to begin house cleaning at the cottage on that day.—

Yours affectionately
W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: Mrs. Frances F. Bryant / Roslyn / Long Island.

1. Mrs. Charles F. Hoyer; see 326.5.
2. Probably a daughter of the Bryants' physician, Dr. John Franklin Gray; see 444.1.

685. To Frances F. Bryant

My dear Frances.

I write this just as we are going into Halifax. We have had a pleasant passage thus far—three days of pleasant weather and a smooth sea. I have not been quite so sick as usual, and hope to get across to England with less of that misery than the last time.

The day before I left New York Mr. Leupp told me that Mrs. Fisk had arrived from Cuba with the two fans and was at the Bond Street House. I told him I would call and take them, but forgot it entirely.

I did not think to give John a memorandum to look to the plum trees and cut off all the knots which make their appearance. There is a tree in Mrs. Kirkland's garden which needs very much his attention. Will you tell him of it and ask him to cut off the knots immediately.

I hope you will look well to your health this summer and take things as easy as possible. Look up something in the books for your eye which continued, when I left you to be affected longer than it ought, in the case of an ordinary stye.

Farewell again and may God bless you. I shall write again as soon as I touch land at Liverpool, which I hope will be in eight days at least. Do not forget, however, that you are not to wait till you get a letter from me.

I am writing almost in the dark— Love to Fanny and Julia.

Yrs affectionately
W. C Bryant

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. Bryant mistakenly wrote "May."
3. An Irish gardener Bryant had engaged that spring; see Frances Bryant to Cyrus Bryant, April 17, 1849, BCHS.
4. The novelist Caroline Kirkland (517.2) had rented a cottage on the Bryant property for the summer. Ibid.
686. To Frances F. Bryant

Liverpool    Monday    June 25, 1849

My dear Frances.

I promised that I would write you as soon as I landed in England and I keep my word, though the letter cannot go till Saturday when the steamer departs for America.

We arrived at half past three this morning after a very prosperous passage—so much so that I often [prayed?]¹ that if you and I should make the voyage hereafter we may have just such a one. The weather was quite favorable, the sea uncommonly smooth, and the wind when there was any, generally with us. When we got into the Channel, where we were for more than a day, there was no more motion than in Long Island Sound. We made the entire passage from New York in an hour and twenty minutes sooner than it was ever made before. I suffered very little from sea-sickness; after the fourth day I might be said to feel no remains of it; though my sensations were still not quite natural. A steamer from the Hudson the captain said, might have made the passage not only with safety but with comfort to the passengers and would have arrived at Liverpool three days sooner, where it would have attracted as much attention as the arrival of the sea serpent.

We had a hundred and twenty eight passengers, not more than five or six of whom were Americans—the rest were English commercial agents or merchants, Frenchmen, Germans, Italians and Spaniards; the latter appeared to be the most numerous. There were few of them in whom we took any interest, but they were all good humoured, like the weather.

Manchester, June 28th, Thursday. I write this from the house of my friend Mr. Christie² where I have already passed two nights. While at Liverpool, I went to see the Prince's Park, a public ground which had just been laid out when I was here before, and which I now found wonderfully improved and embellished. In one place an artificial sheet of water had been formed, where swans were sailing, and the banks of which, with rock-work, and groups of shrubs amidst the thick turf, some of which were covered with brilliant flowers white and red, formed the prettiest piece of picturesque gardening within a small compass that I think I ever saw. I called on Mr. Rathbone, who had been very attentive to us when we were at Liverpool before,³ and went with Mr. Leupp to see some good pictures in the collection of Mr. Clow, a Scotchman to whom he had a letter.⁴

I was seized with a diarrhea, the afternoon of the day I landed, which proved violent and obstinate. I studied Dr. Joslin's book on the cholera,⁵ and followed his directions in regard to regimen, but I got no better. While I was waiting to get well before travelling further, Mr. Christie came out and on Tuesday evening took us down to his house in this city, thirty one miles from Liverpool. Here I passed another very bad night,
and the next day, yesterday, in a kind of despair I swallowed a plate of strawberries which cured me instantly. I had a good night, and was never better than I find myself this morning. Tomorrow morning we go to London.

Mr. Tilden did not come out with us but he came to see us off and declared that he was determined to follow us in the next steamer. We have lost so much time that it will not be difficult for him to overtake us if he comes, as we shall pass two or three days in London.6

The weather has been very chilly since I came, and the skies cloudy, sometimes coyly sprinkling the streets and sometimes opening to let down a gleam of pale sunshine. It is much like the weather we were complaining of in America when I came away—the English however call it fine. I had on a great coat when Mr. Christie came out on Tuesday, and he said it was what he called “a blazing hot day.” Since then I have put on my thickest wrapper, and Mr. Leupp wears two thin ones.

I have not yet seen Mr. Field,7 and having been detained so long by my indisposition I think I must postpone my visit to him till I have seen the Hebrides. After the middle of August I am told that travelling in the Highlands is not so pleasant. I shall write to him, however, today. I am very anxious to hear from you, and hope to get a letter by the steamer the beginning of next week. Take good care of yourself, I entreat you and do not worry yourself too much.

Yours ever
W. C. BRYANT.

[To Julia Bryant]
Dear Julia.

You have your frolic tomorrow when I hope you will get better weather than any thing we have here, where we have made an hospitable friend keep his fire in the grate burning at midday. When the festivity is over, I fancy you returning to your studies,—your drawing and perhaps to your Ollandorf.8 Write to me and tell me what you are doing; how you amuse yourself and how you occupy yourself. As the world is constituted the most fortunate are those who find amusement in occupation. Love to Fanny. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Kirkland and her family.

Yrs affectionately—
W. C. BRYANT

P. S. I have written to Mrs. Fisk apologizing for not calling [to]9 take the fans, and requesting her, if she paid more for them than what I handed her, to send to the office a memorandum of it for you. You will then send her the amount, addressed to the care of John J. Fisk Esq. American Exchange Bank New York.
1. Word omitted.
2. David Christie (d. 1851), a Scottish manufacturer who had entertained Bryant and Leupp in 1845. See 538.4.
3. William Rathbone, former mayor of Liverpool. See 537.A.
5. Benjamin Franklin Joslin (1796–1861), Causes and Homoeopathic Treatment of the Cholera; Including Repertories for this Disease and for Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Cholera Infantism and Dysentery (New York, 1849).
6. In June 1849 Samuel Jones Tilden (389.3), then a busy New York lawyer, "was disposed to accept the invitation of his wise friend and counselor, William Cullen Bryant, to accompany him to Europe," and went so far as to secure a passport and letters of introduction to persons abroad, but the pressure of business forced him to give up the trip. Alexander Clarence Flick and Gustav S. Lobrano, Samuel Jones Tilden: A Study in Political Sagacity (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1939), p. 87.
7. Ferdinand Emans Field, of Birmingham. See 347.5; Letter 687.
8. Probably Heinrich Gottfried Ollendorff (1803–1865), A Key to the Exercises in Ollendorf’s New Method of Learning to Read, Write, and Speak the German Language (New York, 1845).
9. Word omitted. This letter is unrecovered.

687. To Frances F. Bryant

London July 6, 1849.

My dear Frances.

I am yet you see in this great capital which seems to me and really is larger than when I was here four years since. The overgrown city grows and spreads like a great cancer and if it goes on at this rate will cover the whole island at last. North of Hyde Park where they were building streets of palaces when I was here last they are building streets of palaces yet—rows of tall and stately houses of stuccoed brick inhabited by families who spend I am told not less than two thousand a year or about ten thousand dollars of our money.

We left [for]¹ London the day after I wrote you from Manchester, Mr. Christie accompanying us, and it is because he is with us and knows the city and its environs most thoroughly, that we still remain here. He esteems himself under some obligations to Mr. Leupp, and seems anxious to show that he remembers them. He will leave us, however, in a day or two, and then, on Monday probably, the 9th of this month, we set out for Scotland.

On Saturday, the day after I came up to London my complaint returned, and the next day it was so troublesome and obstinate that I went to employ a physician. I called at Dr. Cu[rie?]’s,² he was not at home, at Dr. Epps’s³ with the same success, and finally at Dr. Laurie’s,⁴ whom I
found in. He is a dapper, dark-complexioned young-looking Scotchman. He prescribed pulsatilla and bryonia—the first had a good effect but I was obliged to perfect the cure by mercurius. I paid him a guinea which was his fee he said for the two visits, but I had no occasion to call on him or send for him again.

Since I have been in London I have seen many things, but an enumeration of the sights of London would not interest you much. The original pictures of Hogarth, at Sir John Soane’s Museum⁵ are exceedingly interesting; they are solidly painted and well preserved and there seems to be even more meaning in them than in the engravings he made from them. I wish you could have gone with me to Dulwich College, in a pretty village, with a very rich collection of pictures mostly by the Flemish masters.⁶ We went to Greenwich Hospital⁷ and had our fourth of July dinner there, the principal dish being white bait, a very small fish, for which the place is famous.

I have called twice at Mr. Rogers’s⁸ but he did not happen to be in. I have seen Mr. Bancroft⁹ and Mr. Edwin Field,¹⁰ from whose hospitalities—I speak of them both—I had some difficulty to disengage myself. I wrote to Mr. Field of Birmingham¹¹ our friend and received a letter full of kind reproaches that when I was ill I did not come to his house. I shall answer him that I would have done so, but that Birmingham was so much further off than Manchester.

If I have time I shall write a letter this morning for the Evening Post¹² in which you will find notices of some things which I have not mentioned in this letter.

The weather since we have been in England has been very fine for English weather, though we should call it “very cold for the season.” There are no open windows, except for a short time in the morning to air the rooms. Yet it is fine weather for exercise, for walking and excursions into the country.

I got your letter of the 17th of June¹³ the other day and was very glad to receive it. I read it half a dozen times over. Love to the children. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Kirkland and her family. Tell Julia not to forget to write—and say to Fanny that I shall be very glad of a letter from her.

Yrs ever

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR ADDRESS: MRS. F. F. BRYANT.

1. Word omitted.
2. Unidentified.
4. Joseph Laurie (d. 1865), whose Homoeopathic Domestic Medicine (London, 1842) had been edited in five American editions between 1843 and 1849 by Bryant's
physician and friend Dr. A. Gerald Hull, Jr. (405.4; 944.1). Hull had probably recommended Bryant to Dr. Laurie.

5. Established in 1833 by architect Sir John Soane (1753–1837) at 12–14 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, in several buildings designed by him as a unit. The pictures by British artist William Hogarth (1697–1764) were the two satiric series “The Rake’s Progress” and “The Election.”

6. The Dulwich Picture Gallery, opened in 1817, was also designed by Sir John Soane.

7. Now the Royal Naval College at Greenwich on the Thames, within present-day London.


9. Historian George Bancroft, who had been since 1846 the American minister to Great Britain under Democratic President Polk, was about to relinquish this office to the Massachusetts textile manufacturer Abbott Lawrence, appointed by Polk’s successor, Whig President Taylor.

10. A London lawyer who was an elder brother of Ferdinand Field. See 540.7.

11. Ferdinand Field. This letter is unrecovered.


13. Unrecovered.

688. To the Evening Post

London, July 7, 1849.

I have just been to visit a gallery of drawings in water-colors, now open for exhibition. The English may be almost said to have created this branch of art. Till within a few years, delineations in water-colors, on drawing paper, have been so feeble and meagre as to be held in little esteem, but the English artists have shown that as much, though in a somewhat different way, may be done on drawing-paper as on canvas; that as high a degree of expression may be reached, as much strength given to the coloring, and as much boldness to the lights and shadows. In the collection of which I speak, are about four hundred drawings not before exhibited. Those which appeared to me the most remarkable, though not in the highest department of art, were still-life pieces by Hunt. It seems to me impossible to carry pictorial illusion to a higher pitch than he has attained. A sprig of hawthorn flowers, freshly plucked, lies before you, and you are half-tempted to take it up and inhale its fragrance; those speckled eggs in the bird’s nest, you are sure you might, if you pleased, take into your hand; that tuft of ivy leaves and buds is so complete an optical deception, that you can hardly believe that it has not been attached by some process to the paper on which you see it. A servant girl, in a calico gown, with a broom, by the same artist, and a young woman standing at a window, at which the light is streaming in, are as fine in their way, and as perfect imitations of every-day nature, as you see in the works of the best Flemish painters.

It is to landscape, however, that the artists in water-colors have principally devoted their attention. There are several very fine ones in the col-
lection by Copley Fielding,² the foregrounds drawn with much strength, the distant objects softly blending with the atmosphere as in nature, and a surprising depth and transparency given to the sky. Alfred Fripp and George Fripp³ have also produced some very fine landscapes—mills, waters in foam or sleeping in pellucid pools, and the darkness of the tempest in contrast with gleams of sunshine. Oakley⁴ has some spirited groups of gipsies and country people, and there are several of a similar kind by Taylor,⁵ who designs and executes with great force. One of the earliest of the new school of artists in water-colors is Prout,⁶ whose drawings are principally architectural, and who has shown how admirably suited this new style of art is to the delineation of the rich carvings of Gothic churches. Most of the finer pieces, I observed, were marked ‘sold;’ they brought prices varying from thirty to fifty guineas.

There is an exhibition now open of the paintings of Etty,⁷ who stands high in the world of art as an historical painter. The “Society of the Arts”—I believe that is its name—every year gets up an exhibition of the works of some eminent painter, with the proceeds of which it buys one of his pictures, and places it in the National Gallery. This is a very effectual plan of forming in time a various and valuable collection of the works of British artists.

The greatest work of Etty is the series representing the Death of Holofernes by the hand of Judith. It consists of three paintings, the first of which shows Judith in prayer before the execution of her purpose; in the next, and the finest, she is seen standing by the couch of the heathen warrior, with the sword raised to heaven, to which she turns her eyes, as if imploring supernatural assistance; and in the third, she appears issuing from the tent, bearing the head of the ravager of her country, which she conceals from the armed attendants who stand on guard at the entrance, and exhibits to her astonished handmaid, who has been waiting the result.⁸ The subject is an old one, but Etty has treated it in a new way, and given it a moral interest, which the old painters seem not to have thought of. In the delineation of the naked human figure, Etty is allowed to surpass all the English living artists, and his manner of painting flesh is thought to be next to that of Rubens. His reputation for these qualities has influenced his choice of subjects in a remarkable manner. The walls of the exhibition were covered with Venuses and Eves, Cupids and Psyches, and nymphs innocent of drapery, reclining on couches, or admiring their own beauty reflected in clear fountains. I almost thought myself in the midst of a collection made for the Grand Seignior.

The annual exhibition of the Royal Academy is now open. Its general character is mediocrity, unrelieved by any works of extraordinary or striking merit. There are some clever landscapes by the younger Danbys, and one by the father,⁹ which is by no means among his happiest—a dark picture, which in half a dozen years will be one mass of black paint. Cooper,¹⁰
almost equal to Paul Potter\textsuperscript{11} as a cattle painter, contributes some good pieces of that kind, and one of them, in which the cattle are from his pencil, and the landscape from that of Lee,\textsuperscript{12} appeared to me the finest thing in the collection. There is, however, a picture by Leslie,\textsuperscript{13} which his friends insist is the best in the exhibition. It represents the chaplain of the Duke leaving the table in a rage, after an harangue by Don Quixote in praise of knight-errantry. The suppressed mirth of the Duke and Duchess, the sly looks of the servants, the stormy anger of the ecclesiastic, and the serene gravity of the knight, are well expressed; but there is a stiffness in some of the figures which makes them look as if copied from the wooden models in the artist's study, and a raw and crude appearance in the handling, so that you are reminded of the brush every time you look at the painting. To do Leslie justice, however, his paintings ripen wonderfully, and seem to acquire a finish with years.

<Upon the whole, I did not see any thing in the exhibition to make it compare very favorably with that of our own Academy of Design.>\textsuperscript{14} If one wishes to form an idea of the vast numbers of indifferent paintings which are annually produced in England, he should visit, as I did, another exhibition, a large gallery lighted from above, in which each artist, most of them of the younger or obscurer class, takes a certain number of feet on the wall and exhibits just what he pleases. Every man is his own hanging committee, and if his pictures are not placed in the most advantageous position, it is his own fault. Here acres of canvas are exhibited, most of which is spoiled of course, though here and there a good picture is to be seen, and others which give promise of future merit.

Enough of pictures. The principal subject of political discussion since I have been in England, has been the expediency of allowing Jews to sit in Parliament. You have seen by what a large majority Baron Rothschild has been again returned from the city of London, after his resignation, in spite of the zealous opposition of the conservatives.\textsuperscript{15} It is allowed, I think, on all hands, that the majority of the nation are in favor of allowing Jews to hold seats in Parliament, but the other side urge the inconsistency of maintaining a Christian Church as a state institution, and admitting the enemies of Christianity to a share in its administration. Public opinion, however, is so strongly against political disabilities on account of religious faith, that with the aid of the ministry, it will, no doubt, triumph, and we shall see another class of adversaries of the Establishment making war upon it in the House of Commons. Nor will it be at all surprising if, after a little while, we hear of Jewish barons, earls, and marquises in the House of Peers. Rothschild himself may become the founder of a noble line, opulent beyond the proudest of them all.

