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BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE







*Bertram Woodhouse Carru*  
1896



# BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE

1827—1896

RECOLLECTIONS, LETTERS AND JOURNALS

*VOL I*

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## PREFACE.

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THE autobiographical sketch, entitled "*Recollections*," with which the first volume begins, was written in the September of 1896, some three months before the writer's death. This paper and the majority of the letters in this volume, which date from more than fifty years ago, are, the Editor thinks, likely to be interesting even to some who were unacquainted with the writer, as also may be the Journal in America, which has been placed at the beginning of the second volume.

The same can hardly, perhaps, be said of the greater part of the second volume, which is but a family record, such as would be valued only by friends and relatives, and more especially, the Editor hopes, by descendants. Still, there are chapters towards the end on the International Monetary Conference, the Indian

Currency Committee, and the Irish Finance Commission, which may appeal to a wider circle.

The *Times* of December 30, 1896, contained a short biographical notice, which may usefully be quoted here as an introduction to the collection which follows :

Mr. Bertram Wodehouse Currie, who was the only surviving brother of Sir Philip Currie, British Ambassador at Constantinople, was born in 1827. He was the second son of Mr. Raikes Currie, of Minley Manor, Hants, who was a banker in Cornhill, and who died in 1881. His mother was the daughter of the second Baron Wodehouse. Mr. Currie was educated at Eton, and then travelled abroad, thus acquiring the mastery of foreign languages, which stood him in good stead in after days in the City and at the Brussels Conference. On returning home he entered his father's banking business, which in 1864 was amalgamated with the firm of Glyn, Mills, and Company, and which from that time forth was known by the name of Glyn, Mills, Currie, and Company. The strong will and the remarkable business capacities of the young partner, for his father took little or no share in the transaction of the business, soon enabled him to play a prominent part in the management.

In December, 1880, he was appointed to serve upon the board of the India Council, where his great

knowledge of finance was eminently useful. After ten years' service he was reappointed for a further term in 1890, and finally retired in 1895. In 1885 it was largely through his instrumentality that Glyns adopted the form of a joint stock company with unlimited liability, and that it was the first of the private banks to publish its balance sheet, a wise innovation much resisted by other institutions at the time, but now generally adopted.

But it was in 1890, on the occasion of the famous Baring crisis, that Mr. Currie's power and resolution were most conspicuously displayed. On November 11, 1890, he was selected for his known friendship with Lord Revelstoke, and for his business qualities, to look into the affairs of Messrs. Baring, and at the instance of the Right Hon. William Lidderdale, then Governor of the Bank of England, undertook the task, in company with Mr. Benjamin Buck Greene, a director of the Bank of England. It was in consequence of their report, which showed that there was a surplus of assets over liabilities, that the Bank of England agreed to make the required advances, although the bills payable by the firm amounted to £15,750,000. In pursuance of this determination the Governor of the Bank recommended the directors to undertake the liquidation of the estate on the security of a guarantee to be obtained from the bankers of London. The Bank itself headed this guarantee fund by a contribution of £1,000,000, and Mr. Currie followed on behalf of his firm with £500,000. During the day, November 14, the private banks and cognate firms, such as the Rothschilds, contributed an amount making a total of £3,500,000, and with the

assistance of the joint stock banks and the county banks the total subsequently rose to £18,000,000.

In 1892 Mr. Currie was chosen, among others, to represent this country at the International Monetary Conference at Brussels. The astute politicians of the United States had pressed this conference upon Europe, in the hope of securing "bimetallism." Their plans were almost unanimously rejected by the representatives of the Powers, and Mr. Currie bore his part in the defence of sound principles in a memorable speech delivered towards the close of the proceedings. In 1893 he was a member of the committee which, sitting under the presidency of Lord Herschell, decided upon sanctioning the closing of the Indian mints to the free coinage of silver, a momentous measure upon which the time is not yet ripe for passing a verdict. In the same year he became High Steward of Kingston-on-Thames, besides which office he held those of J.P. for Surrey, and, in 1892, High Sheriff of London. In 1894 he sat upon the Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, the report of which is now so prominently before the public mind. In 1895 it was he who, more than any other man, initiated the Gold Standard Defence Association, formed by the merchants and bankers of London to recall to the public recollection the plain doctrines of sound finance. It was this that was the main interest of the two closing years of his life.

At the end of last year Mr. Currie underwent an operation for cancer in the tongue, which for the time was successful. But this year the disease reappeared in the glands of the neck, and was followed by pros-

tration and death. Mr. Currie married, in 1860, Caroline, daughter of Sir W. L. Young, fourth baronet, who survives him. He entered the Roman Catholic Church in the autumn of this year. He leaves one son, Laurence, who married Miss Sibyl Finch, a daughter of Mr. G. Finch, M.P., of Burley-on-the-Hill, and has a daughter.

Mr. Currie in his young days saw much of the society of Grote and Mill, and, embracing their opinions on many points, might be classed as belonging to the school of the philosophic Radicals. He was a Home Ruler and a warm friend of Mr. Gladstone, who, indeed, actually held one of his Cabinet Councils at Mr. Currie's country seat of Coombe Warren, Kingston-on-Thames. He was well versed in art and literature. In Mr. Currie the City of London loses one of its most prominent and respected men, and probably its first authority upon Banking.

It seems also to be suitable to insert here two letters which were received by the Editor from Mr. Gladstone, who, as a political leader, and still more as a friend, played an important part in the life of him to whom they refer.

*Hawarden, Xmas Day, 1896.*

Dear Mrs. Currie,

I do not write to inquire after your husband's health, for I am always apprehensive lest such letters of inquiry should form a painful addition to the cares of watching or nursing; but only to

assure you with what deep sympathy we have heard of his being gravely ill.

I am thankful to be told that he does not suffer a great deal of pain.

The withdrawal of his presence from the City of London is the loss of a great light in a place where light is not, indeed cannot be, too abundant.

I cannot but be moved by thinking of one as an invalid who is so much my junior, and from whom I have received so much kindness in so many forms.

Please to assure him, *if* it can be done seasonably and easily, of my warm recollections of the past, and my deep and earnest desires on his behalf. Not otherwise.

Those desires can take but one form that is of the smallest value, in the recollection that our Father in Heaven chasteneth every son whom He receiveth, and in the prayer that His chastening may be no other than a sign of love, and a prelude to great and eternal blessings.

I remain, dear Mrs. Currie,  
Most faithfully yours,  
W. E. GLADSTONE.

*Hawarden, May 7th, 1897.*

My dear Mrs. Currie,

It is indeed most kind of you to send me . . . that most touching paper which forms the religious Testament of your departed husband. Apart from the particular form of the course he took, it is indeed notable for its high Christian qualities, and especially the profound humility which for him and



for us all constitutes, I suppose, the most fitting accessory to religion.

For my own part, with the accumulation of my years I become more and more desirous, where I can, to fasten and rely upon the great central and interior truths of the Christian Creed; for I own to thinking the assaults of unbelief, presently and prospectively, to be most formidable, not from any inherent strength in its arguments, but from adventitious causes, and, among them, from the divisions which sever us, and which I fear as regards the Roman Church in particular have of late been sensibly widened.

With these feelings I pass over questions that are in themselves very grave, and heartily rejoice that such a mind and soul as his were brought back into the fold of Christ. He is, I trust, reaping his reward.

I received from him innumerable kindnesses, and apart from them I had the greatest respect for his mental powers. He was so entirely first among the men of the City that it is hard to measure the distance between him and the second place; and at any time it would have been a grave shock to me to find myself differing from him on any economical question. No such case to my knowledge ever occurred. . . .

Believe me,

My dear Mrs. Currie,

Yours sincerely,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

Little more need be added by way of introduction. It will be seen that the greater part of the letters in the first volume were written by

Mr. Currie during his travels and before he had attained his twenty-third year.

In later years he sometimes expressed regret that he had no regular correspondent. But, although the letters which he might have addressed to such a correspondent are wanting, the short notes that he wrote during his occasional absences from his family have their value, and help to carry on the story of his life in his own words.

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## RECOLLECTIONS.

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I WAS born on November 25th, 1827, at a house in Harley Street, which my father had taken by the year from Mr. Musters, the husband, I believe, of Mary Chaworth. My paternal grandparents lived in the neighbouring Wimpole Street, with three unmarried daughters. In 1830, the family, which then consisted of three sons, George the eldest, myself, and my brother Maynard, moved to 4 (now 12), Hyde Park Terrace, a house newly built on the Paddington Estate, the ninety-nine years lease of which was acquired from the builder by the trustees of my father's marriage settlement. My earliest recollections are of this house, which, with the exception of Nos. 5 and 6, was then the westernmost in that part of London. Beyond us on the Bayswater Road were nursery gardens and small detached villas, and at the back our windows looked over green fields with the spire of Harrow Church in the distance. The consecration of St. John's, Paddington, which I was too young to attend in person, was one of the first events I can remember. My brother George spoke of the ceremony as long and tedious, but somewhat relieved by a collation of buns in the vestry.

I was taught to read by my dear mother, who was entirely devoted to her children and exercised a wise and watchful control over them. She was governed in all her actions by a strong sense of duty. Her

judgment was good and her affections, though she refrained from displaying them openly, were warm and sensitive. I feel sure that the loss of any of her six children would have been a terrible blow to her happiness, but from this trial she escaped—dying peacefully in 1869 almost without a struggle.

Our first governess was a Miss Williams, a person more fitted for domestic than for educational service. She was followed by a Miss McTavish, who spoke with a broad Scotch accent, and taught us to decline the verb *ayter* (être) to be.

Our next-door neighbour at No. 3 was Sir Samuel Shepherd, a distinguished Scotch lawyer, on whose recommendation a tutor was engaged to replace the governess, and to walk with us in the Park and Kensington Gardens, both of which were then enclosed by high walls.

While feeding the deer in Hyde Park from a basket of acorns, I was once knocked down by a buck desirous of obtaining the contents of my basket *en gros*.

The name of our tutor has escaped me. He was, I fancy, somewhat of an enthusiast, possibly an Irvingite. He wrote, at the request of my mother, his estimate of the character and disposition of her three sons. I believe that he took the view which my parents shared, that I was the dull boy of the lot. My childhood had been passed mainly in London, a place which from my earliest years inspired me with an antipathy which age has not abated. Without daily affairs to engross one's time and attention, life in London would have been unbearable. I remember that I excited much amusement at Mundesley by speaking of the stable yard in the place of a neighbouring Squire whom I was taken







*Isaac Currie*

*from a watercolour painting by John Russell, d. 1811*

to visit, as "the Mews," that being the only sort of stable with which I was familiar.

In the autumn of 1833 the family moved for some weeks to Cromer, then a small fishing village, in order to be near Witton, where my maternal grandparents had their home. By this time a daughter, named Mary Sophia, had been added to the three boys. Both in 1834 and 1835 I was sent with one of my brothers to lodgings at Mundesley, another village on the Norfolk coast, while my father and mother paid their annual visit to Witton. I can recall the firing of guns and rockets at the neighbouring coastguard station in celebration of the marriage of my aunt, Harriett Wodehouse, with Mr. Chambers.

Of absences from our London home prior to 1833, my recollections are indistinct. We were in the habit of visiting my grandfather, Isaac Currie, at Bush Hill, near Edmonton. He died in 1843, when I was only sixteen, so that I never had an opportunity of forming a judgment of his character from personal observation, but all that I have since heard confirms me in the belief that he was an excellent banker for the times in which he lived, and a thoroughly worthy, good man, of unobtrusive and retiring habits. The Bank at 29, Cornhill had been founded in 1772, and at a very early age Isaac, a younger son, was placed in the counting-house, with a threat from his father that he would brain him if he were caught outside of it.

The patriarchal name which he bore was derived from his grandfather, Isaac Lefevre, whose family had emigrated from Rouen when the Edict of Nantes was revoked by Louis XIV. They established themselves in the east of London, first as scarlet dyers and subse-

quently as distillers. My great-grandfather, William Currie, was also a distiller, and after his premature death, the business in which he had been engaged was united with that of Messrs. Lefevre. I know little or nothing of the circumstances which induced him to become the founder of a bank. He had apparently some connection with his countryman, Fordyce, whose business came to such a disastrous end in 1772, and two of his original partners, Messrs. James and Yallowley, had been in the banking-house of Neal, Fordyce, and Co. The large purchases of barley which he had to make in the course of trade as a distiller, gave him a good deal of influence in the corn market; and when I first came to 29, Cornhill, in 1846, we had still the accounts of many Mark Lane corn-factors on our books. Now the race is almost extinct.

The death of Mr. William Currie was caused by an explosion which took place while he was inspecting the process of fermentation in one of his vats.

The family tradition is that he had originally walked from his birthplace at Dunse, like so many Scotchmen of his time, to seek his fortune in London. He seems to have quickly found it, for I have been told that the profits of his distillery were not less than £30,000 per annum.

He did not live long enough to witness the growth of the bank which he had created, and he was wont to speak rather contemptuously of it, saying that one good back of spirits was worth more than a year's profit in Cornhill. Times have changed since he uttered that saying, for the distillery business was abandoned a few years ago by his great-grandsons because it no longer yielded any profit; whereas his banking adven-





*Bertram, Maynard and George Currie  
From an oil painting by E. W. C. de la.*

ture, grafted indeed on another and more vigorous stem, still preserves the record of his name.

My grandfather made a judicious and happy marriage with Mary, the daughter of William Raikes, whose firm, W. and T. Raikes and Co., of Alderman's Walk, was then among the most eminent in the City. This connection was doubtless of service to him. His life was uneventful, but by diligence and economy he amassed a considerable fortune. This must have been increased by the general rise in securities which took place after 1815, but it was also impaired by his great liberality to my father and to his other partners.

I have always felt grateful to his memory, as, without him, it is unlikely that I should ever have engaged in the banking business, which for fifty years has been to me a congenial pursuit.

During these fifty years the most remarkable changes have occurred. On looking the other day at the list of London bankers in 1846, I find that out of the whole number of clearing bankers—about twenty-four—only three have survived intact. A few have failed, and the others, including my old firm, have been amalgamated or absorbed.

In 1835, my paternal grandmother died, and about the same time died also my maternal great-grandfather, the first Lord Wodehouse, at the age of ninety-two. His portrait, by Sir W. Beechey, is to be seen at Minley.

In February, 1836, I was sent to Dr. Mayo's school at Cheam, where my elder brother had been placed in 1835. Just before he left home, the oval picture representing Maynard on a pony with a brother on each side was painted by E. W. Eddis.

Cheam, where I remained for nearly four years, was not to my taste, and I cannot think that the management of the boys was judicious.

Dr. Mayo was a well-meaning man, but ignorant of the world and an easy prey to impostors. His wife, who as Miss Shepherd had kept a ladies' school at Notting Hill, was careful of our health, but managed to make herself detested by the boys. She took care of our pocket-money, kept a truck-shop for balls and toys, and exhorted us to bestow our spare cash on the conversion of the Jews or the evangelization of the heathen.

Dr. Mayo was what was then called a Millenarian. He taught us that at any moment the last trump might be heard when the world would come to an end. I remember that the sound of a cornet à piston which reached us one night from the neighbouring village after we had gone to bed, caused much alarm among the boys, who thought that the catastrophe had arrived.

As might have been expected, these and similar extravagant doctrines professed by our schoolmaster attracted impostors who played on his credulity. The ushers were generally a somewhat disreputable lot, chosen for their supposed piety more than for their teaching capacity. Our French master was a native of Neuchatel, and had been a corporal in the Prussian army. If his French was detestable and his English worse, he made himself useful as a drill-sergeant, and after endeavouring to make us translate *l'Histoire de Charles XII.*, and insisting that the English equivalent of *entrepreneur* was "undertaker," he used to put us through military exercises in the play-



ground. After my departure from Cheam, this worthy Switzer decamped from the school without giving notice, and left his wife chargeable on the parish rates. It has always appeared to me scandalous that, whereas no one is allowed to practise law or medicine without obtaining some kind of certificate of fitness, the profession of a schoolmaster is open to all the world, and he is able to follow it free from inspection or control of any kind. Probably the system of competitive examinations has done much to improve private schools since my time.

The summer holidays of 1836 were spent at Beddington, the ancient home of the Carew family. It contained a grand hall, in which we used to dine. We had a Swiss tutor, named M. Levanchy, who caught trout in the stream which flowed through the Park, an art to which I was never able to attain.

To these holidays I looked back with regret when the time came to return to the uncongenial school at Cheam, which was only a few miles distant from Beddington Hall.

On coming home for the summer holidays in June, 1837, the Cheam coach, in which my brother and I were passengers, stopped at the Elephant and Castle, where we heard the news of the death of King William. An old gentleman who sat opposite us observed, "Then there will be a revolution." Such is the wisdom to be gathered in public vehicles. The foolometer was to be found in the coach before the omnibus was invented.

Our holidays this year were spent on the Menai Straits, near Beaumaris, at a place belonging to one of the Williams family, with whom we had made an exchange of houses for the summer. My father was

absent most of the time on account of the General Election, and I can remember his joyful return to his family as Member for Northampton.

When the holidays came to an end, the question arose how my brother and I were to return to school. The railway was unfinished, and my mother had little confidence in the safety of that new-fangled mode of travelling. So we proceeded by steamer to Liverpool, where Mr. Jones, the parent of another Cheam boy, kindly received us for the night, and next morning put us into the day coach for London.

I can recall nothing of striking interest in the next two or three years. The principal instruction at Cheam was theological, and we had occasional exhortations from such Evangelical lights as the Rev. Baptist Noel, and Dr. Wolff, the missionary, after which the hat was generally sent round to the boys. The summer of 1838 was, I think, spent at a house in Wellington Crescent, Dover.

In 1839 or 1840 my father took from Mr. Thomas Abdy a lease of Albys, a place in Essex between Romford and Ongar. The house was built about the time of Charles I., and is mentioned in the autobiography of Sir John Bramston, who records that he, and his father, the Chief Justice, dined there in the time of the Commonwealth with his brother-in-law, who regaled them with cold venison. The house, which has been attributed, probably without foundation, to Inigo Jones, is very interesting, with a long upper gallery, and rooms decorated with panelling, and fine stucco ceilings enriched with pendants.

My removal from Cheam was hastened by an attack of what was pronounced by the local doctor to be ring-

worm, but which never resulted in anything more than a temporary bald patch of small dimensions on my otherwise well-covered head. To avoid the risk of communicating this disease to the other boys, I was removed to a house at Epsom, where Dr. Shelley, our medical attendant, lived. He was a kind old gentleman, and I much preferred his hospitality and the absence of lessons to the dull routine of Cheam school.

He used to pay daily visits to Mrs. Howard of Ashstead, the great lady of the neighbourhood. I remember accompanying him in his gig and being much alarmed at the deer who crowded round me while I was waiting for him in the park. On arriving in London I was taken by one of the clerks in my father's banking-house, who had been educated at Christ's Hospital, to be examined by the medical officer of that institution. He did not seem to think that there was much the matter with me.

Instead of returning again to Cheam, I was placed under the care of Mr. Ward, a clergyman at Aston, near Stevenage, in Hertfordshire, who had married the eldest daughter of my father's sister, Mrs. George Raikes. Mr. Ward was not a man of much learning, or force of character, and appeared to be in bad health. My fellow-pupil was Francis Raikes, afterwards Rector of Barnham Broom, in Norfolk, who was supposed to be preparing for the University. The only public event that I can remember during my stay at Aston was the marriage of the Queen and Prince Albert.

As for amusement, I used to visit the neighbours, walk to Stevenage to see the London coaches on the North road, and sometimes I tried to fish in the trout stream at Woodhall, where Mr. Abel Smith lived, but

never with much success. After spending some months at Aston, my father sent a pony and groom to take me over to Albyns, which I then saw for the first time. The ride by Waltham Abbey and Abridge was very pleasant, and Betsey, a weedy thoroughbred, was an easy-going and pleasant hack.

The next event in my life was my arrival at Eton, in September, 1840. I had already visited the place as one of a party who were invited to travel by the Great Western Railway to Slough before the line was opened to the public. From Slough we drove on that occasion to the White Hart, Windsor, where my cousin, John Wodehouse, then an Eton boy, came to meet us at luncheon. As my father and I entered Dr. Hawtry's chambers, where I was to inscribe my name in the College register, we met Sir Henry Hardinge, with his son Arthur, coming away from performing the same function. The master to whose care I was committed was the Rev. E. H. Pickering, a good-natured man for whom I always had a liking, but who was more fitted for success in the cricket-field than in the class-room.

At Cheam, and in my own home, our health had been carefully protected, but at Eton sanitary science had made little progress since the time of the royal founder. Almost my first experience was to be laid up with measles, an accident common to my age, which I only record because the Windsor apothecary who was employed by my tutor to physic us thought fit to bleed me. This must have been in 1841, by which time I fancy that the favourite remedy of Dr. Sangrado was nearly discarded in England. Later on I had scarlet fever, which was always more or less prevalent in the school. Several boys of my own age, including

two of the Lascelles family, and Packe, who boarded at Pickering's, died of it. It was in consequence of this outbreak that the existing sanatorium was built to take the place of the small, insanitary cottages which served for hospitals in our time.

I have always regretted the idleness and indisposition to mental effort which marked my time at Eton. It was no doubt mostly my own fault, aggravated, perhaps, by inherited tendencies; but I cannot but think that I could have been stimulated into greater exertion if I had fallen into the hands of a master who had more sympathy with learning and more appreciation of intellectual delights. I had always an ambition to excel, though perhaps it was not devoted to the noblest objects, and with a little judicious encouragement the spirit of emulation might have been raised in me. On looking back, with the experience of half a century, my only consolation, and it is but a mean one, is that some, indeed most of those who surpassed me at school were left behind in the more serious struggle in which we were all fated to be engaged. But the real value of knowledge, and above all, of the habit of concentrated application, is not to be found in the gratification of vanity, nor in the worldly success which these attainments may bring, but in the addition which they make to the solid enjoyments of life. I have always found my greatest satisfaction in books, but my reading has been of a desultory and dilettante character, and I lament my inability to enjoy the classic authors of antiquity, or to grapple with the great problems of philosophy.

The facility with which my friend, Lord Farrer, expounds the most complicated problems of monetary

science fills me with envy. It is the outcome of a well-spent and laborious life devoted to the public service. Again I console myself that knowledge, invaluable as it is, does not always guide its possessor to right conclusions. Intuition, or a sort of glorified common-sense, is the most valuable gift of all. It comes direct from nature, and is not to be acquired by the most laborious research.

I was never much of a hand at games, nor did the society of my companions greatly delight me. It was the fashion for an Eton boy to praise his school in all companies, but my disposition was critical and impatient of discipline, and the absurdities of the place were more present to my mind than its undoubted advantages. A great defect in my character was want of reverence. To show that there were abuses in the school sufficient to raise legitimate indignation, I will recall an incident which happened in my second or third year. On my return from the holidays, my tutor's maid, "a stale virgin with a winter's face," who looked after my scanty wardrobe, addressed me thus: "Currie, you are not to go to Tom Brown to mend your clothes any more." "Why not?" I replied. "Brown, if not a rival to Stultz or Nugee, is a conscientious artist, and equal to the humble duty of re-seating my pantaloons." "Because," answered the maid, "he has been impertinent to Mr. Cookesley, and the College authorities have decided that he shall be no longer tailor to any of the boys under their government."

This so-called impertinence consisted in the fact that after long endurance Brown had demanded payment for the sartorial services which he had rendered

to Mr. Cookesley's pupils, whose parents in the regular course of things had accounted to the tutor for the amount of Brown's charges. This reverend instructor was soon afterwards removed from Eton to a cure of souls, leaving his affairs in an embarrassed condition. The corporate feeling which led his colleagues to support him so indefensibly was, I fear, accentuated by the fact that some of them were in pecuniary straits themselves.

I remember that I expressed my opinion freely on this irregular transaction, and thereby earned the character of a malcontent and dangerous person.

The death of the Marquis Wellesley occurred in 1842. In his will he desired to be buried in the College chapel. The boys were allowed to go after lock-up to see him lying in state, but for some reason, probably from indisposition, I was not present at the ceremony.

The last celebration of Montem took place in my time, besides the fourth centenary of the foundation of the College by Henry VI.

I saw the Emperor Nicholas at a review in Windsor Park. Among all the bedizened kings, princes, generals, and courtiers, Sir Robert Peel rode in plain clothes, with his beaver hat and buff waistcoat, the greatest man, to my thinking, in the gorgeous company. After the review there was a State banquet in St. George's Hall. Bishop Stanley, who was a guest at the Castle, kindly took me and some other boys to see the tables prepared for the feast. The barbaric pomp pleased my inartistic eye.

Later in the day I saw the great Sir Robert Peel—a living image of the caricatures of H.B.—walking in

Keat's Lane with his sons, John and Arthur, both Eton boys. I can recall his ample frock coat, conspicuous eye-glass, and somewhat mincing gait. He was a great public servant, of noble independence of character, and of lofty aims, but probably he was too much engrossed in public affairs to perform the duties of an amiable father, or to acquire the confidence and affection of his sons.

As to games and amusements, I was but a moderate player of fives, and no good at cricket or hockey, but devotedly fond of Father Thames. Having but a weak constitution, and being rather overgrown for my age, I never became a powerful or expert oarsman; but in the last half of my Eton life I joined the boats as a member of the Third Upper, and rowed with them to Surley. I was on friendly terms with the boys in my tutor's house, but swore eternal friendship with none. My brother Maynard shared my room at Pickering's, and in spite of occasional quarrels, we were much attached to each other.

In the spring of 1845, Dr. Chambers, the Broadbent of the day, pronounced that my heart was not equal to the exertion of rowing, and it was resolved that I should not return to Eton.

My own inclinations pointed in this direction as I was anxious to begin to qualify myself for the impending struggle for life. My grandmother, Mrs. Currie, had inherited a sum of £5,000 which she left to me on condition that I became a clergyman. In spite of this inducement I preferred the career of a layman, and the legacy passed to my brother Maynard who took his degree at Cambridge, spent some time at Wells, filled several curacies, was appointed by



Baron Meyer Rothschild to officiate at Mentmore, and finally, on the presentation of Lord Kimberley, became Rector of Hingham in Norfolk, where he died in 1887.

My father had now four sons and two daughters. He was fairly well off, but spent freely what he made, and it was clear to me that I must depend on my own exertions if I was to obtain any position in the world. I proposed to him to send me for a couple of years to Paris, but to this my dear mother demurred, so it was decided that I should go to Weimar, where my brother George had in the previous year spent some months with a travelling tutor. It happened that Arthur Eden, who had been my schoolfellow at Pickering's, was required to learn German in order to qualify himself for the business of a merchant at St. Petersburg; so our respective parents agreed that we should travel to Weimar together. We went by Ostend, Louvain, and Coblenz, to Frankfort, by rail or boat, but there the facilities afforded by steam came to an end, and we had to take places in an *eilwagen*, a stuffy, rumbling, slow conveyance, such as had carried many generations of travelling Germans between Frankfort and Leipsic. In due time it deposited us at Weimar.

The diary that I kept at this time was destroyed in 1870 by fire at Coombe, so that I cannot be positive about names and dates. Eden was sent to lodge with a learned professor of the Gymnasium, whose only means of conversing with us was in Latin; and I entered the family of a Herr Rath, or minor official of the Grand Ducal Government. He had three daughters, one called Bella, decidedly pretty, who performed the

household duties and in turn cooked the dinner and waited at table. Once a month I used to pay the Rath for my entertainment with a *rouleau* of thalers. The most interesting person of my acquaintance was our German master, Herr Dr. Weissenborn, celebrated by the immortal Thackeray, to whom he had taught German some years before. He was a capital teacher and under his guidance I acquired a fair colloquial knowledge of the language, besides being initiated into the beauties of Faust and the Elective Affinities. One of my first experiences at Weimar was a visit to the vault in which Goethe and Schiller lie buried in the midst of Grand Ducal nonentities encased in velvet covered coffins. I think it was on the anniversary of the death of Goethe that the visit was made.

Lord Brougham, the uncle by marriage of Arthur Eden, had through M. Guizot recommended us to the notice of M. de la Rochefoucault, the French Minister resident at Weimar, and we were kindly entertained at Court both by the reigning Grand Duke Carl Friedrich, and his heir the present Grand Duke. We were invited to dinners and evening parties both in the town and country residences of these distinguished persons. Once we went to shoot deer with the Crown Prince at Ilmenau, a place made famous by the lines which Goethe wrote on a window-pane, the last of which: *Warte nur, balde ruhest du auch*, comes home to me now.

We became members of the Erholung, a sort of club to which the inhabitants of Weimar repaired daily for outdoor refreshment, and we used to engage in the game of *Kegel* with the officers of the garrison. I remember to have received a formal remonstrance

from the committee of the club for having played this game in my shirt-sleeves, an act of immorality according to the German code (*unsittlich*).

There was plenty of partridge shooting to be had over the Royal domain, at which my friend Arthur was a proficient. Bustards we sought for and never found, but he gained great credit by slaying an *auerhahn* (cock-of-the-woods) which had defied the skill of local sportsmen. In the evenings we played whist with the officers in the Weimar army, whose *silber groschen* he used to win by superior skill. Perhaps I learnt more German than my companion, but at cards and sport he was greatly my superior. We danced a great deal, fell more or less in love with Gräfins and other Fräuleins, and on the whole had a pleasant time. The society was almost entirely German, and there were few English residents, which was a help to our linguistic endeavours. For a faithful picture of Weimar and its miniature court, I would refer to the letter from Thackeray describing his life there, which is contained in that delightful book, *The Life of Goethe*, by G. Lewes.

The theatre at Weimar, though it had fallen from the high estate to which it rose when Goethe was director, was a constant source of amusement and instruction. The Grand Ducal family occupied a large gallery facing the stage. On their right sat the *Hoffähige*—persons capable of going to Court—and on the left the multitude who were deprived of that privilege. When H.R.H. made his appearance the "court-capable" rose to their feet; the others took no notice. Actors from Dresden and other German cities used to give special performances (*Gast rollen*),

and it was there that I first heard the melodious voice of Jenny Lind.

In the spring of 1846, my parents decided that I had been absent long enough, and after visiting Leipsic and Dresden, I returned to England. It was in the month of June of that year that I began to work as a clerk in the banking house at 29, Cornhill.

The office or shop as we called it was narrow, low, and not over well lighted, but it was of considerable depth, and extended from the entrance in Cornhill to a private door in Change Alley, opposite to Garraway's coffee-house. The business was a small one, in spite of the absorption of that of Dorrien and Co., which had been effected in 1842, but the traditions of my grandfather had been respected, and it was perfectly sound and solvent. The partners were my father's elder brother Isaac George, his cousin Henry, and himself. John Lawford, the son of a former partner, was actively engaged in the management, and I was placed under his care.

When compared with the great banking institutions of to-day, the firm of Currie's and Co. was, as my father used to say, but a chandler's shop. My uncle was a most careful saver, and had more than doubled the inheritance which he had received from his father, but his timid and suspicious character unfitted him for such a business as banking. Henry had little or no patrimony, and was not inclined to accumulate. He lived in rough plenty in a rambling old house in Surrey, and spent what spare cash he had in cultivating useless land. I must always speak of him with regard, for he had an affectionate disposition, and in spite of occasional bursts of temper, treated me with kindness





*Raikes Curru*

and consideration. To his two daughters, both slightly younger than myself, I was much attached, and the many visits that I paid to West Horsley Place are still green in my memory.

Of my father, Raikes Currie, it is more difficult to speak with justice and propriety. Intellectually, he was certainly superior to his partners, and he was capable of making a great effort on any special occasion. He had quickness, vivacity, and a considerable command of rhetoric, but these are not the qualities which make the ideal banker. He took an active but desultory part in the politics of the City, and on more than one occasion proposed Baron Rothschild at the Guildhall as one of the Liberal candidates for that constituency.

On one of these occasions, when Lord John Manners came forward to oppose the Liberal Members, my father made the happy quotation from the published works of the noble lord, which has since become stale by endless repetition :

Let wealth and commerce, laws and learning, die,  
But leave us still our old nobility.

In Parliament he spoke more than once. His first effort was in support of the Free Trade tendency, which Sir Robert Peel's financial speeches in 1842 disclosed. Miss Martineau in her history of the time gives much praise to this speech, and declares that it influenced public opinion.

Another occasion on which he addressed the House was in opposition to the Lords, who had refused to admit Lord Wensleydale to a seat in their chamber because his patent of peerage was made out in favour

of himself alone, and did not contain the words, "heirs male of his body lawfully begotten."

The sequel has proved, I think, that my father was right in advocating the principle of life peerages, and that the House of Lords, acting under the influence of Lord Derby—the Rupert of debate—took a line opposed to the true interests as well as to the permanency of their order. Since that time the economical laws have been steadily working against the hereditary peerage. If, as Lord Bacon says, nobility is but ancient riches, how can the nobles preserve much authority when their riches are gone?

My brother George, who was looked upon by my father as the heir to his uncle, had made a short apprenticeship in Cornhill before I took my seat there in 1846, and was at that time travelling in the East. Henry Currie had a son of the same name about my own age; and my father, fearing perhaps that I should come into competition with his eldest son, always spoke of my connection with the Bank as temporary and preparatory to some other employment. This uncertainty as to the future probably stimulated me to exertion, and made me secretly resolve that I too would be a banker. *Anch' io son pittore.*

One of the first memorable events which disturbed the calm of City life in my time, was the failure of Harman and Co., the London bankers of the Russian Government. It was reported that some years before the catastrophe, the Russian Ambassador, having heard rumours unfavourable to their credit, had proposed to Messrs. Harman that they should divide the Government account with Messrs. Rothschild. To this Mr. Harman is said to have replied that they



would willingly transfer the account but that it was contrary to the rules of the house to divide it. A splendid example, if true, of successful bluff, for at the time Messrs. Harman must have held many hundreds of thousand pounds of Government money, which they were not in a position to repay. In 1847, came the memorable panic in which so many ancient mercantile houses were swept away. Our firm was not specially concerned with any of them, but Mr. John Cockerell was an intimate friend of my father's, had been always particularly kind to me, and appeared to my inexperienced eyes the incarnation of stability, wealth, and splendour.

I have always thought that the baptism of fire through which I passed in 1847 was useful to my career as a banker. It made me question the solidity of many showy and pretentious institutions, taught me that old firms, like old men, are liable to decay, and that if there is anything irregular or not easily to be explained in their transactions, the most unfavourable estimate of their credit is probably the true one. The old saying that there is only one solution to a commercial enigma is to be recommended for its sagacity.

In 1848, my brother George being about to return from his travels in India, my father urged me to take a holiday, so as to leave the field in Cornhill clear for him. At the time of his arrival in England, we were living at a house in Eastern Terrace, Brighton, whence I travelled daily by train to London, a plan not at all conducive to my health. At this time I was a great sufferer from nervous headaches. Among my

companions in the railway carriage I remember Mr. R. C. L. Bevan, and the unfortunate Sir John Dean Paul, both bankers of eminent piety, but of very different characters and fortune.

In accordance with my father's wishes, and nothing loath myself, I left England in the spring of 1848 for Aix la Chapelle, and took a course of sulphur baths which had been recommended to me. After some weeks I repaired to Homburg to complete the cure. The revolutionary Diet or Parliament was sitting at Frankfort, and had chosen the Austrian Archduke John as *Reichsverweser*. I remember meeting Lord Cowley, who was accredited as British Minister to the Diet, and his secretary Mr. George Petre, at an evening party at Frankfort.

At Aix, I made the acquaintance of M. Blanc, who farmed the gambling tables at Homburg. I did not play myself, but it amused me to see the patriotic deputies from Frankfort staking their money on the green cloth.

The coarse face, red hair and beard of Blusu, a Radical leader, is still before me. He was destined, like many of his colleagues, to fall a victim to the revolution which they had raised.

Among the English were some good-looking young ladies, with whom I made many expeditions in a phaeton and pair which I had hired at Frankfort. Having completed my cure, I visited my old friends at Weimar, and quartered myself—not with the Herr Rath and his charming daughters—but in rooms over a jeweller's shop in the market-place. At this time a religious reformer, named Ronge, was conducting a crusade against Rome, and particularly against the

Holy Coat of Treves, which he denounced as an imposture. A meeting of his supporters was held in the market-place, and the proceedings were noisy. Being confined to my room with illness, this disturbance of my quiet irritated me, and with the imprudence of youth I opened my window and blew a shrill note with my dog-whistle. The consequences might have been serious. My landlord was a Catholic and native of Italy, and the crowd began to menace his house. He came upstairs to my room trembling with fear. The only reparation which I could make was to address the people from the window in my best German, and to say that it was I, an English Protestant, who had whistled for my dog, and that my landlord was entirely innocent. Whether this satisfied them I cannot say, but the government of the Grand Duke after a time ordered out their small army and gradually dispersed the crowd.

I was eventually summoned to the municipal police court, which I think inflicted on me a fine, subsequently remitted by the clemency of the Grand Duke. Many articles about this affair appeared in the German newspapers of the day, in which I was deservedly ridiculed as *Der englische Pfeiffer*.

My friends at Court did not lessen their attentions to me in consequence of this foolish escapade. They were not sorry, I think, to see ridicule thrown upon what was more or less a revolutionary movement. Just after my departure from Weimar this movement increased in force, and the poor old Duke had to leave his capital in haste and take refuge in Eisenach until the storm subsided.

Soon after my return to England my father had,

through a civil engineer, Mr. George Bovill, become interested in a patent for improving the grinding of wheat, from which great results were expected. A successful builder, named Ponsford, and Mr. White, a country miller from Reading, were induced to establish a firm into which I was to be admitted as a partner, my father providing me with a capital of £20,000. A large building was erected in Thames Street, which still "rears its tall head," but remains untenanted, and experiments were begun at a small flour mill lower down the river. My faith in the undertaking was never great, and I only consented to take part in it on receiving a promise in writing from my father that in case of failure, I should be received back into the Bank.

Disputes about increased capital soon arose between the partners. Eventually, Mr. Ponsford assumed the whole responsibility of the firm, and *mirabile dictu* my father got security for his capital, and in time recovered his money. I have always thought this a remarkable instance of the good luck which followed him through life.

Mr. Bovill had the sanguine temperament of the inventor, was always more or less in pecuniary straits himself, and the wonderful patent which was to make all our fortunes proved to be of no practical value.

While this affair was in suspense, having no daily work to occupy my time, I happened in my reading to come across Sir Francis Head's amusing *Ride across the Pampas*. My health was not very good, or my apprehensive temperament made me think so, and I fancied that a life in the saddle would set me up.

About this time, through the good offices of Herr

Lachmaure, our common master in German, I had become intimate with my life-long friend Edward Baring, who had studied at Gotha about the time of my first visit to Weimar. From Gotha he had been removed to a merchant's counting-house at Antwerp, and was then acting as a clerk in the house of Baring Brothers and Co. We spent a great deal of our time together, and more than once I visited his family at Cromer Hall.

The house of Baring, having some interests to protect in Mexico, despatched their agent, M. Falconnet, to that country, and allowed Edward to accompany him, so that he might make acquaintance with their correspondents, and enlarge his knowledge of the world.

My father, always liberally disposed to further my wishes, and still believing in the success of the milling scheme, willingly consented to my desire for foreign travel. Through the influence of Admiral D. Dundas, he obtained a passage for me from Plymouth to Rio Janeiro on board H.M.S. *Driver*, Commander Johnson. At that time there was no communication by steam with South America, and the postal service was conducted by ten gun brigs of H.M.'s navy plying between Falmouth and Rio. I sailed in March, 1849, just as Sir C. Napier was starting to take command of the British army in India, well supplied with letters of introduction from Baring's and other mercantile houses to their South American correspondents, with recommendations from the Foreign Office, and above all with a letter from Mr. Mandeville, an ex-diplomat, to the redoubtable Don J. M. de Rosas, the autocrat of the Argentine Republic. I remember my disappointment

when, after many days of sea, the *Driver* reached Madeira, and we were not allowed to land by the Portuguese health officers in consequence of sickness on board.

In due time—six weeks, I think—the *Driver* entered the glorious harbour of Rio. She had what was called an auxiliary screw, but the Captain's orders were not to consume coal, as long as he could make way with the sails. My natural impatience of confinement made me urge him on, and he used to declare that, when he referred me to the Admiralty regulations, I replied that he might charge me with the cost of the extra coals. He was a pleasant, friendly little man and treated me very well, but the life on board ship did not suit me. I tried to teach myself Spanish, in which I had already taken a few lessons in London, by reading the famous translation of *Gil Blas* by the Padre Isla, and I managed with a dictionary to make it out.

The *Driver* landed me at Rio, and soon proceeded to the West Coast, where she joined the squadron of Admiral Hornby on the Pacific Station. At Rio I found Mr.—afterwards Sir James—Hudson installed as head of the British Legation. He was a man of distinguished appearance and charming manners. By his advice I avoided the unhealthy climate of Rio, and started soon after my arrival for Petropolis, a German colony recently founded in the mountains, but not before Mr. Hamilton, another member of the Legation, had taken me, together with two or three of his young family, for a cruise in Botafogo Bay. Whether purposely or not (for he was an eccentric being), the canoe that carried us was upset in the

bay. His children seemed used to the adventure, and struck out for the shore. My swimming, the only useful thing I had brought back from Eton, stood me in good stead, but my watch was spoiled, and a rather loud suit of dittos, which I fancied had excited the wrath of Hamilton, was shorn of its glory. At Petropolis I put up at a sort of pension kept by one Moss, a Hebrew, who had been butler to Lord Strangford during his mission to the Brazilian Coast, and was now a well-to-do slave-owner and landed proprietor.

After a few weeks spent in Brazil, I sailed for Monte Video in a small schooner of two hundred tons, which carried the mails, and came in for a *pampero*, or storm from the south. The siege of Monte Video—which had lasted almost as long as the siege of Troy—was still nominally in force, but there seemed to be little or no firing going on when I walked on the ramparts with Mr. R. Gore, the British Consul. After a day or two spent with him I went on to Buenos Ayres. To those who have visited this city in recent years, my description would appear incredible. It was a mean-looking town, without anything in the shape of an hotel above the standard of Wapping. It boasted of an unfinished Plaza, the buildings round which, including the Cathedral, were formed of dried clay. The private houses, constructed of the same material, had flat roofs and open courts after the model of those of Seville or Cadiz, but without their artistic charm.

Mr. Southern, a disciple of Jeremy Bentham, and a *protégé* of Lord Clarendon, was H.M.'s Minister at Buenos Ayres, tolerated, but not officially recognized

by the Chief of the Republic, who had some grievance against the British Government. His secretary, C. Henderson, afterwards Consul at Boston, U.S., was my daily companion. We had a mutual friend in Domingo Arcos, the son of a wealthy Spaniard, who had fled from European revolutions to Santiago de Chili. Our evenings were spent at the Opera, or at the house of the Governor Rosas, whose daughter, Manuelita, received every day of the week. Riding was the principal occupation of the day. Horses cost a few paper dollars only, and I remember to have seen in the town that remarkable phenomenon, a beggar on horseback. We paid a visit of some days to an *estancia* belonging to General Rosas, and were initiated into the life of the Campo, saw bulls chased, ostriches entangled with bolas, young horses lassoed and mounted for the first time, and were regaled with *maté* and *carne con cuero*—a piece cut out of the back of an ox with the hide left on, and cooked on the embers of a wood fire.

The intention which I had formed in England of crossing the Pampas to Chili, was frustrated by the time of year at which I arrived, as in the winter the passes of the Andes are blocked with snow. So, instead of spending some weeks only in Buenos Ayres, I stayed there several months until the summer came in October or November. In the meantime, I amused myself with an excursion to the provinces of Santa Fé and Entre Rios. I was attended by a *vigilante*, or police officer, whom General Rosas put at my disposal, and was furnished with a passport, which entitled me to use the Government post-houses free of charge. I went as far as the frontier of Paraguay,



and after some weeks on horseback, arrived at Gualiguaychee, where I found an Italian boat freighted with oranges, which took me to Buenos Ayres by water. I went back to my old apartment in the Calle Tacuari, rode to Palermo, the General's *quinta* in the afternoons, and attended a *tertulia* in the evenings. The *Portinas*, or young ladies of Buenos Ayres, were pretty, graceful, and engaging, and I found their society attractive. There were not many resident Britons, and I lived principally with the natives, with whom I could by this time converse freely in their own language. At last the time came to move westward. I engaged an English servant, who had lived with Mr. Southern, and we rode by S. Luis to Mendoza, changing horses eight or nine times in the day. One journey of one hundred and twenty miles was my greatest performance. At Mendoza, I made a bargain with a muleteer to take me to Santiago by the Uspallata Pass, and he landed me there safely, in spite of earthquakes and narrow ledges cut in the face of the rock, along which the mules had to pass in single file. It was an expedition which I should not care to repeat.

At Santiago I was hospitably entertained by the father of my friend Domingo Arcos, whose brothers, like himself, were clever young men and great musicians. From Santiago I descended the slope of the Andes in a one horse conveyance to Valparaiso, where the English and American merchants were established. Thence I embarked in a steamer of the Pacific Co., and, after touching at various places on the coast, landed at Callao, the port of Lima, where I had arranged to meet my friend Edward Baring on his return from

Mexico. The British Minister was Mr. William Pitt Adams, whose wife was Baring's cousin, and I found him living with them at the Legation. I remember the crowd in the Plaza on Christmas Day, 1849, where I met the Hornby family, including the celebrated Sir Geoffrey, who had come up from Callao. I visited the Admiral, on board H.M.S. *Asia*, and was amused at the deferential manner of Commander Johnson in the presence of his chief, having known him on the quarter-deck of the *Driver*, where everybody bowed down before him. Baring and I were delighted to meet after such a long separation. We stayed together at the sea-bathing hamlet called Chorillos, where a shanty was lent to us by one of the Lima merchants. We gave an entertainment to the bathing guests, which consisted in a great haul of sea-fish by the Indians; we engaged with Peruvian gamblers in the game of Monte, at which the stakes were gold ounces; and had a Christmas dinner with a benevolent old German, who presided over the mercantile house of Huth and Co. I remember my surprise at finding that my German speech had departed, having, I suppose, been driven out by talking Spanish for so many months.

As Baring intended to return by way of Chili and Buenos Ayres, we agreed to go part of the way together, and taking steamer at Callao, we made for Arica and Tacua. Thence we rode to Arequipa, a considerable town in the interior of Peru, where we saw *alpacas* used by the Indians as beasts of burden. The scenery through which we passed was magnificent, but we failed to detect anything remarkable in the ancient buildings of the Incas, about which we had

read glowing descriptions in Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Peru*. He must have taken his facts from Spanish chronicles, and not from personal observation. I remember that we had a French cook besides other servants, and camped out when we were not living at Arequipa. The consequence was that they all caught malarial fever, from which my friend and I happily escaped. Returning to the coast, we parted to meet again in New York. Baring sailed to Valparaiso, and I went in the opposite direction to Panama, which was then, I think, the terminus of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co. Here I found a hospitable entertainer in H.M.'s Consul, Mr. Perry, brother of my friend Sir Erskine, and son of the well-known Whig editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. He had a charming young daughter, with whom I rode about in the neighbouring country. My object now was to catch the Royal Mail steamer at Chagres, on the other side of the Isthmus. There were no roads, and the only mode of transit was on horseback. The gold discoveries in California had recently been made, and I met crowds of desperate-looking Yankee adventurers crossing the Isthmus on foot in order to make their way to S. Francisco.

I think the journey took two days, as I remember sleeping, or trying to sleep, at a wretched half-way house full of dangerous characters. At Chagres the R.M. boat soon made its appearance, and I took my passage for Jamaica. The Bishop of that island, Dr. Spencer, was on board, and we became friends. I visited him at his delightful cottage in the Blue Mountains, where the garden was full of humming-birds. I also dined and slept at Government House with Sir Charles Grey, surnamed Pickwick, who was

a friend of my father. The scenery of Jamaica delighted me, and I wondered why it was not more frequented by travellers in search of a tropical climate.

From Kingston an American boat took me to New York. Some of the United States passengers were, I remember, outraged at the impudence of a coloured newspaper editor who took a leading part at a luncheon given on board in honour of our departure, and made a flowery speech.

I have no distinct recollection of my itinerary in the United States where I stayed for many months, but, besides New York and Boston, I was at Saratoga and Newport in the height of the season, and at the latter place saw what the *New York Herald* called, "Hon. Henry Clay in the surf." I was at a commemoration-day at Harvard, and heard Mr. Everett denounce King George III. I also spent a Sunday with the Shakers, at a place called Sharon. All the people to whom I brought letters, including Mr. Bancroft the historian, treated me with kindness. I danced a great deal and generally amused myself. The principal public event was the sudden death of the President, Z. Taylor, which the papers informed us was caused by his making a hearty meal of berries and milk; and at Boston I heard the news of the death of Sir Robert Peel.

At Washington I found Sir Henry Bulwer, and at his house met the leading public men of the time, such as Webster, Clay, Winthrop, and Sumner. They struck me as somewhat pompous, and resembling in manners and appearance the notables of an English provincial town. Bulwer used to say that the greater a senator or a public man was, the slower he spoke—

and certainly the celebrated Daniel Webster was alarmingly deliberate in his utterances.

Among the young men at the Legation were Messrs. Pennell and Fenton, and during my stay at Washington Robert Lytton, Sir Henry's nephew, the future Viceroy and Ambassador, arrived as *attaché*. He was a boy of not much more than seventeen, who had just left Harrow, eccentrically dressed, with abundant velvet cuffs and collars, and shiny boots, but even at that early age witty and original as he remained to the end. He always appeared to me as a most amusing and charming companion.

Sir Henry, when not laid up with illness, real or imaginary, which happened about four days out of the seven, was also a brilliant talker with a considerable gift of sarcasm. The American papers described him as a small, pock-marked man, weighing 120lbs.; but he managed to outwit their State Secretary Clayton, with whom he negotiated the treaty which bears their names. Whether this diplomatic triumph was worth much remains to be proved. To me he was especially kind. I conceived a great regard for him, and always regretted my neglect to cultivate his friendship in later years when he returned to Europe. By that time, however, I was engrossed in business, and had become unsocial in my habits. He invited me to accompany him in an expedition which he made with Lady Bulwer to Canada. We visited Niagara together, dined with Lord Elgin at a villa near Toronto, where he had retired after the rebellion at Quebec, and went back to Saratoga Springs.

Towards the end of 1850 my friend Baring arrived at New York from the River Plate, having

spent some months at Buenos Ayres, where he made acquaintance with all my Argentine friends, male and female. The name of Baring carried great weight at that time in America, and I remember a dinner which was given to us at the Astor House, then the first hotel in New York, in order to introduce us to what was called "the privacy of the Astor." Mr. S. Draper, a leading wire-puller and politician, made a speech mostly about himself, the relevance of which we failed to perceive, and he perorated thus: "I ask no favour, I expect no favour, I am entitled to no favour." Baring put up at the hotel in New York where I was staying, and after a short time we sailed together for Liverpool in the Cunard steamer *Niagara*. As was to be expected at that time of year, we had a stormy passage which lasted many days.

Having now concluded my transatlantic travels, the only serious travels which the engagements of business ever allowed me to undertake, and having no record of dates or events to guide me, I shall drop the chronological method, and endeavour to put down whatever I can recall, either respecting things or persons which may interest my son Laurence, the only survivor of my four children.

When he gave up living at Albyns, the air of which he fancied did not suit him, my father had for some years no fixed country residence, but usually hired some place for the summer. In 1847, before I left England, he took Canizzaro House, Wimbledon, for a few months, and I formed my first connection with that neighbourhood in which I have had a dwelling of

some sort for more than forty years. Lord Cottenham, the Chancellor, was living close by at Copse Hill, and we dined there with him. One of the subjects discussed at his table was the marriage of the Duke of Wellington with Miss Burdett Coutts, which many people, including her partner in the bank, Mr. Majoribanks, believed to be impending. Our nearest neighbours were Sir John Lefevre and Sir James Stephen, both distinguished members of the public service. At Roehampton lived Sir G. H. Larpent, one of the victims of the monetary crisis of 1847, and Mr. A. Robarts, a worthy specimen of the banker of the old school, who inhabited the fine Palladian house built by Sir W. Chambers, now occupied and enlarged, but not improved, by the Jesuit Fathers.

Soon after my return from America, I remember a summer spent at Redleaf, near Penshurst, an unpretending house belonging to Mr. Wells, whose uncle had formed a valuable collection of pictures, and had shaped the undulating grounds near the house into a charming and original garden.

Here, on September 1st, my brother Philip (born 1834) had his first day's shooting, which resulted in the death of a sporting dog belonging to Sir Edwin Landseer, who had been a constant visitor to Mr. Wells, senior, and had painted for him the choice animal pictures which fetched such large sums at his nephew's sale in 1890.

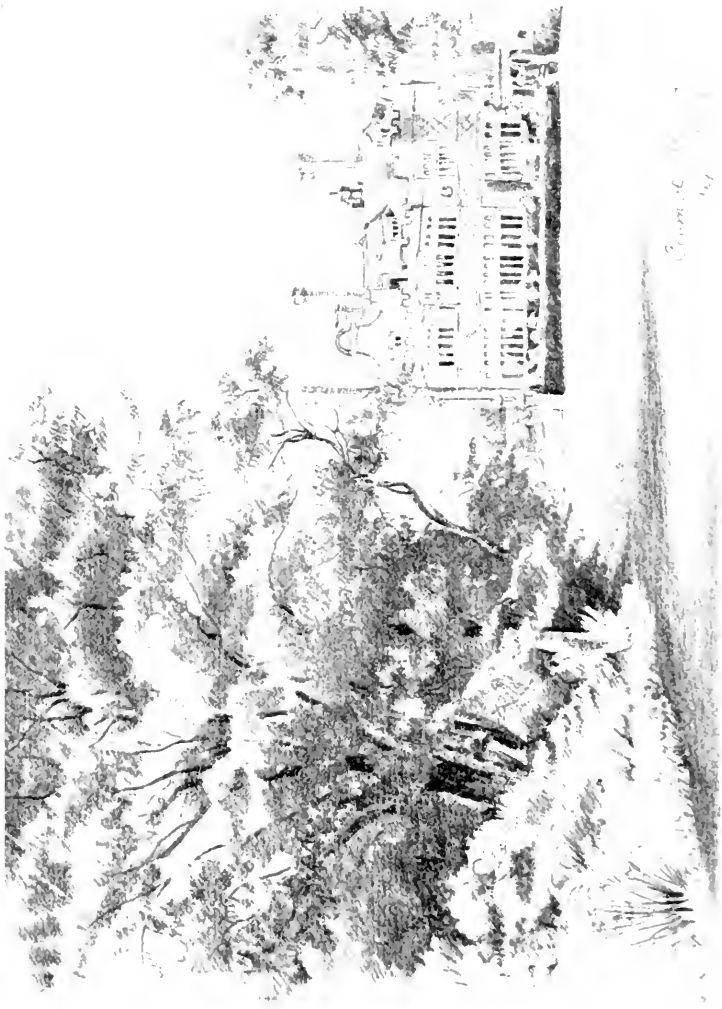
A neighbour who proved a great acquisition to our society was Lord Hardinge, of South Park. He was a most lively, unpretending little man, full of amusing anecdotes relating to his eminent political and military career. The curate of Penshurst was an eccentric

parson named Boissier, who amazed us by the emphasis which he laid upon the personal pronoun, when he read in the lesson for the day: "Saddle *me* the ass."

In after-years I heard much about Penshurst from my friend Mr. Devey, the architect, to whom I am indebted for whatever taste or merit there may be in all the buildings at Minley, Coombe, and Whitehall, upon which in the course of my life so much money has been wasted. It is to him that the admirable restoration of Penshurst Place, the ancient home of the Sidneys, is due. He built a picturesque, rambling cottage in the village for Mr. Nasmyth, of steam-hammer fame, who used to laugh at what he called the "Deveyations" of his home, and he was employed as an architect by many other residents in and about Penshurst. His sudden death, in the middle of my building operations at Minley, was a great blow to me. In order to appreciate his inventive faculty and fastidious attention to detail, the great house which he planned for Lord Kenmare at Killarney should be studied. I flatter myself that my own humble dwelling at Coombe Warren is a rather happy reproduction of the Tudor style. He had a healthy horror of sham ornament and unstable construction, so that his works will live at any rate until they are pulled down.

I sometimes amuse myself by thinking that as the present tendency of things is to reduce great fortunes, whether derived from land, from commerce, or from savings, and to equalize the income of men, most of the great houses which for centuries have adorned the country, will cease to be inhabited, and in their place will arise highly ornamented, semi, or wholly detached villas, of which thousands already exist to disfigure the





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earth. Mankind will, no doubt, as of old, adapt itself to the environment, but to those who were born when George IV. was King the prospect is not inviting. The type of our race may be altered, if it be true that early association with houses and gardens full of historic and artistic treasure influences the mind, for nothing can be so utterly banal and uninspiring for the young as the associations of the modern suburban villa.

Villadom has already given its name to a school of politicians distinguished for the absence of ideas, for the glorification of chauvinism, and for faith in such patriots as that precious pair of knights, Sir Ashmead Bartlett and Sir Howard Vincent.

I must not forget to record my friendship with Mrs. Grote, the wife of the historian of that name, and herself a woman of unusual force of character and intellect. At her house in Savile Row I met politicians, men of letters, artists, and musicians, with all of whom she was able to hold her own. Her sense of humour was very lively, and she invented nicknames for many of her friends. That of Puffendorf, which she bestowed upon Mr. Henry Reeve, was particularly happy. Mr. Grote was an interesting person of great simplicity of character, formally polite in his manners, but a true philosopher in practice as well as in his writings. When he had accumulated a moderate fortune as a banker, he retired from business without a sigh, and devoted all his time to literature; and when, after the great success of his history of Greece, a peerage was offered to him, he had the sense, in spite, I fancy, of his wife's predilections, to decline so incongruous an honour.

I remember a Sunday spent at Burnham Beeches, where the Grotes had a cottage—surnamed “History Hut,” because it was supposed to have been built out of the profits of the history—at which the only other guests were Lumley the lessee of the Italian Opera, the famous Jenny Lind, and her Swedish companion. The interest and curiosity excited about this singer was unprecedented, although the art of *réclame* was still in its infancy. She had not yet appeared in public, and I know not how Mrs. Grote had managed to *accaparer* such a prize. Mademoiselle Lind was doubtless a great artist, with a splendid voice, but, in spite of Mrs. Grote’s exhortation to go in and “cut the girths” of some supposed admirer of her charms, I was not fascinated by her sparse, tow-coloured hair, high forehead, and fishy eyes. Neither she nor her companion spoke French or English, and I remember laughing when Mr. Grote, whose knowledge of German was not colloquial, said, in solemn tones, and with a most British accent, at breakfast, “*Mein Fraulein, wollen Sie ein Ei nehmen?*”

Another well-known person who took notice of me at this time was Mr. Samuel Jones Loyd, the banker and financial writer. My father, who was his intimate friend, loved to magnify both his wealth and his intellect, and was a devout believer in the wisdom of the Bank Charter Act of 1844, which was founded upon the theories of Loyd and G. W. Norman.

I often visited Mr. Loyd at Wickham, in Kent, where he had bought a place from a city merchant in difficulties, on condition that all the contents of the house, down to plate and table-linen, should be included in the purchase. He had a great dislike to domestic,

as well as most other forms of expenditure, and used to say that the best place to live in was an hotel. He once gave me a sovereign when I was a boy at Eton, which was considered a remarkable distinction; and he very kindly invited me as a guest of the Political Economy Club, to attend the dinner which was given at Greenwich in 1846, to celebrate the repeal of the Corn Laws.<sup>1</sup> Lord Grey, Mr. C. Villiers, and other public men were present, but my impression is that by far the best speech was made by the chairman, Mr. Loyd.

His father, Lewis Loyd, the founder of the family fortune, and, I suspect, a much wiser man than his son, had retired to Overstone, a moderate-sized country-house near Northampton, where he had bought a large estate, and on the occasion of the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, I was invited, together with his nephew William, to stay with him. His favourite author seemed to be his banker's pass-book, which lay on a table beside him. He was wonderfully alert for his age, and entertained us with many stories of his early experiences of the City.

<sup>1</sup> "The other day the Political Economy Club gave a dinner at Greenwich to celebrate the passing of the Corn Bill, and each member was allowed to bring a friend. Mr. S. J. Loyd very kindly selected me, and we went down there together. There were about twenty-seven people present, among others Sir H. Larpent, Messieurs Van de Weyer and de Pollon the Belgian and Sardinian Ministers, Milner Gibson, Lyall, Warburton, C. Villiers, M.P's. Messrs. Lefevre, McGregor, Whitmore, Strzlecki, Varden, Ricardo, Tooke, Senior, &c. We had a capital dinner, and Loyd made a splendid speech highly complimentary to Villiers. We had also speeches from Milner Gibson, Warburton (who proposed the health of Peel amidst faint cheering), Whitmore, Van de Weyer, &c. After dinner, Messrs. Lefevre, Loyd, Varden, and myself drove over to Wickham in a fly, and slept there." (*Letter from B. W. C. to Ruihes Currie, Esq., M.P. Kissingen, July 18th, 1846.*)

The glory of the family has now departed. The wealth was, I think, always exaggerated. The business in Manchester, as well as the bank in Lothbury (which Mrs. Grote called a great commercial inheritance) were abandoned, and the purchases of land, to which father and son devoted large sums, have proved a delusion and a snare.

In 1850, while I was travelling in the United States, my brother George married the only daughter of Mr. Vernon Smith, who was my father's parliamentary colleague at Northampton. I became intimate with the family of my sister-in-law, and especially with her mother, afterwards Lady Lyveden, for whom I had a true regard. More than once I took a subordinate part in theatrical performances at Farming Woods, a comfortable house, originally a hunting-lodge, which Lady Lyveden had inherited from Lord Ossory, the friend of Reynolds and of Horace Walpole. The paintings of the one, and the manuscript letters of the other were among the treasures of the house.

The principal leader in these performances was Augustus Stafford, M.P., the heir of a neighbouring squire, and well known in the political and social world of London. Gowran Vernon, a son of the house, and F. Ponsonby, since Earl of Bessborough, were among the actors. Each believed that the rare mimetic gift had been bestowed on him; I being under no such illusion with regard to myself was content with the humblest parts. Miss Mary Boyle, an enthusiastic amateur, was the heroine, and Mr. Vernon Smith's handsome face and good figure showed to advantage as Squire Hardcastle in *She stoops to conquer*.

By this time the firm of White, Ponsford, and Co. had been dissolved, and I was again regular in my attendance at the bank in Cornhill. My father and Henry Currie had other occupations and interests; my brother was newly married, and much in society, for which his wife had really remarkable qualifications, and the drudgery and monotony of our business were irksome to him. He was a man of great originality of character, with perhaps an undue contempt for the opinion of others, fond of pleasure, gifted with more than usual ability, and willing to exert himself if any particular object was to be gained; but he had little ambition, and was incapable of self-control, or of sustained effort. In after-years, when he had retired from the bank, he took a leading and effective part in the affairs of the different undertakings with which he was connected. His judgment and power of lucid exposition were much appreciated by those with whom he acted.

I used sometimes to envy his powers of enjoyment. Hunting, shooting, yachting, all delighted him in turn, and the so-called pleasures of the table aggravated, I fear, the disease of which he died in 1887, to my lasting regret, for we had always lived on the most affectionate terms.

My cousin, the younger Henry, retired from the bank on an annuity. This was a voluntary act on his part, or on that of his father, who proposed an arrangement which was willingly accepted by us.

My uncle, Isaac George, at the mature age of fifty-five, and after he had experienced two paralytic seizures, fell a victim to the charms of a widow, the mother of five children. The natural consequences ensued, and

the fortune, with which my father had always in imagination endowed my eldest brother, was alienated, and in time dissipated. Soon after his marriage my uncle's infirmities increased, and he also withdrew from the Bank.

Thus I, who had been admitted into the business on sufferance only, became, not so much from any merit of my own as from the inabilities of my partners, the responsible manager. The concern was fairly prosperous, and we considered the year a poor one which did not give a profit of £20,000.

Looking back upon the events of business from 1852 to 1864, little of exceptional interest occurs to me. The great financial panic of 1857 inflicted no loss upon us, and we profited by the high rates of interest which were easily to be obtained on bills of exchange. I remember that one of our debtors who had undertaken to pay cash on a given day, could only offer us a bill at three months on the house of Hambro and Co. This he gladly left with us for discount at ten per cent., plus one-half per cent. commission. Such rates must appear fabulous to the banker of these degenerate days, who has to be content with the half per cent. interest, and no commission. As every name was questioned in such anxious times, before agreeing to take the bill I consulted Messrs. Gurney, who said of the acceptors: "They are as safe as thy house."