The protectionist party here are laboring to persuade the people that the government have committed a great error, in granting such liberal conditions to the trade of other nations, to the prejudice of British indus-
try. They do not, however, seem to make much impression on the public mind. The necessaries of life are obtained at a cheaper rate than formerly, and that satisfies the people. Peel has been making a speech in Parliament on the free-trade question, which I often hear referred to as a very able argument for the free-trade policy. Neither on this question nor on that of the Jewish disabilities, do the opposition seem to have the country with them.


3. The brothers Alfred Downing Fripp (1822-1895) and George Arthur Fripp (1813-1896), secretary of the Old Water-colour Society, 1848-1854.
4. Octavius Oakley (1800-1867), nicknamed “Gipsy Oakley.”
5. Frederick Tayler (1802-1889), who was notable for rural and sporting scenes.
7. William Etty (1787-1849), who received very high prices for such works as “Cleopatra” and “Joan of Arc.”
9. James Francis Danby (1816-1875); Thomas Danby (1817?-1886); Francis Danby (1793-1861).
10. Abraham Cooper (1787-1868).
11. Paul Potter (1625-1654), Dutch animal painter and etcher.
13. Charles Robert Leslie (1794-1859), London-born painter of American parentage, who was then a professor at the Royal Academy.
14. This sentence, printed in the EP for July 28, 1849, was omitted from the text in LT I, p. 406.
15. The London banker Lionel Nathan de Rothschild (1808-1879), who was refused a seat after his election to Parliament in 1847, and was thereafter repeatedly re-elected to the same office, was finally seated in 1858.
16. With the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, Conservative Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) had been largely instrumental in implementing a policy of free trade in Great Britain.

689. To Frances F. Bryant

Edinburgh July 11, 1849.

My dear Frances.

I have a few moments leisure before setting out for the Highlands which I employ in finishing a letter for the Evening Post and writing to you. Today we take the railway for Perth, and thence the coach for Inverness. At Inverness we expect to proceed by coach to a place called Wick on the northeast coast of Scotland, where a steamboat will touch on Satur­day morning—it is now Wednesday—to take passengers for the Orkneys
and the Shetland Isles—to Kirkwall in the former and Lerwick in the latter. I think you will be able to trace our course on the map. We shall return to Inverness next Tuesday, and after a short stay there proceed to Glasgow by way of the Caledonia Canal and a chain of lakes in the Highlands.

I have been disappointed at not hearing from home before leaving Edinburgh. We supposed the steamer would arrive on Monday which would have given us our letters and papers yesterday and now we shall be obliged to leave Edinburgh before the arrival of the London mail or we may not secure our passage in the steamer from Wick to Kirkwall. I hear nothing of Tilden yet.

Before I left London, which was on Sunday evening at nine o'clock I had called on Mr. Rogers and had breakfasted with him. He was as formerly extremely kind and tried hard to make me pass a day with him. On our return to London we expect to go down to Hampshire Forest—the neighborhood of the Salisbury Cathedral, and Stonehenge, where Mr. Edwin Field expects to pass some days and where his brother Ferdinand will probably join him. That is an excursion which I think would please you, and therefore I wish you were here to make it with me—the one which I am about to make I think might be fatiguing for a lady.

We reached this city on Monday between one and two o'clock after a journey of four hundred miles without changing our seats, in a very cold night and a chilly morning. Edinburgh is as beautiful as ever but how the strawberries which I had at old Mrs. Christie's yesterday at dinner were ripened in such a climate puzzles me. One of the Christies, Alexander is an artist,¹ and is engaged to paint the panels² of the robing room of the House of Lords with portraits of the ancient sovereigns of England. He has taken us in charge since we have been here, and showed us some of the few antiquities of the place. My health is now excellent—I hope you will take care of yours. I am sorry to hear such reports of the spread of the cholera in the United States, but I do not perceive that it becomes more general in New York. Farewell—Tell Mrs. Kirkland that I have provided myself according to her advice with Walter Scott's journal of his tour among the northern isles.—³ Love to all—write often.

Yrs ever
W.C. BRYANT

[To Julia Bryant]

Dear Julia. I believe that my postscript addressed to you at the end of the letter I wrote to your mother last week contained nothing but exhortations. I will suppose they are followed and inflict no more of them upon you. I suppose you begin to take to the water for coolness sake, while here in Edinburgh we sit with the windows closed, and try to make ourselves comfortably warm. I am just about to set out on a journey to the
very farthest northern extremity of the British Isles and when I get there I will tell you how the descendants of the Danes who inhabit the Shetlands look and what is the price of a Shetland pony, and how it strikes one to be in a country where the daylight, in summer is never out of the sky. I forgot to say to your mother that she must not expect a letter from me by the steamer after this.

Yrs affectionately,

W. C. BRYANT.

manuscript: NYPL-GR.

1. Bryant and Leupp were entertained in Edinburgh by the family of David Christie (1807–1860) was an historical painter.
2. Bryant wrote "pannels."
3. Although Scott’s Journals were not published in full until 1890, Bryant was probably reading the long extracts from these published in John G. Lockhart’s Memoirs of the Life of Scott (1837–1838).

690. To the Evening Post

Aberdeen, July 19, 1849.

Two days ago I was in the Orkneys; the day before I was in the Shetland Isles, the “farthest Thule” of the Romans, where I climbed the Noup of the Noup, as the famous headland of the island of Noup is called, from which you look out upon the sea that lies between Shetland and Norway.

From Wick, a considerable fishing town in Caithness, on the northern coast of Scotland, a steamer, named the Queen, departs once a week, in the summer months, for Kirkwall, in the Orkneys, and Lerwick, in Shetland. We went on board of her about ten o’clock on the 14th of July. The herring fishery had just begun, and the artificial port of Wick, constructed with massive walls of stone, was crowded with fishing vessels which had returned that morning from the labors of the night; for in the herring fishery it is only in the night that the nets are spread and drawn. Many of the vessels had landed their cargo; in others the fishermen were busily disengaging the herrings from the black nets and throwing them in heaps; and now and then a boat later than the rest, was entering from the sea. The green heights all around the bay were covered with groups of women, sitting or walking, dressed for the most part in caps and white short gowns, waiting for the arrival of the boats manned by their husbands and brothers, or belonging to the families of those who had come to seek occupation as fishermen. I had seen two or three of the principal streets of Wick that morning, swarming with strapping fellows, in blue highland bonnets, with blue jackets and pantaloons, and coarse blue flannel shirts. A shopkeeper, standing at his door, instructed me who they were.

“They are men of the Celtic race,” he said—the term Celtic has grown to be quite fashionable, I find, when applied to the Highlanders. “They
came from the Hebrides and other parts of western Scotland, to get employment in the herring fishery. These people have travelled perhaps three hundred miles, most of them on foot, to be employed six or seven weeks, for which they will receive about six pounds wages. Those whom you see are not the best of their class; the more enterprising and industrious have boats of their own, and carry on the fishery on their own account."

We found the Queen a strong steamboat, with a good cabin and convenient state-rooms, but dirty, and smelling of fish from stem to stern. It has seemed to me that the further north I went, the more dirt I found. Our captain was an old Aberdeen seaman, with a stoop in his shoulders, and looked as if he was continually watching for land, an occupation for which the foggy climate of these latitudes gives him full scope. We left Wick between eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, and glided over a calm sea, with a cloudless sky above us, and a thin haze on the surface of the waters. The haze thickened to a fog, which grew more and more dense, and finally closed overhead. After about three hours sail, the captain began to grow uneasy, and was seen walking about on the bridge between the wheel-houses, anxiously peering into the mist, on the lookout for the coast of the Orkneys. At length he gave up the search, and stopped the engine. The passengers amused themselves with fishing. Several coal-fish, a large fish of slender shape, were caught, and one fine cod was hauled up by a gentleman who united in his person, as he gave me to understand, the two capacities of portrait-painter and preacher of the gospel, and who held that the universal church of Christendom had gone sadly astray from the true primitive doctrine, in regard to the time when the millennium is to take place.

The fog cleared away in the evening; our steamer was again in motion; we landed at Kirkwall in the middle of the night, and when I went on deck the next morning, we were smoothly passing the shores of Fair Isle—high and steep rocks impending over the waters, with a covering of green turf. Before they were out of sight we saw the Shetland coast, the dark rock of Sumburgh Head, and behind it, half shrouded in mist, the promontory of Fitful Head,—Fitful Head, as it is called by Scott, in his novel of the Pirate. Beyond, to the east, black rocky promontories came in sight, one after the other, beetling over the sea. At ten o'clock, we were passing through a channel between the islands leading to Lerwick, the capital of Shetland, on the principal island bearing the name of Mainland. Fields, yellow with flowers, among which stood here and there a cottage, sloped softly down to the water, and beyond them rose the bare declivities and summits of the hills, dark with heath, with here and there still darker spots, of an almost inky hue, where peat had been cut for fuel. Not a tree, not a shrub was to be seen, and the greater part of the soil appeared never to have been reduced to cultivation.
About one o'clock we cast anchor before Lerwick, a fishing village, built on the shore of Bressay Sound, which here forms one of the finest harbors in the world. It has two passages to the sea, so that when the wind blows a storm on one side of the islands, the Shetlander in his boat passes out in the other direction, and finds himself in comparatively smooth water. It was Sunday, and the man who landed us at the quay and took our baggage to our lodging, said as he left us—

"It's the Sabbath, and I'll no tak' my pay now, but I'll call the morrow. My name is Jim Sinclair, pilot, and if ye'll be wanting to go anywhere, I'll be glad to tak' ye in my boat." In a few minutes we were snugly established at our lodgings. There is no inn throughout all the Shetland Islands, which contain about thirty thousand inhabitants, but if any of my friends should have occasion to visit Lerwick, I can cheerfully recommend to them the comfortable lodging-house of Mrs. Walker, who keeps a little shop in the principal street, not far from Queen's lane. We made haste to get ready for church, and sallied out to find the place of worship frequented by our landlady, which was not a difficult matter.

The little town of Lerwick consists of two-story houses, built mostly of unhewn stone, rough-cast, with steep roofs and a chimney at each end. They are arranged along a winding street parallel with the shore, and along narrow lanes running upward to the top of the hill. The main street is flagged with smooth stones, like the streets in Venice, for no vehicle runs on wheels in the Shetland islands. We went up Queen's lane and soon found the building occupied by the Free Church of Scotland, until a temple of fairer proportions, on which the masons are now at work, on the top of the hill, shall be completed for their reception. It was crowded with attentive worshipers, one of whom obligingly came forward and found a seat for us. The minister, Mr. Frazer, had begun the evening service, and was at prayer. When I entered, he was speaking of "our father the devil;" but the prayer was followed by an earnest, practical discourse, though somewhat crude in the composition, and reminding me of an expression I once heard used by a distinguished Scotchman, who complained that the clergy of his country, in composing their sermons, too often "mak' rough wark of it."

I looked about among these descendants of the Norwegians, but could not see any thing singular in their physiognomy; and but for the harsh accent of the preacher, I might almost have thought myself in the midst of a country congregation in the United States. They are mostly of a light complexion, with an appearance of health and strength, though of a sparer make than the people of the more southern British isles. After the service was over, we returned to our lodgings, by a way which led to the top of the hill, and made the circuit of the little town. The paths leading into the interior of the island, were full of people returning homeward; the women in their best attire, a few in silks, with wind-tanned faces. We saw
them disappearing, one after another, in the hollows, or over the dark bare hilltops. With a population of less than three thousand souls, Lerwick has four places of worship—a church of the Establishment, a Free church, a church for the Seceders, and one for the Methodists. The road we took commanded a fine view of the harbor, surrounded and sheltered by hills. Within it lay a numerous group of idle fishing-vessels, with our great steamer in the midst; and more formidable in appearance, a Dutch man-of-war, sent to protect the Dutch fisheries, with the flag of Holland flying at the mast-head. Above the town, on tall poles, were floating the flags of four or five different nations, to mark the habitation of their consuls.

On the side opposite to the harbor, lay the small fresh-water lake of Cleikimin, with the remains of a Pictish castle in the midst; one of those circular buildings of unhewn, uncemented stone, skillfully laid, forming apartments and galleries of such small dimensions as to lead Sir Walter Scott to infer that the Picts were a people of a stature considerably below the ordinary standard of the human race. A deep Sabbath silence reigned over the scene, except the sound of the wind, which here never ceases to blow from one quarter or another, as it swept the herbage and beat against the stone walls surrounding the fields. The ground under our feet was thick with daisies and the blossoms of the crow-foot and other flowers; for in the brief summer of these islands, nature, which has no groves to embellish, makes amends by pranking the ground, particularly in the uncultivated parts, with a great profusion and variety of flowers.

The next morning we were rowed, by two of Jim Sinclair's boys, to the island of Bressay, and one of them acted as our guide to the remarkable precipice called the Noup of the Noss. We ascended its smooth slopes and pastures, and passed through one or two hamlets, where we observed the construction of the dwellings of the Zetland peasantry. They are built of unhewn stone, with roofs of turf held down by ropes of straw neatly twisted; the floors are of earth; the cow, pony, and pig live under the same roof with the family, and the manure pond, a receptacle for refuse and filth, is close to the door. A little higher up we came upon the uncultivated grounds, abandoned to heath, and only used to supply fuel by the cutting of peat. Here and there women were busy piling the square pieces of peat in stacks, that they might dry in the wind. "We carry home these pits in a basket on our shoulders, when they are dry," said one of them to me; but those who can afford to keep a pony, make him do this work for them. In the hollows of this part of the island we saw several fresh-water ponds, which were enlarged with dykes and made to turn grist mills. We peeped into one or two of these mills, little stone buildings, in which we could hardly stand upright, inclosing two small stones turned by a perpendicular shaft, in which are half a dozen cogs; the paddles are fixed below, and there struck by the water, turn the upper stone.

A steep descent brought us to the little strait, bordered with rocks,
which divides Bressay from the island called the Noss. A strong south wind was driving in the billows from the sea with noise and foam, but they were broken and checked by a bar of rocks in the middle of the strait, and we crossed to the north of it in smooth water. The ferryman told us that when the wind was northerly he crossed to the south of the bar. As we climbed the hill of the Noss the mist began to drift thinly around us from the sea, and flocks of sea-birds rose screaming from the ground at our approach. At length we stood upon the brink of a precipice of fearful height, from which we had a full view of the still higher precipices of the neighboring summit. A wall of rock was before us six hundred feet in height, descending almost perpendicularly to the sea, which roared and foamed at its base among huge masses of rock, and plunged into great caverns, hollowed out by the beating of the surges for centuries. Midway on the rock, and above the reach of the spray, were thousands of sea-birds, sitting in ranks on the numerous shelves, or alighting, or taking wing, and screaming as they flew. A cloud of them were constantly in the air in front of the rock and over our heads. Here they make their nests and rear their young, but not entirely safe from the pursuit of the Zetlander, who causes himself to be let down by a rope from the summit and plunders their nests. The face of the rock, above the portion which is the haunt of the birds, was fairly tapestried with herbage and flowers which the perpetual moisture of the atmosphere keeps always fresh—daisies nodding in the wind, and the crimson phlox, seeming to set the cliffs on flame; yellow buttercups, and a variety of other plants in bloom, of which I do not know the name.

Magnificent as this spectacle was, we were not satisfied without climbing to the summit. As we passed upward, we saw where the rabbits had made their burrows in the elastic peat-like soil close to the very edge of the precipice. We now found ourselves involved in the cold streams of mist which the strong sea-wind was drifting over us; they were in fact the lower skirts of the clouds. At times they would clear away and give us a prospect of the green island summits around us, with their bold headlands, the winding straits between, and the black rocks standing out in the sea. When we arrived at the summit we could hardly stand against the wind, but it was almost more difficult to muster courage to look down that dizzy depth over which the Zetlanders suspend themselves with ropes, in quest of the eggs of the sea-fowl. My friend captured a young gull on the summit of the Noup. The bird had risen at his approach, and essayed to fly towards the sea, but the strength of the wind drove him back to the land. He rose again, but could not sustain a long flight, and coming to the ground again, was caught, after a spirited chase, amidst a wild clamor of the sea-fowl over our heads.

Not far from the Noup is the Holm, or, as it is sometimes called, the Cradle or Basket, of the Noss. It is a perpendicular mass of rock, two or
three hundred feet high, with a broad flat summit, richly covered with grass, and is separated from the island by a narrow chasm, through which the sea flows. Two strong ropes are stretched from the main island to the top of the Holm, and on these is slung the cradle or basket, a sort of open box made of deal boards, in which the shepherds pass with their sheep to the top of the Holm. We found the cradle strongly secured by lock and key to the stakes on the side of the Noss, in order, no doubt, to prevent any person from crossing for his own amusement.

As we descended the smooth pastures of the Noss, we fell in with a herd of ponies, of a size somewhat larger than is common on the islands. I asked our guide, a lad of fourteen years of age, what was the average price of a sheltie. His answer deserves to be written in letters of gold—

"It's jist as they're bug an' smal'."