The failure of Streatfield, Laurence, and Co. made a sensation in its day, and caused heavy losses to the bankers and discount brokers who held their paper, as will be found recorded in the articles and caricatures which appeared in the newspapers of the time. The legitimate business of the firm was that of leather



factors, but they had developed a huge system of accommodation bills. Their banking account had been transferred to us from Messrs. Dorrien, and both the partners, Messrs. Laurence and Mortimore, used to impress upon me the advantage of increasing our line of discount; Laurence assuming an air of patronage and threatening to remove his account to some other bank, and Mortimore, who was a person of ostentatiously penurious habits, enlarging upon his own great wealth. Confidence, as Lord Chatham observed, is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom. Though mine was still comparatively young, the plant which this crafty pair endeavoured to put upon me did not take serious root, and our loss by the failure was, contrary to the expectations of our neighbours, no more than we could bear without inconvenience.

My great friend and constant companion was now Edward Baring, who was conducting, with much energy and ability, the produce department of the house in Bishopsgate Street. The heads of that firm were Joshua Bates, at whose villa at Sheen we used to dine, and Thomas Baring, a merchant prince, and worthy successor of the Medici or the Fuggers. He was of a sarcastic turn of mind, and if he did not actually "hate us youth," he had no objection to snubbing us when we were in spirits. I was often a guest at his somewhat ponderous banquets, and although I know that he looked upon me, perhaps with reason, as a bumptious youth, I had always a great respect for him, and admired the way in which he raised the reputation, and enlarged the foundations of his house. There were occasions on which he must have run great risks, but his courage and the

unexampled credit which the firm enjoyed carried him through the most difficult times, and when he died in 1870 he left an ample fortune and an unblemished name.

In 1854, the year of that unwise adventure the Crimean War, Baring and I hired for the summer months a cottage at Wimbledon, near the old Roman encampment, the lines of which could then be clearly traced. The cottage now serves as a club for golf players, and the ditch which surrounded the camp has been barbarously filled up. In the three subsequent years we rented three other houses at Wimbledon, the most interesting of which was that which once belonged to Parson Horne, afterwards known as Horne Tooke, at the south-west corner of the Common. Here, according to the memoir of his life, Mr. Horne used to regale his Sunday visitors with a leg of mutton, and here he desired to be buried in the garden; but his undutiful executors placed his remains elsewhere, and stored potatoes in the tomb which he had prepared for himself.

I find that I have omitted to record my flitting from the domestic hearth in Hyde Park Terrace, which took place about 1853, with the full consent if not at the instance of my parents. My first establishment was in chambers at the end of Harcourt Buildings in the Inner Temple. The Thames Embankment was yet to be made, and I have often watched from my windows the barges gliding along the stream by moonlight, and thought the river not unworthy to be compared with the Grand Canal at Venice. The house which I occupied has now been destroyed, or

obliterated by a large modern building of pretentious character, which fronts the Embankment. I had three rooms, besides a vestibule and a kitchen, and with a man and his wife to do for me, I led a not uncomfortable life. The distance from the West End was a bar to society, the charms of which never attracted me much, but the propinquity of my chambers to the City, to which I used to walk every morning, by way of Apothecaries Hall and Doctors Commons, was an advantage. When not in the humour to dine at home, I sometimes repaired to the Cock or to the Mitre, both ancient taverns within "the dusty purlieus of the Law." The theatres were close at hand. It was at the Olympic in Wych Street that I first saw Robson act the part of Shylock, in a wretched burlesque of the *Merchant of Venice*. I believe that under happier circumstances he would have been the greatest English actor since Garrick, and quite capable of representing the real Shylock, in a style very different from that of Mr. C. Kean, or of H. Irving, whose merits, to my shame be it spoken, I was never able to appreciate.

After the summer at Redleaf, I can recall no other temporary home of my family, until they settled for some months at Rickmansworth Park, an unattractive place belonging to Sir John Kirkland. Here it was, I think, that my father, who had thrown himself with his usual lightheartedness into the cause of the Hungarians in their struggle with the Austrian and Russian Governments, entertained the famous Kossuth. One of our most intimate friends of that time, and indeed as long as he lived, was Paul commonly called Count Strzlecki, of whose origin

and parentage little or nothing was known; though I have been told that his father was a steward in the employment of Prince Sapieha. He never spoke of his own affairs; upon other subjects he was full of fun, and poured forth anecdotes, which on account of his imperfect pronunciation of English perhaps seemed more amusing than they really were. He was a confirmed Anglomane. His circumstances appeared to be easy, and he was on friendly terms with most of the leading men of the day, especially with those on the Liberal side in politics. I have never known any one who had a more rational enjoyment of life, or who was in practice such a true philosopher. When the end came unexpectedly he turned his face to the wall without a complaint, and desired that no stone or other memorial should mark the place where he was laid.

I was not at Rickmansworth when Kossuth arrived, but my father told me that his manner, which had been most attractive, suddenly changed when he saw the Count, whom he suspected, without reason, as I believe, to be a spy. Other Hungarian refugees who came to our house were M. F. Pulszky and his interesting young wife, each of whom had escaped separately and in disguise from the clutches of the Austrian police. There was a valuable art collection, principally, I think, of Majolica belonging to the Pulszky family, part of which found a temporary home in Hyde Park Terrace.

It must have been soon after this period that my father shifted his summer quarters to Sandling, near Hythe, in Kent, which he rented for some years from Mr. Deedes, the Member for the county. The house

is ugly, square, and comfortable, and may be seen from the South-Eastern Railway. Miss Austen, in one of her letters, dated from Sandling, mentions a room in which there was a fireplace immediately under the window. This arrangement, then a novelty, seems to have commended itself to her, but in spite of my unbounded reverence for the immortal Jane, it has always appeared detestable to me. The combination is unnatural. A fireplace should be snug, and sheltered. A window should be easy of access. I have seen the plan reproduced in some of the modern villas, which have at various times excited my wrath.

The foreign legion, which was recruited by the Government of the day, in order to supplement the scanty British force in the Crimea, had its headquarters at Shorncliffe, and an entertainment of the legion was got up by the neighbours to be held in the park at Sandling. I came down from London to be present on the occasion. Lord Palmerston, M. Musurus, the Turkish Ambassador, and the Duke of Cambridge were among the guests. Speeches of the usual patriotic character were made in a tent. My brother Maynard was acting at this time as curate to the Venerable Archdeacon Croft, rector of the parish (Saltwood), and a pluralist of no mean dimensions. The Archdeacon, a handsome specimen of the higher clergy, had earned his preferment by marrying the daughter of Archbishop Manners Sutton. In lamenting the decline of the Episcopal order I remember to have heard him say: "My father-in-law never went abroad in Canterbury but in a coach and six, whereas the present Primate (J. B. Sumner)

actually walks up from the railway station to his palace carrying a hand-bag." It may be questioned which of the two men was the better witness to the doctrine, then much debated, of Apostolic Succession. Another utterance of the Archdeacon which grieved my good mother, though it seemed to me to be not inconsistent with sound sense, and to be specially appropriate to his audience, was contained in a charge which he delivered to the clergy of the diocese. He exhorted them to lay by money, saying, that observation had taught him that a clergyman was always respected in proportion to his means.

My brother took an active part in the parish affairs. The village schoolmaster was a somewhat insubordinate person, who, having partaken too freely of stimulants in the housekeeper's room at Sandling on the occasion of the festivities in the park, became noisy and offensive. When requested to withdraw, he declared that he did not care a d—— for Radical Raikes or his family. A body of London police had been sent down to keep order at the *fête*, and Maynard, who had a sufficient sense of clerical authority, desired one of the policemen to remove the excited pedagogue, and to lock him up. No sooner said than done. The result was that the schoolmaster brought an action for false imprisonment. The Judge who presided at the trial, indulged in jokes of the average judicial calibre about Mrs. Housekeeper, and her private bottle of strong waters. The British jury felt that the liberty of the subject had been infringed. My father had to pay £500 in damages, and could only revenge himself by inveighing against the wisdom of our ancestors, who had committed our dearest interests

to the decision of twelve just men, not infrequently noodles!

It was, I think, in the autumn of 1858, after spending the summer months at Camp Cottage, Wimbledon, of which I had now acquired the lease, that Mr. George Hibbert invited me to visit him at his shooting-place, near Brechin, in Scotland. The elder brother of my host, Mr. Nathaniel Hibbert, was from his modest and retiring character far less generally known than he deserved to be, though no man was more appreciated by his few intimate friends, among whom I may record the Dowager Lady Morley, and Mr. George Tierney, names now forgotten, but celebrated in their day for wit and social charm. I often visited Mr. N. Hibbert at Munden, in Hertfordshire, which still contained a residuum of the famous library and picture-gallery of his father, G. Hibbert the elder, a great West India merchant, and one of the *dramatis personæ* in Dibdin's trumpery *Decameron*. In all my experience of life I have never met a more fascinating host and companion than Mr. Nathaniel Hibbert. He was full of information and happy allusion, not averse to paradox, somewhat irascible, and so light in hand, and so changeable in his humour, that I should best describe him as an anti-bore. T. L. Peacock, my favourite minor poet, has written a line which aptly describes him :

For nature had but little clay  
Like that of which she moulded him.

He married the younger daughter of the Rev. Sydney Smith. She and all her children have long been dead.

It was during this visit in Scotland that I made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Sturgis. He has been commemorated in a memoir published by his son, and not unduly praised for his kind heart and generous nature. I remember that Thackeray, who was his frequent guest, once said to me :

“My occupation leads me to study human nature, and in all my observation I have never found a more really benevolent man than Sturgis.”

Mr. Sturgis had passed many years of his life as a merchant at Canton and at Manila, and was now a subordinate member of the house of Baring. Mrs. Sturgis, his third wife, was a beautiful woman of frank unaffected nature, the best female product I have ever known of New England. I did not pursue the grouse, nor fish for salmon, with the sportsmen, but preferred to climb the heights of Lochnagar in her charming company. When the Sturgis family returned to England and settled at Mount Felix, near Walton-on-the-Thames, I was their frequent visitor, and constantly rowed up from Surbiton to have luncheon there on Sundays during the summer months.

From the Temple, urged, I think, by my dear mother, who feared that I should become a recluse, I moved to a small house in Green Street, which I proceeded to decorate, and to furnish, after the manner of beginners, with doubtful taste.

During this period, Baring and I generally ended our Wimbledon season with a short tour on the Continent. We went one year by P. and O. steamer to Gibraltar, rode thence by Algciras to Ronda and



Seville, spent some days at Madrid, and returned by *malle poste* to Bayonne. The discomfort of this conveyance is still vivid in my memory. The seat was hard and narrow, and the roof of the carriage low. When we stopped for half an hour at Burgos, our only halt on the sixty hours' journey, while my companion, with his splendid organization, was quietly eating the dinner which was prepared for us, I could only lie down flat on the floor of the dining-room, feeling as if my back were broken.

Another year we went by Verona, a place hardly over-praised by the exuberant Ruskin, to Venice, which did not fail to exercise upon us the charm which it has cast over so many generations of tourists. But the month was August, the sun was powerful, the canals were putrid, and I had a sharp attack of dysentery which shortened our stay.

We went once, if not oftener, together to Switzerland, then comparatively free from German Jews and Cook's tourists. We walked round, but not up Mount Blanc, stayed at homely inns, and were served by pretty Swiss maidens. I fear that the delights of travelling can never again be what they were before the days of gigantic hotels and German waiters.

The advent of democracy has probably its uses, and it is vain to rail against the inevitable, but it may end by destroying the enjoyment of the individual without greatly adding to the pleasures of the masses.

Perhaps the coming generation will not be so fastidious and intolerant as I must with shame confess myself to be.

Oh, why were farmers made so coarse  
Or clergy made so fine!

Another of our expeditions was a gastronomic one, undertaken in search of Water Souché, which somebody had told us was not to be truly eaten except in Holland. But since the days of our informant, the Haarlem Lake, which contained the finest fish, had been drained, and it was only on the very last day of our tour that we were offered two noble perch, swimming in a bowl of Oriental china, and flavoured with great bunches of parsley.

If we were disappointed in the main object of our journey, the Rembrandts at Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and the Hague made ample amends. Baring had an hereditary connection with the house of Hope and Co., the great bankers of Holland, and through their introduction we were admitted to some of the private collections of pictures.

To return from domestic matters to my business life. I remember that I urged with success upon my partners at Cornhill the policy of saving money, and of creating a reserve. But I could not conceal from myself that the Joint Stock Banks were growing while we stood still, and that the race was, if not always, at least generally to the strong. Various plans of amalgamation suggested themselves. We had *pour parlors*, which led to nothing with such houses as Jones Loyd, Fuller, Prescott and Cunliffe. The only negotiation which made any serious progress was with Robarts, Lubbock, and Co. I visited Sir J. Lubbock, the elder, at his country place, and, as I supposed, came to an understanding with him, but the younger members of the firm, who had not been

consulted, protested, and expressed their disinclination to a fusion with our firm.

When this came to the knowledge of Mr. C. Mills, the senior partner of Glyn, Mills, and Co., he deputed Mr. William Murray, who was the confidential friend and solicitor of his firm, as well as of my own, to make overtures to me with a view to amalgamation.

We speedily arrived at an understanding, and on 1st of July, 1864, the firm of Glyn, Mills, Currie, and Co. came into existence.

My old partners, Henry and George Currie, retired from business. Messrs. Edward Mills and St. Leger Glyn, who were incapacitated by ill-health, took a similar course, and my father and I became the only representatives of Currie and Co. in the new firm.

Having now established myself in the business which I was to follow with varying fortunes for so many years, I will revert to matters of a more personal and domestic nature.

I must confess with gratitude that my lot in life has on the whole been as happy as my anxious and apprehensive temperament would permit. The aspirations which I formed in youth have been more than realized. True, they were not pitched too high, and to some minds they might seem unworthy or ignoble. But it is surely a part of wisdom to pursue what is attainable, and not to strive after ideals for which one is by nature and constitution unfitted.

My father at one time endeavoured to place me in the diplomatic line; at another, he advocated the civil service of India; later on, at his instigation, I actually

issued an address to the free and independent electors of Hull, a city with which, through the Raikes family, we had some slight connection.

I had not the passive endurance, nor the spirit of compromise, which are essential to a Member of Parliament. For success at the Bar I wanted accuracy, and the power of mental concentration; for the Church I was in every way disqualified, so that nature seemed to have destined me for a banker.

Comparing my own life with that of my contemporaries, I have every reason to be content. Though, like Faust, I was never able to say to the moment: "Stay, for thou art fair," and though I have had my troubles, and even more than my share of that greatest of all sorrows—the loss of children—the balance, when the account comes to be made up, is on the right side, and if I cannot pretend, with some of my friends, that I would willingly live it all over again, I can say with truth I am thankful to have lived my life.

That I am able to make such a declaration is greatly owing to an event which took place in 1860—my marriage with Caroline, the younger daughter of Sir W. L. Young. Our first meeting was, I think, at the house of my aunt, Mrs. Chambers, whose marriage in 1834 has been already chronicled. Miss Young's father had been dead for some years. Two of her brothers were victims of the Crimean War. Her only sister was married, and she and her mother having no fixed home in England, spent much of their time on the Continent. Thither I followed them to Reichenhall, an obscure Kur Ort in Bavaria, and there, walking with my intended in a pine-forest, I spoke the fateful words, and performed what I can truly say, at the

distance of thirty-six years, was the most sensible act of my life. As these recollections of mine must necessarily be read by my wife, I will say no more, except that for sweetness of disposition and soundness of judgment I could not name her equal. For her mother, who was the exact opposite of the conventional *Belle-mère* of the Drama, I had a great affection. She was a most gentle, unworldly person, hardly fitted to cope with the serious business of life without the advice and support of her daughter.

When their cure was completed, I accompanied the ladies on a tour through the Bavarian Tyrol. We witnessed a performance at Ober Ammergau, which was then in the simple and pristine condition so admirably described in the novel of Madame Tautphoeus. The Passions Spiel had not been vulgarized by falling into the hands of a Hebrew syndicate, as I have been told is now the case. The only spectators, besides the peasants and ourselves, were some members of the Royal Family of Bavaria. I can quite believe that this curious survival of the middle ages may have had the power of confirming in the faith some of those who were present; though I cannot honestly say that it produced that effect on me. From Bavaria we travelled to Lucerne, where I left *ces dames* in a villa on the lake, which one of their relations had hired for the summer.

After this sentimental journey had come to an end, I reverted to the prosaic occupation of banking at 29, Cornhill, which soon engrossed my time and thoughts. My parents warmly approved the choice which I had made. Lady Young and her daughter in

a few weeks returned to England, and on the 31st of October, 1860, I was married by Samuel, Bishop of Oxford, at Chaddleworth church, Berks. After passing a day or two at my own house in Green Street, we started to spend the honeymoon at Pau. We came home in time for the Christmas festivities at Minley Manor, the new house which my father had built, and upon which I have since his death spent, or wasted so much.

His many wanderings were now brought to an end. He had at last found a home. During my childhood and youth I remember that he was constantly talking of fixing himself in some country place for the remainder of his days. His main object was health, and he had a great belief in the efficacy of a gravel soil, high situation, and pure air, to preserve that blessing. All these were combined at Minley. There was a small house on the property, said to have been once inhabited by the notorious Colonel Blood. Thither, having sold his London house, he repaired with my mother and my sister Edith, my other sister having been married in 1858, to my old friend, W. S. Deacon, who, like myself was a banker, and had been my school-fellow both at Cheam and at Eton.

Mr. H. Clutton, the architect, was employed to make the designs for the new house. He chose the style of the French Renaissance, and aimed at reproducing on a small scale a part of the famous Château de Blois. This was rather a bold undertaking, and I cannot say that the idea was a happy one, though the details were carefully worked out, and there was less of sham decoration than might have been expected. Any attempt to build in such an ambitious style, at a



1073.





small expense, is doomed to failure. Instead of trying to combine the maximum of ornament with the minimum of cost, the aim should be to spend whatever money can be afforded, on solid construction, and just proportion. These will always give satisfaction both to the architect, and, what is more important, to the occupier. If I had to build again myself, I should be content with a simple elevation, a solid staircase, and well-shaped rooms. Another objection to Minley, in my opinion, was, that the style of François I. was adapted to a *château* dominating a town like Blois, and is out of place in a wild country of heath, braken, and fir-trees. But these criticisms must be taken for what they are worth. Sons are seldom the most favourable judges of their father's works. Soon after the house was built, we had a visit from Sir James Colville, a retired Indian judge, and a man of reputed taste. My sister-in-law, who had brought him there, insisted that he should admire everything that had been done. Being pressed beyond his powers of endurance, he exclaimed at last : " Well ! if it was absolutely necessary to build a house in the middle of Bagshot Heath, I don't know that you could have done better." Since his time many additions have been made to the house, and the trees which my father planted in 1858 make a creditable show in 1896.

Whatever its deficiencies may have been, the place suited my father, and he spent more than twenty years of his life there, diversified by visits to Cannes, where he bought a villa after my mother's death.

He had a happy, easy disposition, and never allowed the cares of life to depress his spirits. One faculty he had, which I have always thought of great

value—the power of living alone, and of being independent of others for his enjoyment of life. He read a great deal, was a capital sleeper, and amused himself with the ordinary pleasures of the country.

The pastime of destroying animal life, inherited from our savage ancestors, had never any charms for me, although in youth I pursued it to a limited extent, for in my early days neither to shoot nor to drink wine would have made a young man unpopular, or even suspected. It is to be hoped that we are more tolerant now. Miss Berry, in her amusing journal, avers that when she was young, unusual cleanliness was considered a sign of doubtful morals, but now, thank God, we can wash ourselves all over and yet preserve a decent character.

I used sometimes to be invited to shooting-parties, but, when sure that nobody was looking, I have often let hares and rabbits go across the green rides unmolested. For hunting I had neither time nor money to spare, and probably wanted the requisite nerve, but riding has always been a favourite pursuit with me, and I esteem a well-bred, well-shaped, and well-mannered hack as one of the choicest gifts that the gods can bestow upon mortal man. The bicycle and the electric motor may in time supplant the horse, but they can hardly convey the exhilarating sensations which are felt on a balmy day by one who guides his bounding steed over elastic turf.

I mention these sporting deficiencies in order to account for, or to palliate, my mania for building and making gardens: a pursuit in which I have been pretty constantly engaged since my marriage, with what degree of success, my posterity, if I have any, must

judge. I have built two houses at Coombe, the first having been destroyed by fire, and have spent more than enough to build two others at Minley and at Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, and in planting, laying out grounds, and general improvements, I have never rested for a day. The pursuit is at any rate harmless. It affords innocent amusement to the projector, and profitable employment to the labourer. I exhort my descendants, if they have the means, to continue my labours, as I am convinced that if a moderate sum be judiciously spent every year on a pre-arranged plan, and if each succeeding generation will bear its part, a beautiful and enjoyable place might in time be created. If I may judge by my own feelings, nothing gives more pleasure to the beholder than the evidence of ancient expenditure, applied with taste and judgment. But my descendants will doubtless follow their own inclinations, and it may well happen either that they may not have the money to spend, or that expenditure of this kind upon private objects may become unusual and unpopular. My son, who shares my tastes, will, I feel assured, worthily continue what I have begun.

After this digression into the domain of private life, I return to my more important duties in the City. Hardly had I begun to feel my feet at my new quarters in Lombard Street, when the panic of 1866 broke over our heads. The banks and financial houses which foundered in the storm were mostly those which had been connected with the London, Chatham and Dover Railway, and Messrs. Peto and Betts, the contractors for that ill-starred undertaking. A huge amount of accommodation paper had been created, in order to find

money for the construction of the railway, and those who had rashly invested in such unsubstantial security, paid the penalty which rarely fails to attend a departure from sound principles of finance.

Sir S. M. Peto was an old friend and client of Glyn and Co. They had, however, kept clear of his transactions with the railway, and did not suffer any loss through his failure. But the great event, which will always make 1866 a memorable year in the history of commerce, was the suspension of Overend, Gurney, and Co. The old firm had recently been converted into a Company. Its credit, though somewhat shaken, was still good; but when my partner G. G. Glyn, K. D. Hodgson, and R. C. L. Bevan were hastily summoned one morning to a meeting at the office of the Company, it was found that its affairs were in a desperate condition, and that the only course to adopt was to suspend payment. Some months before the catastrophe, I remember that I predicted it to my partner, C. Mills the elder, who, admitting that heavy losses had been incurred, and that the management of the business was defective, pinned his faith on the great wealth of J. H. Gurney, and of the other partners in the Norwich Bank, all of whom were liable to the full extent of their fortunes.

The original cause of my suspicion was this. We had in Cornhill the account of an Italian firm, Rocca Brothers, of good standing in their own country, and recently established in the City. Signor Rocca, who knew little or nothing of London business, surprised me one day by saying that he had been offered a banking commission by Overends if he would consent to accept the bills of their nominees. In spite of all

the reputed wealth and credit of the Overends, this could only mean that their resources were locked up. About the same time Mr. Edmund Gurney proposed to borrow money of us at a special rate on some securities which seemed to me of doubtful value, and I remember his indignation when I threw doubt upon them, and his remark: "Do you presume to question the credit of Overend, Gurney, and Co.?"

Up to 1868, G. G. Glyn gave a fairly regular attendance to the business, but in that year he accepted the position of Political Secretary to the Treasury in Mr. Gladstone's Government, and naturally withdrew from the City. Until his sudden death in 1887, we remained the closest friends. In 1884 he became my neighbour at Coombe. He was quick, lively, and intelligent, and able to inspire personal regard, a valuable attribute in the qualifications of a banker, but he was too fond of change and excitement to be content with the daily round and common task of city life. For his father, the first Lord Wolverton, he had the greatest respect, and it was, I think, to please his father that he remained so long a worker in Lombard Street. Both father and son warmly approved a proposal which was made to us in 1865-66 by four of the principal Scotch banks, who desired to acquire jointly a share in a London banking business, in lieu of the separate agencies which they have since founded. The premises and good-will of our house were to be valued at a million sterling, and two-fifths of this were to be bought from the Mills family by payment of £400,000 in cash by the four Scotch banks. The negotiation was in a forward condition, and would probably have been completed, when the failure of Overends took

place. The perils of unlimited liability alarmed our Scotch friends. They behaved with perfect fairness, but evidently desired to be released, and we readily acceded to their wishes. It must be remembered that limited liability in banking was then unknown, and illegal. Had the affair been concluded, it was intended that Mr. C. Gairdner, of the Union Bank of Scotland, and I should be the joint managers. A powerful combination would no doubt have been created, which in time might have absorbed both Glyns and Curries, but my excellent young partners, C. and A. Mills, have no cause to regret that they still preserve their inheritance, and I rejoice that my son is able to follow the path which has been trod by five successive generations of his family.

It was in November, 1880, that Lord Hartington, prompted, I think, by Sir Erskine Perry, offered me a seat on the Council of India. He told me that they felt the want of a financial adviser, and desired to revert to the practice which prevailed in the days of the East India Company, some of whose directors had always represented the City interest.

My reply to their offer was that the business in Lombard Street must always be my first consideration, but that, if the service expected of me was not too arduous and engrossing, I was willing to make the experiment, though I was doubtful whether I could be of much use to the Council.

In December I first took my seat at the carved mahogany table, which had served for the meetings of the old Company in Leadenhall Street. The Council then consisted of fifteen members, some appointed for

life, and some for a term of ten years. When I retired from the Council in December, 1895, its number was reduced to twelve, and my original colleagues had all disappeared.

In accordance with the rule which I have prescribed for myself, I will express no opinion about persons still living.

Of the six Secretaries of State who presided over our deliberations, only one, Lord Randolph Churchill, has pre-deceased me.

I shall never forget how nervous and ill at ease he seemed to be at our first meeting. His manners were not, as might have been supposed, at all presumptuous or assuming: he was very quick of apprehension, and not over-burdened with scruples, but I failed to detect in him that zeal for economy which he is said to have afterwards displayed at the Treasury. I never heard him express any large or statesmanlike views, and in my secret heart I thought him rather deficient in quality. But my opportunities of judging him were not many, and it is quite possible that I underrate his merits.

He belonged to the school of political adventurers of which D'Israeli was the most brilliant disciple, and that school never roused me to enthusiasm. The type of the laborious, conscientious, and disinterested public servant, incarnated in such statesmen as Peel and Gladstone, was better calculated to command my admiration.

Soon after my appointment, Sir Ashley Eden, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, was nominated to the Council. He took his seat next to me. We served together on the Finance Committee, and became great

friends. Of all the Indian civilians appointed in my time, he was the only one that impressed me as a man of more than ordinary capacity. He was not a product of competitive examination, but had passed through Haileybury in the old days of the Company, without, I believe, any distinction. But he possessed that most uncommon gift, strong common sense, and soon after his arrival as a youth in India, an emergency arose which gave him the chance of showing what was in him. He was not at all afraid of responsibility, and his judgment was generally to be trusted. But for his untimely death in 1887, he would, I believe, have gained a position of great authority on the Council.

It was mainly at his instigation that, in 1887, I gave a garden party at Coombe to the princes and nobles of India, who had come to England for the Queen's Jubilee. He took a great interest in the preparations, but was struck down by apoplexy on the eve of the entertainment.

In the same year, it being my turn to serve as Vice-President of the Council, I was requested by Lord Cross to represent him at the annual distribution of prizes at Cooper's Hill College, an institution founded and supported by the Government of India. I had to make a regulation speech of the hortatory kind, and managed to dilute the usual platitudes by introducing the lines from the poem of "Windsor Forest," in which Pope celebrates the beauties of Cooper's Hill. To make amends for my oratory, I undertook to endow a scholarship for the encouragement of the students present and future.

Another of my colleagues, much better known to fame than Eden, and who had indeed an European, as



well as an Asiatic reputation, was Sir Henry Maine. His published biography, which did not seem to me lively or interesting, relates his life, and enumerates his writings. To me his character appeared somewhat complex. Gifted with unusual clearness of vision and foresight, of which his recorded minute on the probable consequences of the Ilbert Bill gives eminent proof, he never seemed to have enough faith in his own opinions to make him stick to them manfully in the face of opposition. Time-serving I should not like to call him, but if his independence and courage had been equal to his intellect, Sir Henry Maine would have been a man of the highest class.

Besides his duties as a member of Council, he performed those appertaining to the Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He kindly invited me one year to the annual Christmas festivities, which have been celebrated from time immemorial at that ancient seat of learning. Mr. Fawcett was a Fellow of the College, and Sir Andrew Clark,<sup>1</sup> like myself, an invited guest. What principally struck me, whose habits have for many years been most abstemious, was the quantity of food and liquor consumed. At a Gargantuan college breakfast on the morrow of the great banquet, I asked Sir A. Clark whether he was able to indulge in these pleasures with impunity. He replied with his pronounced Scottish accent: "It is the every-day practice that is of importance, my dear sir, and not these occasional outbursts."

On the previous evening a *tabagie*, or smoking *salon*, had been held in Professor Fawcett's rooms. There Sir Andrew laid down dogmatically that there was no

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated physician.

such thing as sleeplessness, it was only the apprehension of sleeplessness. Very likely his nervous system was such that insomnia never troubled him; but had I needed a physician at that time, I should have chosen one of more delicate organization, and more able to feel for the unfortunate to whom sleep is denied.

When I came to the India Office, Sir Louis Mallet, a *doctrinaire* of the purest water, was the permanent Under-Secretary of State, and Mr. Drummond was Chairman of the Finance Committee. It was commonly believed in the City :

1. That, at the weekly sales of Council bills, the Secretary of State was more or less at the mercy of the Exchange Banks, who, it was said, were wont to combine together to depress the price of his bills.
2. That, in the shipment of stores to India, he was not sufficiently protected against the machinations of ship-owners and ship-brokers.
3. That the employment of his surplus funds in the money market was not properly conducted by the broker of the Council, a sort of hereditary officer, who had been transferred from Leadenhall Street to Whitehall, together with the good-will and fixtures.

Having these three grievances, which were not altogether unfounded, present to my mind, I set to work to seek for a remedy.

That the Exchange Banks may to some extent have combined to depress the rate when the demand for Council bills was slack, is possible. I do not believe that during the last fifteen years such combination has

been frequent or serious, and I am convinced that it does not at present (1896) exist at all.

However, to counteract any such tendency on the part of the banks, I persuaded the Council to publish a minimum price each week, below which tenders for bills would not be received. I still think that the experiment, which after a time we abandoned, was worth trying. The banks for some months refused to tender at the minimum, but when trade became active, they applied for as many bills as the Council had to sell. Whether the ultimate effect of this was to raise or to depress exchange, it is difficult to say.

I was more fortunate in my endeavour to improve the working of the department of stores. At my instance, a firm of ship-brokers was appointed to act as agents for chartering ships and engaging freight on account of the Secretary of State. The charge made for these services was very moderate, and the business has been so well conducted, that for efficiency and economy I think the shipping business of the India Office will compare favourably with that of any private undertaking.

The other grievance to which I have referred was one which I was better able to appreciate, inasmuch as the lending of money for short periods formed part of my own daily avocations, and the higgling of the market was my constant joy. The hereditary broker above-named found his slumbers disturbed, and his bargains severely criticized and overhauled. He soon resigned his post in favour of a nephew, who, being required to ally himself with another reputable firm of brokers, and to consent to a reduced scale of remunera-

tion, still transacts the business of the Indian Council to the satisfaction of all concerned.

After these not very important changes, I can remember nothing which particularly concerned me until 1888.

At this time Lord Cross sat in the chair of state, which was enriched with the coat of arms of the honourable Company. Sir Louis Mallet had retired, and I had become chairman of the Finance Committee. I must break my rule for once, to say in the fewest words, that a better appointment than that of Mr. Godley as successor to Sir L. Mallet could not have been made, and that my own duties at the India Office became much more interesting and agreeable in consequence of his help and his companionship.

The period was approaching when the four per cent. Stock of India, amounting to fifty-three millions sterling, became repayable at the option of the Government. This stock was at a small premium in the market, while the three and a half per cent. Stock was under par. The proposal of the financial department was to offer about £103 of three and a half per cent. in exchange for each £100 four per cent. Stock. I persuaded Lord Cross to adopt a bolder method, and to give the public notice that the interest on the four per cent. debt would be reduced to three and a half per cent.

To effect this some manipulation of the market was required, and as the Secretary of State in council was evidently unequal to the task, I advised that we should invoke the assistance of a financial house, who, in consideration of a commission, would undertake to place twenty millions of three and a half per cent.

Negotiations were opened with Messrs. Baring, who, in conjunction with Messrs. Rothschild, eventually undertook the business. Before anything was settled, Lord Cross, at my desire, consulted the Governors of the Bank of England. They dissuaded us from the attempt, adding that as large holders of India four per cent. on behalf of the Bank, it was not their intention to accept a reduction of interest. In spite of such weighty authority we persevered. The financial houses, in addition to their commission of three per cent., made a handsome profit out of the conversion, and the Government of India effected a large saving in interest without adding to the capital of the debt.