From the ferryman, at the strait below, I got more specific information. They vary in price from three to ten pounds, but the latter sum is only paid for the finest of these animals, in the respects of shape and color. It is not a little remarkable, that the same causes which, in Shetland, have made the horse the smallest of ponies, have almost equally reduced the size of the cow. The sheep, also—a pretty creature, I might call it—from the fine wool of which the Shetland women knot the thin webs known by the name of Shetland shawls, is much smaller than any breed I have ever seen. Whether the cause be the perpetual chilliness of the atmosphere, or the insufficiency of nourishment—for, though the long Zetland winters are temperate, and snow never lies long on the ground, there is scarce any growth of herbage in that season—I will not undertake to say, but the people of the islands ascribe it to the insufficiency of nourishment. It is, at all events, remarkable, that the traditions of the country should ascribe to the Picts, the early inhabitants of Shetland, the same dwarfish stature, and that the numerous remains of their habitations which still exist, should seem to confirm the tradition. The race which at present possesses the Shetlands is, however, of what the French call "an advantageous stature," and well limbed. If it be the want of a proper and genial warmth, which prevents the due growth of the domestic animals, it is a want to which the Zetlanders are not subject. Their hills afford them an apparently inexhaustible supply of peat, which costs the poorest man nothing but the trouble of cutting it and bringing it home; and their cottages, I was told, are always well warmed in winter.

In crossing the narrow strait which separates the Noss from Bressay, I observed on the Bressay side, overlooking the water, a round hillock, of very regular shape, in which the green turf was intermixed with stones. "That," said the ferryman, "is what we call a Pictish castle. I mind when it was opened; it was full of rooms, so that ye could go over every part of it." I climbed the hillock, and found, by inspecting several openings,
which had been made by the peasantry to take away the stones, that below
the turf it was a regular work of Pictish masonry, but the spiral galleries,
which these openings revealed, had been completely choked up, in taking
away the materials of which they were built. Although plenty of stone
may be found everywhere in the islands, there seems to be a disposition to
plunder these remarkable remains, for the sake of building cottages, or
making those inclosures for their cabbages, which the islanders call *crubs*.
They have been pulling down the Pictish castle, on the little island in the
fresh-water loch called Cleikimín, near Lerwick, described with such mi-
nuteness by Scott in his journal, till very few traces of its original construc-
tion are left. If the inclosing of lands for pasturage and cultivation
proceeds as it has begun, these curious monuments of a race which has
long perished, will disappear.

Now that we were out of hearing of the cries of the sea-birds, we were
regaled with more agreeable sounds. We had set out, as we climbed the
island of Bressay, amid a perfect chorus of larks, answering each other
in the sky, and sometimes, apparently, from the clouds; and now we heard
them again overhead, pouring out their sweet notes so fast and so cease-
lessly, that it seemed as if the little creatures imagined they had more to
utter, than they had time to utter it in. In no part of the British Islands
have I seen the larks so numerous or so merry, as in the Shetlands.

We waited awhile at the wharf by the minister's house in Bressay, for
Jim Sinclair, who at length appeared in his boat to convey us to Lerwick.
"He is a noisy fallow," said our good landlady, and truly we found him
voluble enough, but quite amusing. As he rowed us to town he gave us a
sample of his historical knowledge, talking of Sir Walter Raleigh and the
settlement of North America, and told us that his greatest pleasure was to
read historical books in the long winter nights. His children, he said, could
all read and write. We dined on a leg of Shetland mutton, with a tart
made "of the only fruit of the Island" as a Scotchman called it, the stalks
of the rhubarb plant, and went on board of our steamer about six o'clock
in the afternoon. It was matter of some regret to us that we were obliged
to leave Shetland so soon. Two or three days more might have been plea-
santly passed among its grand precipices, its winding straits, its remains
of a remote and rude antiquity, its little horses, little cows, and little sheep,
its sea-fowl, its larks, its flowers, and its hardy and active people. There
was an amusing novelty also in going to bed, as we did, by daylight, for at
this season of the year, the daylight is never out of the sky, and the flush
of early sunset only passes along the horizon from the northwest to the
northeast, where it brightens into sunrise.

The Zetlanders, I was told by a Scotch clergyman, who had lived
among them forty years, are naturally shrewd and quick of apprehension;
"as to their morals," he added, "if ye stay among them any time ye'll be
able to judge for yourself." So, on the point of morals, I am in the dark.
More attention, I hear, is paid to the education of their children than formerly, and all have the opportunity of learning to read and write in the parochial schools. Their agriculture is still very rude, they are very unwilling to adopt the instruments of husbandry used in England, but on the whole they are making some progress. A Shetland gentleman, who, as he remarked to me, had “had the advantage of seeing some other countries” besides his own, complained that the peasantry were spending too much of their earnings for tea, tobacco, and spirits. Last winter a terrible famine came upon the islands; their fisheries had been unproductive, and the potato crop had been cut off by the blight. The communication with Scotland by steamboat had ceased, as it always does in winter, and it was long before the sufferings of the Shetlanders were known in Great Britain, but as soon as the intelligence was received, contributions were made and the poor creatures were relieved.

Their climate, inhospitable as it seems, is healthy, and they live to a good old age. A native of the island, a baronet, who has a great white house on a bare field in sight of Lerwick, and was a passenger on board the steamer in which we made our passage to the island, remarked that if it was not the healthiest climate in the world, the extremely dirty habits of the peasantry would engender disease, which, however, was not the case. “It is, probably, the effect of the saline particles in the air,” he added. His opinion seemed to be that the dirt was salted by the sea-winds, and preserved from further decomposition. I was somewhat amused, in hearing him boast of the climate of Shetland in winter. “Have you never observed” said he, turning to the old Scotch clergyman of whom I have already spoken, “how much larger the proportion of sunny days is in our islands than at the south?” “I have never observed it,” was the dry answer of the minister.

The people of Shetland speak a kind of Scottish, but not with the Scottish accent. Four hundred years ago, when the islands were transferred from Norway to the British crown, their language was Norse, but that tongue, although some of its words have been preserved in the present dialect, has become extinct. “I have heard,” said an intelligent Shetlander to me, “that there are yet, perhaps, half a dozen persons in one of our remotest neighborhoods, who are able to speak it, but I never met with one who could.”

In returning from Lerwick to the Orkneys, we had a sample of the weather which is often encountered in these latitudes. The wind blew a gale in the night, and our steamer was tossed about on the waves like an egg-shell, much to the discomfort of the passengers. We had on board a cargo of ponies, the smallest of which were from the Shetlands, some of them not much larger than sheep, and nearly as shaggy; the others, of larger size, had been brought from the Faro Isles. In the morning, when the gale had blown itself to rest, I went on deck and saw one of the Faro
Island ponies, which had given out during the night, stretched dead upon the deck. I inquired if the body was to be committed to the deep. "It is to be skinned first," was the answer.

We stopped at Kirkwall in the Orkneys, long enough to allow us to look at the old cathedral of St. Magnus, built early in the twelfth century—a venerable pile, in perfect preservation, and the finest specimen of the architecture once called Saxon, then Norman, and lately Romanesque, that I have ever seen. The round arch is everywhere used, except in two or three windows of later addition. The nave is narrow, and the central groined arches are lofty; so that an idea of vast extent is given, though the cathedral is small, compared with the great minsters in England. The work of completing certain parts of the building which were left unfinished, is now going on at the expense of the government. All the old flooring, and the pews, which made it a parish church, have been taken away, and the original proportions and symmetry of the building are seen as they ought to be. The general effect of the building is wonderfully grand and solemn.

On our return to Scotland, we stopped for a few hours at Wick. It was late in the afternoon, and the fishermen, in their vessels, were going out of the harbor to their nightly toil. Vessel after vessel, each manned with four stout rowers, came out of the port—and after rowing a short distance, raised their sails and steered for the open sea, till all the waters, from the land to the horizon, were full of them. I counted them, hundreds after hundreds, till I grew tired of the task. A sail of ten or twelve hours brought us to Aberdeen, with its old cathedral, encumbered by pews and wooden partitions, and its old college, the tower of which is surmounted by a cluster of flying buttresses, formed into the resemblance of a crown.

This letter, you perceive, is dated at Aberdeen. It was begun there, but I have written portions of it at different times since I left that city, and I beg that you will imagine it to be of the latest date. It is now long enough, I fear, to tire you and I therefore lay down my pen.


1. Tacitus, Agricola 10; Pliny, Natural History IV.xvi.104.
2. Walter Scott, The Pirate (1822), a novel set in the Shetland Islands in the seventeenth century.

691. To Julia S. Bryant

Guisachan, Strathglass, North Highlands of Scotland, July 22, 1849.

Dear Julia,

I promised I think to write to you after I had visited Shetland. The journey or rather voyage to Shetland has been made and here is the letter. But before going to the Shetland Isles Mr. Leupp and myself being
detained a day at the ancient town of Perth, on account of not being able to obtain seats in the mail coach, made a sort of romantic pilgrimage in a drosky to the graves of Bessy Bell and Mary Gray, who in 1666 “biggit a bower on the burn side and theekit it owre wi’ rashes,”¹ to which they retired for safety, but were smitten, notwithstanding, by the plague of that year, and were buried not far from their bower close by the stream of the Almond. An iron railing incloses the spot where they are supposed to have been buried, and an old yew tree stands near, planted probably by order of the noble families to which these two young girls belonged. On the banks of a little brook which flows into the Almond, and about half a mile from the graves, the foundations of their woodland habitation are shown, a regular parallelogram, out of one corner of which springs a Norway spruce of considerable size. All around, the banks of the river are closely embowered in shade, and the woods for a considerable distance, above and below are uninterrupted by cultivated grounds or habitations, except the Lynedock cottage, and that of the gardener, a civil Scotchman who acted as our guide. I am thinking that I may write an account of my visit to this place for the Evening Post, so I will reserve the minuter particulars and the sentimentalities proper for the occasion for that letter.²

We passed nearly two days in the Shetlands, went to church, the Free church, for the schism in the Presbyterian church has extended even to that remote region, walked over three of the islands, and climbed the headland called the Noup of the Noss, which impends almost perpendicularly six hundred feet over the sea. Near to it is the Holm a rocky islet, with perpendicular sides, separated from the island of Noss by a very narrow chasm, over which two strong ropes are stretched, and on these a kind of wooden chair or rather box slides to and fro, to convey the shepherds with their sheep to the grassy summit of the Holm. The box was made fast by a lock, that it might not be used by visitors. But the Noup or Head of the Noss is really a sublime object. The immense height makes you dread to look down where the breakers are constantly dashing and roaring and flinging up their white foam at the foot of the rock, and rushing into the caverns which they have hollowed out for themselves by beating against it for hundreds of years. Myriads of sea fowl are constantly wheeling and screaming before the precipice and high overhead, we could see them sitting in ranks on the narrow shelves of rock. In places, particularly near the summit the face of the rock was tapestried with green plants and flowers; the crimson phlox, nodding daisies in profusion, and butter cups, and a pink flower the name of which I did not know. From the top of the precipice the ground slopes smoothly, in green pasturage, to the strait which divides the Noss from the island of Bressay. A strong south wind was blowing all the while from the sea and drifted, at times the low clouds against the headland on which we stood; they came by us in cold streams of mist and often hid the sea and the islands from our sight.
The Shetlanders are said to be a civil, hospitable people, kindhearted, of quick apprehension, active, dirty and healthy; their health, I suppose is owing to the perpetual coolness of their climate. Sir Arthur Nicholson, a native and resident of the island who was one of our fellow passengers,³ attributed it to the saline particles in the air—in other words he thought the dirt was preserved from putrefaction by being salted. The men fish for a living, and the women dig and carry home peat and knit fine woollen stockings and knot the Shetland shawls which sometimes come to our country.

I asked the price of a Shetland pony, or sheltie—a lad of fourteen gave me this intelligent answer—It's jist as they're 'bug an' smal'. I learned afterwards that they can be had at various prices from two pounds to eight or nine. I saw a drove of them upon the Noss, and when we came away, there was a cargo of them in our steamer, some of them not much larger than a sheep and nearly as shaggy.

I did not sit up to see whether it ever became dark in the course of what we call the night, but when I went to bed at half past ten o'clock I could see very well to read and it seemed to me like going to bed in the day time. Of course the twilight continued till midnight, and then the light again began to increase. In travelling, from Perth to Inverness a few days before, I perceived—for I was on the outside of the coach all night—that a sunset blush remained in the sky all night travelling from the north west to the north, and so on to the north east, where the sun rose.

I find that I have reached the bottom of my page, and I have a letter yet to write to your mother. At Edinburgh I expect to meet a letter from you as well as letters from her. Farewell and be good—

Yrs affectionately
W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. Bryant quotes here from the short ballad "Bessy Bell and Mary Gray," to be found in the first volume of Walter Scott's The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border (1802).
2. Apparently this letter was not written.
3. Not further identified.

692. To Frances F. Bryant

Oban, in the Scottish Highlands,
July 24th 1849.

My dear Frances.

After I wrote to you on the 11th of July, I went to Perth, the ancient capital of Scotland, by railway intending to proceed immediately in the mail coach, to Wick where we were to take the steamer for the Shetlands and the Orkneys. There was no room, however, and we were obliged to
wait another day which we did not regret, as the environs of the town are very beautiful and there are several places worth visiting. The next day at five in the afternoon we took our seats on the outside of the coach, that is on the top, and traversed a country of extraordinary [beauty?] by Birnam wood, and Dunkeld, and through the forests of the Duke of Athol, the finest I think I ever saw, gigantic beeches, mingled with Scotch firs and other trees, through which we had occasional glimpses of the river Tay and the mountain tops among which the road conducted us. The country was beautiful nearly as long as there was light enough to see it distinctly, and then it became a region of dark moorland without trees and broad mountain summits covered with heath. It was extremely cold, but I had provided myself with a shawl or plaid at Perth, which I wrapped round me. Of course I dozed now and then, but to prevent myself from falling from the top of the coach I lashed myself by my pocket handkerchief to the iron rods which formed the back of my seat, and this answered the purpose very well. Whenever I woke there was the same dreary country around me, and just light enough from the sky to enable me to distinguish its character. The glow in the northwestern horizon shifted gradually to the north, and after midnight to the east, for in this high latitude at midsummer the light of day on the other side of the globe streams up into the atmosphere on this. About two o'clock as we were passing by a high mountain the moon, in her wane, showed herself suddenly through an opening in the summits, looking very broad and shedding a pale glow which contrasted with the blush in the northeastern sky seemed almost frightful. Shortly afterwards a fog rose and grew more and more dense till it changed into a regular Scotch mist, cold and penetrating. In this mist we journeyed the rest of the night, and reached Inverness, an old town, the capital of the North Highlands, where King Duncan was murdered by Macbeth.2

Inverness is a town of good appearance, overlooking the meadows of the river Ness. The streets were full of people from the country talking Gaelic, and among them was here and there a kilt and a pair of bare knees. We breakfasted here and went on through a pleasant country on the Firth of Cromarty, and the sea shore, travelled all day and all the next night till one or two in the morning; a very cold and foggy night but we were inside the coach, and at last arrived at Wick a considerable fishing town on the northern coast of Scotland. The steamer which we expected was delayed by the fog, so that we had plenty of time for rest and sleep. At half past twelve we were on our way for the Orkneys but after proceeding for two or three hours the steamer stopped on account of the fog. Late in the evening we were in motion again, and reached Kirkwall in the Orkneys a little after midnight, but I did not get up to look at it. Next morning when I rose we were passing under the dark steep rocks that formed the shore of
an island; it was Fair Isle, between the Orkneys and Zetland or Shetland. We landed at Lerwick in the Shetland Isles about mid day, Sunday the 15th of July. In my letter to Julia I have given some account of my visit.

On our return we stopped for an hour at Kirkwall in the Orkneys and looked at the old cathedral built there by the Norwegians, which the English government is now repairing and completing. It is a most venerable pile, and offers the best specimen of what is called Norman architecture that I ever saw. In coming from Shetland, the sea was terribly rough, and I was seasick. One of the ponies which formed our cargo, a Faro Island pony, gave out in the course of the night and lay dead the next morning on deck. We did not stop at Wick but kept on in the steamer to Aberdeen, and crossed over the country by coach to Inverness. From Inverness we went to Guisachan, where my letter to Julia is dated a valley deep in the Highlands owned by Mr. William Frazer a friend of Mr. Leupp's who has twice visited America, and who has a vast hereditary estate of many square miles of heathery and rocky mountains and narrow glens between them. His sister a very agreeable young lady was with him. We made an excursion of fourteen miles to the west end of his estate, upon ponies, the young lady accompanying us. After leaving the little Highland settlement near his house, we met with but one habitation, where a shepherd lived in the wilderness. We called and looked at the interior. The abodes of the Highlanders are not so comfortable nor so desirable as those of the Indians at Sault St[e]. Marie.

We returned to Inverness—thirty two miles distant and came down the Caledonian Canal to this place, in steamers, through the locks and mountains of the Highlands, visiting in our way the Fall of Foyers, the island of Iona with its ruins, and the island of Staffa with its basaltic caves. Tomorrow we take the steamer for Glasgow and the next day we expect to be in Edinburgh where I hope to meet with letters from you. My health is good, but I am obliged to be careful in my diet. Remember me affectionately to all. I have had a very fatiguing journey to the north, and though I have often wished you with me, yet I could not wish that you should travel in the same manner.

Yrs ever
W. C. Bryant

Manuscript: NYPL-GR.

1. Word omitted.
2. Macbeth, II.ii.15.
3. Apparently a great-grandson of Simon Fraser, twelfth Baron Lovat (1667–1747), a follower of Charles Edward, the "Young Pretender" (1720–1788), and an heir to the vast Fraser property. See Bryant, "Diary, 1849," July 20, 21.
4. See Letter 590.
To Frances F. Bryant


Dear Frances,

I reached Edinburgh last evening, where I found two letters from you, one from Julia with a postscript by you, letters from Dr. Neilson and Bigelow and a note from Mrs. Moulton. I thank you for writing so regularly. The burning of the mill I am sorry for; I was attached to the old building, and by making it a house for John and his family it promised to be a great convenience to us. You do not say to what extent the surrounding trees were injured, and whether the boats were burnt up with the mill but I suppose they were.

As to the money coming from the Insurance Company you shall have your own way in the application of it. It would be just the sum to pay on the mortgage in General Wool’s hands, as it would extinguish that part of the debt which is properly General Wool’s, and make the payment of the interest more convenient. But if it is paid into the bank in my name, my check would be necessary to draw it out. I propose therefore to send Mr. Howe a power of attorney to receive the money, and that you write to Maj. General John E. Wool, to inquire whether at the time he calls for the interest due on the 20th of September, he will also receive seven hundred dollars on the principal which he will readily do, I am sure. In the mean time the use of the money might be a convenience to the office.

I have enclosed a letter to Mr. Neilson in answer to the one from him. Read it and put it in an envelope, but do not make its contents or the subject of them public. It certainly was fortunate for me that the building was insured, and Mr. Neilson very kindly congratulates me on having had the prudence to keep it so.

I saw Mr. Lawson’s mother and sisters at Glasgow—the old lady has been unable to leave her bed for twelve years, but seems very cheerful. They expressed great concern for the estrangement of Mr. Forrest from his wife, knowing as they do both parties. I could tell them little in addition to what they already knew.

A kind of presentiment haunted me before I came to Edinburgh that something unpleasant had happened, and I was very uneasy till I got the letters. It was rather a relief to me to find that nothing worse had taken place. I hope that this fire will be the worst that befalls us in the time that shall elapse before I see you again. It was my intention to return in September, but the first of September will make my visit rather short for seeing all that we have planned to see, and after the tenth of September the weather is so variable and stormy that I have been advised to defer my return till October. On this matter, however, I must think further. I am extremely sorry for the trouble that the fire has given you—more sorry
than for the loss of the mill itself—but the inconvenience I hope is quite over before this time, and your men able to go on with their work.

While you were suffering with heat I have been suffering with the cold. This season is unusually cool and unusually late. Cloudy weather prevails for the most part, particularly in the northern parts which I have visited with frequent sprinklings of rain, and drizzling uncomfortable mists. We are here just in the midst of the strawberry season, and the first ripe gooseberries, rather poor yet, have made their appearance. We shall stay here a day or two and then go southward.

Accompanying this is an answer to Mrs. Moulton's letter. Will you be so good as to put it in a cover and address it to her if you know where she is—if you do not, I suppose the best way would be to direct it to the care of Joseph W. Moulton New York.

The time has arrived when I must send off this letter and I therefore can write no more. My love to the children and thank Julia for her letter.

Yours ever

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR
ADDRESS: Mrs. F. F. Bryant.

1. Neilson (204.1, 329.6) apparently handled Bryant's insurance. None of the letters referred to has been recovered.
2. A paper and fulling mill, which Bryant soon replaced by the picturesque structure of brick and wood which still stands on the edge of the salt water. Goddard, Roslyn Harbor, p. 70.
3. See 563.3.
4. Timothy Howe (503.2), then business manager of the EP, as well as a proprietor.
5. Bryant mistakenly wrote "from." This letter is unrecovered.
6. James Lawson; see 154.4; Letter 665.
7. Letter 695.

694. To Edwin W. Field


My dear sir

I promised that I would mention some Saturday, about the end of this month or the beginning of the next, when Mr. Leupp and myself would be in London. We have made our tour to Shetland and through the Highlands, and arrived last evening in Edinburgh. We expect to be in London about the middle of next week and to remain there a day or two beyond Saturday the 4th of August.

Yours faithfully

Wm C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: HCL
ADDRESS: E. Field Esq.
695. To Leonice M. S. Moulton

My dear Madam.

I thank you for your letter which had but two defects—one that it was too short, the other that it did not mention what office had fallen to the lot of your husband in the new arrangements of the Custom House.

I am sorry that I did not get your letter earlier so that I might have fulfilled your commission to bring you a leaf or flower from the Shetlands. It is not my habit to collect relics of the sort, but I mentioned the matter to Mr. Leupp, who has promised me one of the daisies which he gathered on the main island.

What you say of the sea is true, if you mean the sea beheld from the land; there is no pleasure to me in looking at the sea when you are on its bosom; the sensation of physical discomfort predominates over the idea of sublimity. One should see it as I have lately seen it breaking and roaring and foaming at the foot of the huge precipice of six hundred feet in height called the Noup of the Noss and rushing into the caverns which it has hollowed out in the rock. Or one should stand as I stood three days since in Fingal's cave on the island of Staffa and hear the grand murmur of its green translucent tides, echoed from the roof of the high vault every time the wave comes in and retires. But there is no need to go to Shetland or Staffa to know what a grand thing the ocean is and I am only talking nonsense. It is grand everywhere.

Of mountains I have almost had a surfeit—In this country they are bare and bleak with woods only on their lower declivities, and sides and summits dark with heather, which makes a spongy boggy soil through which streams are trickling. But if the summits are not shaded with woods, they are often shrouded with fogs, and the traveller among the Highlands is often surprized by mists which wet him to the skin. The Highlanders are yet but a half civilized race, living in miserable cabins with no floor but the earth, and without sheets to their beds. In some districts they speak only Gaelic yet, and the Lowlanders speak of them as wanting in industry, and indisposed to any advance in civilization.

The women of this country are no beauties. I think I have seen more coarse featured women, more women absolutely ugly in Scotland, than elsewhere—If you were here, now, I think you would be stared at as a wonder; in our own country you are only admired. The English women also are far inferior to the American in beauty.

There is a letter as long as yours I think. I send it to my wife who I hope knows your address.

Yrs truly

W C BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-Bryant-Moulton Letters ADDRESS: Mrs. L. M. S. Moulton.
1. See 648.1.
2. Unrecovered.
3. A John W. Moulton, of 82 Charlton Street, is listed as an employee of the New York Custom House in *Rode's New York City Directory for 1851–1852*, p. 389. Mrs. Moulton's husband, Joseph White Moulton, is there listed as a lawyer at 5 State Street.
4. Bryant wrote "surfet."

696. To Frances F. Bryant

Birmingham August 3, 1849.

My dear Frances.

I am passing a day or two with our friend [Ferdinand] Field, who often speaks of you and "little Julia" as he calls her, and wishes that you were here. I am sure I wish so too. He is very comfortably established here, in a house on what is called the Bristol road with green fields and cottages and country seats about him, with two servant maids, and a Scotch gardener who works for him half the time and keeps his conservatory in order, where he amuses himself with raising calceolarias from the seed, and other flowers, which take prizes at the horticultural exhibitions. He defended himself for preferring this sort of culture to common horticulture, by saying that it furnished him with occupation in the winter. In his garden is a bath, a huge tub supplied with water from a pipe, under a tent. I came just in time to take the last of his strawberries, enormous things they were, and quite sweet, of the variety called "British Queen," —this and the Keene's seedling, he says, are esteemed here the only varieties worth cultivating—the first is the earliest, and the other is the least acid strawberry I ever tasted. Meantime there is an abundance of raspberries in his garden, so you can imagine that I am doing very well for the present. I have missed the usual summer fruits since I came to this country very much, and sometimes to the prejudice of my health.

Before leaving Edinburgh we called on Lord Jeffrey,¹ to whom we had a letter from Colden, of the Sketch Club, his brother-in-law.² He was quite indisposed with an attack of bronchitis, from which he was partially recovering, but he still seemed quite ill. He received me, however, with great distinction and said many kind things. He is a very small man, smaller than our poor friend Dr. Bliss,³ and thinner, but though pale with illness, bearing a certain look of vivacity and elasticity, and by no means seeming as old as he really is, which is seventy five or seventy six. He had lain down when we arrived, which was about half past eleven in the morning, and his son-in-law Mr. Empson⁴ walked us about the grounds till he should be ready to see us. The grounds are beautiful, commanding a distant view of Edinburgh, with its old castle, its hills and monuments, and of the Firth of Forth and the shores of Fife and the Pentland Hills &c.
The house in which Jeffrey lives is an antiquity, belonging once to the abbey of Holyrood, and of an architecture similar to the Holyrood palace. He has greatly enlarged it in the same style, so that the whole of it now appears like a building of the 14th century.

Our companion in these walks was civil and well informed, but when we were admitted into the presence of Lord Jeffrey, the contrast between Mr. Empson’s somewhat prosy talk and the pithy, weighty, yet lively conversation of Lord Jeffrey was as great as one can well imagine. I was much gratified with the visit, and glad to have seen so eminent a man, though I certainly should not have gone but for Mr. Leupp.

From Edinburgh we went by railway to Melrose, and after viewing the fine ruins of the old Abbey, and taking a drive to Abbotsford, we hired a conveyance to Kelso pleasantly situated at the junction of the Tweed and the Teviot. From Kelso the mail coach took us along the banks of the Tweed and by the ruins of Norham Castle, to Berwick-on-Tweed, a little place lying among its ancient ramparts of earth and stone now dismantled. We here took the railway for Newcastle, the capital of a great coal district, a large town with several magnificent streets lately built, and many old streets and lanes remarkable for dirt and bad air. It was there that the cholera raged so terribly in the year 1832. At Newcastle we stopped for half a day Mr. Leupp having some business in the neighbouring town of North Shields. In the afternoon we took the train and passing through York and in sight of its grand old minster reached Manchester at midnight.

I passed a day at Manchester, where I attended to the making of the affidavit and letter of attorney necessary to obtain the money on the insurance of the mill, and walked out about four miles from the city, through the village of Blakely, pleasantly seated on the Irk, and inhabited by handloom weavers, many of whom are learned botanists, to the cottage of Samuel Bamford, author of “Passages in the life of a Radical,” an extraordinary book of which the Manchester literati are rather proud. An intelligent Manchester solicitor, said to be a good geologist, Mr. Binney accompanied us—Mr. Christie was also of our party. We found the old radical an interesting man, of an original turn in conversation, and quite well informed. His occupation is that of a weaver, and he took me into one of the neighbouring cottages to see the process of weaving poplin. It was a clean Lancashire cottage—the Lancashire people are very cleanly; a decent looking young man and his decent looking wife were at the loom, he driving the shuttles and she superintending some other part of the work. Half the warp was blue silk the other half orange, and the shuttles crossed it first with a thread of blue cotton and then a thread of purple silk alternately. The process produced a beautiful tissue. Mr. Bamford gave our party a dish of tea, and a glass of homebrewed, which was brought by his fresh coloured good looking wife, and we returned by moonlight
over hill and dale by pleasant walks among the trees. Day before yesterday
I came to this place. Today I expect Mr. Leupp and tomorrow we go up to
London. Love to all.

Yrs ever.

W. C. BRYANT

The steamer Canada which arrived last Saturday brought me no letters
from America. I hope to get some by the next, at all events.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR.

1. See 546.22; Letter 697.
2. Francis Lord Jeffrey's wife, the former Charlotte Wilkes of New York, was a
sister of the wife of David Cadwallader Colden (1797–1850, Union 1817), a New York
3. Elam Bliss (1779–1848), Bryant's former publisher. See 241.1; 616.2.
4. William Empson (1791–1852), editor of the Edinburgh Review from 1847 to
1852.
5. The home of Sir Walter Scott for the last twenty years of his life.
7. Edward William Binney (1812–1881), a founder of the Manchester Geological
Society, and later its president.

697. To Eliza Robbins

Paris  August 11, 1849.

My dear Miss Robbins.

I arrived in this city yesterday from London at an early hour, and
have since looked at the Annual Exhibition of Manufactures under the
auspices of the government, a magnificent spectacle, & the annual exhibi-
tion of recent pictures—a wretched one, and then refreshed myself with a
walk through the galleries of the Louvre, which seemed to me richer in
masterpieces than ever, closing the day with a visit to the Champs Elysées
where temporary stages were erected, and singers were performing to
crowds of people seated before them in the open air. I find Paris little
changed, externally I mean, from what it was four years ago, before the
revolution, except that it appears to me that there is less bustle in the
streets.

One of the first things we did was to call on Mr. Chapman.¹ He and
his wife seemed very glad to hear from you. Mrs. Chapman has quite re-
covered from her cough, and he from his ill-health and despondency, and
now instead of coming to America as they had made arrangements for
doing, he has gone industriously to work, and as soon as he has finished
one or two copies of pictures which he has on hand, will hasten to Florence.

At London where we passed a few days Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Field in-
quired concerning you with much interest, and the Chapmans, at whose
house I was twice—you know I promised you to call on them—seemed
much pleased to hear the report I gave them from my wife's last letter,
that you were in better health than usual. Chapman tells me that your friends, the Walishes were near being carried off by the disease which killed poor Franconi.² I hope you will forgive the juxta-position, for Franconi was a much better circus-rider than Walsh is a critic.³ Mr. and Mrs. Walsh were greatly frightened by the cholera and went to St. Germain where both had it, but fortunately did not die of it.

I suppose my wife may have told you something of my wanderings—how Mr. Leupp and myself have traversed Scotland in various directions, strolled on the banks of the Tay, the Dee and the Don, visited the graves of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray on the Almond, navigated the Ness and the Clyde, and half a dozen lochs, sailed to the distant Orkneys & the more distant Shetlands, made an excursion into the wildest part of the Highlands, where we could only travel on ponies, where we met with but one habitation in a journey of fifteen miles, and where from the top of Ben Sassenach, we looked upon a vast wilderness of heathy mountains and lochs, and scattered hamlets, at a great distance from each other inhabited by a race living in extreme poverty and strongly attached to dirt and the Gaelic speech and the Catholic religion; that we have stood in the Giant’s Cave in Staffa, and seen the ruins of Iona, where the Free Church has erected a place of worship, close⁴ by the kirk of the establishment, and almost in the shadow of the old cathedral, for the benefit of the few people who inhabit a row of Highland huts by the shore.

At Edinburgh we called on Mr. Jeffrey—I beg his pardon Lord Jeffrey, to whom we had a letter. We left the letter and our cards at his residence in town, and soon after received a note from his son-in-law Mr. Empson who said that his lordship regretted that he could not call at our hotel, but that he was confined by illness at his seat in the country called Craig Crook a little way out of Edinburgh. Mr. Empson invited us to come out to Craig Crook to lunch, at one o’clock, on any day we chose. On our return from the north of Scotland we went. Mr. Empson received us and informed us that Lord Jeffrey had been confined for three weeks with a dangerous attack of bronchitis and was just beginning to find himself somewhat better, that he was then taking a little rest, but would be able to see us shortly. He then took us over the grounds, which are handsomely laid out, most of the trees having been planted by Lord Jeffrey himself. They command fine views of Edinburgh with its hills and crags and old castle, and of the Frith and its shores, and of the Pentland Hills.

When we returned we found the owner of the mansion ready to receive us. In stature he is one of the smallest of men, and quite thin, but his movements show an elastic frame, and his manner is that of one whose conversation has always been listened to with attention and deference. He received me with great consideration, said that he had long known my name and was glad to know me personally, and was complimentary enough to add that he felt honoured and flattered by my visit. I had to say some-
thing, of course in reply to this, so I spoke of the Edinburgh review which I read from its commencement, and of the early deference I was accustomed to pay to its critical decisions. "I believe I never had the pleasure of cutting you up in it," said he. I replied that he had not. "Then, if you were in the habit of reading it, I hope," said he, "that you forgave what you found amiss, as I forgave you your trespasses."

The conversation happening to turn on Puseyism he said, "There are but two great divisions of the religious world—those who are inclined to an intense devotion and who delight in the contemplation of mysteries, and those on the other hand who take a hard and rationalistic view of religious subjects. The tracterians belong to neither of these and therefore can never have the large majority or any considerable number of mankind with them. What is peculiar to them consists in the revival of certain usages of antiquity which had been laid aside; they complain that the Church of England at the reformation abolished certain observances which might advantageously have been retained. It is an affectation, a fashion which like other fashions will be temporary; it has no root in any great principle of human nature."

Mr. Jeffrey is about seventy five years of age, but he does not look so old, though pale and apparently in ill-health. I was struck both with the dignity of his manners and the point and vivacity of his conversation. His house is an antiquity, and the older part of it is said to have once belonged to the Abbey of Holyrood. He showed me his study which is in the ancient part of the building, with thick walls and deep windows, the interior somewhat elaborately fitted up in the Gothic style. The new part of the house is built precisely like the other—it was added by Lord Jeffrey—and it looks quite old. The building has round turrets with pointed roofs.