The next, and by far the most important affair in which I was concerned took place in 1892-93. The Governor General and his Council, who ever since 1872, when the fall began, had urged the Home Government to co-operate with other nations in measures for the rehabilitation of silver, were now in favour of independent action, and asked the Home Government for permission to close their mints in the hope that a gold standard might in time be attained.

The officials of Her Majesty's Treasury did not view this proposal with favour, believing that a sound currency could only be based on free and unlimited coinage, but Lord Kimberley, with the full approval of Mr. Gladstone, decided to appoint a committee under the presidency of Lord Herschell, to hear evidence, and to advise as to the reply which should be given to the proposal of the Indian Government.

A good many witnesses came forward. Most of them, such as the managers of Indian banks, and merchants trading with the East, expressed the view

that the closing of the mints would injure, if not destroy, the export trade of India, would lower the price of opium, and handicap the tea-planters of Assam and Ceylon in competing with their rivals in China. The members of the committee were selected with care, and included many whose names were calculated to influence public opinion on such an abstruse question. With perhaps three exceptions, I think that they began their task with a feeling that the proposal was unsound. But when they were brought face to face with the difficulties which threatened the Indian Treasury in the event of a further fall in silver, and when, after the dispersion of the Brussels Conference, it seemed probable that such a fall would be precipitated by the repeal of the Sherman Act, the members of the committee, though some of them were believers in the bi-metallic remedy, came unanimously to the conclusion that the Government of India should be allowed to carry out its policy.

This recommendation was accepted by the Cabinet, and immediately carried into effect by legislative enactment in India.

The secret of the deliberations of the committee, although they extended over many months, had been admirably kept, but as soon as the conclusions at which they had arrived were laid before the Cabinet, their purport began to leak out, and curiously enough the heads of the despatch which it was proposed to send to the Government of India appeared verbatim in a Frankfort newspaper. A wild speculation began in rupee paper, from which some Hebrew financiers are said to have derived advantage.

Though I was in no way responsible for this

accident, against which I had taken every precaution in my power, it caused me much annoyance.

Now that three years have passed since the closing of the mints, and considering, firstly, that Indian exchange has not rapidly risen, as some of my colleagues on the committee expected, and secondly, that the decline of the export trade and the other misfortunes foretold by expert witnesses have not come to pass, it may be well to record my own view of the question, bearing in mind how fallible is human judgment, and how seldom events shape themselves in accordance with our anticipations.

As far as I am able to judge, the policy of the Government of India has succeeded in its object, which was to arrest the further and incalculable fall, which might have occurred so long as exchange was indissolubly linked with silver; and, in spite of the imprudent utterances of Mr. Balfour and others in the House of Commons, I cannot believe that the Government of India will willingly reverse their policy, or be led away by the phantom of International bi-metallism. With the present rate of exchange, the Government of India can meet their foreign, as well as their home engagements without further taxation, and if, as I anticipate, that rate should slowly but steadily rise, they will be able to reduce taxation, and so to strengthen their hold upon the races subject to their rule. The only recommendation made by the Herschell Committee from which I dissented, was that which fixed 1s. 4d. as the point at which gold should be accepted by Government in exchange for rupees. My belief is that India as a great exporting country can get as much gold as she requires in the natural course

of trade, and that the more nearly exchange reverts to the rates which obtained before 1872, the easier will be the task of Government. It is impossible to foretell the time when, or the ratio at which gold will be coined at the mints of Calcutta and Bombay, and were I responsible for the finances of India, I should not trouble myself much about these questions, convinced as I am that the advantages of a gold standard are attainable without a gold coinage. My ambition would be to reduce expenditure by lowering the salaries of the European officials, which are calculated on a much higher scale than can be found in any other colony or country, and the nearer the rate of exchange approximated to the old level, the easier would be the task of reduction.

Immediately after my term of office expired in December, 1895, I was taken ill, and had to undergo a severe operation. As soon as the state of my health allowed, I undertook, at the desire of Lord George Hamilton, to make a new arrangement with the Governors of the Bank of England, for the management of the Indian debt. A correspondence, to which I was a party, had taken place some years before, between the India Office and the Bank, in which it was stipulated, that when the capital of the debt came to exceed one hundred millions, the charge for management should be subject to revision. This contingency had now arisen. After several interviews with the Governor and Deputy Governor, who were fortified on one occasion by the presence of two distinguished ex-governors, the terms which I suggested were accepted by the Bank. With this negotiation my connection with the India Office came to an end.



Looking back upon the fifteen years which I spent there, I feel that it was well for me that I accepted the offer which Lord Hartington made in 1880, and which Lord Cross renewed in 1890. My part in the government of India was obscure and of little importance, and the necessary attendance at the Council and on committees was often irksome and inconvenient, but the work was sometimes interesting; and, unlike the pursuit in which I was generally engaged, it had the advantage of affording no opportunity for the advancement of my personal interests.

Having taken my leave of Whitehall, I revert to my old haunts in the City, and will make some reference to the currency question, as it concerns the dwellers in Lombard Street, and the parts adjacent.

I was brought up in the belief that the Bank Charter Act of 1844 was founded on principles which could be proved by experience, and demonstrated by logic to be universally and immutably true. Messrs. Loyd and Norman were intimate friends of my father; he admired their pamphlets, and adopted their views. Moreover, the authority of Sir Robert Peel, whose financial policy he supported in Parliament in opposition to his own party, had naturally great weight with him.

The periodical suspensions of this Act by order in Council in 1847, 1857, and 1866, first led me to doubt whether it was really so unimpeachable and of such general application as its founders supposed. The primary object of the Act was to make it certain that under all circumstances the notes of the Bank of

England should be redeemed in gold; and Mr. Loyd maintained that the contraction of the note circulation, which a demand for gold must necessarily bring about, would automatically lower prices, and turn the foreign exchanges in our favour. The experience of fifty years has proved this theory to be delusive. The note circulation plays each succeeding decade a decreasing part in monetary transactions, and it is only in times of panic and distrust, when the other instruments of exchange become discredited, that it tends to expand. Clearly therefore, the remedy for a panic is not to contract the note circulation, but to meet any sudden demand for notes by issuing more of them until the demand is supplied.

Mr. Newmarch, the disciple of Tooke, used to discuss this question with me. He agreed that the separation of the Bank of England into two departments—one of issue, and the other of banking—was a mistake; and that a better plan would be to enact only that the bank should publish its accounts weekly, and be required to redeem its notes in gold, leaving it to the discretion of the directors to settle what amount of gold was wanted to enable them to meet their obligation. An excessive issue of notes such as the authors of the Act of 1844 apprehended, seems now chimerical; for the public, when panic has subsided, will not demand more notes than it can profitably employ. I was wont to combat the arguments of Mr. Newmarch, but I am inclined to think that he was right. What is really essential to a bank-note is not so much convertibility into gold, as (if one may coin so barbarous a word) exchangeability; and can it be doubted that twenty-five millions of

Bank of England notes, or even double that amount, would be accepted by every one, at all times, in exchange for goods or services, secured as they are in reality by the wealth and credit of a nation, whose annual income exceeds one hundred millions sterling.

The Bank of France, which it must be confessed, has of late years managed its affairs much better than the Bank of England, is governed by such a law as Mr. Newmarch advocated, except that the total amount of its issue is limited by statute. What has been the result? The law requiring payment of its notes in coin has never been suspended, except during the German invasion of 1870, and even at that terrible crisis, although the notes in circulation exceeded one hundred millions sterling, such was the credit of the bank that they circulated freely at a trifling discount which disappeared as soon as peace was concluded. It is seldom that the holder of a bank-note desires to convert into gold. What he requires is the certainty that under all circumstances it will be accepted by those to whom he has to make payments at its nominal value.

The authors of the Act of 1844, who had either themselves experienced, or had heard from their fathers, the evil wrought by irredeemable paper, were determined that this evil should never again prevail; but the danger was not so great as they supposed. As wars became infrequent, and as wealth increased, the whole complexion of things was changed. The issue of notes by private persons, which had enriched so many bankers, and defrauded so many innocent persons during the war period, had ceased to have much importance, and might well have been gradually

extinguished by the Act of 1844. The issues of the Bank of England, instead of expanding in harmony with the enormous expansion of trade, tended to contract and diminish, until they came to form but an insignificant part of the instruments of exchange; and the important discovery was made that credit, whether of a nation or of a firm, is really the one thing needful, and that, if their credit be undoubted and unchallenged, the bank-notes or promises to pay which they issue may be left to take care of themselves.

I sometimes amuse myself with speculating on the money of the future. No one has been a stronger advocate than I of gold, as against silver or inconvertible paper money; but the causes which have in the course of ages made such articles as iron, flocks and herds, piece goods, cowry shells, copper and silver ineffective as instruments of exchange, may in time perform the same office for gold. The greatly increased and increasing production of gold will not improbably have the same effect upon that metal, as the modern improvements in mining and refining have had upon silver, and both the precious metals may lose their place in the estimation of mankind.

The value of these metals must originally have arisen from their rarity, and been enhanced by the facility with which they could be hoarded, or transported in times of war or disturbance. In the French Revolution for example, the *emigrés*, who were forced to leave their lands, their houses, and their goods to the mercy of the Convention, were able to carry off to foreign lands what silver they could scrape together, either in the form of coin or plate.

As far as one can judge, such a condition of things is not likely to recur. Frenchmen who dread war or revolution, have probably made investments in England, or in the United States, so as to provide against possible risks, and bank-notes, or bills of exchange, are used by emigrants instead of gold or silver money.

I incline to the opinion that the money of the future will consist of tokens either of metal or of paper, limited in quantity and secured on the credit of the State. Their intrinsic value may be small, but they will pass freely from hand to hand as long as the credit of the State, whose effigy they bear, remains unimpeachable. Who now desires a better security than the acceptance of a first-class firm, or the promissory note of a solvent State? But as the use of cheques, transfers, postal orders, and other instruments of exchange becomes universal, the sphere of money properly so called will be narrowed, and it is conceivable that the most civilized communities will in the course of time dispense with it altogether.

The first occasion on which I took any part in the discussion of these matters was in 1887, when, at the instance of Lord Farrer, I gave evidence before the Gold and Silver Commission. To the views which I expressed I still adhere, except that the theory that a low exchange stimulates exports, which I thought plausible at that time, no longer has any weight with me. As I have stated elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> I believe it to be a delusion, in spite of the many respectable authorities by whom the theory is still maintained.

The Commission of 1887 came, as might have

<sup>1</sup> *National Review*, June, 1895.

been expected from its constitution, to a lame conclusion. It has always seemed to me that the evils caused by the collapse in the price of silver and by the fall of Indian exchange were enormously exaggerated; that, as in many similar cases, if left alone they would cure themselves; and that any attempt to bolster up silver by artificial means would end in disaster.

In 1888, Mr. Goschen, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, consulted me on the question of reducing the interest on the National Debt. The plan of the Treasury, as explained by Sir E. Hamilton, was to offer to each holder of £100 Consols to divide his stock into two equal portions. £50 to bear three per cent. and £50 two and a half per cent. interest. I combated this idea, and strongly urged upon Mr. Goschen that he should follow the practice of Mr. Goulburn in his dealings with the old three and a half per cent., and should offer to the holder of Consols in consideration of his accepting an immediate reduction of his interest to two and three-quarters per cent, a guarantee against any further abatement for a term of years. Whether my arguments had any weight with him I cannot say, but this was the plan which Mr. Goschen adopted, and which, owing greatly to the favourable condition of the money market, was crowned with success. A good deal of nonsense was uttered at the time about the commission of 1s. 6d. per cent. allowed to bankers on conversion, which it was said bribed them to give their consent to the plan. In the first place, bankers, as by far the largest holders of Consols, lost a great deal more in income than they could possibly gain by

commission, and in the second place, if no such allowance had been made, they would have infallibly charged their customers with a heavier commission than 1s. 6d. per cent. for effecting the conversion.

Many arguments might be used against this operation, and there can be no doubt that it gave a stimulus to speculation, and was one of the causes of the ruin and devastation which began in 1890; but it can hardly be seriously maintained that the State is not bound to borrow on the best terms it can, and, if the present condition of the money market (1896) continues, further reductions of interest may be effected, until the burden of debt, which seemed so appalling to our forefathers in 1816 becomes of little moment to the tax-payers of 1916.

In 1892, Mr. Goschen requested me to act as one of the British delegates to the monetary conference, which the Government of the United States desired to summon. One of the proposed delegates was a Government official, and the other was Sir William Houldsworth, a well-known bi-metallist. I suggested to Mr. Goschen that the delegation as he proposed to constitute it, would speak with little or no authority, as my ideas and those of Sir William Houldsworth were directly at variance, and what seemed to me sound doctrine, to him was foolishness. To this he replied that what he wanted to bring about was free discussion, and a conflict of opinion. After some demur on my part, I yielded to the pressure which he put upon me, and consented to act as a delegate, but only on the condition that I was at liberty to deliver myself at the Conference in favour of the gold standard,

and against any international arrangement which should include Great Britain.

Mr. Goschen accepted my condition, and observed that I had served him with notice. Soon after my last interview with him, the Government was changed, and Sir William Harcourt became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Again, I attempted without success to escape from this distasteful duty. Mr. Alfred Rothschild and Sir Rivers Wilson were added to the number of delegates, and it was decided that the meeting should be held at Brussels. The Conference sat for about four weeks, and, as might have been foretold, much nonsense was talked, and nothing was settled. Our proceedings are narrated at length in the Treasury report, so I need not refer to them.<sup>1</sup>

The general impression among the delegates, was, I think, that the United States Government had not been well advised in calling the Conference together, as they had no definite plan to propose, and no reason for thinking that the European nations had changed the views which they had expressed at previous conferences. Moreover, the delegates of the United States were badly chosen. With one exception (Senator Allison) they were not men of authority, or likely to influence opinion; and, without any exception, they were ignorant of the language in which the proceedings were conducted.

I can hardly suppose that the experiment of a conference will be tried again. Any international agreement is in my opinion visionary and impracticable; but the only possible way of approaching such

<sup>1</sup> B. W. Currie's speeches at the Brussels Conference will be found in the Appendix.



a question would be by direct negotiation between the Governments concerned.

After my return from Brussels, I continued to interest myself more or less in what is called the currency question. I wrote one or two letters to the papers, and made a speech at the Institute in Finsbury Square which was fully reported in the *Bi-Metallic Journal*.<sup>1</sup> I never could bring myself to believe that the gold standard, which has prevailed in this country ever since the resumption of specie payments after the great war, was really in danger; but when Mr. Balfour attended a meeting of the Bi-metallic League at the Mansion House, and declared his adherence to their doctrines, it was felt that some demonstration should be made on the other side.

A meeting was accordingly held at 67, Lombard Street, of the principal merchants and bankers of the City, who thereupon formed themselves into an association for the defence of the gold standard, raised a substantial fund, and appointed a committee with Mr. George Peel as secretary. They also agreed to and signed a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to which he returned a reply fully approving of the views which they had expressed. This correspondence was made public, and to judge from the comments in the newspapers was generally approved.

I have said nothing as yet about politics beyond a reference to my ill-timed address to the electors of Hull, which fortunately came to nothing. My father,

<sup>1</sup> This speech will be found in the Appendix.

when he entered Parliament in 1837, associated himself with the so-called Philosophical Radicals, among whom such men as Grote, Molesworth, and Charles Buller were conspicuous. Bentham, I suppose, was the founder of the school, and their doctrines which were then thought subversive, are now generally accepted as true. I have never deviated from my allegiance to the Liberal party, though in the great controversy which took place in 1866, concerning the reduction of the franchise, the arguments of Mr. Lowe commanded my assent. His eloquent predictions have come true. Every mole-hill is now a mountain, and every thistle a forest-tree. It was perhaps hopeless to attempt to arrest the democratic movement, but why was it necessary to hurry it on by ceaseless agitation? In 1866 the metropolitan boroughs, including the City of London, were impregnable strongholds of the Liberal party. The number of metropolitan seats and of metropolitan voters has been trebled, but the good old Liberal doctrines of Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform appeal to them no more. Their confidence is bestowed upon local nobodies, and is reserved for the champions of ancient heresies, and of obsolete institutions.

More than once I have been invited to offer myself as a candidate for Parliament, but several reasons combined to make me decline the honour.

*Firstly.* As I could reckon with certainty upon no inheritance from my father, an expectation which at his death in 1881, was realized to its fullest extent, my first duty was to provide for my family, and make myself independent. A seat in the House of Commons, if taken seriously, would have diverted my mind from

money-getting, and would have interfered with this primary object of my ambition.

*Secondly.* Although I always placed the service of the public on a higher plane than the pursuit of personal objects, I felt convinced that my temperament unfitted me for public life. The boredom and banality of the House of Commons would have made my life there a burden to me.

*Thirdly.* In 1880, I disqualified myself from becoming a Member of Parliament by accepting a seat on the Indian Council.

In addition to these three excellent reasons, I may add that my politics were unsuited to every one of the constituencies with which I had any natural connection; so that, except as a carpet-bagger, my prospect of success at the poll would have been small. I am now the fortunate possessor of six votes, without ever having had the remotest chance of returning a single candidate of my choice.

When the agitation for municipal reform began, I gave some support, principally, if my memory serves me, of a pecuniary character, to the League of which Mr. Firth was chairman; though I attended a meeting, made a speech, and moved a resolution at the Memorial Hall, a task very antipathetic to my habits. The objects of the League have been in great part accomplished by the Act which created the County Council of London; but what moved my wrath and made me become for once an agitator, was that ancient imposture which, like the heroine of the *Dunciad*, never dies—the Corporation of London.

The perpetual guzzling of Aldermen and Common Councillors, the jobbing in City lands, in which some

of them were notoriously engaged, their want of public spirit, the cadging for subscriptions on every possible occasion, the thirst of "Mayors and Recorders for titles and orders"—all these excited my bile. But more than all was I indignant that such men should be held out to the world as genuine representatives of the great merchants and bankers of the City—a class which I considered second to none in education and in refinement, and which for two generations at least has held itself aloof from the Corporation and all its works.

I remember to have heard that my partner, Mr. G. C. Glyn, whose grandfather and father both filled the office of Lord Mayor in the last century, had in his youth the idea of becoming an Alderman, but was dissuaded by his father, who told him that the office was no longer fit for a man of his character and station.

This sensitive and surly ebullition of my feelings may be forgiven, for it relieves me and does not hurt the Corporation. In spite of my sarcasms, the Lord Mayor, the man with the fur cap, the mace, the gold coach, and all the frippery will survive me; and on each 9th of November the traffic of the streets will still be interrupted, and serious men of business will still be annoyed by the tawdry tomfoolery of a Lord Mayor's Show!

When, after the Reform Bill of 1868, the constituency of Mid-Surrey came into being, I acted as chairman of the Liberal committee; and I have supported at each election the Liberal candidates who have failed ignominiously to win the seat.

The part of Surrey in which I came to live, had, like the City of London, been always looked upon as a safe Liberal seat. Alcock and Locke King were our trusted representatives, and no Tory had a chance against them. Now the genius of villadom is triumphant, and I feel that it is hopeless to contend against it until times are changed and new ideas prevail.

I was also chairman of the City of London Liberal Association, and in that capacity took part in inaugurating the statue of Mr. Gladstone, which adorns the hall of the City Liberal Club.

On that occasion I pronounced an eulogy upon Mr. Gladstone, to every word of which I adhere, and I ventured to make a prophecy, which has already been partly fulfilled, namely, that when he withdrew from public life, the scurrilous attacks upon him, which were then of daily occurrence, would cease, and his great qualities and noble character would be recognized even by those who disliked his politics.

To have known Mr. Gladstone, and to have enjoyed his friendship, is among the most interesting events of my life. With many of his opinions I was unable to agree. His views of life were different from mine, and his taste in literature did not accord with my own. In fact, while he was something of a Stoic, my philosophy inclined to that of Epicurus. But his wonderful vigour, his enthusiasm, his versatility, commanded my admiration. I have never conversed with any man whose intellectual superiority I was so ready to acknowledge, or who in the common intercourse of life took such original views of things, and was so free from the demon of commonplace.

I agree with Sir C. Dilke, in thinking him the most interesting person of our times, and believe that when he is gone his memory will continue to attract many generations of men. He was the best example of his age, and of the class in which he was born, cultivated, courageous, independent, disinterested, and courteous—and all these qualities he gave with absolute devotion and untiring energy to the service of the State.

Will democracy produce so good a sample? Looking across the Atlantic at the ignoble strife of Bryans and MacKinleys I am inclined to doubt it.

In 1894, my friend, Mr. John Morley, asked me to serve on the Royal Commission which was appointed to inquire into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. Mr. Childers, whom I first saw as a small boy at Cheam school in 1836, was our chairman, and in spite of failing health did much useful work. We had many meetings, and heard much conflicting evidence. What struck me most was the ability which Mr. Sexton displayed in cross-examination, and the service which he rendered to the claims of Ireland. The conclusions at which the Commission ultimately arrived are before the world, so it is needless to repeat them here.

The result of our proceedings was to confirm me in the opinion which I had long held, that the Act of Union passed in 1801 was a mistake. It has utterly failed in its main object of reconciling the Irish people to the British Government, and it has lowered the tone of the House of Commons by introducing into it an irreconcilable and barbaric element. The Members from Ireland, treated not unnaturally as aliens by their

English colleagues, had recourse to the usual devices of a minority. They either sold their votes to the highest bidder, or endeavoured by well-known arts to bring Parliamentary Government into contempt.

Admitting to the fullest extent all that can be said against the character of Irishmen, their want of self-respect, their inability to combine for a common object, their mendicant habits, and all their other notorious defects, I still believe that they could manage better for themselves than we have managed for them. It is a delusion to suppose that nations are enamoured of rulers more civilized than themselves. They detest the government of superior persons, and prefer their own customs and their own prejudices to the teachings of philosophy.

It is hardly possible that the practically unanimous report of the Commission will be altogether ignored. Such a course would arm the Irish Members with a formidable weapon, against which no English party could permanently stand. I incline to the belief (expressed by me many years ago) that the deliverance of Ireland will ultimately come from the Tory party. I have seen that party swallow its principles with undeviating regularity ever since 1832, and when the alternative is presented to it of contributing two and a half millions in cash to Ireland, or of letting the people go, it seems to me that in spite of the clamour of Unionists, and in spite of the fulminations of the *Times*, the leaders of the Tory party may be driven to afford to the Irish people the same measure of relief as Pharaoh reluctantly granted to that equally uncomfortable race, the children of Israel.

In making this prediction, I assume that the great

majority of Irish electors will remain constant to their demand for Home Rule. But I am by no means sure that they would persist in this demand if they thought it was likely to be granted. They may well hesitate to undertake the responsibilities of Irish finance without English support, and they will reluctantly part with an ancient grievance, which enables them to put forward claims for relief. But the hands of the British Government would be greatly strengthened if they were prepared to offer the alternative of Home Rule, provided that no other terms were acceptable.

It would be impossible for me, without consulting books and memoranda, to trace the course of our business for the last thirty years; and as my principal object in writing this memoir is to amuse my son by recording long past events, known only, or mainly, to myself, I can safely leave him for information respecting this period to such persons or records as are to be found at 67, Lombard Street. Suffice it to say, that since 1864, the transactions of the firm have greatly increased, its credit has certainly not been diminished, the premises occupied by the bank have been almost doubled, and the step which was taken in 1885, of publishing a balance-sheet, though criticized at the time by our brother-bankers, has been followed by them all to their manifest advantage, as shown by the increased esteem and confidence with which the public now regard them.

Probably the most important episode in my banking life, and certainly the one which touched me most nearly, was the so-called Baring crisis of 1890.

I have already spoken of the feelings of respect



with which I regarded Mr. Thomas Baring, and of my close intimacy with Edward Baring, who shortly before the crisis had exchanged his honoured name for that of Lord Revelstoke. I may add, that with H. B. Mildmay, another of the partners, I had lived, since we were boys at Eton together, on the closest terms of friendship and affection.

For once my principles were at fault; and although, in common with most discerning people, I deplored the departure from sound traditions which was manifest to all observers, and disapproved the intimacy with Mr. Sanford, and the close identification of the firm with the needy republics of the River Plate, I could not bring myself to believe that the resources and credit of the house of Baring were not equal to any strain. Let this example be a warning to my successors. If such colossal houses as those of Overend and Baring, the two greatest probably that I had known, paid the penalty of their imprudence, what man of business can with impunity depart from the beaten track? In both cases the evil probably began from a plethora of money attracted by the high credit which each house enjoyed. In the case of Messrs. Baring, it was aggravated by a taste for extravagant expenditure, and by the marvellous success which had attended some of their ventures.

As regards the part which I took in the arrangements which was made in November, 1890, under the auspices of the Bank of England, a memorandum, drawn up in January, 1894, exists in the archives at 67, Lombard Street. It was a great satisfaction to me that I was able to contribute something to the salvation of a house which from my earliest years I had

been taught to look upon as the first among British merchants.

[The memorandum referred to in the preceding paragraph is as follows :

*67, Lombard Street, London.*

*January 11, 1894.*

I have been asked to put on record my recollection of the circumstances attending the Baring crisis of 1890, so far as I was personally concerned with them.

The first intimation of any trouble in the affairs of Messrs. Baring Brothers and Co. was conveyed to me by Mr. S. Brunton, the broker, on October 13, 1890. He came with a message from Lord Revelstoke to say that the firm required a large sum of money, and that it was difficult for them to appear in the market as borrowers. Before replying to this proposal, I told Mr. Brunton to ask Lord Revelstoke for a statement of the bills payable and receivable. He returned with the answer that the acceptances of the firm amounted to ten millions sterling, and the bills in portfolio to nine millions sterling.

Thereupon Glyn and Co. made an advance to Messrs. Baring of £500,000 on the security of stock in A. Guinness and Co., Limited, standing in the names of various partners in the Baring firm.

Subsequently a further sum of £200,000 was advanced on Canada Government Treasury bills and £50,000 on securities sold for delivery on the Stock Exchange.

On the 11th of November the annexed letter from the Governor of the Bank reached me.

*Bank of England,  
November 11, 1890.*

Dear Mr. Currie,

I want to see you on a very important matter. Could you come over here soon? I go to the Treasury at 4.30 p.m.

Yours faithfully,

WM. LIDDERDALE.

Bertram Currie, Esq.

The very important matter was that the firm of Baring Brothers and Co. were in difficulties, that the writer had been in communication with Mr. Goschen, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the subject, that the latter had provisionally agreed to the suspension of the Bank Charter Act, so as to enable the Bank to afford assistance, but that H.M.'s Government required to be assured of the solvency of the firm, and with that object Mr. Lidderdale proposed, that, in conjunction with Mr. Hoskier (a former partner in the firm of Brown, Shipley, and Co. and a friend of Messrs. Baring), I should look into their affairs and express my opinion as to their condition.

I declined to act with Mr. Hoskier, but offered to do so with Mr. B. B. Greene.

Having undertaken in conjunction with Mr. B. B. Greene, a director of the Bank of England, eighty-three years of age, to verify as far as possible the figures contained in a statement which had been handed to Mr. Lidderdale by Messrs. Baring, we proceeded together to their counting-house in Bishopsgate Street, and examined and counted the bills receivable,

which amounted to about seven millions. We required each partner to authenticate the above-named statement by appending his signature thereto. Mr. Greene undertook the valuation of securities, adopting the prices quoted in Wetenhall's list wherever practicable.

On Friday, 14th November, after leaving the India Office, I called about 2 p.m. on Mr. Greene at the Bank, and found him uneasy in his mind about the value of the securities, and impressed with the magnitude of the advances which it might be necessary for the Bank to make in order to meet Messrs. Baring's engagements: the bills payable alone amounting to £15,750,000.

After some discussion we agreed upon a joint report to be made to the Governor of the Bank, in which we said that after verifying the statement as far as was possible in the limited time at our disposal, we were of opinion that the assets of the firm showed a substantial surplus over its liabilities.

At about five o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, I was summoned to the Governor's room at the Bank, where several members of the Committee of Treasury were assembled, including, besides Mr. Lidderdale the Governor and Mr. D. Powell the Deputy Governor, Sir Mark Collet, Messrs. H. Gibbs, J. P. Currie, H. R. Grenfell, B. Greene, J. S. Gilliat, and possibly some others.

I was invited to take a seat by the side of the Governor, who, having informed his colleagues of the purport of our report, stated that he was prepared to recommend the Bank of England to undertake the liquidation of the Baring estate, and to contribute one million sterling to a fund for guaranteeing the assets,

provided that a sum of not less than three millions were contributed by other parties. I then rose and said that, as an evidence of my belief in the correctness of the estimate, which, in conjunction with Mr. Greene I had made of the assets, the firm of Glyn and Co. would contribute £500,000 to the fund, provided that Messrs. N. M. Rothschild and Co. would become responsible for a like amount.

At this moment it was announced that Lord Rothschild had arrived, and I was asked to see him. When informed of the circumstances of the case and of the condition which I had made, he hesitated and desired to consult his brothers, but was finally and after some pressure persuaded to put down the name of his firm for £500,000. Mr. H. Raphael, Messrs. Gibbs, Morgan, Brown Shipley and Co., and others joined in the guarantee for sums of £200,000 and £250,000. At the request of the Governor I proceeded to call on Barclay and Co. and Smith Payne and Co., who each promised a contribution of £100,000, so that at about 6 p.m. an amount exceeding three and a half millions had been subscribed without any application to the Joint Stock Banks, whose managers were summoned to meet the Governor on the following day, with the result that the amount of the fund was increased to about eighteen millions.]

Having endeavoured to give a short description of my old partners in Cornhill, I will now attempt to perform the same office for those who have left the world since they and I joined our forces in Lombard Street.

Our senior, Mr. Charles Mills, had been for many years a director of the East India Company, and very fairly distributed the valuable patronage which belonged to that office, though, as he used to tell me, an application from a good customer of the bank was not often refused. Before the monopoly of trading with China was taken away from the Company, the public sales of tea used to be conducted in turn by the directors, some of whom were bankers like himself. It was said by one of them, probably by way of joke, that he used to knock down the chests of tea to his own customers, and to ignore the bids of outsiders. What a curious picture of bygone manners!

When the old East India Company was abolished, Mr. Mills became a member of the Council of India, where he left the reputation of a shrewd and sensible man. These qualities were apparent to all with whom he was brought into contact. He wisely left the principal management of the bank to his partner, Mr. Glyn, but was much interested in the division of profit and loss. When I became his partner, he was already advanced in years, and did not come early or often to the City. Shortly before his death, while he was dozing before the fire, one of the busybodies who frequented our counting-house wished him many happy years of life. He turned to me and said: "That fellow talks nonsense. I have had my years, and very happy ones they have been."

His system of philosophy was not to expect too much, and to be content with the ordinary blessings of life.

Mr. George Carr Glyn, afterwards Lord Wolverton, was of a different type. His quickness and alertness

of mind were remarkable, and if he had not been so engrossed in the details of business, and if his domestic environment had been a little more intellectual and æsthetic, his natural talent for conversation and for society would, I always thought, have been developed to a high pitch. But the puritanical and philistine element which prevailed in his days in the banking and mercantile world checked his flight, and made his private life somewhat colourless and uninteresting.

In business he displayed great ambition. He desired to make his house the first in London, and to perpetuate a long line of bankers. He was bold without rashness, prudent almost to a fault in his own expenditure, and gifted with a wonderful facility for endearing himself to his customers, whom he was ever ready to support in time of need. One of his maxims was: "Get hold of the right sort of people, and then let them have what they want."

He was a great admirer of the sweet simplicity of the three per cents., and eschewed investments which offer high interest. I remember to have been told that in some time of panic Mr. Glyn sold a part of his Consols at a fraction under the price of the day, in order to help a customer, while S. J. Loyd, chuckling to himself as he bought the Consols cheap, buttoned up his pockets, and allowed a perfectly solvent firm, which banked with him, to suspend payment. This incident is characteristic of the two men, and shows which of them possessed the true banking instinct.

I do not dwell on Mr. Glyn's early connection with the founders of the railway interest, as their history may be read elsewhere, but there is no doubt that the sagacity and courage with which he threw himself

into the railway movement contributed largely to the fortunes of his house.

My father used to tell me that when he came to the City about 1820, the position of Glyn's bank was not specially eminent, whereas in 1850 its business was certainly more extended, if not more solid and substantial, than that of any of its competitors.

I will add a few words about Mr. Newmarch, who, though not a partner in the bank, had become identified with it about 1863 as secretary or manager.

He had already acquired reputation as the collaborateur of Tooke in his *History of Prices*, and as a writer of authority on economical questions. The merit of these productions was recognized by the Institute of France, of which he was a corresponding member. Mr. Glyn had become acquainted with Newmarch at the old Globe Insurance Society, of which he was a founder and director, and Mr. Newmarch was the actuary and manager.

I suppose that Mr. Glyn's original idea was that Newmarch should take part in the management of our business, but for this, in spite of his remarkable abilities, he was not fitted. The banking trade is only to be successfully carried on by those who have been brought up to it from early youth. But in the introduction of a proper and scientific system of accounts in place of the obsolete and rule of thumb methods which he found in Lombard Street, and to a less degree in reforming the discipline and management of the numerous staff, Mr. Newmarch was of great service to the house of Glyn and Co., and amply justified his appointment.

Considering the disadvantages of his early life, his



knowledge was remarkable. There were few books which he had not read, and few subjects upon which he was not competent to form and to express an opinion. He had a ready, if not a refined wit, and was capable of making a capital and amusing speech on the spur of the moment. Born of humble parents in Lancashire, the letter "h" was not included in his vocabulary, and upon this deficiency we sometimes mischievously played. Having to speak at a meeting of the Grank Trunk Railway Company, he made use of a favourite metaphor.

"Gentlemen, we must take the bull by the 'orns."

When the assembled shareholders smiled, he went on: "By the 'orns, I repeat."

While still in the prime of life, and after he had arranged to retire from the bank, and to devote himself to a continuation of the *History of Prices*, he was seized with a paralytic stroke while sitting at his desk at Lombard Street.

Of my living partners it would not be decorous for me to speak, so that, having exhausted the topics which may be of interest to those who come after me, I find that my task is finished. My fifty years of banking are accomplished, and I have received unmistakable notice to quit.

Having, up to the month of August, 1896, been a regular attendant at the bank, an inactive life offers no attraction to me. Better to depart in full possession of what faculties one has than to prolong existence as an incurable.

Ein unnütz Leben ist ein früher Tod,

When I think of the friends I have lost, and of the number of better men than myself who have gone before me, whose places, in spite of all their qualities, have quickly been filled by others as capable, why should I repine at the common lot of humanity?

I leave the business in safe hands, with as good a prospect of increasing prosperity as is to be found in this world of development and change; and whether it stands alone, or whether, as I have sometimes thought probable, it becomes the nucleus of a larger constellation, may it continue to shine and be an example to the world of the soundness of the practice of private banking.

Many generations have toiled in their day to make and keep the business. To enlarge and improve it, and above all to uphold its credit and reputation, the best years of my life have been devoted, and at its close I can say, in humble imitation of Lord Holland:

A City banker born and bred,  
Sufficient for my fame,  
If those who knew me best have said  
I tarnished not the name.

## APPENDIX.

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The following is the English version of Mr. Bertram Currie's speech at the Fourth Session of the International Monetary Conference at Brussels. Mr. Currie spoke in French.

“As I think it is the duty of every Delegate to show his respect for the Conference by contributing his mite to the proceedings, I shall ask leave to say a few words, though I fear that my opinions will fail to commend themselves to the majority of my honourable colleagues.

I am not one of those who believe that great evils are impending upon the world from the disuse of silver as the standard of value. This disuse has, I think, gradually arisen in obedience to the natural law of selection, by which progressive societies choose for themselves the methods best suited for their development. Any artificial attempt to arrest this process seems to me doomed to failure. We have witnessed the heroic labours of the United States in this direction. The fable of Sisyphus has been repeated for our edification, and although for a moment silver was by gigantic efforts forced up to a certain height, it soon came tumbling down again.

He must be a sanguine person who believes that such a costly experiment is likely to find imitators.

What, I may ask, are the supposed evils that we are called upon to remedy? As far as can be

ascertained, we are met here to endeavour to raise the price of commodities. Such an object is entirely opposed to the economic doctrines which are accepted in the country from which I come. Cheap goods and not dear goods, plenty and not scarcity have always been held to be conditions of profitable trade. That the general fall in prices has been brought about by the scarcity of gold has never been proved, and such a theory is, in my humble opinion, at variance with the facts which are within our knowledge.

To the question, What then is the remedy? I venture to reply, 'A gold standard, even without a gold currency.' Such a system is already at work in several countries, and apparently it performs its functions to the satisfaction of the communities which have adopted it.

Theoretically, a gold currency like that of England may be best, but it is a costly luxury, involving an outlay which may perhaps be avoided.

I do not deny that exchange may sometimes be unfavourable to nations who do not possess an effective gold currency, but unless the credit of the nation sank very low, the fall in exchange would hardly be so disastrous as the fluctuation to which silver-using countries, such as India, have been exposed.

In conclusion, I would venture to submit that the wealth of a nation does not depend upon the gold and silver which it possesses. The contrary indeed is much nearer to the truth, and it might be argued that the more prosperous and civilized a nation becomes, the less occasion has it to use the precious metals, and the smaller is the stock which is required for its transactions. The real *desideratum* for a nation is to

maintain a surplus of revenue over expenditure, and thereby to establish and extend its credit. When that has been accomplished, it may command as much gold as it can profitably use, and failing such credit, its monetary system can never rest upon a safe foundation.”

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At the Tenth (and last) Session of the International Monetary Conference at Brussels, it is recorded in the official Report that Mr. Bertram Currie (*Delegate of Great Britain*) made the following speech in English :<sup>1</sup>

“ It may seem ungracious to raise any objection to the adjournment which has been proposed ; and if I do so it is rather with the view of saying a few parting words in my individual and private capacity, than from any intention of calling for a vote on the question ; but it must not be forgotten that the Conference of 1881 still remains adjourned, and if during the eleven years which have elapsed since that time it has not been found expedient to summon it, what prospect have we, the Delegates of 1892, of a speedier reunion ?

Three times the Delegates of various nations have met at a Monetary Conference. On each occasion they have exhausted their ingenuity in devising plans for the increase of silver money, and thrice they have been compelled to separate without accomplishing or even advancing the object which they had in view. Has not the time arrived when, as men of the world, and some of us men of business, we should recognize the fact that the task which was set to them was

<sup>1</sup> This speech is printed here in the terms in which it was actually delivered in English. It differs, in a few phrases, from the French version handed in by Mr. Currie and printed in the official minutes.

impossible? Would it not be wiser, instead of postponing our decision, to declare plainly to our bi-metallic friends, that the plan which they advocate is no cure for the ills of which they complain; so that, abandoning vain imaginings and illusive visions which can never become realities, they may turn their attention to some possible alleviations of their distress?

It would be presumptuous in me to indicate the quarter to which their inquiries should be directed; but unless I am greatly mistaken, the malady which affects them is political rather than financial.

The world is not suffering from a penury of gold, but from the loss of its savings through hazardous investments, from exaggerated tariffs which destroy and hamper trade, from heavy taxation, and above all from the many unproductive consumers of its wealth.

If there be any ground for the complaint which has been made in the course of our discussions, that gold, if not actually scarce, is difficult to be procured, it is explained by the fact that more than one of the great nations of Europe has accumulated gold in excess of financial requirements, and views with alarm and suspicion any diminution of its stock.

Reference has been made by some of the Delegates to the practice of the Bank of England, as well as of other banks of issue, with respect to gold, and our eminent colleague, M. Tirard, drew an interesting comparison between the stability of the rate of discount in France, and the constant changes which have occurred in England.

It is not for me to criticise the action of the Banks of France or Germany, but I am confident that the Bank of England will never depart from the policy,

which is indeed prescribed to it by law, of paying gold freely and without demur in satisfaction of all lawful demands.

The question that has been raised whether that Bank habitually holds a gold reserve sufficient to meet all emergencies is a fair subject of debate. If a larger stock be thought desirable, it might perhaps be provided by the other banking institutions of London, out of the large balances which stand to their credit in the Bank of England.

There was another remark which fell from M. Tirard which made a great impression upon me. I refer to the eloquent protest which he uttered against opening the mints of his country to unlimited coinage of silver, so as to compel France to receive from Mexico and the United States a commodity which she could never return to the countries from which it came, nor use for the payment of her debts or the satisfaction of her requirements.

Are not these words of M. Tirard the condemnation of silver as a fit medium of unlimited coinage? For how can any substance provide a good currency which will not pass current, or be fit for circulation if it refuses to circulate?

It is a matter of indifference to me as a seller of goods or services, whether I am paid in paper, in gold, or in silver money, but on this condition, that when in my turn I become a buyer, the money which I have received will be accepted without deduction in exchange for the goods or services which I require.

Tried by this test, silver has broken down. Nobody wants it for himself, but everybody desires to pass it on to his neighbour, like one of those coins of South

American origin of which the unwary tourist is apt to find himself the possessor.

After the categorical and repeated declarations against free coinage which we have heard from the Delegates of France, Germany, and Great Britain, we should only delude ourselves if we did not admit that the question is closed.

Let the bi-metallists, supported in some degree by the high authority of my friend, Mr. Rothschild, and encouraged by the utterances of persons so competent in these matters as Archbishop Walsh and Mr. Chaplin, console themselves with predictions of the calamities and perils which are to follow as the result of our inaction. We will not venture upon the domain of prophecy, content to meet present difficulties as best we may, refusing to aggravate them by any attempt to interfere with the natural course and tendency of events, and leaving it to our successors, the Delegates of the twentieth century, to discuss and determine the monetary system of the future."

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Speech delivered at the London Institution, May 22nd, 1895, by Mr. Bertram Currie. Referred to p. 81.

"Mr. Courtney and gentlemen, I am here to-night at the instance of my friend Mr. Tritton, who assured me that unless some defenders of the gold standard put in an appearance it would be said that we were afraid of the bi-metallists and had no answer to make to their arguments. Mr. Tritton has laid us under great obligation by the very valuable paper which he read at the last meeting of this institution, supported as it is by facts and figures which are not easily to be



controverted. I therefore obeyed the invitation of Mr. Tritton, but the opinion which I expressed to him is unchanged, that not much practical good is likely to arise from this discussion. It seems to me to resemble a theological debate in which much heat is engendered but few conversions are made. (Laughter.) To make a debate of this sort profitable there must be some premises on which both sides are agreed, some common basis on which to rest our arguments. Now, having given my best attention to the able and well reasoned pamphlet of Mr. Gibbs, I find myself in the unfortunate predicament of being unable to accept any of the propositions he lays down. They are three in number, and I propose in the brief and cursory manner which the exigencies of the time and place alone permit, to deal with them in their order. The first proposition is that trade and finance are unduly depressed. Now, the word unduly is somewhat vague and indefinite, but I assume it may be taken to mean unusual or unprecedented. Now, I have one advantage over Mr. Gibbs which I am sure he will not envy me. I am old enough to remember other times of depression when he had either not come into the world or was too youthful and joyous to be depressed. (Laughter.) With a most lively recollection of 1847, 1857, 1866, I can confidently assert that the disasters of 1890-94 are not to be compared in number or severity with those which occurred at the former periods. Why, in 1847 twenty-one banks failed, five directors of the Bank of England, and the Governor of the Bank of England, failed, besides many mercantile houses of the first importance. In 1857 sixteen banks failed, including two of the largest country banks, the

Northumberland and Durham District Bank and the Liverpool Borough Bank, both institutions of the highest importance. In 1866 five London banks failed, besides the world-wide renowned firm of Overend, Gurney & Co. On all these occasions credit was shaken in the most serious manner, and the Bank Act of 1844 was suspended. I only mention this to show that our predecessors had their troubles as well as we, and that financial and commercial depressions are not new. The real depression seems to me to amount to this: Many people belonging to a class who are able to make their grievances heard have lost large sums of money through unwise speculations in North and South America. Many merchants, brokers, wholesale dealers and other middlemen have seen their trade and profits vanish owing to new developments in the conduct of business. Why, I am told that my friend Mr. Ralli, who is here this evening, sells whole cargoes of jute and of cotton and seeds for one-fifth or one-tenth of the profits which used to be divided among the classes to which I have referred, and which went to swell the prices of those commodities before they reached the consumer. Mr. Ralli has devoured whole hecatombs of British merchants. It was unpleasant for them, but his smiling countenance assures me that he has not found the process of digestion painful or difficult. (Laughter.) I now come to the second proposition, namely, that defects in our monetary system are to a great extent responsible for these evils. Well, this proposition I am altogether unable to accept in spite of the resolution of the House of Commons which Mr. Gibbs brings forward in its support. Having had some experience of the resolu-

tions of that honourable House in connection with the Government of India, I am bold enough to say that I do not view them with any great respect, nor am I strongly impressed with their authority, but the history of this particular resolution must be known to many who are now present, and certainly to my distinguished friend who occupies the chair to-night. I suspect that this resolution was allowed to pass unchallenged as a tactical move in order to conciliate some agricultural supporter of the Government or some Lancashire member with a doubtful seat. (Laughter.) As no action was contemplated it was thought that no harm would be done, but I am unable to accept this abstract resolution as embodying the real opinion of the majority of the House of Commons. As for defects in our monetary system, they may exist, though it remained for bi-metallists to discover them. But it would seem that the systems of other nations must be more defective still, for they are all, to the best of their capacity, adopting ours. Germany and the Scandinavian States have got the gold standard. France and the Latin Union by refusing to coin silver have practically adopted it. Russia and Austria (countries with a nominal silver standard) are tending to a gold standard, so that our defective monetary system promises to become universal in Europe, if not in the world. The third proposition is that international bi-metallism would alleviate those evils. Well this, gentlemen, I confess, is the most unacceptable of all the three. It is true that we have had no experience of international bi-metallism, but the nearest approach we have known to it was when France enjoyed the blessings of the double standard, and in those good

old days we were no more free from commercial and financial depression than now. But leaving aside the arguments, from experience I venture to say that, in my opinion, and in that of those much better able to judge than myself, an international agreement belongs to the region of dreams and not of realities. It is impracticable and unattainable. We who reject the nostrum are, you must allow, considerable in numbers and not wholly unprovided with this world's goods. We utterly disbelieve that the value of silver can be permanently raised by Act of Parliament or by International agreement, and no amount of discussion will shake our faith, which is founded on principle and confirmed by experience. Clearly, therefore, if we seriously apprehended that such a course was contemplated we should endeavour to contract ourselves out of it, and we should collect and store up as much gold as we could afford in the sure and certain hope of selling it at a profit when the bi-metallic bubble burst. (Applause.) I am aware that Mr. Balfour, when he honoured us with a visit in the City, treated this idea with derision, but I hope and believe that, in any conceivable Government that may be formed in this country, some sober-minded men of his own party will be found to stop him from tampering with the gold standard or from entering upon an untried and hazardous experiment. The benefits to be derived from such a course are speculative and imaginary, while the possible dangers are real and palpable, sufficient to appal the stoutest heart and shake the nerves and disturb the slumbers of the most solvent trader in the City of London."

## THE CURRENCY QUESTION—FOR LAYMEN.

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Article in *The National Review*, June, 1895, referred to in page 77.

I OBSERVE that the form of a dialogue as a method of expounding their views is much in favour with Bi-metallists, who are by no means so ready to answer the real questions which their adversaries put to them as they are to find replies to imaginary interlocutors. Lord Farrer, for example, reiterates in *The Times* newspaper an inconvenient but pertinent inquiry, to which no intelligible answer has yet been vouchsafed.

Let us assume, however, that the questions in Mr. Courtney's dialogue<sup>1</sup> proceed from a real living interrogator, and we will endeavour to answer them in the order in which they appeared :

### THE GENERAL CASE.

1. Low prices are not an evil.
2. Fluctuation in prices is a quality inseparable from the nature of commodities.
3. Abnormal competition from silver countries is moonshine.

The assumption that any of these things have been caused or aggravated by a change in the relations between gold and silver is unproved; the most that can be said is that silver has fallen in price at the same time that other (not all) commodities have fallen, and for the same reason, viz., that it can be produced in larger quantities and at a lower cost. Labour has not

<sup>1</sup> See *The National Review*, May, 1895.

fallen in price. Neither has coffee nor tobacco. Hay, in the summer of 1893, doubled in price in the course of a few weeks.

#### I.—LOW PRICES.

Wheat, cotton, wool, and other articles are cheap, because during the last few years they have been offered for sale in excess of the demand for them.

As for the abnormal competition of silver countries, how is it that Argentina, which in spite of her name uses no silver, has driven India out of the wheat market? How is it that in 1890-91, with an average exchange of 18d·089, the wheat exports of India were 14,320,496 cwts.; while for eleven months in 1894-95, with exchange at 13·1, these exports have fallen to 6,592,521 cwts.?

The assumption that gold has appreciated begs the whole question in dispute, and can only be met by the counter assertion that there is no evidence of any scarcity in the supply of gold, which is now produced in larger quantities and held in greater stocks than at any previous time, while the demand for gold money tends to diminish as banking facilities are increased.

That the quality of gold money affects prices at all is another assumption which urgently calls for proof.

Low prices, whether taken alone or in conjunction with other things, are not an evil: to prove this, it is only necessary to state the contrary proposition. Are high prices a blessing? Were the good old times of fifty years since, when wheat, cotton, and wool cost twice or thrice as much as they cost now, better for the mass of the population in England than the present year of grace?

I recommend Mr. Courtney to introduce into his next dialogue some mechanic or labourer who was at work in 1845 to give an answer to this question.

Merchants, brokers, wholesale dealers, and other middlemen, whose charges tended to swell the price of the commodities which they handle, have lost their trade; but what they have lost the consumers have gained.

## II.—FLUCTUATIONS OF PRICES.

Fluctuations of price are inevitable unless the seasons could be controlled, and supply could be regulated. As already stated, the drought of 1893 raised the price of hay from £4 per ton to £8.

This is mainly a home product, which is not exposed to foreign competition in the same degree as wheat or wool. Would Bi-metallism have prevented this rise?

It is highly probable that fluctuations will in the future be much less violent than in the past, at any rate in the price of such articles as wheat, cotton, and sugar, which are supplied to this country from so many different sources that the risk of a general failure of the crops is reduced to a minimum.

The price of wheat in Mark Lane rose to 120s. per quarter in 1847. So long as we have Free Trade with all wheat-exporting countries, such a calamity is hardly conceivable; but perhaps Protectionists and Bi-metallists would consider the price in 1895 more calamitous than that in 1847.

## III.—COMPETITION OF SILVER-USING COUNTRIES.

It is not easy to understand why the competition of silver countries is more abnormal than that of gold countries such as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland,

whose rivalry is keenly felt both in the iron and textile trades.

That India, Japan, and possibly China, will manufacture in increasing quantities goods of which England had once a practical monopoly, is not only inevitable, but should hardly be a subject of regret to those who hold to the principles of Free Trade.

As soon as order and tolerable government were established in the East, and as soon as capital followed in their wake, was it natural or likely that cotton grown in the Bombay Presidency, or in Japan, should travel to and fro thousands of miles in order to be woven into cloth for the use of those who cultivated the plant on which it grew? As well might we lament that the woollen stuffs which the Medici, the Riccardi, or the Peruzzi of Florence, sent on pack-horses to be dyed in Flanders, no longer yield the profit from which the wealth of those mediæval bankers and merchant princes took its rise, just as Manchester spinners grew rich by weaving cotton to clothe the nakedness of a large part of the human race.

We must expect and be ready for competition, whether it come from the East or from the West, from cheaper labour or longer hours, from greater advantages of soil, of climate, or of situation, but to suppose that the use of a silver standard gives any advantage to our competitors is an unproved assumption, and in my humble judgment one of the most singular delusions that has ever taken possession of educated and intelligent minds.

BERTRAM CURRIE.



## MR. GOSCHEN'S CURRENCY SUGGESTIONS.

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To the Editor of *The Times*.

SIR,—I should like, with your permission, to make a few remarks on the very interesting speech delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Chamber of Commerce at Leeds.

Mr. Goschen dwells in forcible language upon the calamity which would have ensued if the firm of Baring had stopped payment in November last, and founds his main argument for increased reserves of gold upon the danger from which we then escaped. That this calamity was avoided and that confidence was so quickly restored, can hardly be adduced as evidence of the unsatisfactory condition of our banking system.

It is not apparent that the difficulty which occurred in Paris in 1889, in connection with the Comptoir d'Escompte, was more easily overcome, although the gold reserve of the Bank of France may have been double that of the Bank of England.

In advocating a larger gold reserve in London, because that reserve is habitually less than those of France, Germany, and the United States, it would have been pertinent to show that the condition of business in those countries is sounder and more progressive than in England. It might be argued that the capacity of England to attract gold in time

of need is far greater than that of other countries, in consequence of the exceptional position which England holds as the universal creditor and central banker of the world, and this hypothesis would be supported by the evidence of what actually occurred in 1847, 1857, and 1866, as well as in November last, when large supplies of gold were attracted from Australia, Brazil, and other countries, in addition to the artificial supplies from France and Russia.

As to the possible remedy indicated in Mr. Goschen's speech to result from an issue of £1 notes, it remains to be seen by what method they could be put into circulation. There are few things upon which mankind are so much the slaves of habit, or so suspicious of change, as in regard to the money which they are accustomed to handle in their daily transactions.

The banks who are invited by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to increase their cash reserves will naturally inquire to whose custody such reserves are to be entrusted. Is it seriously proposed that they should largely increase them for the benefit of a rival establishment, whose competition they already feel with increasing severity?

Would not the effect of creating any new and special reserve, to be used only in case of danger, intensify alarm whenever it was found necessary to encroach upon it? Such, at least, seems to be the case in New York, whenever the limit of 25 per cent. of the banking deposits is overpassed.

In conclusion, I would observe that the present banking system has gradually developed itself to meet the exigencies of business without State interference,

that if it has not created our financial supremacy, at any rate, it has been found compatible with such a supremacy as the world has never seen, and that under its operation no solvent firm has failed to meet its engagements. No banking system can be invented which will suspend the economical laws under which improvident trading leads to ruin, and the best service that the State can render in this and similar matters is to interfere as little as possible with the operation of those laws.

The improvements in our present system which seem useful and attainable are, I believe, to be sought in the direction of more extended co-operation between the Bank of England and the other leading banks, and possibly by the abandonment of the futile attempt to fix officially a rate of discount which it is impossible any longer to enforce.

W.

## SPEECH

DELIVERED BY MR. BERTRAM CURRIE ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE UNVEILING OF A STATUE OF MR. GLADSTONE AT  
THE CITY LIBERAL CLUB, WALBROOK, REFERRED TO ON  
P. 85. DECEMBER 13, 1883.<sup>1</sup>

THE first intention of the committee was to have addressed themselves to the noble President of the Club,<sup>2</sup> and I hoped he would have undertaken the duty which is undertaken by me, but I suppose the noble lord felt it would hardly be becoming in him to pass a public eulogy on a colleague with whom he is so closely connected, whose responsibility he shares, and, I may add, to the success of whose Administration he so ably contributes. (Cheers.) The next person to whom the attention of the committee was directed was Lord Wolverton, the attached follower and personal friend of Mr. Gladstone—(cheers)—but Lord Wolverton was unfortunately obliged to leave this country for the Continent, and I am commissioned to express his regret that he was unable to avail himself of the honour intended for him. This much I have said by way of excuse for my appearance here to-day, for I am painfully conscious that I have no qualification for the place I occupy except an extreme and sincere admiration for the great original of the statue we are to uncover. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I believe it is

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the *Daily News*, Friday, December 14, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> Earl Granville.

customary on occasions like the present to trace with more or less detail the life and actions of the man whom we have come to honour, but I feel that would be impossible in this case. The political life of Mr. Gladstone has been so protracted, his actions have been so numerous, that even in the most discursive manner I should be unable to give a connected account of them. I think it would be more acceptable to you if I were to endeavour to select out of the whole of his great and glorious career some particular instance of great and never to be forgotten service to the Liberal party; and, if I were called upon to select such instance, I should select the Midlothian campaign. (Cheers.) We vividly remember the state of affairs that existed in this country when the campaign began. We have not forgotten the anxiety and apprehension with which we viewed the policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government. (Hear, hear.) We felt that the vessel of the State was being navigated by rash and reckless men, that she was entering on a dangerous course which could only lead to misfortune. All this we felt, but how few of us were able to express our thoughts with effect, or to make them heard by others. We looked forward with grave apprehension to the meeting of a new Parliament which appeared likely to be swayed by the same counsels and obedient to the same leaders as the last. At this juncture Mr. Gladstone came forth from his retirement armed with the most righteous indignation. (Cheers.) He left his quiet home, his studious leisure, to which I doubt not he intended to devote the remainder of his days, and he left them in our cause. (Cheers.) Shall we ever

forget how he fought that battle? What force of declamation, what freshness of illustration, what wonderful feats of memory, what mastery of facts he then displayed! How he discomfited his opponents, and secured a triumph to the Liberal party, the latest history shall tell; and, surely, if ever conqueror deserved that a statue should be decreed to him by his fellow-countrymen, that honour is most justly his due. (Cheers.)

Having in the briefest manner sketched one of the most interesting periods of Mr. Gladstone's career, I should like, with your permission, to say a few words of the man himself, of the qualities and combination of qualities which distinguish him from other men. Strong men lived before Agamemnon. Great orators and statesmen have never been wanting in this country, and for eloquence and the power of swaying assemblies it would be hard to surpass the power and passion of the elder Pitt, the argumentative force of Fox, the reasoned eloquence of Burke, or the wit and fancy of Sheridan; but I have never learned, as I have read the history of these great men, that they combined with their wonderful eloquence those no less rare and valuable gifts of patient industry, of mastery of detail, which in those days may not have been a necessary attribute of statesmen, but which are now so necessary to constitute a successful leader of a party, or to enable him to pass useful measures through Parliament. (Cheers.) This, gentlemen, is the wonderful combination we find in Mr. Gladstone—a rhetorical ability of the highest class coupled with a power of elaborating the most difficult and complicated measures, of explaining them to Parliament,

and of passing them through the opposition, not always of the most scrupulous nature, which there awaits them. (Cheers.) It has often occurred to me to ask why, while the name of Mr. Gladstone fills us with such enthusiasm, it seems to create in the breasts of our opponents exactly the opposite feeling. (Laughter.) I can only attribute it to the contraction of their views and the feebleness of their minds. (Laughter.) When I hear a man revile Mr. Gladstone, as we all of us so often hear, it is an indication to me, not that Mr. Gladstone is not great, but that his reviler is so small. (Laughter and cheers.) You all remember the happy maxim of La Rochefoucauld, which I will translate in this way: "No man is a hero in the eyes of his valet." And you know, doubtless, the admirable comment that was made upon that maxim: "That is not because the hero is not a true hero, but because the valet is and remains a valet." (Laughter.) His mind is so constructed that he cannot see, he cannot understand the heroic proportions of his master. Gentlemen, you have shown by your presence here to-day that you know how to recognize a true hero, the man of simple tastes and simple manners, with a noble scorn for vulgar aims, forgetful of himself, free from all personal motives, devoted to the public interest, and especially devoted to those of the poor and the unfriended. (Cheers.) If such qualities do not make a hero, if such a man does not deserve to be commemorated in marble, I know not what human object is worthy of our praise. (Cheers.) I have said the abuse of Mr. Gladstone proceeds from the inability of our opponents to understand him, but there is yet another

cause. I fear that the base passion of envy has much to do with it. (Hear, hear.) They are dazzled by the glare and the blaze of his unrivalled superiority. It is the privilege of superior wisdom and superior virtue in all times to excite the animosity of the vicious and the unwise :

Sure fate of him beneath whose rising ray  
Each star of meaner merit fades away.  
Oppressed we feel the beam directly beat,  
Those suns of glory please not till they set.

Gentlemen, when that glorious sun shall set—when, in the fulness of time, his name shall be added to the roll of those illustrious men who have ruled England before him, I venture to predict that the voice of envy and depreciation will be hushed, that from all parties and from all quarters of the world will come the universal feeling that a greater and nobler and more truly patriotic statesman never rose to guide the destinies of his country.



LETTERS FROM GERMANY.

1845. 1846. 1848.



## I.

### LETTERS.

1845. 1846.

In the preceding autobiographical sketch, not more than two or three pages are given to recollections of the months spent at Weimar. The writer expresses regret that the loss of the diary kept at that time, prevents him from being certain about names and dates.<sup>1</sup> He was ignorant of the existence of several packets of letters addressed by him to his parents and brothers during the time he spent abroad, which were carefully preserved by them, and have since been found in a despatch-box that belonged to his father.

The following letters, written by Bertram when in his eighteenth year, relate in detail his life in Germany.

*Verviers Railway Station, on the frontier of Prussia,  
Friday, May 2, 1845.*

My dear Mother,

As we have to stay at this station for about an hour, I will take out my pen and ink to write you a letter. I had intended doing so last night, but as I rose at three, and did not get to bed till eleven, you may imagine that I was rather tired. We sailed from Dover in the *Princess Mary*, and were down at the place of starting at four o'clock, but we did not get off much before twenty minutes to five. We had a very

<sup>1</sup> See p. 15.

quick passage, but considerably rough, the wind and tide in our favour. Eden suffered considerably, but I did not experience any unpleasant sensation. We arrived at Ostend about a quarter before ten, the distance being seventy miles. We met at the hotel at Dover, and afterwards in the steamer, a Colonel Cowell, formerly of the Guards. He was residing at Brussels, and consequently gave us advice about the inns in Belgium. We repaired to the Hotel des Bains, recommended by Murray, and after breakfast were much surprised by meeting with Williamson, who, with his father and mother, is residing at Bruges. We found it impossible to get our luggage through the *douane* in time for the train at eleven o'clock, so we walked about the town with W. There is one extremely fine airy walk on the fortifications, where gentlemen in encumbered circumstances, who form a great part of the population of Ostend, take the air. We then dined at a capital *table d'hote*, 2½ francs, including wine. At three o'clock, at which time the next train started, we set off. I determined to stop at Louvain, which Murray described as an interesting place, with a good inn. It is about a third of the way from Ostend to Cologne. We passed through Bruges and Ghent, and also Malines, or Mechlin, which is the centre of the Belgian railroads; the country very flat and uninteresting, but the vegetation is much more advanced than in England.

We arrived at Louvain a little after nine o'clock: here we repaired to L'Hotel de Suede, and got some supper and beds. Previously to going to bed, we walked down to the railway, which is some way from the town, to inquire about the trains, as the people at

the inn were so stupid, that we could make nothing out. Here we found the station shut, and an obtuse Belgian private soldier, who could not speak French. The railroads here are very bad, and there are no printed papers of trains in circulation, so that it is difficult to find out when they start. As there was only one train from Louvain to Cologne, we had no choice, and were obliged to go at a quarter to nine. We were called at a quarter past seven, and by a great effort managed to see what was worth seeing before breakfast at eight. There is a beautiful Gothic Hotel de Ville, according to Murray one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in Europe. The Cathedral also is worth seeing,\* numerous shrines, &c., and also a beautiful carved wood pulpit, which last we could not see very well, as service was going on. We then started on the rail, and passed through the plain of Neerwinder, celebrated for two great battles fought there, Tirlemont and Liége, which is situated in a valley, and of which there is a beautiful view from the railroad. We crossed over the Meuse on a very fine bridge. There are nineteen tunnels in the railroad from Liége to Aix-la-Chapelle.

*Cologne, 11 p.m.*—I was obliged to leave off my letter at Verviers, as the train came up. We stopped at Aix-la-Chapelle for two hours, and walked down to the town, saw the Cathedral, &c. We reached Cologne about nine o'clock, p.m., and find ourselves in a very comfortable inn. We have been to J. M. Farina's, and dined. To-morrow we start per rail for Bonn, and then join the steamer on the Rhine. We are in the Hotel du Rhin, and find it a very good one. Soap, in the German inns, is charged in the bill as an extra,

and one does not find it in the rooms, but the waiter brings a cake wrapped up in paper.

With love to all,

Believe me to be your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

Cologne, May 2, 1845.

*Mayence, Monday, May 5, 1845.*

My dearest Mother,

I am writing this letter under the same circumstances as the last, viz., at a railway-station where there is no table, so that I am compelled to hold my desk on my knee, which must be an apology for bad writing. We left Cologne on Saturday morning, after visiting all the lions, which consist principally in the different churches, which are filled with relics. We started about eleven, and arrived at Coblentz about ten in the evening, where we resolved to stop, as it is beautifully situated at the junction of the Rhine and the Moselle. We stopped here on Sunday; there is a very nice little English Church, which is given by the King of Prussia to the English residents. It is the chapel of the royal palace. Here we were enlightened by one Menns, who takes pupils, among whom we recognized two Etonians, Cook and Leech. The former accompanied us over the Ehrenbreitstein (Honour's broad stone), which is the principal fort of Coblentz. The town is very strongly fortified: it is said to be, after Gibraltar, the most impregnable fortress in the world. From the top of this rock there is the most beautiful view of the surrounding country, watered by the Rhine and Moselle. I think the Rhine

is decidedly more beautiful than the Scotch lakes, the outline of the mountains is far bolder. We passed the Drachenfels and Roland's Castle in sunshine, but the day was very showery and cold.