I thought you might like to see these notices of a man who has left the impression of his mind upon the literature of the first half of this century and therefore I have written this letter. I have since visited a man of humble literary pretensions Samuel Bamford author of "Passages in the Life of a Radical," a remarkable book and some poetry less remarkable. The old hand loom weaver, now subsisting by his literary labours, lives in a hamlet—a "fold" they call it in Lancashire, near the village of Blakely and not far from Manchester. We were accompanied by Mr. Binney a solicitor who has written a work on geology. "Here" said he, as we approached Blakely, by a pleasant path among the trees, "live, among the weavers, a society of learned botanists, who meet once a week, to communicate their researches. One of these weavers has just written a book on the plants of the neighbourhood of Manchester, which has kept him out of the poor house. In another village just beyond the hill, called Chatterton, are, or rather were, for they are dying out now, a set of profound mathematicians, also mechanics." We found Mr. Bamford at home, living in a clean Lancashire cottage like those of his neighbours. He is a hale old
man, of pithy conversation and uses the Lancashire dialect. He seemed glad to see me, and gave our party a glass of homebrewed and a cup of tea. —I am at the end of my paper.

Yrs truly

W C BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: UVa.

1. The American artist John Gadsby Chapman (526.1).
2. The bookseller and publisher John Chapman (1822–1894), editor and publisher of the Westminster Review, lived with his wife and children over his shop at 142, The Strand. Here he entertained many literary friends, including Emerson—for several weeks in 1848—George Eliot, who helped him with his review, and others. Bryant, "Diary, 1849," July 2; Ralph Leslie Rusk, The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York: Scribner's, 1949), p. 341. For Franconi, see 558.1.
3. Bryant had often written contemptuously of the critical judgments of the Philadelphia journalist Robert Walsh, who was United States consul-general at Paris, 1844–1851. See Letters 80, 159, 194, 195.
4. Bryant mistakenly wrote "closed."
5. As the authoritative Edinburgh Review was first published in 1802, this suggests that Bryant began to read it at the age of eight!

698. To Frances F. Bryant

Paris August 13 1849.

My dear Frances.

We have been delayed in this city two days longer than we wished, for having shortly after our arrival made up our minds to go to Munich, we began to look after our passports, and found that they had not been sent to the police of this city from Calais where they were taken from us. We arrived here on Friday morning early—the 10th of the month—by railway—today, which is Monday we shall set out, at eight in the evening, if we can get our passports, for Brussels and Cologne, on our way to the capital of Bavaria.

After writing to you on the 8th\(^1\) we went by railway from London to Dover on the sea coast, and there passed the night. Here a long line of chalk cliffs, high and white, rise directly from the sea, and in a vale forming a recess between two of them Dover, an old looking town with narrow streets, is situated. A castle built on one of the cliffs in the time of Henry II—a dark looking edifice—overlooks it, and near this are two towers and part of the wall of an old Roman castle, prodigiously massive, the stones intermixed with Roman tiles. We climbed up to it, on a wet morning, and were shown by a soldier the opposite coast of France.

We left Dover for Calais at twelve o'clock on a steamer, and were two hours in making the passage. Calais has nothing of any importance to show
to the stranger, but we could not leave it till half past six in the afternoon when the first train departed for Paris. The train took us eastward through St. Omer, Lille and Douai, a flat and in many places a marshy country reminding me of Holland, with canals and rows of willows and poplars, and often with Dutch or Flemish names to the stations—as Steenwerck, Ebangham &c. From Douai we turned southward towards Amiens Arras and Paris and I went to sleep.

Almost the first thing which arrested my attention when I awoke next morning in the daylight was the remains of a building at one of the stations, not far from Paris, which had been destroyed by fire, and portions of iron rail scattered about on the ground. This was the work of the late revolution when the communication between the capital and the country was cut off. The next station presented a like spectacle. Shortly afterwards we were in Paris and about six o'clock were established in the Hôtel des Étrangers, near the Place de la Bourse.

I do not see much to remind one of the change in the government and of the terrible and bloody days which followed it. The paving stones have been put back to their places, the damaged buildings have been repaired and the mourning for the dead is over. The words, liberty, equality, fraternity are inscribed in staring letters on the churches, but soldiers with fixed bayonets are marching before them, and every where you see armed men, the signs of a government of force. People have as much trouble with their passports as ever, and you cannot go from place to place without the leave of the police. There is you know no liberty of the press, nor liberty of assembling.

There is I think less appearance of activity and bustle than formerly; the number of strangers residing here I am told is far less than formerly, owing unquestionably to a belief that the present state of things is not to last, and that another revolution, sooner or later, must come.

I miss you very much in this city where there are so many interesting objects which we once looked at together. The Louvre, enriched with new monuments of antiquity from Nineveh and elsewhere, is as glorious, and the Boulevards almost as gay as ever. I shall miss you still more at Munich where I expect to see completed the magnificent works of which you and I fourteen years since witnessed the beginning.²

Our absence from Paris on this excursion will probably not much exceed a fortnight, or if we return by way of Zurich and the north of Switzerland three weeks. This will bring us back to Paris about the first of next month. It is not probable that I shall write by the next steamer.

My health is just now extremely good; the fresh figs which we get at Paris agree with me surprisingly—and if there were no figs I could make a shift with the pears. I have had several returns of the complaint which gave me so much trouble soon after my landing, but the[y] do not last long, and I find that the best cure and best preventive is fruit.
Enclosed is a letter for Miss Robbins which after you have read I will thank you to put into a cover and send to her.3

I have no letter from you since the one dated July 22d, which I answered by the steamer of last week. I hope to get a letter at Munich. In the meantime, I trust you do not let your cares weigh so heavily upon your mind as to make you thin. Do not suppose that I mean to laugh at you—I understand too well the extent to which I am obliged to you, for consenting to be perplexed, during my absence, with affairs properly belonging to me, to think of doing that.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Kirkland and her family. Love to Fanny and Julia.

Yours ever

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR ADDRESS: Mrs. F. F. Bryant.

1. This letter was lost; see Letter 704.
2. The Bryants had lodged in Munich from June 30 to October 2, 1835. See Letters 303–309.
3. Letter 697.

699. To Frances F. Bryant

Munich August 22d 1849

My dear Frances.

I am sitting in a chamber at the Goldener Hirsch, in the Theatinerstrasse, not far from the Bazaar in which we passed a summer. The cold morning reminds me of the weather we then had in the latter part of August when we were obliged to make a fire in our room. Yesterday I took a long walk alone in the English Garden. I recognized the same winding paths in which we used to walk, there were the same swiftly running streams, as turbid with clay crossed by the same bridges but the woods had grown taller and darker and what then seemed thickets of shrubbery had now become groups of tall trees. It was a sad walk for me; I am not sure but it would have been sad even if you had been with me for I thought every moment of the time when we used to ramble there with our children, when we were all so much farther from the grave than now—and perhaps so much more innocent.

Munich has been greatly enlarged and beautified since we saw it together. The Allerheiligen Capelle, where we saw them putting in the frescos, sumptuous as it is, is not to be compared in beauty with the Ludwigskirche, the Basilica in the neighbourhood of the Glyptothek and the Aukirche in the suburbs on the other side of the Isar. The two first of these are in the Byzantine style with round arches—the last is in the pure Gothic. Ludwigstrasse from the Bazaar northwards is a broad street of magnificent public buildings ending with the university and the Catholic
Theological Seminary, and the grand vista closed with an arch, almost finished, bestriding the street and upbearing groups of colossal statuary. In another quarter of the city side by side with the Pinacotheck to which the public collection of pictures is now removed, is another large building destined for the reception of modern paintings. The suburbs have been extended, and the taste for roomy houses of massive architecture is shown everywhere. Bronze statues of gigantic size representing the great men of the kingdom have been set up in all the public squares. Overlooking the Teresienwiese, the meadow in which the Octoberfest is annually held a building is now rising destined to contain memorials of the great men of Bavaria, and before it is to stand a colossal statue of bronze, an armed female representing Bavaria. They are casting the figure in this city; the upper part is finished. I visited it the other day and crawled into the head which they say will contain fourteen persons.

We have been through the Pinacotheck, the Glyptothek, and the new palace with its statues and frescoes, seen an opera at the Hoftheater, and visited the studio of Kaulbach, the most imaginative of the German painters, where a woman showed us among others his grand [painting?] of the Destruction of Jerusalem, a work just on the verge of extravagance, representing the entrance of Titus into the conquered city and the terrible scenes which attended it. We have looked into the Kunst Verein [Art Union] and peeped into the churches.

At Eichthal's—our banker's—I have seen the son of our old landlord Grandi. He had forgotten us, and speaks Italian with difficulty. He is a bookkeeper in the banking house. His father he told me went back to the Milanese territory, but having been long accustomed to the climate of Germany, the change disagreed with his constitution, and he died about four years since. Mariana, the daughter is married and lives near the lake of Como. Our other acquaintances, and they were few, I have not seen.

On the evening of the day I wrote you from Paris the 13th of this month, we set off by the railway at eight o'clock, and sweeping round, in the night, through Amiens, Lille, Douai and Valenciennes were in Brussels at sunrise, whence turning eastward we passed the cities of Malines and Louvain, in a level region, and next Liège, a prosperous manufacturing town charmingly situated in a valley of the Meuse. We then threaded a narrow glen full of mineral springs, one of which is a spa, with here and there an old castle on the cliffs and emerging from this, came upon a country resembling England,—green hills and dales divided by hedge rows and shaded by scattered trees. We had entered Germany—the possessions of Prussia on the Rhine. At Aix La Chapelle, which the Germans call Aachen, we stopped to let our passports be examined, and regretted that time did not allow us to stop a day at this ancient watering place and to see the cathedral where nearly two score of emperors had been crowned. At five in the afternoon we were at Cologne where we dined and at half
past nine took a steamer going up the Rhine. When the morning broke we had just entered the picturesque part of the valley of the river. At eleven we stopped at Castel opposite to Mayence, where that part ends. Here I had a feast of yellow plums, the Mirabellen, juicy sweet and fragrant. We took the railway to Frankfort, ran to look at Danneker’s Ariadne, set off again at three o’clock, and, passing through Darmstadt, and a fertile country got to the Badischer Hof in Heidelberg at half past six; hastened to look at the old castle by daylight and returning sat down to the best dinner I have eaten in Europe. I next went to call on Mrs. Hagen. The streets had a strange air; they were full of Prussian soldiers.

I found your friend sitting with her husband at a table in the twilight; she knew me by the sound of my voice, and expressed great satisfaction at hearing from you and your children. Her husband was a delegate to the diet or parliament of the German Confederation, a government the authority of which was acknowledged but for a few months. The Diet was first obliged to leave Frankfort, whence it went to Stuttgart and there a few weeks ago was broken up by the military force, after which Professor Hagen removed to Heidelberg. He is quite disheartened at the political prospects of his country. The cause of liberty he said had been injured by the Gelehrten or learned class who knowing nothing of practical liberty had first insisted on their own fantastic schemes and then, frightened at their own work had thought it their duty to aid the reaction which was sweeping every thing back to absolutism. Heidelberg was now in a state of seige, in other words, under the worst form of military despotism, and any man, in the least suspected or dreaded was arrested and imprisoned as long as the government pleased; there was in fact no security for any body against the most arbitrary oppressions. Mrs. Hagen told me that her husband had thus far owed his exemption from arrest to the mildness of the policy he had supported in the diet, but she did not appear to think him quite safe, and talked of the possibility of their coming to America. Her health had suffered much by anxiety and the traces of this were too visible on her countenance. She desired to be most kindly remembered to you and your daughters, and said that she wrote to you not long since. Eva she sometimes hears from, and she was well at the last accounts. Of Mr. Barrault I could hear nothing; he was not in town and Mrs. Hagen believed that he had gone with his family to Weinheim.

Next morning at four o’clock we took the eilagen [mailcoach] for Heilbronn, travelling in lovely weather through the lovely valley of the Neckar, amid fruit trees and nut trees and vineyards, and reeking manure tanks at the doors of the dwellings. Soldiers were pitched on the villages, marching in companies on the roads, quartered at the inns. At Heilbronn after a late breakfast we took the railway which carried us to Stuttgart, where we snatched a look at the royal palace, and its garden, and proceeded through a winding fertile valley to where the railway ends at the
little town of Geisslingen, looking like a remnant of the middle ages dropped in that gorge of the mountains. An omnibus took us some twenty miles further to Ulm on the Danube, where we were obliged to pass the night, the vehicle in which we expected to proceed having gone on just before our arrival.

Ulm is a picturesque old city, the several stories of the houses over-hanging each other so that its streets are almost caverns, but it has little to detain the traveller. On Friday morning at eight o'clock we were again on our way travelling over a monotonous country of broad plains unenclosed, and broad woods, to Augsburg where we had an hour or two to look at the handsome fountains and fine old town houses, and to get dripping wet in a tempest of rain. At three we took the railway and about nine in the evening reached Munich in the rain. We made the journey from Paris in four days and one hour, and from Paris to Heidelberg in less than two days.

*Munich August 22.* After I wrote thus far I visited the Schloss at Schleissheim a country seat of the royal family three leagues north of the city a moulid old palace built in 1601 on a dreary plain, where the late King Ludwig⁸—you know he has abdicated in favour of his son—has a private gallery of paintings, many by modern artists, and some very beautiful, Wilkie's⁹ Reading of the Will for example, and some landscapes by Achenbach.¹⁰ Returning we took Nymphenburg in our way which you and I once saw together. The buildings have been whitewashed, the walks are neatly tended, though formal, and the weather being beautiful they looked very pleasant to me amidst the thick shades overhanging swift currents of clear water. The two beavers, one from the Danube and the other from the Mississippi, which used to fight whenever they met, are long since dead, but there is a fat beaver from the Danube in their place whom a woman stirred up for us with a pole. In the afternoon we went to the Au kirche, very symmetrically built, but mostly of a mean material brick. The interior, however, realizes my idea of what a Gothic church ought to be; the clustered columns support a nave of great height, seeming to carry the eye up to heaven, and nothing breaks the view between the principal gates of the temple and the altar at the farther end. There is perfect unity and great grandeur of effect and a certain severe and noble simplicity in the details. A priest was chanting vespers and the people responding; the reverberations of sound in the arches of the church reminded me of those of the tides in Fingal's cave.

*Lyons September 3d.* I am giddy with being whirled through Switzerland. So many sights have passed before my eyes within these last ten days—great mountains green vallies, blue lakes rushing streams, tall woods and picturesque cities that my head swims when I think of them. On the 23d of August we left Munich in the afternoon and ran down through Augsburg to Kaufbeurn, an old Swabian town in the south part of the kingdom
of Bavaria. Next morning we went on with some other travellers in a hired coach, with the Alps in sight for a considerable part of the way. The country in many parts reminded me of my own, by its scattered houses woods and orchards. In a day and a half we reached Lindau still in Bavaria, on the Lake of Constance or Bodensee, skirted by vineyards with the Alps overlooking it from the south and southwest. Crossing the lake in a steamer, we landed at Roorschah in Switzerland, on a beautiful declivity, and climbing the green slopes in a diligence reached St. Gall—St. Gallen the Germans call it—beautifully situated among the hills and groves of spruce trees. A discharge of fire arms was heard from a neighbouring meadow where all the boys of the city schools from twelve to sixteen were engaged in a sham fight, for in Switzerland every man is educated to be a soldier. Next day we had another beautiful drive through the rich and fresh Swiss valleys, with great Swiss houses—the house and barn in one—the snowy summit of Sentis looking down upon us, to the lake of Zurich, the descent to which is prodigiously beautiful. A steamer took us to the town at the west end of the lake. But I must be less minute. I have climbed Mount Righi, passed a night on its summit, looked thence on the Swiss lakes, towns, and white mountain peaks, crossed the lake of Zug in a row boat, the lake of the Four Cantons in a steamer, visited successively the picturesque towns of Luzern Bern and Freiburg, passed into the warmer region of French Switzerland, eaten figs at Vevey contemplated the fine old cathedral of Lausanne, refreshed my recollection of Geneva, and having arrived here this morning too late to take the steamer to Châlons employ a moment in adding this paragraph. I wish you could have seen Switzerland with me. The northern part of it is more beautiful than I could have imagined.

Paris. September 6. I took the steamer up the Saône on the morning of the fourth, and was broiled all day on deck without an awning. You remember how uncomfortable the steamer on that river was fifteen years ago—there has been no improvement since. We reached this city yesterday at one o'clock partly by diligence and partly by railway. I found your letter of the 12th of August with Fannys and Julias of the 3d, and before night got yours of the 20th, with Julia's of that date, and Miss Robbins's, and one from Mrs. Moulton. I am glad to hear that you are all doing so well, for I had become quite uneasy not having heard from you so long. Farewell—God bless you—[See another note enclosed]

W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPTS: NYPL-GR (draft and final).

1. Wilhelm von Kaulbach (1805–1874), who was made director of the Munich Academy that year. The opera was by the Italian Alessandro Stradella (1642?–1682). Bryant, "Diary, 1849," August 19.
2. Word omitted.
4. Johann Heinrich von Dannecker (1758-1841), one of whose outstanding sculptures was entitled *Ariadne on a Panther*.
5. See Letter 558.
6. Eva (Hepp) Mercier; see Letter 540.
7. See 305.1; Letter 408.
8. Louis I (1786-1868), king of Bavaria, 1825-1848.
10. Andreas Achenbach (1815-1910), marine painter, and a founder of the modern German landscape school.
11. None of these letters has been recovered.
12. Letter 700. The brackets are Bryant's.

700. *To Frances F. Bryant*

Paris September 6 1849.

My dear Frances.

Please to thank Miss Robbins for her short note.\(^1\) I have already written to her\(^2\) so that debt is paid in advance. Tell Fanny I should answer hers\(^3\) if I were not already fatigued with copying out legibly what I had scribbled down for you—a very long letter you will see it is.\(^4\) I thank you for writing so minutely about matters at home, and for the care you have taken of every thing, this unpleasant summer. You ask what shall be done with the clover field next to Miss Mudge's.\(^5\) Will you be so good as to speak to Mr. Hicks\(^6\) about it. If he agrees with the men that it is best to till it again very well. If he thinks that a top dressing of ashes would do, let it have that—I do not want so much land under tillage if I can help it.

You inquire if I take care of myself. I assure you I think I am in pretty good hands. The complaint of which I spoke in my former letters recurs about as often as once in a fortnight, but passes off in the course of twelve hours.

I am sorry that your own health has been so delicate. The cooler weather I hope will complete your restoration. *You* I hope will be careful—it is an admonition of which you stand more in need than I. What you say of the gratitude we owe to Providence for the safety we have found amidst so many dangers, I feel very strongly.

Give my kind regards to Miss Robbins and to Miss White\(^7\) and my love to the children and remember me to Mrs. Kirkland and her family.

Yrs affectionately

W C BRYANT.

**Manuscript:** NYPL-GR.

1. Unrecovered.
2. Letter 697.
3. Unrecovered.

7. Unidentified.

**701. To Fanny Bryant Godwin**

Paris September 11, 1849.

Dear Fanny,

I thank you for your note,¹ short though it was. It was something to have found time to write it amidst your many cares and anxieties. I hope they are happily over by this time. My own health which you so kindly inquire about is very good. I am becoming a florid old gentleman, particularly about the nose.

You have seen I suppose my last letter to your mother which gives a sort of bird’s eye view of my journey to Germany and Switzerland. Since my return to Paris I have seen little worth writing about. The most remarkable sight was one which I saw in the Rue de la Paix the other day. A man was sitting in a vehicle about as large as a one horse waggon; it had four wheels and a box of very fair dimensions, but was without any animal to draw it. The vehicle, without any apparent motion of his body or limbs he caused to run backward or forward with great velocity, and to turn with great suddenness. A bystander explained to me that he did it by first pressing on one foot and then on the other, the wheels being moved by a machinery to which the impulse was thus given, and that he had been ten years in bringing this invention to its present state.

Paris is not so gay a place as when you knew it. There is less bustle and movement in the streets; the splendid carriages and gay liveries have disappeared. The[y] still supply the people with amusements, and a fete is now holding at St. Cloud, which began on Sunday the 9th. All Paris trooped out to St. Cloud, some on foot, some in cabs, some in omnibuses and some by the railway. There had been rows of booths erected for the occasion, swinging machines set up, shows and spectacles of all kinds provided, and tents for those who wished to dine, and places where children could gamble for macaroons. The *grandes eaux* were made to play, but though the sculpture and other arrangements of the fountains were quite elaborate, the volume of water to one who had seen our fountains would appear rather scanty. The grounds of St. Cloud are fine, and the old trees make noble avenues. The view of Paris from the higher grounds is prodigiously fine. The place is a kind of Richmond Hill with a clearer atmosphere. On the heights were a crowd of people looking at the city through enormous telescopes and not far off young women in white playing tag among the trees.—

So you see, French gaiety is not quite dead. The political condition of France is bad enough, but the friends of liberty are not discouraged. They see that if they can but keep the *form* of government as it now is the
substance of liberty will be attained at last. At present there is very little of liberty here except the name. The number of strangers in the city is considerably less than usual, and the reason I hear given is, and it is no doubt the true one, that the late revolutions and attempts at revolution, and the dissatisfaction of the people with the present government, make strangers afraid to live here. A year of quiet would bring them all back, and if no attempt is made to alter the constitution so as to make it more monarchical or aristocratic the probability is that there will be no popular disturbance. At present the principal resort of tourists and summer residents is Switzerland. At Munich they complained very much of the absence of strangers this season.

September 13. I have been trying to look up Madame Mercier—Eva Hepp—of whom I thought you and your mother would like to hear. Mrs. Hagen told me to apply to Professor Quinet for her address; Professor Quinet is not in town, and I have written to him at Seineport but have received no answer though sufficient time has elapsed. I heard however from Mrs. Hagen that she was well at the last accounts they had received from her.

I hoped to get letters from home by the steamer which was due at Liverpool the beginning of this week, but though we hear she has arrived we have no mails from her yet. The weather has been exceedingly stormy for a day or two past, and we have nothing from England this morning. We do not choose to pitch ourselves head foremost into the cholera, and therefore we do not go to London at present where the deaths by it are from four to five hundred a day. We make a short excursion to Holland hoping that the cholera in England will have subsided by October.

Farewell. I would send my love to the little ones if they were old enough to know what is meant.

W C Bryant

Manuscript: NYPL–GR Address: To Mrs. F. Bryant Godwin.

1. Unrecovered.
2. Edgar Quinet (1803–1875), historian and professor at the Collège de France, and a leading opponent of Napoleon III.
3. Bryant's grandchildren, Minna Godwin (612.3) and her sister Annie (born 1848).

702. To Frances F. Bryant

Paris September 13, 1849.

Dear Frances.

I suppose you will have seen, before you receive this, accounts of the ravages which the cholera is making in London and other parts of England. Of course we are in no haste to get to that country as we at first intended to do. The distemper rages in the south of England which we had
hoped to visit. We shall therefore direct our way to Holland and pass a few days at Ghent and Amsterdam in hopes that the cholera will subside before the time for our departure arrives.

I send with this a letter for Fanny[1] which I wish [you][2] to put in an envelope for her, after you have read it. By this steamer I have written a long letter for the Evening Post.[3] I have had more matter for such letters than either time or inclination to write them. The worst of it is that I must write them on the spot or the vividness of the impression made by what I have seen or heard is lost and my account of it becomes flat and meagre.

I hoped to get letters from you by the last steamer before writing this, but it has arrived late at Liverpool, and yesterday there was a storm in the channel which prevented the mails from being brought over. I shall expect them tomorrow, and in the mean time I must write or lose the steamer which leaves Liverpool on Saturday.

Mr. Leupp wants to go to America in the steamer which sails on the 20th of October. I am for going on the 6th, and I think that if the cholera in England is not too bad at that time I shall take passage in the Niagara on that day. Love to Julia and regards to all my friends.

Yrs affectionately
W. C. B.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR
ADDRESS: To Mrs. Frances F. Bryant.

1. Letter 701.
2. Word omitted.
3. Letter 703.

703. To the Evening Post

Paris, September 13, 1849.

Whoever should visit the principal countries of Europe at the present moment, might take them for conquered provinces, held in subjection by their victorious masters, at the point of the sword. Such was the aspect which France presented when I came to Paris a few weeks since. The city was then in what is called, by a convenient fiction, a state of siege; soldiers filled the streets, were posted in every public square and at every corner, were seen marching before the churches, the cornices of which bore the inscription of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, keeping their brethren quiet by the bayonet. I have since made a journey to Bavaria and Switzerland, and on returning I find the siege raised, and these demonstrations of fraternity less formal, but the show and the menace of military force are scarcely less apparent. Those who maintain that France is not fit for liberty, need not afflict themselves with the idea that there is at present more liberty in France than her people know how to enjoy.

On my journey, I found the cities along the Rhine crowded with sol-
diuers; the sound of the drum was heard among the hills covered with vines; women were trundling loaded wheel-barrows, and carrying panniers like asses, to earn the taxes which are extorted to support the men who stalk about in uniform. I entered Heidelberg with anticipations of pleasure; they were dashed in a moment; the city was in a state of siege, occupied by Prussian troops which had been sent to take the part of the Grand Duke of Baden against his people. I could hardly believe that this was the same peaceful and friendly city which I had known in better times. Every other man in the streets was a soldier; the beautiful walks about the old castle were full of soldiers; in the evening they were reeling through the streets. "This invention," said a German who had been a member of the Diet of the Confederation lately broken up,1 "this invention of declaring a city, which has unconditionally submitted, to be still in a state of siege, is but a device to practice the most unbounded oppression. Any man who is suspected, or feared, or disliked, or supposed not to approve of the proceedings of the victorious party, is arrested and imprisoned at pleasure. He may be guiltless of any offence which could be made a pretext for condemning him, but his trial is arbitrarily postponed, and when at last he is released, he has suffered the penalty of a long confinement, and is taught how dangerous it is to become obnoxious to the government."

From Heidelberg, thus transformed, I was glad to take my departure as soon as possible. Our way from that city to Heilbronn, was through a most charming country along the valley of the Neckar. Here were low hills and valleys rich with harvests, a road embowered in fruit-trees, the branches of which were propped with stakes to prevent them from breaking with their load, and groves lying pleasantly in the morning sunshine, where ravens were croaking. Birds of worse omen than these were abroad, straggling groups, and sometimes entire companies of soldiers, on their way from one part of the duchy to another; while in the fields, women, prematurely old with labor, were wielding the hoe and the mattock, and the younger and stronger of their sex were swinging the scythe. In all the villages through which we passed, in the very smallest, troops were posted, and men in military uniform were standing at the doors, or looking from the windows of every inn and beer-house.

At Heilbronn we took the railway for Stuttgart, the capital of Wurtemberg. There was a considerable proportion of men in military trappings among the passengers, but at one of the stations they came upon us like a cloud, and we entered Stuttgart with a little army. That city, too, looked as if in a state of siege, so numerous were the soldiery, though the vine-covered hills, among which it is situated, could have given them a better occupation. The railway, beyond Stuttgart, wound through a deep valley and ended at Geisslingen, an ancient Swabian town, in a gorge of the mountains, with tall old houses, not one of which, I might safely affirm,
has been built within the last two hundred years. From this place to Ulm, on the Danube, the road was fairly lined with soldiers, walking or resting by the wayside, or closely packed in the peasants' wagons, which they had hired to carry them short distances. At Ulm we were obliged to content ourselves with straitened accommodations, the hotels being occupied by the gentry in epaulettes.

I hoped to see fewer of this class at the capital of Bavaria, but it was not so; they were everywhere placed in sight as if to keep the people in awe. "These fellows," said a German to me, "are always too numerous, but in ordinary times they are kept in the capitals and barracks, and the nuisance is out of sight. Now, however, the occasion is supposed to make their presence necessary in the midst of the people, and they swarm everywhere." Another, it was our host of the Goldener Hirsch, said to my friend, "I think I shall emigrate to America, I am tired of living under the bayonet."

I was in Munich when the news arrived of the surrender of the Hungarian troops under Görgey, and the fall of the Hungarian republic. All along my journey I had observed tokens of the intense interest which the German people took in the result of the struggle between Austria and the Magyars, and of the warmth of their hopes in favor of the latter. The intelligence was received with the deepest sorrow. "So perishes," said a Bavarian, "the last hope of European liberty."

Our journey to Switzerland led us through the southern part of Bavaria, among the old towns which formed a part of ancient Swabia. The country here, in some respects, resembles New England; here are broad woods, large orchards of the apple and pear, and scattered farm-houses—of a different architecture, it is true, from that of the Yankees, and somewhat resembling, with their far-projecting eaves, those of Switzerland. Yet there was a further difference—everywhere, men were seen under arms, and women at the plough.

So weary had I grown of the perpetual sight of the military uniform, that I longed to escape into Switzerland, where I hoped to see less of it, and it was with great delight that I found myself at Lindau, a border town of Bavaria, on the Bodensee, or Lake of Constance, on the shores of which the boundaries of four sovereignties meet. A steamer took us across the lake, from a wharf covered with soldiers, to Rorschach, in Switzerland, where not a soldier was to be seen. Nobody asked for our passports, nobody required us to submit our baggage to search. I could almost have kneeled and kissed the shore of the hospitable republic; and really it was beautiful enough for such a demonstration of affection, for nothing could be lovelier than the declivities of that shore with its woods and orchards, and grassy meadows, and green hollows running upward to the mountain-tops, all fresh with a shower which had just passed and now glittering in the sun-
shine, and interspersed with large Swiss houses, bearing quaintly-carved galleries, and broad overhanging roofs, while to the east rose the glorious summits of the Alps, mingling with the clouds.

In three or four hours we had climbed up to St. Gall—St. Gallen, the Germans call it—situated in a high valley, among steep green hills, which send down spurs of woodland to the meadows below. In walking out to look at the town, we heard a brisk and continued discharge of musketry, and, proceeding in the direction of the sound, came to a large field, evidently set apart as a parade-ground, on which several hundred youths were practicing the art of war in a sham fight, and keeping up a spirited fire at each other with blank cartridges. On inquiry, we were told that these were the boys of the schools of St. Gall, from twelve to sixteen years of age, with whom military exercises were a part of their education. I was still, therefore, among soldiers, but of a different class from those of whom I had seen so much. Here, it was the people who were armed for self-protection; there, it was a body of mercenaries armed to keep the people in subjection.

Another day’s journey brought us to the picturesque town of Zurich, and the next morning about four o’clock I was awakened by the roll of drums under my window. Looking out, I saw a regiment of boys of a tender age, in a uniform of brown linen, with little light muskets on their shoulders, and miniature knapsacks on their backs, completely equipped and furnished for war, led on by their little officers in regular military order, marching and wheeling to the sound of martial music with all the precision of veterans. In Switzerland arms are in every man’s hands; he is educated to be a soldier, and taught that the liberties of his country depend on his skill and valor. The worst effect, perhaps of this military education is, that the Swiss, when other means of subsistence are not easily found, become military adventurers and sell their services to the first purchaser. Meantime, nobody is regarded as properly fitted for his duties as a member of the state, who is not skilled in the use of arms. Target-shooting, Freischiessen, is the national amusement of Switzerland, and has been so ever since the days of Tell; occasions of target-shooting are prescribed and superintended by the public authorities. They were practicing it at the stately city of Berne when we visited it; they were practicing it at various other places as we passed. Every town is provided with a public shooting-ground near its gates.

It was at one of the most remarkable of these towns; it was at Freiburg, Catholic Freiburg, full of Catholic seminaries and convents, in the churches of which you may hear the shrill voices of the nuns chanting matins, themselves unseen; it was at Freiburg, grandly seated on the craggy banks of her rivers, flowing in deep gulfs, spanned by the loftiest and longest chain-bridges in the world, that I saw another evidence of the fact that Switzerland is the only place on the continent where freedom is understood, or allowed to have an existence. A proclamation of the authorities
of the canton was pasted on the walls and gates, ordaining the 16th of September as a day of religious thanksgiving. After recounting the motives of gratitude to Providence; after speaking of the abundance of the harvests, the health enjoyed throughout Switzerland, at the threshold of which the cholera had a second time been stayed; the subsidence of political animosities, and the quiet enjoyment of the benefits of the new constitution upon which the country had entered, the proclamation mentioned, as a special reason of gratitude to Almighty God, that Switzerland, in this day of revolutions, had been enabled to offer, among her mountains, a safe and unmolested asylum to the thousands of fugitives who had suffered defeat in the battles of freedom.

I could not help contrasting this with the cruel treatment shown by France to the political refugees from Baden and other parts of Germany. A few days before, it had been announced that the French government required of these poor fellows that they should either enlist at once in the regiments destined for service in Algiers, or immediately leave the country—offering them the alternative of military slavery, or banishment from the country in which they had hoped to find a shelter.

I have spoken of the practice of Switzerland in regard to passports, an example which it does not suit the purpose of the French politicians to follow. Here, and all over the continent, the passport system is as strictly and vexatiously enforced as ever. It is remarkable that none of the reformers occupied in the late remodelling of European institutions, seem to have thought of abolishing this invention of despotism—this restraint upon the liberty of passing from place to place, which makes Europe one great prison. If the people had been accustomed to perfect freedom in this respect, though but a short time, it might have been found difficult, at least in France, to reimpose the old restraints. The truth is, however, that France is not quite so free at present as she was under Louis Philippe. The only advantage of her present condition is, that the constitution places in the hands of the people the means of peaceably perfecting their liberties, whenever they are enlightend enough to claim them.

On my way from Geneva to Lyons I sat in the banquette [outside seat] of the diligence among the plebeians. The conversation happened to turn on politics, and the expressions of hatred against the present government of France, which broke from the conductor, the coachman, and the two passengers by my side, were probably significant of the feeling which prevails among the people. "The only law now," said one, "is the law of the sabre." "The soldiers and the gens d'armes have every thing their own way now," said another, "but by and by they will be glad to hide in the sewers." The others were no less emphatic in their expressions of anger and detestation.