We found a very good inn at Coblenz, all the waiters speaking English. At all the good inns in Germany, the waiters are sent abroad to learn the different languages, and they are therefore very intelligent and well-informed. I think that the inn-keepers are far the most gentlemanly men that we have seen, and certainly better dressed than any of their guests.

I was rather amused by meeting a steamer with the name "John Cockerell" in huge letters on the paddle-boxes, and I imagined that the fame of that great prince had reached even to these distant shores, but I find from Murray that there is an iron-founder of that name of almost equal fame with his great namesake.

We started this morning at half-past seven by steam for Mayence. There were very few passengers on board, but I got engaged in conversation with a fat, middle-aged lady, who I thought seemed very clever and intelligent, and whom I soon found out to be Mrs. Austen, travelling with her husband. We then talked a great deal about the Grottes, Count Thun (who she is going to visit), Saxe-Weimar, &c. She seems to have a quantity of friends on the Continent, and knows the best German families. She was very chatty and agreeable, and told me a great deal about Germany. It was very great luck to meet with any conversable person, they being very rare in these parts.

In the Cologne railway we met with a desperately vulgar English shop-keeper, who, in spite of strenuous endeavours on our part to get rid of him, would stick

to us, and bored us with accounts of his having been cheated, &c.

*Frankfurt.*—We have come to Frankfùrt by the railway from Mayence, a journey of about one hour. I inflicted a good deal of French upon a wretched native in the train. We find ourselves in a very comfortable inn here, L'Hotel de Russie. We have just finished our *petit souper* in the coffee-room, and are now sitting over our coffee in our own room, about eleven o'clock. We find that the Eilwagen starts at eight in the evening; we have sent to secure the *coupé* for to-morrow, but the office is shut, so that we have desired them to go the first thing to-morrow morning to secure places.

There are several things worth seeing at Frankfùrt, Dounecher's statue of Ariadne, pictures, &c. We were very much bored to-day by being kept waiting on the bridge of boats at Mayence twice for about half an hour, while they opened the bridge to allow the vessels to pass. This entirely stops the thoroughfare for some time.

To-day we had a very fine day for the Rhine, though there was a cold wind. We were quite in the middle of the castles, which are very beautiful. Prince Frederick of Prussia has repaired, or rather rebuilt, one of them, Rheinberg, and made a very pretty summer residence of it. While we were waiting at Mayence, we went to the gardens there just out of the town, where there is a beautiful view of the confluence of the Maine and the Rhine.

I hope to find a letter at Weimar. With best love to my father, Mary, and Edith, believe me, my dear mother, to be your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.



*Hotel de Russie, Weimar, Thursday, May 7, 1845.*

My dear Father,

We arrived here last night about half-past seven, having started from Frankfort at eight the night before. We had the *coupé*, which luxury, however, is participated in by a rather odoriferous conductor, without an idea of anything but German. I could not manage to sleep, as my interior was in rather a disordered state, owing to some *vin* (or rather, vinegar) *ordinaire* at dinner. The journey, on the whole, was not disagreeable, as the pace is good, and the motion not uneasy. We were not able to take our luggage with us, as they will not allow more than forty pounds to each passenger, and though we tried bribery and abuse, it was impossible to persuade them to allow us to take it.

Upon arriving last night, I posted off a card to old Weissenborn, with a request to call at eleven the next day, to which he returned a pasteboard, with an intimation that Dr. W. *shall* have the honour of waiting, &c. Accordingly he arrived, and immediately perceived the astonishing likeness between me and George. He then accompanied us first to Lieberkuhn's, and then to Zwierlein's. We found the former in a very greasy dressing-gown. He seems to be an amiable, quiet man. We then went to Zwierlein's, where there are three daughters, considered the belles of Weimar, but they are no great shakes. Z—— himself was not at home, so we walked about the Public Gardens, and then went to the reading-room, where Weissenborn put down our names. After dinner, we went to the

rifle-shooting, where we were introduced to the gun-maker, who is the best shot, and quite the nob there. We had a few shots. I got 11, 10, and 7, in three shots (the highest mark being 12). The shooting was entirely among the tradesmen, who have a meeting there every Wednesday.

I suppose that Weissenborn has already explained the *ménage* at Zwierlein's. He seems a gentlemanly man. He and Weissenborn came here, and had a bottle of wine after dinner to-day. The only objection to the place is that there is only one room, and I am to sleep on a sofa about five feet long. I have, however, made a strike against this. He seems disposed to be very accommodating, and his daughters speak a little English, and some French. There is a Madame Zwierlein, but I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing her.

Weissenborn tells me that I must get leave from the Chamberlain to wear a plain black coat at Court, as it is usual to have a court dress-coat, if one has no uniform. The Court are soon going to move to their summer residence at Belvedere.

At Zwierlein's I am to breakfast by myself and dine with them. Tea is left doubtful. Weissenborn tells me that a good coat comes to 20 thalers, which is about 60 shillings. As I have not yet had intercourse with the Schneider, I do not know the price of waistcoats. W—— himself charges 18 dollars a month. Zwierlein 40—about £6. I will send you however in my next a full account of my expenditure, as I have not yet had much time to inquire about it. The journey came to £13 for me. Eden had to pay more in various ways. The principal reasons for this

expenditure were (1) the frequent change of money first into francs, then thalers, then florins, and now again into thalers; (2) the charge made by all the railways for luggage (40 lbs. being all that is allowed). The fare from Dover to Ostend was very dear—£1 1s.; the railroad from London 18s. 6d.; the inn dear and bad, 10s.; this made the journey to Ostend very dear. We incurred some extra expense in feeding occasionally in our rooms, but after a long day's journey it is almost impossible to sup in a room filled with fumes of stale tobacco and smoking Germans, as the public rooms invariably were at night. I made a purchase on the journey of an umbrella, which was necessary, as we have had a good deal of rain. The gentleman to whom Mr. Mellish gave me an introduction is not in Weimar now. I intend to send my letters to-morrow. My direction is, "Chez M. le Conseiller Zwierlein, Weimar." With love to my mother, Mary, and the baby,

I remain, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

May 11, 1845.

My dearest Mother,

I have this moment finished reading your agreeable long letter, which they sent here from the post-office this morning. I find myself in very comfortable lodgings. I have a nice room, the only drawback to which is that, as a matter of course, there is no carpet. My landlord only occupies the ground floor of a large house; the rooms open into

one another, and the approach to my room is through the dining-room, which is never occupied except at dinner-time. The family consist of M. Zwiertein, who is an *employé* in one of the Government offices: he would be agreeable if he were not so painfully civil and obliging. He comes into the room generally when I am breakfasting, with profound salutations and requests to know if there is anything which I would wish to have altered, and professes his desire to accommodate me in everything. This I hope will wear off, as it is a great bore to be always asked if one does not want anything, and pressed to take things which one does not want. Then there is a Madame, who I have no doubt is very agreeable, but she does not speak a word of anything but German. Her gestures, however, at dinner, to induce me to eat, are terribly intelligible. Then come three daughters. The eldest is plain but agreeable, and speaks capital French and very fair English, but we always converse in French. The second is very pretty, by far the best-looking person I have seen since I left England. She speaks French well. The youngest is shy, and does not speak at all. These young ladies are extremely refined for Germany, for they neither eat with their knives nor pick their teeth with their forks, and the only solecism which they commit at dinner is in making small pellets of bread, which they throw at one another: they are nevertheless more agreeable than most English young ladies, as they are extremely obliging, and have plenty to say for themselves. There is one very painful circumstance attending the dinner, which is that the youngest daughter brings in and takes away all the dishes, and the servant never enters

the room. Of course they cry out if one attempts to move. Besides this, they make me sit at the head of the table.

Our dinner yesterday was as follows. A kind of thick meaty soup. Beef boiled to tatters and dry, with an oily attempt at caper sauce. A pancake with *confiture de framboise*, and high cheese. This is rather distressing, but I suppose one will get used to it. I have breakfast about nine o'clock and tea about eight. They are going to make an arrangement by which I shall tea with Eden one night, and he with me the next. I have as yet had tea with them. I sleep on a sofa which is rather too short, and when I get up the servant removes the bed-clothes and makes it into a sofa again. I have just, with the aid of the dictionary, ordered my *flunky* or servant to procure me a *grosse Tonne* (great Tub), to which he answered that the Englishers always asked for that. I have got a capital servant: his name is, I think, Carl. He is engaged by Zwierlein to come and brush my clothes and attend upon me in the morning. He has attended upon almost all the Englishmen that have been here.

The Professor Lieberkuhn is a great joke. Our medium of conversation is Latin, and the other day I had a long disputation in Latin as to whether the Romans pronounced "Cicero" Kikero or not. It was capital fun, as we riled him considerably. He is a very good-natured, harmless sort of creature. He has asked me to-day to a great spread which he gives on the occasion of the baptism of one of his children, or, as he explained it to me, *Christianorum effusio*. He is one of the under Professors in the Gymnasium here.

I sent my letters yesterday to the Comtesse Fritsch

and Madame Eglosstein. The Baron Zikagi is out of town: when here, he lives in this house. I find the Zwierleins know Mr. Mellish very well.

I met Mrs. Austen again on her way to Dresden at the door of the inn. She told me that she had looked about for us in Frankfrt, to make a proposal that we should post together to Weimar. This would have been agreeable, and I should think more economical, for in addition to the £2 for the fare of the Eilwagen, we had to pay £1 apiece for our luggage by the Pack-wagen. Weissenborn told us that this was the regular charge.

I began my lessons in German yesterday. We read some of Lepin's fables, and I am going to do some Tiark for him, and also some of Boileau's exercises. He comes to Eden at ten, and to me at eleven o'clock. I went yesterday evening and played at *Kegel* with the officers: it is rather an amusing game.

Last Friday was the anniversary of Schiller's death, and we went down into the Grand Ducal vault, which is very rarely opened, where he and Goethe are buried. Madame Zwierlein placed a wreath of laurel upon their respective coffins: these are regularly renewed every year. There is a good view of the town and surrounding country from the cemetery. And we saw that ingenious contrivance for preventing premature interment which I think George described in one of his letters. Thimbles are placed on all the fingers of the deceased, which at the slightest movement by pulling the threads on which they are suspended ring an alarum in a room which is always occupied.

I have just been interrupted by a visit from a very great swell to demand my passport. I had great difficulty in making out what he wanted. I find my French considerably improved, and I can now speak quite fluently, though not grammatically.

I find that the Miss Zwierleins have met George at the Schwendlers. I am going to ask Weissenborn to introduce me to them. There is an English family here of the name of Fane, connected I believe with the Westmoreland family.

I cannot yet find out the exact price of clothing, but I will send it as soon as I have. The banker here, who is of the Hebrew persuasion, showed me the letter of credit, which he says he does not understand, as he is requested to pay the sum of £10 and to continue the same for six months. He does not know whether he is to pay it every month, or how it is to be done. It certainly is not very clearly expressed in the letter. I told him that I would mention it when I wrote to my father. Perhaps he will write to the bank to explain it. Old Weissenborn is a very good fellow: he is very kind, and walks with us every day. I have not yet seen the Gross Herzog. The young Prince is in Holland, and they say he is going to London. With love to all at home, and kisses to Mary and the baby, believe me to be your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

Pray send my letter to Eton if Maynard wants to hear. I think I have written you a good long proser.

Weimar, Monday, May 19, 1845.

My dear Father,

I have delayed my letter till to-day in order to give you an account of our dinner and presentation at Court, which took place yesterday. In my last I told you that I was going to a *Baptême* at Professor Lieberkuhn's. It was very amusing, as the company was not very select, and they made a great noise and got very much elevated.

On the Monday following (May 12th), Mr. Parry arrived in Weimar for a day. He is a very pleasant, good-natured little man, about 36 or 38. He was extremely kind to us, and introduced us to some of the best people here; among others we called upon Madame de Rochefoucault, who is very pretty and agreeable. We afterwards went to the theatre with him, and were introduced to Madame Maltitz, the Russian Ambassadrice (who is also pretty and agreeable: I am going to-night to have tea with her), and also to the Countess Marschalle, who is related to Mellish. We heard the Grand Duke and Duchess ask who those distinguished foreigners were.

I saw the other day a very curious plan of shooting vermin—hawks, ravens, &c. A large horned owl is tied to a perch, near which is a hut underground with holes for shooting out of. The birds are attracted by this owl, and the man then takes a cool shot from his den. Unfortunately the day that I went there the owl was so shaken about that he became unwell, and we were obliged to leave off without getting a shot.

On Thursday we went to see the cross-bow



shooting, which is very curious, as the shooting is entirely confined to the ancient cross-bow. The steel bow is of immense strength, and it is strung by a kind of windlass. On Friday we walked with Weissenborn to a very pretty village situated in a valley called Buchfahrt: it is on the Ihm, the same river which runs through Weimar. Here we eat trout, and had a game at whist. We were accompanied by a young Englishman in the army here: his name is Cathray. Some of the officers are very gentlemanly men. We are now acquainted with most of them. On the same day there was dancing in a place called the Resource, or Erholung in German. The room is very fine, but the company were not of the *élite* of Weimar. I was introduced to Mrs. Fane, who is a sister-in-law of Mr. Cecil Fane.

On Saturday I went to the theatre: the opera was *Don Juan*: Mozart's music, and very fine. The female singers are very fair. As the Duchess is extremely fond of music, we frequently have operas. We also left our cards on M. Spiegel, the Chamberlain, which is a necessary preliminary to an introduction at Court. On Sunday we were asked to dine at three, and to come again in the evening at seven to the Palace. We set out in full costume in sedan-chairs, and after waiting some time were presented by two generals—M. Birle and M. Beutwitz. This was managed for us by a Captain Seebach, who is a very pleasant officer in the same house as the *Zwierleins*. The Duke said he had forgotten his English, and hoped to see us very often, and I treated him to *Votre altesse Royale*. The Grand Duchess remembered one of my name having been there last year. She is very gracious,

and a very fine, handsome person, with splendid emeralds. The Prince of Modena was a guest, and, as we had a great spread, about fifty people, the dinner would have been good but for a fault which exists always in Germany, that the plates were cold. As we dined off plate, this was dreadful. In the evening we had a very fair concert. I was introduced to the *demoiselles d'honneur*, who are pretty and agreeable. I also made acquaintance with the Schwendlers, who of course discovered the most striking resemblance to George. The other day I shook hands in the street with a man who I thought was an officer, but who I found out was a policeman, and had been George's servant. He had mistaken me for George, and offered me his hand. I suppose George was on very good terms with him.

The Countess Fritsch came and spoke to me about Madame Pitt. She told me she was very thick with the *Imperatrice de Russie*.

I keep a journal of all the events of each day, and my letter is principally a compilation from that valuable work.

With regard to expense, the articles of clothing which I am to have are as follows: Coat, 60 shillings; waistcoat (evening), 12 shillings; hat (I have been obliged to get a Court hat, the price of which I do not know, but it will be about 12 shillings), 15 shillings; scarf (of black satin, which is always worn of an evening here), 14 shillings; boots (of patent leather, which I was assured by Weissenborn were necessary for the Court), 15 shillings. Zwierlein has accommodated me with a sword, and I had only a small sum to pay for refitting it. This would make a total

of about £6 10s. These are all the things which I was in immediate want of, but I shall in course of time want trousers. The expenses of masters are: Weissenborn, per month, 18 thalers, which is a little below £3; dancing-master (whom I have not engaged), 4 thalers (12 shillings) the course—about ten lessons. Zwierlein is 40 thalers—£6 per month. Washing about 1½ thalers, or 4s. to 4s. 6d. Gloves are very dear (2s. the pair). Servant about 5s. the month: he is paid the same sum by Zwierlein. Besides this, there are the subscriptions to the Reading Room, Resource, Shooting House, &c. The theatre is 21 groschen, rather more than 2 shillings. There are besides numerous extras—wine, servants, and any expedition or walk where a dinner is necessary. Conveyances are all dear. Weissenborn has calculated it often, and he tells me that he has written to you on the subject of expenses. I am not yet aware of many of the incidental disbursements, but they seem to be very numerous. I am going on with German steadily.

With many thanks for your kind letter and love to all at home,

Believe me, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

TO B. W. C. FROM HIS FATHER.

*Hyde Park Terrace, May 26, 1845.*

My dear Bertram,

Your agreeable letter of the 19th has just arrived. Your full accounts of a society which is quite as new to us as to yourself are very amusing, and I

hope that you will continue them. All descriptions of persons with their sayings and doings, sketches of character, &c., when they are parties you come in contract with, are interesting to *us*.

I am anxious to hear more of the "famille Zwierlein," more particularly of the *demoiselles*, as George (who says he was written you a long letter) insinuates that one of your friends fell a victim to his power of inadvertent captivation. As long as their battery is confined to "bread pellets," well and good, but pray beware of any serious flirtation. What are their names, ages, &c.? Tell us all about them. Married ladies like Mesdames de Rochefoucauld, &c., know more of the world, and are, I should think, better to talk to. I do hope you will avoid *French* with all *on* whom you can learn *German*, this being the great object of every twenty-four hours.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Fane dined here Saturday. Mrs. W. F. was a Dashwood, and is aunt to my old friend Charles Bruce. . . . Mrs. Grote was not well enough to come on Saturday, but we had the glorious G. Warburton, the Coltmans, and a pleasant party. I have been poorly since mama wrote last, but am getting better and take an airing daily. With regard to your letters, we had none from Louvain, but we had one dated 2nd May, begun at Verviers R. station and finished at Cologne.

How comes it that old Weissenborn's charge is so high, so much more than for G. and James together? Unless he devotes himself to you soul and body for the day, I don't understand it. You must exercise care in the disbursement of various petty expenses and not arrange them according to English notions,

but be as economical as you can. The credit which puzzled the Jew was simply a credit for £10 with the usual limitations. I will shortly open another for the same amount. Zwierlein and Weissenborn I will pay separately. I particularly wish you (taking a memorandum) to pay ready money for everything.

Your friend, de la Rousière, is gone over to Paris to bring back something very clever for his wife to go to the Queen's *bal costumé* in—time, one hundred years ago—all in powder.

We have referred to George's journal and find it there recorded under date May 30th: "Met the Fraulein Zwierlein: *her* inadver. cap. very amusing!" Which of them was the victim? Is the whole a fable?

On Wednesday, the R. Ellices, Mr. Vincent, Abdys, Ld. Marcus Hill, Barnards, &c., dine here. Thursday—R. Goslings, Goulburn, P. Bouverie, J. Cockerells, V.-Ch., &c., Lucy Wodehouse. Next week—Seniors, Hayters, Mr. Loyd, Forbes of Edinbro', &c.

Here Mr. Raikes Currie's letter abruptly ends, and the remainder of the sheet is filled with a few lines from Mrs. Raikes Currie.

*May 27th.*

Dearest Bertie,

Papa tells me to finish this letter. I have no news to communicate. We go on as usual. Papa does not regain his strength so quickly as I could wish, and only goes out airing in the carriage. We have dinner parties on the 28th and 30th, and talk of going

on the Friday for change of air to the hotel at Slough for two or three days. It has been re-opened by Dotesio with a flaming advertisement. We have invitations to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Strutt on the 7th, and with the V.-Chan. on the 11th, also with the Macnaughtens on the 4th. The Wigrams are going to the Court *bal costumé*. I shall go and look at them. I cannot fancy the ball itself will be very pretty: *all* the dresses in such a stiff style, and of course there can be no dancing, save minuets.

Mary is invited to a little party to-morrow at Mrs. Robartes in Hill Street—a conjuror and dancing afterwards. *À propos* of conjuring, they say M. Philippe, who advertises *Soirées mystérieuses* at the St. James' Theatre, is the most wonderful conjurer ever seen, beats Herr Dobler “into fits.”

Dear Edith does not forget your instructions. She said yesterday to Mary at tea, who had asked for more cake, which was not granted her, “Don't you wish you may get it?” and added, “I *mean* by that, that I don't think you will get it!”

Your father wishes you to take a course of dancing and to endeavour to accomplish waltzing *well*. He has explained that he wishes you to pay everything except *Zwierlein* and *Weissenborn*, and to be careful of expense. You must not indulge in *frequent* dinners and other expensive amusements. Do you find English books?

I suppose in a short time you will be able to understand the service at the Lutheran church. I wish Sunday were not a day of complete amusement.

The weather here up to the present time has been very cold, but it seems improving a little. I believe

Mr. L. Loyd is to be married in about a fortnight. I have not seen him since he was engaged. He put us off dining here.

Mary and Edith unite in kindest love with, my dear Bertie,

Yours very affect.,

L. S. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*Sunday, May 25, 1845.*

My dear Father,

I received a joint letter from you and my mother on the same day as the letter (also from her) which was posted on the 17th. The post office *employées* having previously forwarded two letters to Zwierleins were, as I thought, aware of my residence, but having expected a letter for a day or two, I sent and found there had been a letter lying there since the 19th. I have, moreover, to acknowledge a short letter from my mother announcing the hooking of Mr. L. Loyd. I am very much astonished at this match, and hope Mr. L. may not have cause to grieve at his departure from Green Street.

My mother states that you are desirous for further particulars concerning the *ménage* Zwierlein. The eldest daughter is the most pleasant; she is, I believe, considered pretty here, but her jaws are perfectly *cerbercan*, which entirely precludes anything of the sort. Her name is Thérèse. The second is really very pretty, but she is not so agreeable; her name is Bella. The third is tall, she rejoices in Emilie as a cognomen. The father Z. is counsellor or Rath of the household, which means that he has a place of £100 a year in

the household department of the Grand Duke. His business consists in calculating the expenditure of wax candles and meat. Madame has been a beauty and an heiress. They are not "von" (*i.e.* noble), but they are in very good society here. I had tea the other evening with Madame Maltitz, who is the most agreeable person I have met, and very nice looking. Old Maltitz is a cousin of B. Brunnow and very intelligent. He is reading *Coningsby*, and comes upon me daily for explanations of English words.

I see *Galignani* every day. It seems that the Queen is coming to Gotha, in which case she will visit the Grand Duchess. Yesterday there was no Court, as the Prince of Prussia, who is son-in-law of Weimar, was here; he is the heir presumptive to the throne of Prussia. The celebrated Humboldt was also here yesterday, but I did not see him.

The Grand Duchess is going in a few days to Ems—a watering-place near Coblenz. She will stay there for six weeks. The Grand Duke is also shortly going to Carlsbad. This is rather a bore as the Court will then be finished. I called yesterday upon the Schwendlers, who I had met, but they were not at home. They have now moved into the rooms formerly occupied by George and James.

*Monday, 26th.*—I walked yesterday to Belvedere, the Duke's summer residence. It was built by the great-grandfather of the present man, and is in the Louis XIV. style. The gardens, hot-houses, &c., are on a very large scale.

I am glad to hear in the last letter that you are improving in health, and hope to hear in the next arrival of despatches that you are quite restored.



I have already had to send my card-plate to the engravers in order to get some more cards. The consumption of pasteboard here is frightful. One has to leave cards upon the father, mother, daughters, &c. If one goes in person, the corner of the card is turned up. The taste in pasteboard here somewhat resembles Sir Bowyer's—the arms, titles, appointments of the individual being all blazoned forth. I received one the other day from “Le Ministre de France.”

The weather here until Saturday was dreadful. We had rain without sun every day, but we have since experienced a change and it is now very fine. I hope you will send me in your letter some political news. I have read of the “gigantic scheme of godless education.”

My mother alludes to W.'s charge. It is eighteen dollars a month or 2s. a lesson, this he says is his established charge. My house here is situated at the corner of a new street called the Fried-Hof or Cemetery, because leading to that place. It is on the borders of the town, but at no great distance from any part of it. There is a small open space at the end of the street which is faced by a part of our house. Eden is in a street at right angles to mine and very near. The streets are very broad and the houses low, so that they are quite airy and light.

The only way of transmitting newspapers at a moderate expense is by sending them through a bookseller to his agent at Hamburgh, from whence they are sent very reasonably by post. Ackermann is the London agent of the Hamburgh man. We dine every day at half-past one or two. Z.'s monthly payment

will be due on the 9th of June. Pray congratulate L. Loyd from me. Where does he mean to live? With love to my mother and many thanks for her amusing letters, love to Mary, the baby, believe me, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

If Maynard will write I will answer him.

P.S.—I am to begin Kotzebue's plays to-morrow.

The next letter in the series is addressed to his elder brother, who had spent some time in Weimar in the preceding year.

*Weimar, May 29, 1845.*

My dear George,

I take the opportunity of a rainy day to answer your letter, which I received on Wednesday, the 27th. I gave your remembrances, which were thankfully received by Weissenborn, Rheins, &c. Your knowledge of the topography of Weimar seems to have become somewhat dim from your long absence. My house is not near the Gymnasium, nor is that of Mr. Maltitz, who lives in Goethe's house. I live in the Fried-Hof Strasse, near the corner. The entrance is by a high green door. The Zihagers and Seebachs live in the same house. Maltitz's house is in a small square very near to me. Opposite to me is the house where V. Rex, the officer, lives, and the next street parallel to me is the road to Belvedere, with the avenue of chesnut-trees. Horrocks is in England and will not return till July. My flunk's

name is Care (I don't vouch for the orthography), but that is the pronunciation. As he is rather of an obtuse nature, I am daily contemplating to "drive dull Care away."

Mdlle. Zwierlein indignantly disclaims any connection with you beyond a passing acquaintance. Your acquaintance with her seems to have produced melancholy in you, for she told me one day, "Monsieur votre frère n'était pas gai comme vous."

I have now become rather a dab at *Kegel* and occasionally win a few pfennigs. I cannot, however, come up to the twisting of v. Rhein ii. There has already been one dance at the Erholung; but the society was not at all of the *élite* of Weimar. There is one to-night if the weather improves, which is unlikely, as it is the worst I ever saw. I am acquainted with most of the officers. The most gentlemanly is Rex, a fine young fellow and on the staff. Leibnitz is also a nice fellow. One soon learns something of German in their company. I go a good deal to the guardroom, which is well attended by the officers. I have been frequently to the theatre, but we have hardly anything but operas, *Don Giovanni*, *Sonnambula*, *Norma*, &c. In the last we had a very good singer who made her first appearance.

On Tuesday I went to take a last farewell of the Gross Hedgehog. He started with the Duchess on Wednesday. She will be away six weeks. The old boy said to me, "Mi tear sir, I hope you are quite well." I have been asked to-day to go to Madame de Heldorf, but, as I have a Kopf-Schmerz, I declined.

I sent for the dancing-master the other day. He is a vile man, quite a Spitz-büben, and professes to

be an intimate friend of yours: his name is Engst. He came into my room with a dramatic air, shook hands with me! and asked if you had not told me "Mille choses de lui." He has since written to me and directed only "Wohlgeborn," which is a horrid insult. He is a kind of second lover on the Weimar stage.

There is a man here named Cathray, who has been in the West Indies, and has very bad health, who has actually entered the Weimar service, for what reason I cannot make out. He has travelled a great deal and written novels. He is about twenty-eight and is much addicted to long-bow practice, however he is a tolerably good fellow. He and some other men, among whom were Rheins and Thompson, came to me last night, and had a game of whist and a bowl of punch. There is a very nice fellow, an officer, but a man of about forty, one Seebach. He has introduced me to most of the people. The general of that name is also a nice old fellow. Count Boyse is an agreeable old man. Your principal friends, viz., those that have made tender inquiries are, Engst, Duntz (who have both shaken hands with me), and an Irish washerwoman. Eden, having lost his fishing-rod on the road, has sent to Frankfurt for one, and is going to try fishing.

I suppose you are going out to balls now. Although you express a wish to be here, I would *mit grossem Vergnügen* change with you, as Weimar, though a very fair sort of place, is decidedly inferior to the metropolis.

Weissenborn, with the exception of his ailment (as he calls it), is in strong health. His conversation principally relates to the aforesaid ailment, and to

one Peter, a Yankee, who has been here and quite captivated old W. I am reading with him the *Deutsche Kleinstädter* of Kotzebue.

With love to all at home, believe me, your affect. brother,

B. W. CURRIE.

June 5, 1845.

My dear Mother,

I received a joint production of yours and my father's on the 2nd, for which I am much obliged, but as I had written to George on the 30th, I was obliged to wait in order to get up some intelligence. I accomplished a letter to Mr. S. J. Loyd on the same day that I wrote to George, as he had exacted a promise to that effect, before I left England. I have, since that, had several lessons from the dancing-master, who seems anxious to protract the lessons to as long a term as possible, and consequently teaches me as little as he can. I find the *gallope* very hard, but to-day I am going to have a lesson, and I have the Misses Z. to dance with me.

On Sunday the Z.'s gave a spread. One of the guests was a Professor of French and English at the Universe of Jena, his name Wolf, and, like his Bokhara travelling relative, a converted Jew. He was very intelligent however, and talked a great deal about the respective advantages of the systems of education in England and Germany. On the same day I went to the Resource (which I have before described), where I was introduced to Madame de Donop and Madame de Wolfskael. (I give the names for the benefit of

George.) They are remarkably agreeable young married women, and lead the most agreeable society here. They invited me the next day to a very pleasant party at a place called Fifurt, where the Grand Duke has a chateau and gardens. We set out at 4 p.m., and walked together to the place, which was about two miles distant. The company consisted of twelve ladies and the same number of gentlemen. We had tea and danced in a summer-house constructed for that purpose, and then danced a polonaise (which consists merely in taking a lady's arm and walking) in the garden. We continued dancing till eleven, and then wound up by *Bischopf*. After this we all walked home together. We had a most beautiful day and the party was extremely pleasant, but the weather for the most part has been very bad.

On Tuesday there was a curious feast at the Resource called *Brat-wurst*, or Sausage Feast. Sausages were cooked in the open air and were partaken of by the company, who sat at tables in the garden. There were some very agreeable people there, and I met the two ladies whom I mentioned before. They both talk very good English, and one is obliged in compliment to them to speak it sometimes.

On Tuesday evening I had tea with the Schwendlers, and presented the most affectionate remembrances from James and George. The amusement of the evening consisted in playing at a game called Black Peter, the fun of which is that the person in whose hand the Knave of Spades is found, is ornamented with moustaches with a blacked cork. As there were some pretty young ladies it was rather a joke.

On Wednesday I walked to *Buchfahrt*, where I

have been before. It is a long walk, and the Zwierlein ladies went in a carriage while I and Weissenborn walked. We treated them to trout, &c. I think the story about the captivation is unfounded, and that the perception of G. must have been distorted, for the Miss Z.'s are not in the least forward. Your letter seems to manifest some alarm as to the state of my feelings with regard to the said Miss Z.'s. All fear of their captivation is removed by their manner of treating me, which is almost servile on their part. They are respectful in the extreme; besides, though very good people, they have not the refinement of manners necessary to captivate an Englishman. I find some of the *Vons* extremely well-bred and pleasant. . . .

Weimar, Friday, June 13, 1845.

12—1 p.m. o'clock.

My dear Mother,

I received your letter on the 10th, containing an announcement of the arrival of money, which, with regard to the £10, proves to be correct, but up to the moment of my beginning this letter (to-day's post having already come in) nothing has been heard of the £20. As money is rather an object to Zwierlein, I paid him from the £10 already arrived. His extra charges amount to 9 thalers—for wine and some extra wax candles. The change given here for £10 is 67 thalers 10 groschen, so that having disbursed 47 thalers to Zwierlein, I have now 20 left in the

bank, and by subtracting Weissenborn's 18 from that, a balance of 2 thalers is left.

I have, at the beginning of another month of lodging, after having consulted with Weissenborn, made an arrangement which I think you will not object to. It is more agreeable both to the Zwierleins and myself, and gives me the possession of another room, the grievous want of which was very uncomfortable. The arrangement made, is that I should dine at the *table d'hôte*. It is more agreeable to the Zwierleins, as they, being in rather embarrassed circumstances, are able to retrench their expenses by indulging in a worse dinner, which they could not do while I dined with them; and it is agreeable to me, as their hour was inconvenient, and the necessity of being in time (so as not to keep them waiting), very irksome. With regard to any advantages in learning German which I should lose by this change, I am far more likely to pick up German at the inn, where people cannot *really* speak any French and where they are very conversational, than at the *Zwierlein ménage*. I also by this arrangement gain a capital room, in which they previously dined, and through which is the only approach to my room. As I no longer dine there, they will remove their table into another room. The difference of expense is trifling. Madame Zwierlein, through the mediation of Weissenborn, has undertaken to furnish me liberally with a good breakfast and supper, including candles, &c., for 30 thalers. This is not very cheap, but W. made the best bargain he could, and as they are very liberal people, it is better to be on rather handsome terms with them. The charge for the Lobprin *table d'hôte*



is 12 thalers per month, and allowing 5 thalers for wine, the whole would come to 47 thalers: the exact sum which I paid Zwierlein for the past month. The advantages gained by the possession of a room twice as large as the one I have, are very great.

I made my *début* in dancing last Friday evening at the public garden, where there are balls every fortnight; my performance was much applauded.

Gotha is about thirty miles from this place. In the event of the Queen's coming there, I think I shall present my letter to the Dowager at that Court. We had a most terrific thunder-storm here on Sunday. A great deal of damage was done in many parts by the rain.

We went on Tuesday to a grand party at the Maltitz's. They inhabit Goethe's house, and have a very nice garden, where the military band played. The Grand Duke and all the *élite* of Weimar were there. Yesterday the Prince and his wife came back from their journey, and I left my letter on Baron v. Ziegesar, who is his Chamberlain and has been with him. I am anxious to be introduced to the Prince, as the rook-shooting begins in a few days. The *Sonnambula* was very nicely performed at the theatre by a *débutante* who sang very well.

I forgot to mention that the two surplus thalers may reimburse me for the three thalers which I expended on an *Ollendorf*, which book Weissenborn always uses with his pupils. I hired a horse to-day and rode to see the soldiers exercise at eight o'clock, but the animal entirely declined anything beyond a walk.

*Weimar, Wednesday, June 25, 1845.*

My dearest Mother,

I am sorry that so long an interval has elapsed without my writing to you, but I have been in daily expectation for some time past of a letter from you, which came at last yesterday morning.

Soon after I wrote my last letter, we made a party to a garden near here, where the military band was in attendance. The principal object of the visit was to drink a compound of sour milk, brown bread, sugar, and spice, which is much admired here. The pleasure of the evening was rather destroyed by a tremendous thunder-storm, of which we have had several. A few days after this, I got up at three o'clock a.m. to go in pursuit of that almost fabulous bird, the bustard. We only saw one of these rare birds, and were not able to get near it.

On the 16th and two following days, the annual Wool Market was held. This draws a great many people into Weimar, and an immense supply of wool, but there is no great amusement for the casual visitor. I saw some curious examples of the agricultural interest in Germany. Here we met Mr. Parry, who had come in from the country to dispose of his fleeces (*i.e.*, to be fleeced). We had tea with him at the house of a celebrated man in Weimar, Dr. von Frouep. He is a retired physician of great repute. We also met here a beautiful Danish governess of Parry's who was very lively and agreeable. On another day we sallied forth to the slaughter of the wary rook, whom we exterminated in great numbers with rifle

and gun. We (Eden and I) killed in about two hours sixty of these animals, and might have continued all day, but after a short time we got tired of it, and the contusions received on the face from constantly firing high up in the air were very unpleasant. In another month I hope to have some roebuck-shooting, and in September the partridges and quails begin. The guns here are very bad, and I hope my father will remember his promise of a gun. This being sent by a London agent to Hamburgh would come here at a small cost.

We have had another ball at the Resource, where I figured in the waltz and gallop. I am now a pretty good hand at these accomplishments, and take every opportunity of improving myself in them. On Saturday we were invited to Ettersburgh, the seat of the Prince, in order to be introduced to him and the Princess. This was managed for us by Ziegesar, to whom I had a letter. The party was only of sixteen persons, including all the people of the household, who are very numerous. The Prince desired me to make his compliments to my brother. He seems very good-natured and took us all over his house, which is furnished in the English style. The Princess is a very agreeable person. They gave us a very good dinner at five o'clock.

On Sunday we were invited to Belvedere, the Grand Duke's summer place, but could not go, as we were engaged to Mr. Parry's. We went there in a carriage and arrived in about four hours. His establishment is by far the most comfortable I have yet seen. He is, I believe, a wealthy man, and has a very nice wife, and all the comforts of England.

He had, unfortunately, just suffered from a water-spout on his estate, so that most of the grounds were in great confusion.

Yesterday was the birthday of the Prince, and we had to go at one o'clock to offer our congratulations. It is also the etiquette to go to the theatre on that night. We had a German version of *Romco and Juliet*, but several scenes are left out and it was vilely acted. To-day we go at two o'clock to a *déjeuner dansante* at Ettersburgh, which is to be something very grand. You will think by this letter that we have been very gay, but my letter occupies some space of time.

Mr. Roebuck seems to have been very plucky in the House. I hope my father is now quite well. With love to all at home,

Believe me, your affect. son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

*Wcimar, Sunday, July 6, 1845.*

My dear Father,

I received your letter dated the 25th, and was much shocked to hear of the sudden death of my grandmother.<sup>1</sup> It is announced in the *Galignani* of Monday, the 30th.

I thought that you would have already gathered from my letters how the day here was usually spent, but as you seem to be desirous of a further account I will give you the proceedings of a regular day. I get up about eight, and from that time till eleven

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte Laura Lady Wodehouse.

(with the exception of breakfast) I work for Weissenborn. I have now read two plays of Kotzebue's, besides some easier reading at first, and I have been lately reading Schiller. I am soon to begin Goethe's *Faust*. Besides this I write exercises from Tieck, and learn by heart exercises from Ollendorf. Weissenborn generally stays till after twelve. I then perhaps read or write till one, when I dress (having previously been in *deshabille*) and go to dinner. If I have any visits to make, they must be done between twelve and one. In the afternoon I generally read till four or five and then go out, have tea or supper about eight, and go to bed about ten or eleven. The weather during the last few days has been so terrifically hot—quite unlike anything I ever felt in England—the thermometer 40 of Reaumur, equal I think to 120 Fahrenheit, that it has been impossible to go out during the day, and I have sat in with closed shutters till about seven o'clock. We have had two tremendous thunder-storms, but the weather is very little cooler. I have just got Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. I have been unable to get any books before, as during the month of June the books are collected and cannot be taken out. The library belongs to the Grand Duke, and upon Zwierlein becoming security that I shall not steal the books, I can get them gratis.

Mr. Horrocks has just returned to Weimar with two brothers. Weimar is getting very dull, as the *beau monde* are all going, or gone, to the baths, which must be very pleasant at this time. The Duke is at Carlsbad, and the Duchess at Ems. On the 25th of June, the day on which I wrote my last letter, I went at 2 p.m. to a *déjeuner dansant* at the Prince's. It was very

pleasant, and we had a capital *déjeuner* at five. They tried the polka, but it was played much too slow. I was introduced to a charming young lady, a Mdlle. Ziegesar, who is one of the maids of honour. I danced with her twice, and with a quantity of other people. I have since been to a *café*, or party after dinner, at my friend Madame de Wölfskael's. Yesterday I went with Eden and a gunmaker to endeavour to shoot three things, capercailzie, roebuck, and bustards. I was unlucky, and saw nothing, but Eden and the other saw the bird and several roe. They did not, however, get any shots. As we had no beaters, and were only four, the animals got between us. The bustards, which must be shot in the morning or evening, had been disturbed, but we are going to try on Wednesday. I find the German gun rather an awkward implement. . . .

*Weimar, July 18, Friday.*

My dear Mother,

I should have written before, had I not been for a long time in daily expectation of a letter from you. Since my last letter we have had two arrivals of countrymen; one consisting of Mr. Horrocks, with two brothers, and the other of a Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, the son-in-law and daughter of Mrs. Fane. The last is a gentlemanly young man, and says he has ridden in the park with my father. He is about twenty-seven, or twenty-eight. I find that I have seen Horrocks before, with his twin-brother, at Eton, playing at cricket. The two brothers are remarkable for their extreme resemblance, which is so

great that nobody here can distinguish one from the other.

Since my last letter, we have been out shooting, but were overtaken by a tremendous thunder-storm. Eden, however, managed to shoot a black cock, and a man with us shot a roebuck. We also went, on another day, with the Horrockses to the same place, taking pigeons and a trap with us, but were again unfortunate in the weather. We had about sixty pigeons among five of us, and only managed to kill thirty-two of them. This was very bad, but the wind was high, and it was difficult to shoot them. I killed from the *trap* the same number as Eden and one Horrocks, viz., five. The elder Horrocks killed seven, and the other one. I lost several shots while standing as an outpost, from the inefficiency of my loading apparatus, which is still in a very primitive state in this country. After the shooting, we feasted on the roe which we had previously shot. Horrocks tells me that the only good shooting here is the partridge-shooting, which begins on the 12th. This is very good, and he kills as many as twenty brace occasionally. I have also, since last writing, dined at the Prince's. They are to have, in a day or two, some private theatricals there, which will be amusing.

During the last few days, the yearly fair has been held, at which all the people lay in a stock of clothing. It is not very amusing. . . . This place is now most painfully dull, and all the respectable part of the society, with few exceptions, are gone. German progresses rapidly, and I can now carry on a common conversation. I had a visit to-day from a man whose name I do not know, who spoke nothing but German.

The Grand Duchess returns from Ems on Monday, and her arrival will, I hope, bring some life into the town. I have now positively nothing in the way of amusement to do. It either rains, or is too hot to go out, and I am obliged to stay in nearly the whole day. If George is not too deeply immersed in ancient Rome, he will perhaps write me a letter. I have never heard from Maynard. If he will write to me, I will send him an answer. Give my love to my father, brothers, sisters, &c., and believe me, my dear mother, to be your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

In a letter dated Albyns, July 22, 1845, Mrs. Raikes Currie wrote: "We were very glad to receive your letter, in which you tell us how you spend your day. . . . Dr. Weissenborn gives us a satisfactory report of you, except that you do not *work* as hard at German as you might. Probably you do not give *time* enough to the study of it. I hope you will work at it in earnest. You will be amply repaid for the trouble by-and-bye, if you ever succeed in becoming a good German scholar, which is, I believe, a rare accomplishment." On another page, she continues; "I have just got Dr. Weissenborn's letter, and will quote to you what he says of yourself: 'I should qualify his conduct as exemplary, if he did study German with all the zeal that I ought to desire as his teacher. He does, however, make visible progress in the knowledge of our language, and there is no reason to fear that he'll grow regularly lazy, because I have not found him *very* eager in the beginning, whereas his diligence has been gradually increasing ever since.'"

Mrs. Currie then gives a chronicle of the doings of various members of the family, and mentions that "George remains at home, doing daily a little, and but a little, Livy." George himself takes a different view. Writing the same day, he says: "I am reading lots of Livy, which I have got to do for the College; and have also loads of work to do for little-go, which comes on at the end of the vacation in October."

In his answer to the foregoing letter from his mother, Bertram makes no comments on Weissenborn's remarks upon himself:



Weimar, Tuesday, July 29.

My dear Mother,

I received your letter this morning, and will not let a day pass without answering it. . . . This place grows daily more *triste*, and in addition to the natural want of amusement, the weather has been shocking. We have alternate cold and rain, with thunder-storms. These last abound in this country in an extraordinary degree, so that we never pass two days without one. . . .

I have just written to Lachmann requesting him to do something for a Baron Netsch, who lives near here, and who is said to be the best rider in Germany. He goes to England with Mr. Parry, principally with the intention of seeing the racing studs of the English noblemen. He is also very much interested in agriculture, and is going to the meeting of the Agricultural Society. He wanted me to give him a letter to somebody who would tell him about London, and the best way of seeing it. This is rather necessary, as he does not speak a word of English. . . .

My dancing gets on splendidly. I am told that this is quite unlike that of an Englishman, which is, in the estimation of the people here, great praise. *Er sieht gar nicht aus wie ein Engländer.* The King of Prussia came here on Friday, on his way to the chateau of Stolzenfels, on the Rhine, where he is to meet the Queen. They say that he imbibed so much of old Weimar's Rhine wines that he was completely floored after dinner, and astonished the company by his conversation. The Grand Duke has returned to Weimar,

and I dined last Sunday at Belvedere, the summer residence.

During the last two days, there has been an annual entertainment, given by a cross-bow shooting society here, called the Vogel Schisse, or bird-shooting. In the morning, the members of the society shoot with ancient cross-bows at a wooden bird resembling the Austrian eagle, and prizes are given to those who hit it in certain parts, such as the crown, sceptre, &c. In the afternoon, a band plays in the adjoining gardens, and there are amusements, such as a theatre, &c. The evening is finished by dancing. The crowd in the gardens is enormous, and consists of the whole population of Weimar. It is astonishing how well-dressed and well-conducted they are. The Prince is also there, and all the *élite* who are left in Weimar. There was an amusement called Schatten Spiel, or Shadow Game (which consisted in throwing the shadows of the actors on a sheet, by means of a light placed behind), which had a pretty effect. With love to my father, George, Maynard, and all at home, believe me, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

*Weimar, August 9, 1845.*

My dear Father,

I received your letter of the 31st, on Wednesday last, and am very much obliged to you for your kind present of a gun. It is not yet arrived, but I expect it now every day.

I am very sorry to hear that you have decided on leaving Albany, and also to hear that we have been

beaten by the Westminsters, which I can only attribute to my absence. This is really disgraceful.

Pray tell Maynard to write, and tell me about the cricket-matches with Harrow and Winchester.

Last Sunday we had English service, performed for the first time in Weimar by the Hon. and Rev. A. Perceval, Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen Dowager. He seems to have a living near Mr. H. Currie, and is an agreeable little man, and a Puseyite, very much prejudiced against the philosophical religion of the Germans. He has been to Erfurth to see Kirplus (or some name like that), who is the leader of the new German Catholic movement, which is making a great noise here now; I suppose you hear of it in England. He, Mr. P., after a long discussion in Latin with this learned divine, told him he was no Catholic, and a d——d bad theologian. He was much scandalized on account of the objection which the members of this sect have to Episcopacy, without which it seems to be impossible, according to Mr. P., for Catholicity to exist.

There is now another English family in Weimar, of the name of Gough, or Goff (according to pronunciation). They are friends of Weissenborn's—at least, the man is an old pupil.

I had a dinner *en famille* with M. and Madame de la Rochefoucauld yesterday, who have the best *cuisine* in Weimar, and afterwards drove out with them in their carriage, which is the best turn-out in Weimar.

Your fears with regard to the fair Miss Zwierleins may now be quieted, as I have a far more charming *haus-genossin*, or dweller in the same house, in the person of a Mdlle. de Ziegesar, who is a most beautiful and charming young lady, possibly not without some

feeling for your unworthy son. She is one of the *demoiselles d'honneur* to the Hereditary Grand Duchess, and quite the ornament of the Court here. The weather, during all the time that I have been here, has, with few exceptions, been execrable, which has rendered the place far less agreeable than it would otherwise have been.

I have been reading Gibbon strenuously, and also Kotzebue, of whose plays I have now flooded a good many.

With regard to money, I have now been here long enough to form an estimate of the necessary expenses. The board, lodging, and Weissenborn, *can* be done, but not very liberally, at £10 per month. This is only allowing £2 11s. for dinner and wine. The washing, particularly in summer, comes to about 6 thalers, or 18s. a month, and clothing is little cheaper than in England. I hope you will take into consideration that I have been unfortunate in this last respect, having just got a coat, when, upon going into mourning, I was obliged to provide myself with another black coat, waistcoat, and trousers. The subscriptions to societies do not amount to less than £3 annually, and carriages, which are necessary, particularly in shooting, are very dear; besides which there is a sort of expenditure which is always expected of an Englishman here. With regard to carriage, if I am asked to Ettersburgh, or Belvedere, I cannot get there and back under 6s. Gloves are also dear, and, in fact, all the necessaries of life. It is always necessary to have money, as there are things one wants to buy, such as a dog, which each of us must have for the shooting season, rifles, which are well made here, and not dear, &c. Besides,

as one receives the civilities of the people, it is necessary in some way to return them. Old Weissenborn, who has studied the thing, says it cannot be done well by an Englishman under £300 a year; and if you proportion the sum which G—— spent to the time he was here, I think you will find it was not less. He, W——, has written you a letter to this effect, but did not send it, as he thought that you might, perhaps, think he was interfering in what was not his business.

*Weimar, Sunday, August 17, 1845.*

My dear Mother,

I received your letter to-day and hasten to reply to it. I think that my punctuality in answering your letters is highly commendable, as I rarely fail to answer them on the same day that I receive them.

My gun arrived at the beginning of this week, and I am happy to say that I had only about 7s. or 8s. to pay for it. I feared that the duty would be much more, as Eden found that he had a great deal to pay in bringing his gun here. I am very much charmed with it, and hope it will prove a long ranger. I had a dozen pigeons the other day to try, but only eight of them would fly. Of these I killed seven, which is good, as they are difficult to shoot from the trap. Pray tell my father that the gun is very much to my taste, and that I hope to do great execution with it.

The shooting here is open to every one, with the exception of one beat near Ettensburgh, where the Prince lives. The whole territory is divided into beats, under different jägers or keepers. They are considered almost as gentlemen, and are generally

very obliging. Mr. Horrocks, who is a great sportsman, resides here principally for the shooting, which in some years is very good. Unfortunately this year the partridges have been much destroyed by the winter and wet spring. In a good year Horrocks has killed repeatedly twenty brace in a day. The inhabitants of Weimar, with few exceptions, do not shoot, as they generally cannot. The Prince himself is a rascally bad shot.

Is there any great attraction at Scarborough to take you there? I should think in the present state of the weather it must be dismally cold. Here for five weeks we have not seen the sun, and have a continuation of rain and cold. I am obliged sometimes to have my stove lighted. . . .

. . . I see in the papers great accounts of the festivities at Cologne and on the Rhine, but I suppose that the exclusive correspondents of the *Times*, *Chronicle*, &c., enlarge sufficiently about them. There has been a great riot at Leipzig within the last few days on account of the Prince Johann (brother of the King of Saxony) having placed his son (who is the heir to the throne) at a Jesuitical school. The populace attacked the hotel in which the Prince was, and forced him to fly. The military fired upon the people, and killed fourteen. The National Guard joined with the people, and the military, after firing several times, refused to do so any more, notwithstanding the command of the Prince. All is now quiet, as the Prince has left the town precipitately. With love to my father, brothers, sisters, &c.,

Believe me, your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

Weimar, Tuesday, August 26, 1845.

My dear Father,

I will now endeavour to answer your amusing letter dated the 15th, and will at the same time acknowledge the credit announced in it. I have already (as you will see) drawn the amount, as I was in small circumstances on account of my having disbursed to Zwierlein, &c., out of my previous month's allowance. I have no wish to live like a *magnifico* in Weimar, but as the sum I mentioned has usually been the allowance of Englishmen, and as Mr. Eden has also given it to his son, I thought you would not have found it extravagant. Moreover, it must be taken into consideration that I have to provide everything for myself in Weimar, and that it is only the amusements, and not the necessaries of life, which are really cheaper here than in England. I have no doubt that if I was settled permanently here, I could live on much less, but I am now on disadvantageous terms with regard to lodging, as of course temporary furnished lodgings must always be much dearer than a permanent dwelling. In several instances the charges for strangers are double; for instance, in the subscription to the reading-room and *Erholung*; and in the *abonnement* at the theatre, the charge for a stranger is nearly £1 a month, whereas for residents it is not ten shillings.

I am now reading with Weissenborn the *Wallenstein* of Schiller. It is considered his masterpiece, and is very fine.

On Monday of last week I made a very agreeable

fishing expedition with the two younger Horrockses. We had received a letter from the Chamberlain of a neighbouring Prince (of Rudolstadt), informing us that we might fish in a preserve of the King of Belgium, which was near Coburg. On the strength of this, and being previously acquainted with a good trout stream in the neighbourhood, we started at four in the morning of Monday and arrived at Rudolstadt about nine for breakfast. Here, as is generally to be expected from all Germans under similar circumstances, we found a letter informing us that the aforesaid Chamberlain, although he had expressly told us that he had *already* obtained the permission, had, upon writing for it, failed in doing so. We were rather disgusted at this, but not by any means surprised, as, from former experience, we had rather expected it than otherwise. We then drove on in the direction of Schwarzburg, where there is a castle belonging to the Prince of Rudolstadt. Near this place the Thuringian forest begins, and this is the most beautiful part of it. The scenery is extremely bold, and very superior to any that I have ever seen. Here we began to fish the river, which in some parts is quite a rocky torrent. We then fished for about five miles up to Schwarzburg. The castle here is most beautifully situated, overlooking a park or Thier-garten (beasts' garden), which is full of red deer and boars. The park is almost entirely occupied by a huge hill which rises in the middle, entirely covered with beautiful trees, and round this there is a circle of grass, beautifully kept and looking like a vast lawn.

We slept at Schwarzburg, and fished again the next morning, and drove the same day to a place



called Ilmenau, belonging to the Weimar territory, but separated from it. Here we slept. The scenery is very pretty, but looked tame after Schwarzburg. It is a small bathing-place, and much resorted to by the Weimar people. Here we again fished, but in another river, and returned to Weimar the same night. Our entire bag of fish was 86, of which I caught but few, as I was not so experienced nor so eager as the others. However, the excursion was very agreeable, as it made a diversion in the tedium of the life here, and the scenery was most beautiful. The fishing here with flies is very astonishing to the natives, and we were looked upon by many charitable persons as *non compos*.

FROM MAYNARD CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Crown Hotel, Scarborough,*  
*Saturday, August 23, 1845.*

My dear Bertram,

You will be rather surprised to hear that we are in this place, if you have not been told of our intended tour. We, *i.e.* pa, ma, Mary, and myself, started from Albyns on Monday morning, slept that night at Derby, and the next at York, and, after we had been to the morning service in the Minster, came on to this place. It poured incessantly with rain from Monday evening till Thursday morning, when it cleared up, and has since been very fine.

We all think this a delightful place. There are very good sands, on which I rode yesterday, and very nice walks which have been made at a great expense

on the cliff. The only drawback to the place is the crowds of people whom the railroad brings from Leeds, Manchester, &c. A great many of them are at this hotel, where there is a very nice public room. They all dine together, and dance and play at cards in the evening. I had a polka last night with the only tolerably good-looking girl there. . . .

I should think you must have heard by this time from John Mirehouse. He used to be "going to write" every day at Eton. I am very sorry he has left; he got forty leaving books.

Philip is not to go to Eton next half after all. It was rather a bore being beaten by Westminster, but our crew was continually changed.

*Black Swan, York,*

*Wednesday, August 27.*

My letter has been lying unfinished in the writing-case since Saturday. We are just returned from the Minster. The chapter-house, which we saw last year in an unfinished state, is now nearly completely restored. We posted yesterday from Scarborough, as the railroad is not in a very safe state, and there was a bad accident on it the day before. On our way we saw Castle Howard, the seat of Lord Carlisle. It is a splendid place. The house was built by Vanburgh. We had luncheon there, and then walked and drove about with Lord Morpeth and Mr. Charles Howard.

I return to Eton on the 11th of September. I really do not know the result of the cricket-matches at Lord's this year. I know that we beat Harrow

very hollow, but as to Winchester I am ignorant. I think, however, we must have beaten them, as we had no end of a good eleven this year.

Pray remember me to Eden. I hope he is recovered.

Ever your very affectionate brother,

MAYNARD W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS BROTHER MAYNARD.

*Weimar, Wednesday, September 3, 1845.*

My dear Maynard,

I received your long-expected letter this morning, and will immediately answer it. Will you tell my father that I beg to acknowledge a letter on Monday, in which the whole firm of Cornhill lay themselves at my feet as "most obedient, humble servants."

That wretched old humbug Mirehouse has never written to me. I imagine that your minds must have been much occupied during the last school-term at Eton, as Eden wrote twice to Deacon without receiving an answer, I to Mirehouse, and you yourself have been singularly dilatory in writing. You do not tell me anything about your rule of conduct at Eton, whether you had a lock-up, &c. With regard to the matches, they have long since appeared in *Galigiani*.

I went out on the 1st of September to try the partridge-shooting. It begins late this year, as the crops are very backward. I am sorry to say that in consequence of the tremendous hard winter the birds are very rare. The two Horrockses and myself found

on the 1st only two coveys, after incessant hard walking for six hours. We killed of these thirteen. The shooting here is very unlike that in England, as the country is entirely unenclosed, and when a covey is found, the only way of getting any birds is to walk them regularly down. This is of course very hard work. I went out again on the 2nd in another place, and we found one covey, of which we killed nine. I killed a brace. This is dismal work, as the shooting here is said to be in a good year almost the best in Germany; but the winter and wet spring have entirely flooded it.

To-day we are all to dine at the society called the Erholung, it being the anniversary of its foundation, and also the birthday of the late Grand Duke. There will be a ball to-night lasting till about 4 a.m., also an illumination in the garden.

In a few days the annual bird-shooting begins—a festival which is held in every German town and village—in which a wooden Prussian eagle is shot at with rifles, and prizes are given for the different parts which are hit.

What has become of Philip? I quite forget whether he was to go back to Roughton's, and I have never heard of him in my letters.

The Queen has been very near to this place, and the whole Grand Ducal family have been to see her. On Sunday the King and Queen of the Belgians came to dine at the Court. To-day the Prince entertains the Queen at Eisenach to breakfast. The papers and people are full of stories against our Sovereign, who, they say, is uncivil and ill-dressed. She seems, if the reports are true, to have behaved badly on the Rhine.

I was much amused by seeing a *buttery* article from the *Chronicle* quoted in *Galignani*, in which that paper expresses its joy that nothing has been said or felt in Germany against the Queen. This shows the absurd lies which the papers are in the habit of retailing. The Princess of Prussia, who is a daughter of old Weimar's, has been here, and says that she was much disgusted with the Queen at Stolzenfels.

The celebrated Pückler Muskau is still here, and turns out in an English carriage and horses, which look very curious here.

The Horrockses were at Eton this year, and I think you must have seen them. They are very good fellows.

With love to all, believe me, your affectionate brother,

B. W. C.

*Weimar, Sunday, September 14.*

My dear Mother,

Although I have not heard from you for some time, I will continue my usual hebdomadal letter. My last communication from England was from Maynard, whom I immediately answered, hoping to reach him before he returned to Eton. As he did not tell me what your plans of action were, I directed to Albyns, where I thought you would return after your tour.

I have just drawn for the money which my father sent me, as my monthly account is due on the 9th of each month. The banker recommended me to draw

the amount at once, as by so doing the expense of several postages is saved, and I of course still keep the balance in his hands, drawing upon him for whatever I want.

The usual routine of this place is much the same, except that during the last week the annual fair has been held. The amusements differ very little from those of an English fair, except perhaps that the spectators are not so drunk or noisy. The great amusement of the Germans being to sit still and drink beer, their equanimity is rather disturbed by this unusual excitement.

We had rather an amusing day at the foundation commemoration of the Erholung. There were some capital songs. In the evening I walked in the gardens with the la Rochefoucaulds and Prince Pückler. He is very amusing and a regular old beau. He is about sixty-five, and is painted and dyed to a tremendous extent. . . .

The theatre has been opened again after a cessation of three months. We have now one of the best comic actors in Germany as a guest here. He is to play about four times. As I now understand the language so much better than before, I find the theatre a great resource. There is the great advantage in it, that it is not too long: it begins at half-past six and ends at nine.

I think it would be a very favourable time now to go to Dresden, which may be reached in a day, and make the tour of the Saxon Switzerland on foot. This (according to Murray) occupies only three days. The youngest of the Horrockses, who is here, is a very intelligent man, and would like much to make this tour.

In a short time the autumn will be so far advanced that the country will have lost its beauty. It already is beginning to feel cold, and I deplore the exchange of stoves for a good blazing fire.

*Weimar, Friday, September 26, 1845.*

My dear Mother,

I have at length received a letter from you, after an unusually long silence. Your tour must have been very pleasant, but I had thought that you intended to cross to Ireland this year, and make the long-promised visit to the MacNaughtens.

I am really sorry that you are to quit Albany, and think that the scene of the auction will be quite heart-rending. With Sarling and Mollets in the background, it would make a good accompaniment to Wilkie's picture (or whoever's it is) of the "Rent Day." . . .

George will probably get some good shooting in Norfolk, as, according to *Galignani*, the game is this year very plentiful. I think it is the first September that he has been there. The shooting here continues to be bad. The other day I was promised a good day's shooting by myself, but, with my usual good fortune, after driving about fifteen miles, found that one of those agreeable headaches of mine had come on, and although the birds were at my feet, I could not fire off my gun. This was not agreeable, as I shall not be able to go there again.

The theatre is an amusement of which I make great use. It is open three nights in the week. . . . We have hopes of getting the celebrated "Jenny

Lind" to come here for two or three evenings. She is said to be equal to Grisi, and is now on her way to Berlin. I believe she has an engagement at Drury Lane or Covent Garden in the winter.

There is at present going on the Michaelmas fair at Leipsic, and I am thinking of just seeing it, as they are the largest fairs in Europe, and are, I believe, very curious.

I dined at Court the other day with the Queen of the Netherlands. The King was to have come to-day, but is detained on account of a revolution in Holland. The Empress of Russia is also expected here, so that we shall have an assemblage of "royal and august personages." The season does not begin at Weimar till December and January, and continues with unabated gaiety till April.

With respect to my German, the people here say that I have made astonishing progress, and will not believe that I did not understand it before I came; but it is extremely difficult, of which fact I become daily more aware, the idiom and construction being entirely different from English. I now speak German with all the natives. My dancing also is satisfactory; at least the (perhaps?) partial young ladies are wont to admire it (*vide* "my partial mother").

This railway mania of which I hear, must *tell* in the *shop*, as it must put in circulation some of that money concerning the accumulation of which I heard so many complaints.

. . . . .



Sunday, September 28, 1845.

My dear Father,

I received your letter this morning, and shall embrace with great pleasure your proposal for visiting Dresden. I think of deferring it for a week, as by that time my month will have expired, and the time of my journey will form an interregnum between Zwierlein's and my other lodgings. I have resolved upon this change of residence after mature consideration, and, as I think you will perceive, upon sufficient grounds. I have been hitherto deterred from this step from the difficulty of obtaining other lodgings moderately, but have at length found an "eligible opportunity." The disadvantages of my present abode are (1) that the Zwierleins command the approach to my rooms, so that I cannot enter except through the enemy's territory; (2) that the domestic concerns of the aforesaid family take place daily under my nose, so that the fumes of their *cuisine* fill my room, and the noise and bustle of their movements disturb my repose; (3) that it is impossible, according to the internal economy of the house, for me to have a servant who can be at all times in the house, an appendage which is really indispensable: (4) that the rooms at best are small and not comfortable, without carpets, &c.; (5) that the aforesaid Zwierlein family consisting of four unoccupied females, my house becomes a kind of head-quarters for retailing gossip and scandal, for which this town is celebrated, and all my minute actions are published and scrutinized, so that I am

often surprised by hearing of what I have done from the most unexpected quarters.

I now propose to lodge on the second floor of a jeweller's in the market-place. Here I have two rooms in front, bed-room, ante-room, and closet for servant, being an entire floor of a house, commanding a fine view of the principal parts of the town, and in a central situation. The place is rather larger than I want, but is not large enough for myself and Eden, as there is but one bed-room. For these apartments I am to pay monthly 20 thalers. A servant I procure for 10 thalers per month, and wood and light I have also to find. This arrangement is certainly dearer than my present one, but the amount of comfort gained thereby is very great, and, as the winter is approaching, it is a great object to be comfortably lodged. I have parted with the *Zwierleins* on splendid terms. They themselves acknowledge that their accommodation is of necessity very deficient, as they have never calculated on receiving lodgers. *Weissenborn* has arranged all minutiae, and I think of engaging my new apartment on the 20th of October, by which time (if I start on the 7th) I think to return. I could have had it cheaper if I had been sure of making a long stay here, but everything in *Weimar* is dear for the stranger. . . .

*Pückler Muskaü*<sup>1</sup> is no impostor, but a great gun. He is a mediatized prince, and has sold his place of *Muskaü*. He has very handsome equipages, &c. I believe that in England he gave himself out as a young unmarried man, whereas he is really an old fellow who has been separated from his wife for many years.

I do not bore you about Miss *Ziegesar*, because

<sup>1</sup> See p. 174.

her charms defy description. When, however, she gives me a ring, I will write. She is not, however, at all in the Miss B——<sup>1</sup> line, but is extremely clever and lively. She forms an animated oasis in the moral dearth of Weimar.