The expedition to Rome is unpopular throughout France, more especially so in the southern part of the republic, where the intercourse
with Rome has been more frequent, and the sympathy with her people is stronger. "I have never," said an American friend, who has resided some time in Paris, "heard a single Frenchman defend it." It is unpopular, even among the troops sent on the expedition, as is acknowledged by the government journals themselves. To propitiate public opinion, the government has changed its course, and after making war upon the Romans to establish the pontifical throne, now tells the Pope that he must submit to place the government in the hands of the laity. This change of policy has occasioned a good deal of surprise and an infinite deal of discussion. Whatever may be its consequences, there is one consequence which it can not have, that of recovering to the President and his ministry the popularity they have lost.  


1. Professor Hagen; see Letter 699.
3. The printed text has "Roorschach."
4. William Tell, legendary Swiss patriot of the thirteenth century, who, under compulsion by Austrian oppressors, successfully shot an apple from his son's head with bow and arrow.
5. More properly, "Fribourg."
6. Louis Philippe (1773–1850), "Citizen King" of France from 1830 until his abdication in the 1848 revolution.
7. On July 3, 1849, after a siege of three months, a French expeditionary force had entered Rome, forcing Giuseppe Garibaldi's revolutionary army to flee to the Adriatic, whence its leader sailed to New York. Here, according to Parke Godwin, he and Bryant first became acquainted, and in 1867 they met again in Florence. See Life, II, 258; EP, March 10, 1851.
8. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (1808–1873), elected president of France in 1848. In 1852 he was proclaimed Emperor Napoleon III, reigning until 1870, when he was captured during the Franco-Prussian War and subsequently deposed by a revolution in Paris.

704. To Frances F. Bryant

Paris September 17, 1849.

Dear Frances,

Professor Quinet was polite enough to send me the address of Victor Mercier, and at the same time to enclose to Mr. Mercier my note of inquiry. Mr. Mercier called immediately at the Hotel de Paris to see me. I
was not in at the time, but he told Mr. Leupp that his wife thought that you were with me and would be disappointed to find that you were not. He fixed an hour for calling again and at the time appointed was at the door of my room, with Eva herself, who is a lively, bright looking, slender woman, speaking English quite well, for they resided two or three years in England. I should not have known her for any recollection I retained of her looks. She spoke of you in affectionate terms as well as of Fanny and Julia and appealed to her husband to bear witness how often she had spoken of little Julia. She had really supposed, she said, when she saw my name, that I had brought you at least with me. You must come, she said, to Paris,—there were some nice apartments, in the hotel in which she and Mr. Mercier lived, which would suit you exactly, and where you could be very comfortable. She spoke of her health, as being very good—though neither she nor her husband were of a robust constitution—and of her life as a happy one. He is a literary man of some sort—journalist or book maker—I could not ask which—and seems to be a [rather?] quiet man. Very different he is certainly from the flippant voluble Frenchmen whom you so often meet. I am to call at their lodgings before I leave town.

We have concluded to take passage in the steamer Niagara which leaves Liverpool for New York on the sixth of October. If you do not hear from me otherwise you may expect me by her. Leaving England on the 6th I may be in New York on any day from the 18th to the 21st. You remember you said that you should be in New York to receive me, and I need not tell you how much pleasure it would give me to meet you so much the sooner.

We are still waiting here for letters from America. The cholera is rapidly decreasing in London, and it may be that we shall not take our trip to Amsterdam but proceed directly to England. In the south of France meantime the cholera is increasing and Mr. Chapman, who was preparing to go with his family to Florence told me last evening that in consequence of the spread of the distemper in that direction he had given up the plan.

I went on Saturday—it is now Monday—with Mr. Leupp and Mons. Goupil² to the studio of Sheffer³ the painter, whose Christ the Consoler we have in an engraving. He has just finished a picture of Christ the Rewarder, intended as a companion piece to that. It is very fine, perhaps superior to that in some respects, but, as appeared to me, not equal to it in pathos and therefore not so great a picture. Christ is represented as separating the benevolent and the repentant from the wrong-doers. The aspect of Jesus is certainly nobler than in the other picture. The artist received us politely. He is a broad bottomed man, with white mustachios, and though he seems to be nearly sixty, paints, his friends think, with more vigour of talent than ever. I saw in his studio the original of Christ the Consoler, a picture of the Three Marys, another of Francesca da Rimini, from the story in Dante,⁴ and a remarkable painting called St. Augustine

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² John Leupp
³ Charles Sheffer
⁴ Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy
and Monica, representing the saint and his mother in a moment of religious meditation. The devout thoughts of the two personages are so plainly expressed in their countenances that they need no interpretation of language.

_Paris_ September 18.

Yesterday I called on Madame Mercier at No. 10 Rue St. Honoré a short street parallel with the Rue Rivoli. Mr. Leupp took a fancy to go with me. I found her in a little chamber among papers and manuscripts; her husband soon made his appearance from another room. She made a great many inquiries about you and the children and the Americans she had known at Heidelberg. She said that I would render them a service if I could recommend such Americans as had need for a French master to Mr. Mercier which I promised to do when I found opportunity. In England she gave lessons in German to young ladies and would be willing to do so here. She desired to be affectionately remembered to you all. Mr. Leupp was quite pleased both with her and her husband and so was I.

Last evening Monsieur Circourt—he was a Count under Louis Philippe—called on me. It was he, you may remember, who wrote a review of my poems for a Geneva literary periodical, giving a prose translation of some of them.⁵ He had come into town from the country for a day and hearing I was here came immediately to see me. He is a very well informed and accomplished man, speaking English, with great volubility but with so decided a French accent, that I was obliged to listen with almost painful attention to be always sure of what he said. He regretted he said that his wife could not have the opportunity of knowing me and said a good many other kind things.

I have just learned that the steamer Hibernia which was due at Liverpool last week ran aground at Halifax and that the steamer Cambria arrived at Liverpool yesterday bringing the mails and passengers of the Hibernia. We expect letters tomorrow after getting which I shall finish this.

_Paris_ September 19th. I have just received a letter from you of the 2nd of August— I suppose it means the 2nd of September, and one from Fanny of the same date.⁶ I wrote to you last week and the week previous—my letters were dated the 6th of September and the 13th; the last letter written previously to these was dated August 13th on which day I also wrote to Miss Robbins. I am sorry you lost my letter of the 8th⁷ as it continued the narrative of my journey and its incidents up to that date, though I believe it was not very long. Tell Fanny I am much obliged to her for her letter. I sent her a letter on the 13th as long as three of hers.⁸ Mr. Leupp is now writing a letter to England to take our passage in the steamer which departs on the 6th of October. If the berths are not all
taken and we are alive we shall go then. The cholera at London is greatly abated and now gives no alarm. Love to all.

Yours affectionately

W. C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPTS: NYPL-GR (draft and final).

1. Unrecovered.
2. Adolf Goupil (1806–1893?), a partner with Theodore Vibert (1816?–1850) in the Paris firm of art dealers Goupil, Vibert & Co., which had opened a gallery in New York in 1848. This was succeeded by the present firm of M. Knoedler and Company.
5. It was apparently this review which was published by Count Adolphe Marie Pierre de Circourt (1801–1879) as Poesies de William Cullen Bryant (Geneva: Bibliothèque Universelle de Genève [1847?]).
6. Neither letter has been recovered.
7. Unrecovered.

705. To the EVENING POST

Paris, September [17], 1849.

There are many here who affirm that the French expedition against the Roman people was the most fortunate thing that could have happened for the liberties of France, and that it has in fact proved the salvation of the republic. There may be some exag[er]ation in this, but there is no doubt that the expedition has made the men who now administer the government, so unpopular that they have been obliged to give up their favorite scheme, with all the other plans it was intended to introduce—the scheme of re-electing President Bonaparte, and extending his term of office to ten years.

The French constitution you know, forbids a second election of the same person as President, and makes his term of office four years. The members of the present administration began to intrigue for expunging the prohibition, and enlarging the term of office as soon as they stepped into their places. In due time Leon Faucher,¹ one of their instruments, was sent to make the tour of the departments, and harangue the people in favor of the change, and at length the Consuls Generaux of the departments, which I shall take leave to translate General Councils, were desired to take the question into consideration and give the nation their advice. Certain members of these Councils are appointed by the ministry, and it was thought that they would have sufficient influence with their colleagues to secure a majority in favor of the scheme, and give it the appearance of being strongly supported by public opinion.
The legitimate party co-operated with great zeal in this movement; it was an attempt to bring the government nearer to monarchical forms, and they favored it, of course. It is said here, very confidently, that the ultimate design of the men in power, was to make Mons. Bonaparte, President for life. In this the legitimists could not have concurred, inasmuch as they are dreaming of Henry V. as king, and the restoration of the Bourbons. They were ready, however, to give their help in diminishing the frequency of elections, and to keep the power for the present in the hands of men who manifestly bear no good will to republican doctrines.

In the meantime the Roman expedition had given great offence to the people, and excited an indignation which they were desirous of an opportunity of expressing. They could not do this by means of public meetings, for they are forbidden; nor by their votes, for there were no elections at hand; and the feeling was perhaps more intense and impatient on account of this suppression. When the question of recommending a revision of the constitution therefore, came before the General Councils of the Departments, it found them pervaded with that distrust of the men in power which pervaded the nation generally. The friends of the ministry in the councils were overruled, and out of eighty-six departments, all but two or three reported against the project. It was a complete defeat of the ministry in the very quarter in which it thought itself strongest. The whole combination of Bonapartists, legitimists, men in office, presses, and emissaries of the ministry, were put down by the mere force of public opinion, operating upon the General Councils. The result is highly creditable to the French nation,—to its good sense, and what is a part of good sense, its sense of justice. The project of changing the constitution is now given up, and if there was any intention of giving to the shallow coxcomb who is now President, a life estate in his office, it is postponed to a more favorable period, if not for ever.

The French politicians do not seem to be aware of what we know very well in the United States, that a popular candidate does not always make a popular officer. A man who is elected to a post of great responsibility by the general good will of his fellow-citizens, must possess extraordinary qualifications for public life, to keep the same measure of popular favor to which he owed his election. Let him do his best, he will offend many, and disappoint more. Particularly is this the case, when he happens to be, like the present Chief Magistrate of France, a man of weak understanding and no principles.

I find that nobody here, except perhaps the American Consul, believes that any conspiracy existed to overthrow the government by force on the 13th of June last. The story of a plot is regarded as one of those humbugs which the government of Louis Philippe, and the governments which preceeded it, used to get up from time to time to frighten the timid
and credulous and make them believe that to be a republican is the same thing as to be a ruffian and a cut-throat.— The proceeding which led to the flight of Ledru Rollin\(^4\) is looked upon as an act of folly and imprudence, and nothing more. Its object was to present a petition with an imposing display of numbers, and such of the petitioners as belonged to the National Guards, appeared in their uniform with their military equipments. The trial of those who were engaged in this affair is to be opened on the 10th of October, and nobody expects that any thing will be proved against them, but the simple fact of the intended procession.

Meanwhile the public confidence in the stability of the present form of government, though it is now administered by men who are objects of public distrust, seems to be gaining ground. If the constitution is not meddled with, the people, by and by, as they begin to understand their rights, will assert them in a peaceable and proper manner, that is, by legislation, which the constitution gives them power to do, whenever they are disposed. At present there is very little political liberty in France, except the liberty of suffrage. The police can seize the printed sheets of any journal containing expressions which the government happen to dislike, and prevent its circulation. The law punishes with severe penalties the vague offence of printing and publishing any thing which is calculated to bring hatred and contempt on the government, and therefore a trial by jury is allowed in such cases; all that the jury has to do, is to say whether the obnoxious article was published or not; the judges, who are the creatures of the government, decide whether the law is violated or not. There is no chance, therefore, of escape, when the government has marked out its victim. People are arrested and detained, by order of the government, and there is no process like that of our habeas corpus, to deliver them, if confined on a frivolous or insufficient pretext. There is no liberty of assembling to express public opinions on political questions, in addresses and resolutions, or we should have seen the entire people moving, on the Roman question. In short, here is a government, with popular forms, conducted in the worst spirit of oligarchy, and allowing ample scope for the exercise of the most capricious tyranny.

The remedy, however, is in the hands of the people, and if the friends of liberty are guilty of no acts of rashness and violence, but confine themselves to the task of enlightening the people in regard to their rights and interests, the remedy will yet be applied.

I have lately been to look at the printing press constructed by our countryman, Hoe,\(^5\) for the administration paper, La Patrie. It is a beautiful piece of machinery, tended by four men, and delivering eight thousand impressions an hour. The perfection and simplicity of the arrangements, as well as the celerity of its operation, are greatly admired here; but I have heard that the workmen are jealous of it, as a labor saving
machine, and are not inclined to favor its working. It prints for *La Patrie* forty thousand copies daily, of which thirty thousand are without the advertisements, and are sold for a single sou each; the others, containing the advertising department, are sold for three sous. It is the most perfect printing press in Europe. The London Times has a more complicated and expensive machine, occupying three times the room, and tended by sixteen men, which prints about the same number of impressions hourly.

Among the recent arrangements for the accommodation of Americans in Paris, is the Reading Room of Livingston & Wells, which has almost entirely drawn them away from Galignani’s, where they found but one or two American journals. The reading room of Livingston & Wells, on the contrary, is abundantly supplied with American papers, though the assortment, as a merchant would say, is by no means complete. The room is becoming a place of much resort, and in an address-book, lying on its desk, are registered the name and residence of most of the Americans who arrive at Paris.

Our countryman, Chapman, has recovered from his indisposition, and is applying himself to his art, with all his former activity. He has lately been making some admirable copies of Van Ostade and Gerard Douw. His keen eye and extraordinary ingenuity, make him a very perfect copyist, whenever he condescends to a work of that nature. He seems to penetrate, at once, the mechanical methods of the artist whose work is before him, and in his copies there is no trace of Chapman except his fidelity. I believe he is almost the only man in the world who could perfectly reproduce Denner’s Old Men and Women, if he thought it worth the trouble.

Scheffer, the French artist, who paints so much in the German manner, and whose “Christ the Consoler” is already known in America by means of an engraving, has lately finished a companion-piece to that beautiful work; he calls it Christ the Rewarder. It represents Jesus separating the good from the bad—those who practice his precepts, from those who reject or neglect them. It does not appear to me that it possesses the pathos and interest which belong to the other picture—the subject, perhaps, does not admit of them—but in some respects it is finer. The countenance of the Savior, for example is nobler and of higher dignity. The group of the good at the right hand, in whose faces the traces of human suffering yet remain, is well conceived, but the group at the left hand, the wicked and the men of violence, make a feebler impression on the beholder than any thing in the other picture. It is intended, I was told, to send the picture to the United States for exhibition.

W. C. B.

**Manuscript:** NYPL–GR (partial draft) **Text:** *EP*, October 5, 1849; not published in *LT* I.

1. Léon Léonard Joseph Faucher (1803–1854), representative from the Marne district in the French parliament, was a frequent writer on financial matters.
2. Henri Charles, Comte de Chambord (1820–1883), claimant to the French throne as Henry V, was never crowned.

3. Robert Walsh; see 697.3.

4. Alexandre Auguste Ledru, called Ledru-Rollin (1807–1874), who had been minister of the interior in the provisional government formed after the revolution of February 1848, turned against the government during the unsuccessful workingmen’s revolt in June 1849, and was forced into exile in England. Among his many published writings were Le 13 Juin (Paris, 1849) and The Decline of England (London, 1850).


7. Probably Adriaen van Ostade (1610–1685), a Dutch genre painter, and Gerard Douw (1613–1675), Dutch genre and portrait painter.

8. Balthazar Denner (1685–1749), French miniaturist and genre painter, whose many realistic studies of elderly men and women were most characteristic of his work.

706. To Julia S. Bryant

Paris September 19, 1849.

Dear Daughter.

I think you would have been amused had you heard Madame Mercier talk the other day about the dear little Julia, whom she represented as a most accomplished creature, speaking not only English and German but Italian and French with the greatest facility. She inquired whether you possessed these accomplishments yet. I was obliged to give up your Italian and to confess that your German had fallen off, but I made a stand in favour of your French and, if I had thought of it, I might have told her that you had made some proficiency in English since she knew you. I should almost be ashamed to have her see you, her recollections of you are so favorable. It would be a pity if she should institute any disparaging comparisons between the little child of 1836 and the grown up girl of 1849. If you should ever see her you must be upon your good behavior. I wrote a long letter to your mother on my return from Bavaria and Switzerland—a very long and minute one which I hope will have come safely to her hands before this. I am now about starting for Belgium and Holland whence I shall go to England reaching London in the last week of September, to embark for America on the 6th of October. I have remained in Paris till it seems a little dull to me, and I want to be moving again. Mr. Seymour\(^4\) is here, and has been of much use to Mr. Leupp and myself. Mr. Chapman has also been very kind and hospitable to us. Albinola\(^2\) is here also—I dined with him and Wright\(^3\) & [others?] yesterday. I shall bring home some views of Switzerland which Chapman found for me.

Give my regards to Mrs. Kirkland and her daughters and Willie. Your
house has not been very lonesome this summer I think with such entertain-
ing people as you have had for neighbours and inmates.

Yrs affectionately
W C Bryant

Manuscript: NYPL-GR Address: To Julia Bryant.

1. Probably Daniel Seymour (d. 1850), a member of the Sketch Club and an hon-
orary member of the National Academy of Design. NAD Exhibition Record, II, 117; in-
f ormation from James T. Callow.

2. G. Albinola has been identified only as a member of the Century Club from 1851 to 1870, when he resigned.

3. Probably Charles Cushing Wright (1796–1854), an engraver and medalist who
was a founder of the National Academy and exhibited his work there and at the
American Art-Union. From 1823 to 1827 he had been a member of the engraving firm
of (Asher) Durand and Wright in New York, and he was long a member of the Sketch
Club. DAA; NAD Exhibition Record, II, 217; information from James T. Callow.

707. To Frances F. Bryant

London September 28th 1849.

My dear Frances.

I have just arrived in this city from Belgium which I left this morn-
ing at half past twelve—it is now the same hour in the afternoon—travel-
ing with all haste that I might learn whether a berth had been secured
for me in the Niagara which leaves Liverpool on Saturday week and that
I might answer any letters I might find here, in time to send off the an-
wers by the steamer which departs tomorrow. In one respect my hopes
have been fulfilled, in another they have not. A state room has been taken
for us in the Niagara and we go out to America on the 6th of October.
But I receive no letters from you nor any body else in America. Mr. Leupp
has several brought by the last steamer. I hope however, to hear from you
by the steamer which arrives the beginning of next week, and if I do, I
shall bring the answer in person.

The Evening Post of the latest dates—September 7th and 11th, has
come to hand and I perceive, by that, that the cholera has so greatly sub-
sided that no more is thought of it than of any of the common distempers
and that people are returning to the city and business is becoming active.
I rejoice that this great fear is at length taken off from men's minds, and
my thoughts recur again and again to the relief which you and all our
friends must feel. Here to[o] the cholera, which has been more fatal than
in New York, has abated so far that it no longer causes alarm. There are
still deaths by it in Paris, and in many other cities of Europe—in Amster-
dam for example where I was two days ago, but in no part of northern
Europe, is it, I believe, at all the subject of much apprehension.

My journey to Belgium and Holland was as pleasant as fine weather
could make it, but it was not particularly interesting to me. It was very
short, and most of the novelties which these two countries have to offer to one who merely goes to their principal cities and passes a day or two had been exhausted in my first visit. At Antwerp, however, I saw an exhibition of modern paintings like the exhibitions of our Academy of Design; and a very fine one it was, better than any I have ever seen abroad, though I have seen two Academical Exhibitions in London, one in Paris, the present season, two at different times in Florence, one at Vienna and one at Naples. The exhibition was a large one, the proportion of decidedly bad pictures small, and the number of really good ones very considerable. The Flemings I find, keep their ancient skill in the art, if not their ancient reknown. It was the last day of the exhibition, the rooms were crowded, and I had the opportunity of observing the physiognomy and personal appearance of the Flemish race under its best aspect, and the result of my observation was favorable. They are a good looking healthy looking race, and their physiognomy certainly comes nearer to that of our branch of the human family than the German does. There were a good many people in the country garb among the crowd.

At Brussels where we arrived on the same day that we left Paris, we called on Mr. Clemson the American minister.\(^1\) He has been a Professor of chemistry in the University of Paris, but his conversation does not strike one as that of a highly educated or intellectual man. His wife, however who is a daughter of John C. Calhoun appears to have much the most talent of the two—at all events is much the better talker. It was but an hour before we called upon them, entirely unexpected that she had been reading with her children my poem of the Death of the Flowers. In the evening we saw at Mr. Clemson’s, two of the present Flemish artists, Robbe\(^2\) whom his friends claim as the best cattle-painter living, and Eckhout,\(^3\) who is a portrait painter and a painter of cabinet pieces—domestic scenes after the manner of the old Flemish masters. Mr. Leupp ordered two pictures of Robbe, and afterwards bought a picture by Eckhout, and a very fine one, of Mr. Vesey the American consul at Antwerp, by whom, let me say by the way, we were very kindly received.\(^4\)

Holland is as poor, as dear and as green as ever. Not a touch seems to have been given to Amsterdam since we were there four years ago. There are the same girls, the neatest cleanest looking creatures in the world, with the whitest caps and the purest complexions, and some of them exceedingly pretty stooping and wiping the pavement with wet cloths, and there is the same long row of strong, clumsy vessels idly moored along the curving edge of the huge basin in which they lie. Of the two hundred and sixty thousand people who make the population of Amsterdam, eighty thousand I was told are supported either wholly or partly by charity. A good deal of this charity is voluntary, and our valet de place told us, that in providing for these poor the Catholics of Amsterdam were the least liberal of all the religious denominations.
At Amsterdam we saw what we were not able to see when we visited it before, the Museum, a collection of pictures belonging to the public, quite large and containing some of the very finest things of the old Flemish masters. We obtained also permission to see the collection of Van der Hoop, the banker which an exceedingly choice one, and for a private collection quite ample. There is scarce any of the old Flemish painters of any note of whom there are not specimens of his best things.

In returning from Rotterdam to Antwerp I saw what might be called the original material out of which Holland was made. This part of the journey is performed in steamers, which run when the tide serves; often in the night, when you are accommodated, instead of a berth, with a sleeping place on a narrow bench covered with hair cloth, there are no sheets of course. We went on board at Rotterdam late in the evening, and about half past one in the morning the steamer left the wharf. After proceeding a little way the captain stopped her on account of the fog and she remained motionless till morning. With daylight we were again on our way and after winding through various narrow channels between rows of houses willows and windmills, we entered upon a broad expanse of water, with distant shores in sight and channels marked out for the shipping by buoys and poles planted in the sand. Once or twice our steamer touched the ground but was got off again, but finally about twelve o'clock she struck and would go no further. We remained on the spot for several hours; the tide fell till we saw nothing for miles around us but bare dark-looking flats intersected with watercourses looking like large brooks. If on the margins of these water courses banks were to be erected ten or fifteen feet in height, it would do for these flats what the dykes have done for the greater part of Holland and would reclaim them from the dominance of the sea. I suppose that the greater part of that country was at an early period much like the bare oozy waste which I saw about me.

In consequence of the delay occasioned in the manner I have related I did not reach Antwerp till eleven o'clock at night instead of ten o'clock in the morning as I had expected. This occasioned the loss of a day in our journey to London. We took the railway to Brussels the next morning, and in the evening took the railway from Brussels to Ostend. From Ostend a steamer, a little light vessel with no accommodations for sleeping brought us in the night to Dover, and a most uncomfortable night it was. Towards morning the motion made me very sick but the voyage lasted but five hours and a half, and after showing our baggage to the custom house officers, we took the railway to London at eight o'clock. If this letter is a stupid one, as part of it is I am sure, you must ascribe something to the sea sickness with which I am giddy yet.

For the last three weeks I have not wished you to be with me—you will excuse my frankness—but I have wished to be with you on Long Is-
land. A few days I hope will realize the wish. In a week after receiving this letter you will probably see me, very glad to get home again, and to see you all as I pray that I may be permitted to do as well at least as when I sailed for Europe.

I have bought a microscope at Paris, a very good instrument of the kind, which Mr. Seymour who sails today from Havre in a packet ship belonging to one of the lines is kind enough to take charge of. I shall perhaps be in New York before him. Mr. Leupp has remembered you, as you will see when I return. Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Kirkland and her family— Love to Fanny and Julia. Miss Robbins I suppose is gone by this time; if not tell her that I will inquire particularly concerning Mr. Delft and his family before leaving London.

Yours ever
W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR.

1. Thomas Green Clemson (1807–1888), by profession a mining engineer. Through his bequest, Clemson Agricultural College was founded in 1889 on the site of John C. Calhoun's South Carolina plantation.
2. Louis Marie Dominique Romain Robbe (1800–1887).
4. William Henry Vesey of New York was United States consul at Antwerp, 1847–1853. U. S. Consular Officers, 1789–1939. See also 974.5.
5. Not further identified.
6. Word omitted.
7. Unidentified.

708. To John Bigelow
New York Friday Nov. 2 1849

Dear sir

Mr. Dougherty called yesterday according to his appointment. He declined the offer of $12—which I made him—said that Hallock had paid him at the rate of $500 a year, and talked of wanting $900— I did not feel authorized to make any other arrangement without further consultation. We had a long talk as to what was expected of him if he came &c. and he is to call on you on Monday morning. I think well of his capacity, if he would exert it industriously, and would be willing myself to give him what he had at the Journal of Commerce rather than not have him.

He had scarcely gone out, however, before another man presented himself, Geo. W. Peck, who said he knew you, and who is much in want of occupation. He was at one time employed on the Courier where they paid him ten dollars a week and employed him to read proof and to do all kinds of things that were required. His politics are not of our sort, and he is I fear of a temper which imagines slights when they are not intended,
but I am inclined to believe he is diligent, and he is certainly very well educated, and has a good deal of literary expertness. He asked when you would be in town and is to call some time on Monday morning.

I will give you a carte blanche to make any arrangement with Doherty you think just and judicious—but I must have a talk about our Montreal correspondent who costs us I believe ten dollars a week.

Yrs truly

W. C. BRYANT

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL–GR.

1. A year earlier three-tenths of the shares in the EP had been transferred from William G. Boggs (341.2) to John Bigelow (1817–1911), a New York lawyer who had previously contributed to the newspaper articles and editorials on constitutional matters. Bigelow, Retrospections, I, 73–79; 615.1.

2. Not further identified.


4. George Washington Peck; see 647.4.


709. To Leonice M. S. Moulton

New York November 14th. 1849.

My dear Mrs. Moulton.

I did receive your note from Duxbury, for which I was greatly obliged to you. It was considerably longer than your first, and I was glad to hear of your pleasant visit to Roslyn, and your still pleasanter rambles in the region where you were born and which I am sure was glad to see you again. You are one of the few friends who took the trouble to write to me while I was abroad, and to whom, accordingly I cherish a special gratitude. I wrote to you, in my last, that I brought away no memorial of the Shetlands, but I quite forgot a small parcel of little shells which I gathered on the shore of the strait which divides the island of Bressay from that of the Noss, with the waters of the North Sea—clear green waters—dashing at my feet. One of them is yours, and if you are good a sprig of heath, from the summit of the Righi shall be added thereunto.

I am afraid you were not accurately informed concerning the disconsolateness of the Frau. I found her in tolerable health, though she has been far from well during the summer; but she seemed quite sick of our place at Roslyn which I was sorry for as I hoped to pass many pleasant days there yet. However, I succeeded in reconciling her so far to the place that she passed a whole day with me in planting and transplanting trees shrubs and roses. In the course of another season the cure, I trust, will be complete.

We have pleasant rooms in New York, at No. 263 Greene Street where
we shall expect to see you often when you come to town. At present we
have nothing to plague us but the marriage of Victoria Gibson\(^1\) to a young
Scotchman, Mr. Campbell, son of a millionaire.\(^2\) Julia is to be one of the
bridesmaids, and we are all in a bustle to equip her for the occasion. The
ceremony is to be performed tomorrow at twelve o'clock at the Ascension
church, after which the couple will set out upon their travels.

We are glad that you find yourself so much the better for your resi-
dence in New England. When you return to town we shall expect to see
you amplified from a Sylph to a Juno. You do mean to come back, I sup-
pose, sometime or other, notwithstanding that you say nothing about it
in your letter, and when I see you I will tell you what I think of the crumb
you speak of.

My wife desires her love. She has been either very busy or else sick
all summer, which is her apology for not answering your lively and witty
letter—you always write to her in your sprightly vein and keep your gravity
for me.

Yours faithfully

Wm C. Bryant.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-Bryant-Moulton Letters.

1. See 502.3.
2. During a trip abroad with her father in 1867, Julia Bryant visited her former
schoolmate Victoria and her husband at 6 Clarendon Crescent, Edinburgh. Bryant to
John Durand, June 23, 1867, NYPL-Berg.

710. To Richard H. Dana

New York November 15, 1849.

Dear Dana.

We took your hint, and drank your health today and wished you
many more birth days; all as pleasant as this, which is one of the most
beautiful and sunshiny of our autumnal days. The grass in the fields is al-
most as green as ever and the willows have lost scarce any of their leaves.
You are a November birth as well as myself I find, only twelve days later
in the season.

We have pleasant rooms in town, and though we have not quite
broken up housekeeping in the country we have been passing a few days
here and shall be here next week, including Friday and Saturday and the
Sunday following. You can come directly to 263 Greene Street, near Eighth
Street, where there is a room in which you can have a fire, and the “lady
as keeps the house” will give you your meals at the same table with us—we
have a separate table. If by any casualty, which is not at all likely, the room
with a fireplace should be occupied when you arrive there is another room
without one, in which you could make yourself comfortable for two or
three nights, and our own parlour shall be yours while you stay. My wife
has arranged all these matters for you in case you have not another place engaged.

I have several times thought of what you counsel me to do in regard to the publication of my letters. They have, I know been received in rather a friendly manner by readers, and this is what made me think of reprinting them—but when I look them over it does not appear to me that there is much in them. I shall, however, turn the thing over again in my mind now that you advise me to publish them.¹

They tell me that you have been busy in preparing your works for the press, and I think you have done well. If nothing else comes of it, I shall get back the copy I lent to Park Benjamin,² and get it back with interest. It is high time that we had another edition of your writings, for your fame is much wider and more deeply rooted than when the first appeared, and whereas you then belonged to New England you now belong to the United States. I am glad that you are to lecture in Philadelphia. Besides the immediate good it will do to those who hear you, it will increase the demand for your book. As you go to Philadelphia early in the season, you may pass on further south as the weather grows colder, repeat your lectures in Baltimore, and even find yourself in South Carolina, where the rice-birds, and bobo’lincolns pass the winter.³

I have had in some respects a pleasant time of it abroad, and have come back a little stouter and a good deal stronger—with a stock of health, I hope to last for some months. But I will talk over these and other matters with you when you come.⁴

Faithfully yours

WM C. BRYANT.

MANUSCRIPT: NYPL-GR DOCKETED: Wm. C. Bryant / Novr 15/49.

1. These letters, published in the EP between 1834 and 1849, were gathered in *Letters of a Traveller; or, Notes of Things Seen in Europe and America* (New York: Putnam, 1850).

2. Park Benjamin (1809-1864, Trinity 1829), a New York newspaper and magazine editor, and a minor poet.

3. Bryant may have tried that fall, through William Gilmore Simms, to arrange a lecture engagement for Dana in Charleston. Simms wrote from Woodlands to the painter Charles Fraser (1782-1860) in that city that “steps ought to be taken immediately to invite Mr. Dana” to lecture on Shakespeare. But Fraser “wrote a very chilling reply, on December 20, 1849, saying that Dana’s whole object was to levy a contribution on the South ‘in pursuance of a system in which the scholar and mechanic of New England are always alike happy to exert their best efforts.’” William P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms, “American Men of Letters”* (Boston and New York, 1892), p. 157. Trent attributes this attitude to a “growing feeling of hostility in Carolina to anything hailing from New England,” which is the more surprising in Fraser’s case, since he had been a close friend of Dana’s brother-in-law, the late Washington Allston. And he himself had paid many visits to the North, where his works were exhibited at the Boston Atheneaum, as well as at the National Academy, of which he had long been an honorary member,

4. Dana apparently visited the Bryants the following week; he and Bryant attended a Sketch Club meeting on November 23 at the home of Dudley B. Fuller. Information from James T. Callow.

711. *To Messrs. Carey & Hart*

New York  Nov 24  1849.

Gentlemen.

Please send me one copy of the illustrated edition of my poems and three copies of the cheap edition,¹ with a bill which I will discharge by return mail.

About a year since in a letter to me you said you hoped to get out another edition of my poems for the holidays. I have heard of no new edition since that time. I hope the demand for the book has not ceased. If it has not, I should be much [pleased?]² to know that the previous edition has been cleared off and that there is room for another.

I am gentlemen

Yours respectfully

WM C. BRYANT

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MANUSCRIPT: DuU
ADDRESS: To Messrs Carey & Hart
ENDORSED: 250 fine — 125 / 500 cheap 62.50 / 250 cheap 31.25 / —— / $218.75.

1. See Letters 594, 642.
2. Word omitted.

712. *To Abraham Hart*

New York  December 3, 1849.

Sir.

I got your letter¹ and the four copies of my poems this morning, and remit you five dollars, the amount of your account, which please return to me receipted.

I shall immediately draw on Carey & Hart for the $218.75 due on the thousand copies of my poems published since the last settlement. Mean time I am much obliged to you for your attention to my letter.

Yrs truly

W C BRYANT

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MANUSCRIPT: HSPa
ADDRESS: A. Hart Esq. / [late Carey & Hart] / Bookseller / Philadelphia

1. Unrecovered.