You ask about my sayings and doings. As the former are for the most part couched in a foreign language, I fear that the point of them would be lost on you; and my doings are so monotonous that I have nothing new to tell you of them. The German gets on well, and I think it would really be worth while to stay here some time longer, in order, if possible, to master it. This, however, I declare in the face of all opponents to be in six months utterly impracticable. With love to all at home, and hoping soon to hear,

I remain, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

The next letter is dated Wednesday, Oct. 21, 1845.

*Stadt Rom, Dresden.*

My dear Father,

Being now somewhat settled, I begin a letter to inform you of the events of my trip from Weimar. I left Weimar in company with the younger Horrocks on the 10th. We reached Leipsic the same evening, after passing through Nuremberg, where there is a Cathedral, and nearer Leipsic through Lützen, immortalized by the two celebrated battles fought

<sup>1</sup> A lady who had bestowed the aforesaid gift on his brother George.

there. At Leipsic we put up at the Hotel de Pologne, where everything was in a great bustle on account of the fair. The effect in the streets was quite singular, from the enormous assemblage of persons of all nations, and in different costumes.

In Leipsic we met with Herr Wallner, a comic actor of great celebrity whose acquaintance we had made at Weimar, and who acted as our *cicerone*. We visited the monument erected to Poniatowski, which is in a garden outside the town. The stream in which he was drowned is hardly more than a brook or about the size of the river at Albys. We also went to the theatre, which is very pretty, and of course crowded to excess. We made the acquaintance of most of the literary men of Leipsic, with all of whom Wallner was intimate, among others of a Herr Mann, who is celebrated in Germany as the actor of Mephistopheles. There is a splendid reading-room where I read two months of *Punch*, not having seen him before since I left England. He does not seem to degenerate at all.

On Sunday we sat down to dinner at the *table d'hôte*, at least three hundred persons, in a splendid *salon* with music. The town of Leipsic being very rich, it is luxurious in these respects, far more so than Dresden.

We parted from Leipsic on the 14th, and arrived at Dresden after four hours' railroad. The town seems to be very agreeable, but the weather has been execrable. I have been constantly to the picture-gallery, which is open only till one o'clock. The other exhibitions, though interesting, become tedious, as they are much too long. The theatre is beautiful both externally and internally, but the pieces given are in

bad taste, being for the most part bad modern comedies or farces. We have, however, had the pleasure of seeing *Clavigs*, a splendid tragedy of Goethe's, in which Emil Devrient, the great tragedian of Germany, performed. We had an introduction from Wallner to this distinguished character, but have not yet been able to meet him.

The tour of the Saxon Switzerland we were obliged to give up, as the lateness of the season and the continuance of bad weather had rendered it impossible. I have met here my friend Hibbert, who has been staying in Dresden for more than a year waiting for his commission. The number of English here is very large, several families being settled for the winter. I received your letter, and also one from George enclosing a letter to Count Thun. We think of going back in a day or two to Weimar.

Weimar, Monday, Nov. 3, 1845.

My dear Mother,

I received your letter dated the 24th this morning. It has been longer than usual on the road, owing, I suppose, to the journey from Brighton to London, which however, I should have thought, would not have made such a difference.

I have now been here several days, but have not been able to go out. The journey from Leipsic to Weimar is performed in the *eilwagen* and takes ten hours. On this voyage I caught cold, and have been very seedy ever since, having pains in the back, &c. There is luckily here a capital doctor, who is now

physicking me. He has told me what I am sure is quite true, that I cannot stand strong medicines. I still have that dizziness in the head, arising from the tendency of blood to that point, although I have been lately living on a single straw. I cannot help thinking that the water cure might get rid of it. It is highly recommended now in these cases. I have now fulfilled your request of telling you all about myself. There is not much to tell you about my trip, as it was only to Leipsic and Dresden, two well-known places. The picture-gallery at the latter I visited daily, and studied all the famous pictures. The Madonna di S. Sisto is the only Raphael in the gallery. The painter whose productions there are most numerous is Wouvermans, of whom there are at least fifty. I discovered there a small Rubens exactly the same, only of a far smaller size, as that in the National Gallery lately bought at Mr. Penrice's sale. It is the Judgment of Paris. I forgot if I told you this in my last letter, but I will hope not.

The Court of Weimar have now come to town for the winter. I was invited yesterday but could not go, and to-day the Prince has a shooting-party which I have also declined. Eden intends shortly to return to England for a month or two; but I think it is a bad plan, as he will thus lose all that he has acquired by the time he comes back to Weimar. . . .

Monro must be a first-rate whip to have coached anything out of George.<sup>1</sup> Probably the charms of Miss B— have rendered him quite sentimental. The ring was evidently a hint at the marriage state.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> George had got through his "little-go" examination at Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 179.

From a young lady so skilled in the language of flowers, every present must be significant. I fear I am quite cut out, although she once did pin a flower in my coat with her fair hands, and told me I was quite a beau.

Pray tell my father that I have had great outlays lately. I was obliged to provide winter clothing in Dresden, in which I was previously deficient. Hoping that this hint may not be thrown away, and with love to my father and sisters, believe me, my dear mother,

Your affect. son,

B. W. C.

*Weimar, Monday, Nov. 10th.*

My dear Father,

I received your letter shortly after one from my mother, which I answered a week ago, so that the interval of a week only will have elapsed between this and my last. Pray tell my mother that in consequence of her not affixing the indispensable "Via France" to her last, the letter was delayed two or three days and an extra charge of 10d. was made. This is on account of its passing through old Cumberland's dominions, who is such an intractable old dog, that he will not consent to join in the Post Confederation, which has been formed by most of the other German States, but on the contrary, levies money on every letter that comes into his premises.

With regard to your jobation about my journey to Dresden, I beg to state that Dresden cannot be reached from Weimar without passing through Leipsic,

which town, on account of its commercial and bibliothecal celebrity, is worthy the attention of the intelligent traveller, &c., and further, that the visit to the Saxon Switzerland was only deferred on account of the unfortunate tendency of the weather, which is unusual at this season. My reasons for not leaving Weimar sooner were that the term of Zwierlein's lodging might expire, and that I might not have the necessity of keeping up a lodging during my absence. . . . I was sorry that through a mistake in Dresden I did not see the sitting of the Saxon Chambers, which are now going on. The debate is considered very important, as they are to decide on the fate of the military who fired on the mob at the Leipsic disturbance. They will besides consider the great religious movement. The people, whose political topics of conversation are, from their form of government, necessarily modified, are now (in proportion to the novelty of the subject) bursting with politics. It seems curious that a people whose opinions are far more liberal than the English, should submit to such an abominable despotism as they—more especially in the larger States—live under.

I am very glad to hear that George has passed the ordeal. Pray congratulate him from me if he is now with you.

According to the papers the "Panic" has subsided. Has there been a run upon the banks? I should have thought that the effect of these extraordinary speculations would have been to make money scarce, or at least to diffuse it through the country.

I think the plan of staying for some months at Weimar would be beneficial, although Heaven knows



it is not amusing. One gets so tired of seeing people every day that one does not care about, that the sight of a Weimarian is repulsive. The people here not being engaged in commerce, or in anything but toadying the old tyrant, are so limited in their ideas as to be anything but amusing. We have just had a row with the officers in consequence of some of them not having paid some small debts at cards, which was nearly terminating in a hostile encounter! It has been, however, peaceably settled, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts to the contrary of a pic-eating Mexican (or some such snob) who has the consummate impudence to call himself an Englishman. I think I have before mentioned this person under the name of Cathray. He appears to be flying from justice, as he has actually entered the Weimar army of two hundred men!

In the following letter, addressed to Clarence Mansions, Brighton, a description is given of the religious demonstration at Weimar, which in the autobiographical sketch is referred to a later visit.

*Weimar, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 1845.*

My dear Mother,

I hasten to reply to your long and amusing letter from Brighton. My medical man here attributes the headaches to a disordered state of stomach, which, however, I can hardly understand, as I have lived, ever since my return, in the quietest manner and on the simplest food. The headaches nevertheless continue and give me much pain, especially in the morning on rising. . . .

I heard from Maynard this morning. I am sorry the Liberals had not a worthier representative at Windsor. The late euphoniously-named Member was, I think, a Whig.

The great German anti-Catholic, Ronge, has been here for a few days. I had rather a curious adventure connected with him. He was to lodge at a house close to mine, and on the evening of his arrival great crowds of people were collected to meet him. On his arrival he was greeted with loud cheers, and I, hearing this noise and being ignorant of the cause, put my head out of the window and blew a dog-whistle. This was construed into a sign of displeasure, and as my landlord happened unfortunately to be a Roman, the mob thought that the opposition proceeded from him, and advanced to the house with a tremendous row. They broke the windows, and I was obliged to address them in a neat and appropriate speech. I was thus something in the position of an unpopular candidate at an election. My landlord was in a dreadful state, positively melting with fear, and thought the people were going to pull down his house. It was a great shame that the police did not attempt to protect us, and we might have been sacrificed before they would have taken any notice of it.

Has Philip undergone the inspection of Westmacot previous to admission to Eton, or do you mean him to go to the house at which Mr. Cockerell's son is?

Eden is to go to England in a week, and means to stay there about six or seven weeks, and then return to Weimar. I shall charge him with a commission or two. I wish you would procure me in London some warm winter gloves, which cannot be

procured here, and which are very comfortable in the winter. Also if my father would give me his hussar dress, in which I appeared with so much success as Prince Bambini, it would be of great use to me here, as there are some masquerade or fancy balls given in January and February, and I think I could get it altered and done up moderately. However, as it will be long before Eden returns, there will be plenty of time to write about these articles.

I want to know if the Bank has not made a good thing out of these speculating times. I suppose they are very particular in taking the accounts of new companies.

I believe another Englishman is coming here who was a pupil of Weissenborn's twenty-five years ago, his name Lettsom. The place is dull beyond anything you can imagine.

Have you been over from Brighton to Lewes to see Gundreda,<sup>1</sup> who, I see in the papers, has been dug up there? Do you ride at all? The weather here is fine but autumnal, or rather, wintry, frosts, &c. With love to my father, sisters, &c.,

Your affecte. son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

<sup>1</sup> Workmen, who were excavating at the Priory, Lewis, for the proposed extension of the railway from Brighton to Lewis and Hastings, uncovered a leaden box, the inscription on which recorded that it contained the bones of Gundreda, daughter of William the Conqueror.—ED.

George wrote from Brighton :

Nov. 25, 1845.

My dear Bertie,

I must begin my letter by wishing you many happy returns of to-day, being your birthday. My mother is writing you a letter with the same object.

You have, I believe, heard of my intended journey to *the East*. At first it was all planned that I was to go to Rome for the winter, but this has been altered for Egypt, &c., which is much better. I have just returned from London, where I have been for a couple of days, taking my place, getting my outfit, &c. I have taken a passage to Malta in the *Tagus*, and from Malta to Alexandria in the *Iberia*, Oriental steam-vessels. The damage of the whole is £40. We are from fourteen to twenty-one days *en route*, touching at Gibraltar for six hours, and at Malta for twenty-four. I have also had to get an iron portable bedstead and accompaniments, leather sheets, mosquito-net, calico shirts, portable soup, Lemann's biscuits, a canteen containing knives, forks, tea-pot, gridiron, tins and bottles for tea, brandy, &c., rifle, holsters for pistols, &c. I am going to take a saddle of the governor's, which is gone to Wilkinson's to be repaired. The saddle is necessary for riding in Syria and the desert, unless you wish to be ruptured by riding on two pieces of board, which form a sharp ridge at the top. When I get to Alexandria, I expect to make a party with one or two Englishmen; from there, or from Cairo, to hire a boat, and proceed up the Nile to Thebes, the Pyramids, Nubia, &c. I suppose we shall spend about two

months on the Nile. During this time you live in your boat—a very large affair—and land to explore the temples, &c., or to shoot pelicans, crocodiles, ducks, &c., as you go along. After this, I think of going through Syria to Damascus and Smyrna, Jerusalem, Lebanon, &c. This is done on horseback, taking your tent with you, and pitching it every night, with a company of servants and camels (*à la patriarch*). After this, I may perhaps go to Constantinople and Greece, or my father thinks I may possibly go to India for a few months. Is not this a *joli voyage*? It is almost the only tour left that has not become cockney, and even this is getting commoner every year.

You give a rich account of your adventure with the infuriated Rongists. Your German must have progressed wonderfully, if you could manage an address to them. Who paid for M. Predari's broken windows? I left Oxford rather suddenly, after passing my little-go. I was sorry to leave, but think it was the best thing on the whole. I had some grand entertainments on getting through my smalls. I should like *very much* to hear from you. If you will write soon, the letter will meet me at Cairo. . . .

Ever, dearest B., your affectionate brother,

G. W. CURRIE.

Weimar, Tuesday, Dec. 2, 1845.

My dear Mother,

I received your kind letter this morning, and also one from my father on the 25th. George's promised despatch is not arrived. I have had no return of headache for the last week or ten days, and

am now feeling pretty well. . . . I am much surprised at George's intended tour to Egypt. Will he visit the Pyramids and Cheops? It is a pity that Lady H. Stanhope is dead, or he might have visited her in Syria. P. Muskaü, who has been here, was a friend and correspondent of her's till her death. G—— will probably fall a prey to some savage Druse, or Maronite, who seem to be making a great disturbance in Syria. How long will he be absent from England?

Eden has already started, and must by this time be in England. I told him to call upon you, if you were in London.

I have been reading Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, in English, which is certainly a most charming book. I had before read parts of it. In German, I have begun the *Faust* within the last day or two, and am reading besides some of Goethe's prose works by myself.

I do not go to the church here. The service is, I believe, at nine in the morning, and consists principally of a long discourse. It is not well attended, as the preachers are great sticks.

The weather is fine and dry, though cold. This is, I fancy, the general character of the winter in these latitudes. We have had no rain for a long time, which is very pleasant. The Prince has several shooting-parties—roe, hares, &c., but no pheasants. I have not taken part in them, on account of my having been unwell.

I have had an absurd scene in consequence of the disturbance at my house, when Ronge was here. About a week ago, I was waited upon by the burgomaster and head policeman of the town, who were instituting an examination into the cause of the disturbance.

These worthies were inclined to be insolent, and I threatened to turn them out of the room, in revenge for which they have sentenced me to three days' imprisonment in the police-office, and to pay the costs of the affair. Of course I informed them that I would see them in a very warm situation before I submitted to this injustice, and have therefore appealed to the superior court. If they do not reverse the judgment (which, however, they will probably do), I shall appeal to the Grand Duke. Justice is *very* indifferently administered here, the police-court having the right of summary conviction, and being greatly under the fear of the people; so that they (the police) have sentenced me to this penalty, because the burghers of Weimar require a sacrifice for the disturbance in the market-place. This is evidently against all justice, as I am the party sinned against, not sinning, having sustained damage from the populace. The people, and principally the burghers, are so enthusiastic on the religious question, that the least ostensible interference enrages them, and hence they will not be appeased until they have been satisfied for the insult (as they call it) to their principles. I shall, however, of course not submit to this, and have, with Weissenborn, drawn up a spirited appeal to justice. This absurd sentence has been dictated partly (I think) by the irritated feelings of the burgomaster, and partly at the desire of the citizens, who in fact overrule the police-court. This beats Bow Street and Mr. Greenwood, and burgomaster's justice should be as proverbial as justice's.

I am glad to hear that Edith flourishes like a green bay-tree. I should have thought she must quite forget me.

In return for your description of yourself *écrivante*, I will describe my position. It is ten minutes to two by the clock on the Rath Haus, which is opposite to my windows. I am sitting in dressing-gown at a sort of mahogany bureau, in the larger of my sitting-rooms. I shall dine at two, and will think of, and envy your "sand which is by the sea-shore." After dinner, I shall perhaps go out a little and make a call.

I will direct to Rotherfield. Pray remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Scott, and love to Mary, and all.

A letter which, it seems, was sent in the interval between the preceding and the following, is not forthcoming. The opening paragraph in the succeeding letter must refer to Sir Robert Peel's resignation of office.

*Thursday, Dec. 18, 1845.*

My dear Father,

I was much surprised and interested at your intelligence, which was quite unexpected. Has Lord Melbourne nothing to do with the present Government?

You will have received my answer to your last, but as I wrote somewhat hurriedly, I will give you some further particulars of Vogel's opinion. He has said from the beginning, and also stated in the writing which I sent you, that my chest is weak. On the day that I wrote, he tried it *per percussionem*, *i.e.*, by tapping it in a peculiar manner all round, and then making me draw a breath. He says that it is certainly weak, although there is at present no disease, and that as I am of course more susceptible of cold from having been so long confined in the house, I must be doubly careful. On this account, he disapproves of the plan of going to England, as I stated in my last.



My last credit arrived here on the 15th Nov., so that it will be due Jan. 15.

It seems to be a very creditable thing of Sir R. Peel going out, at least I suppose he does it to avoid the imputation of having deceived the country gentlemen. Sir J. Tyrrell and Co. must be on their last legs. Do you expect that Peel will come in again, as surely Lord John cannot command a majority in the House? Shall you, in case of a dissolution, again appeal to the enlightened electors of Northampton?

We have had frosts here, but of no long duration. I am now writing just after breakfast, and before the arrival of Weissenborn. I read the *Faust*, and turn English into German daily.

We are trying to get up some small theatricals here, but I think they will not succeed, as the Grand Duke has refused his small private theatre. He says that he does not like tragedy, or the English language. I believe he cannot go to sleep after a tragedy. The refusal is, I think, in reality on account of some absurd jealousy of the young Court, to whom Mr. Horrocks applied first, and who are very anxious to have it. I think that we shall probably have *Bombastes Furioso*, which is not a great undertaking.

Pray write and send me some early news about the new Government. Your letters arrive a day earlier than *Galignani*. With love to my mother and sisters, believe me,

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

P.S.—This will arrive on Christmas Day, or eve—a great festival, I think, in No. 29.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, Tuesday, December 23, 1845.*

My dear Bertram,—

I wrote a few lines yesterday, acknowledging your letter of the 16th.<sup>1</sup> I wish you (for many reasons) to come home, and I differ from Vogel's opinion respecting the two climates of England and Weimar. At the same time I am disposed to think that, with the very severe weather which seems coming, it would be hazardous for one who has been so much confined to travel at the present moment. From this consideration I am willing to postpone your return till the prospect of milder, or at least more settled weather. You will of course consider the credit, which I remitted specially for your journey and closing expenses, as not available till the time when it becomes due in January.

I particularly wish you, in addition to your German studies, to have in hand some good standard English book in history, and some book in philosophy—by which I mean the philosophy of the intellectual faculties (metaphysics), and really to recollect that you are given this interval to complete, as far as may be, a very imperfect education, and not to fill up a certain number of hours with light reading, &c.

When I was about a year younger than you are, I read Locke *On the Human Understanding* attentively, making an analysis, and I cannot overstate the benefit I derived from it. It is stiff at first, but opens an

<sup>1</sup> The missing letter referred to in p. 192.

entirely new train of thought to one who has never read any work of the kind. Hartley, *On Association of Ideas*, is an excellent book. Brown, on *Cause and Effect*; Reid's or Dugald Stewart's works. I mention several, because the Library at Weimar may afford one or other of them, and the real advantage of the study is to exercise the mind, and open up new trains of thought, rather than to teach any one man's system. I assure you, from my own experience, there is no sort of reading which I know of, that so much elevates the mind.

By standard *history* I mean such works as Gibbon (which you said you began) or Robertson, Watson, &c. In French, Michelet and Thierry are charming books, and all Guizot's works excellent.

Do, my dear B., aspire to profit hereafter by the society which you *may* cultivate in England, by acquiring a decent stock of information now.

The entire absence of ordinances at Weimar, and the sceptical tone of German society, are most grave objections to the place. The difficulties of Christianity are patent, and on the surface, and *any* superficial sneerer can lay a finger upon them. I have in my time made myself acquainted with these views—a course I would not recommend to any one—but depend upon it, that human nature, and the life with which we are conversant, is a dreary, cheerless thing without the belief of immortality, and an entire trust in an all-wise and all-beneficent Creator. In certain frames of mind, the philosopher may think that he realizes both these convictions, but religious faith alone can bring them home to the heart and understanding, and make them substantial principles of action and of comfort.

The evidences and facts of our religion are the legitimate field for reason and inquiry. I believe that the Resurrection of our Saviour is as well, or more completely attested, than any other fact in the history of mankind. When once the evidence of a revelation has satisfied the candid and truth-seeking inquirer, the province of faith begins; and that faith is, I do believe, vouchsafed only to humble prayer, and an earnest endeavour to practise God's will.

I have been led on to say much more than I intended, but I sometimes feel almost unhappy at having, perhaps, exposed you, at a dangerous age, to the contamination of opinions which I sincerely believe to be as erroneous as they are destructive. May God protect you! We all unite in kindest remembrances of, and best wishes for you, dear B.

Your mother returned in great force from Kimberley yesterday. We have heard from George from Gibraltar, Dec. 10. He had been dreadfully sick for two days, having had very rough weather, but was then in a delightful climate. Mr. J. Lefevre is staying with us.

Sir R. Peel's modified Cabinet is not yet known, but it is said that Lords Dalhousie, Ellenborough, and Mr. Gladstone, are to be in it. The precise scope of his Corn Law propositions is quite unknown. Parliament will probably meet about 21st January. He has now, more than ever, the game in his own hands. The whole resignation affair was probably the result of sagacious foresight working to bring things to their present phase—the *chef d'œuvre* of "the Astute!" Pray mention your health particularly, and in detail, when you write. Of course, exercise if the weather

is tolerable—good walking exercise is essential to health.

Ever yours, dear B., affectionately,

R. C.

I have written in the midst of serious interruptions, in Cornhill.

Weimar, January 1, 1846.

My dear Father,

This being the first day of 1846, I write to wish you many happy returns of the same, though it does not seem to be favourably ushered in, judging, I mean, from the President's message,<sup>1</sup> which I have seen for the first time this morning. Although warlike enough, it seems to have no effect in the City. How is this? I have just been to congratulate our Sovereign Prince here on the auspicious state of affairs throughout his dominions. This was at twelve o'clock, and at three I dine at the Court, and at seven go to a *thé dansante*. This is rather strong for one day. I cannot say that I find it—

The sweetest of all earthly things,  
To speak with Princes, and to talk with Kings, &c.

It is tremendously dull, not even being redeemed by the goodness of the *vivers*, for although he (the Grand

<sup>1</sup> "The ship *Sea* arrived at Liverpool on Monday, with New York papers to the 4th inst., and also brought the President's message, which was delivered to Congress on the 2nd inst. This document, as usual, is a very long one, but the portion of it which chiefly interests this country is that relating to the Oregon Territory. The tone adopted upon this important subject is, we regret to say, a bellicose one." (*Illustrated London News*, Dec. 27, 1845)

Duke) eats like an alderman, he has a shocking bad dinner, and we dine off *cold* plate.

Last night there was a grand ball in the public rooms, and we danced in the New Year with a polonaise. When the clock struck twelve, the music made a tremendous crash, and all the men fell to kissing and congratulating one another. I had some difficulty in escaping from the embrace of one or two hairy ruffians. Formerly, I believe, it was allowable for the gentleman to salute his partner on the St. Sylvester eve, but unfortunately the extreme refinement of the age has swept away this valuable and much-to-be-lamented custom. These New Year congratulations are rather painful. As I write this last sentence I have been waited upon by a youth whom I never saw in my life, with a congratulatory address; and in order to escape hearing it read aloud, had to stump up 6d. I have just heard that the Court, to whom I appealed against the sentence of the police,<sup>1</sup> have reversed the sentence, costs and all, so that I get off without anything to pay.

I don't know what to do about writing to George, as I suppose he will have left Alexandria before a letter from me can get there, or is Alexandria to be his headquarters?

Pray make Maynard write to me, and tell me how many pheasants he has shot. I heard from Eden the other day. He has been shooting at Mr. Scrope's, and is now gone to Mr. Shafto's, in the New Forest.

We had some charades a few nights ago at the Horrockses', which went off with great *éclat*; I, taking the part of a lady, and bearing a great resemblance in

<sup>1</sup> See page 191.

that costume—as all the people said—to George's somewhat aged friend, "Miss Schwendler," whose years Mr. James so carefully specified in his letter. We are now getting up a representation of some scenes from the *Merchant of Venice*. Miss Fane takes the part of Portia; the youngest Mr. Horrocks of Shylock, in which he thinks he makes a great many hits; and myself the humble part of "my Lord Bassanio." We are to have the casket-scene, and the trial-scene, and a few other short ones. We thought of acting *Bombastes F.*, but it would not have been appreciated by the audience, as indeed I fear our Shakespeare will not. However, H. is so earnest about it that I was obliged to give in; my own opinion being that it is a great bore, and not half so amusing as our French comedy.

On Christmas eve there are great festivities here; all fathers of families stuffing their children with cakes, &c., with which they adorn a small fir-tree, which is planted in the room. This is lit up with wax-tapers, and the effect is very pretty. My Christmas Day was passed alone, with the exception of a dreadful evening at Court, where the ladies sported trains, and we had to stand without intermission for three hours. When you add to this that all the women stand or sit in a circle where it is impossible to speak to them, you will see how lively our Court evenings are here! Now, I believe, they will begin to dance. Yesterday was the first ball.

The weather is quite tempestuous, tremendous gales of wind. I have not been very well lately, having had a sort of oppression on the chest, which Vogel attributes to rheumatism, but it is better to-day, and seems to be benefited by dancing. He still declares

that he is strongly against my returning to England yet. With kindest love to my mother, and all at home, I remain your affectionate son,

B. W. C.

P.S.—I received a letter from you on the 27th, and also on the 28th Dec.

*Weimar, January 7, 1846.*

My dear Mother,

I write to thank you for a very amusing letter, enclosing a caricature from *Punch*. I think the idea is capital, and lament much that I do not see him (*Punch*) at all, except in short extracts in *Galignani* from our "pungent contemporary."

We are now in the midst of very strenuous rehearsing for the *Merchant of Venice*, which is, I believe, to be performed in about a week, but I do not expect much amusement from it, as our audience will not appreciate the beauties of our acting. We have had very cold weather for the last few days, 13 degrees of frost Reaumar, but to-day it is thawing.

I am now translating into German a book called *Schinderhannes, the Robber of the Rhine*, by Leigh Ritchie. It is very hard, which is indeed its principal recommendation. By this I make more sensible progress than by any other means, and lately I have, I think, advanced some way in German. I have been reading by myself the tales of Hoffman, who was considered a genius, and like most of that description died young. His stories are extraordinarily imaginative and mysterious, quite unlike anything that I have



read in English, dealing in the most unaccountable wonders.

With Weissenborn I read the second part of *Faust*, which is held by everybody but Weissenborn to be very inferior to the first. It was written thirty years after the first part and is extremely difficult to understand, being entirely allegorical. It is in this part that Lord Byron is introduced under the name of Euphorion; and also many other personages, such as the late Grand Duke, the patron of Goethe and Schiller.

I have not yet seen the *Quarterly Review* of which you speak, as they are terribly unpunctual in the reading-room here. The Weimar *savants* were very angry about the article on Lessing and the German poets in the last *Edinburgh Review*.

How is *Punch's Pocket-Book* this year, and also Dickens' new work? I see them advertised in the papers, but they are not yet to be had. There is a bookseller at Leipsic who pirates all the new English works, and sells them at 1s. 6d. a volume. In this way all the novels of Bulwer and James come out, but as they are not admitted into England, they are only valuable to those who live abroad.

I see an article from the *Globe* commendatory of Mr. S. J. Loyd's liberality in giving £1,000 to the Clerks' Christmas Fund. Are the lucky recipients the clerks in his own office or a society of clerks in the City? I also see, though I fear not on good authority, that the receipts of bankers this year have been *enormous!*

The season here seems to be unaccountably deferred. We have had only two balls yet. I suppose the polka

has ceased in England by this time. Before I went away, I remember the *Post* had announced that Her Majesty disapproved of it. Here it is in full vigour, but they *will* play it too slow. Eden will come and call on you when he comes to London, where he has not yet been.

I hope the Northampton dinner went off well. I see that Mr. "Varmin" has just declared in favour of the Repeal of the Corn Laws. What a seedy politician! He must be furious at being kept out of place.

That lazy fellow Maynard will not write. When does he go to his private tutor's? We are now, I fear, unrepresented at Eton, till Philip makes his appearance to support the honour of the family.

The great events *in prospectu* here are the birthdays of the Grand Duke and Duchess, which are both in February. There are then two grand balls in the Palace, which is not used on other occasions. On Saturday, we are to have a German version of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* in the theatre. I fear that the representation of Falstaff will be but seedy. I am pretty well in health and hope you are all the same. What is J. Wodehouse doing? Has he left Oxford, or when does he take his degree?

With love to all at home,

Believe me, your affect. son,

BERTRAM WODEHOUSE CURRIE.

Weimar, Saturday, Jan. 17, 1846.

My dear Mother,

I received *The Times* newspaper, containing my father's speech, together with a long expected letter from you yesterday. I have read the speech over several times, and think it extremely eloquent, though I should think too elevated for the Northampton cobblers. I hope it may move the obdurate hearts of Sir J. Tyrrell and the "gentlemen of England." Mr. V. Smith's seems to me proportionably seedy, particularly in his peroration, where he hopes that he has not acted *without* consistency. This, considering his very well-timed adoption of Repeal, is rather strong.

Our representation of the *Merchant of Venice* went off, after numerous rehearsals, on Tuesday the 13th, with great *éclat*; which day is, I think, your birthday, and was extremely appropriate to such a festival. The people were, or pretended to be, very much pleased. The theatre was very ingeniously arranged with *coulisses*, curtains, drapery, &c., by the machinist of the Weimar Theatre, and the dresses were capital. Miss Fane, who is a fine-looking girl, looked splendid as the lawyer with a moustache and charley. The scenes chosen were in the First Act, that between Shylock, Bassanio, and Antonio, and also between Shylock, Gratiano, and Tubal; in the Second Act, between Portia and Bassanio with Nerissa and Gratiano; and in the Fourth Act, the famous trial scene. The people admired Shylock very much, who certainly has some idea of the part, but is, I think,

much too boisterous. I make a long speech of about half an hour in the trial scene, when I choose between the caskets. We altered it rather ingeniously, taking part of the speech of the Prince of Aragon (namely, that relating to the gold and silver casket), and afterwards the speech of Bassanio on the leaden casket, beginning: "So may the outward shows." You will see this on referring to your Shakespeare. This speech is very difficult, as it is entirely contemplative and not addressed to any one. I also composed an epilogue, which, however, was not recited, as Antonio (Mr. Marshall), for whom I wrote it, had not time to learn it, it being written only on the last day. As it is rather long (fifty-six lines), I will only send you the last eight lines, which are detached from the others.

Enough—once more I claim your kind support  
*Again* defendant, but in beauty's court,  
 At your tribunal suppliant I appear,  
 Hoping no second Shylock may be here.  
 Judge not our efforts with a critic eye,  
 Let our endeavours our defects supply  
 And think, that if you are but entertained  
 Our wish accomplished and our purpose gained.

And also one or two lines referring to Shylock :

'Tis true, he's rather noisy—only look at  
 The speech in which he says, " If every ducat  
 Were in *six* parts and every *part* a ducat  
 I'd have," et cetera ; but I have left my book at  
 Home, and forget the rest : 'Tis in the trial  
 When all our efforts met with a denial.—  
 Yet could you see him in his fallen state,  
 His daughter fled, his moneys confiscate,  
 The *scene* behind the *scenes* might move a tear,  
 Where Shylock seeks oblivion in small beer ;  
 And now, turned Christian, plays his knife and fork  
 Sadly *chop*fallen on a *chop* of pork.

You will remember that Antonio in the trial makes it a condition that the Jew should become a Christian. I must give you another line about the Duke.

And last, not least, but greatest on the scene, is  
 The Duke, or rather 't should be said, the Doge of Venice.  
 Like other *Dukes*, he meets with much applause,  
 Though sadly ignorant of his country's laws.  
 A passive, harmless fellow, and no Nero  
 Wanting the *voûs* of famous Faliero.  
 For were not Portia specially retained  
 I fear the Jew his vile intent had gained ;  
 And the poor gentleman who stands before ye  
 Had had no further business for his lawyer.

As this was done in a couple of hours, I have no doubt there are plenty of mistakes in it.

On Thursday night we had the *Milanollos* here, who are making a great sensation in the musical world. They are two Italian girls, about fourteen or fifteen years old, who play the violin in the most wonderful manner, and as all *connoisseurs* say, bring out better tones than Ernst or Sivori. They gave a concert in the theatre, and were tumultuously applauded, and at night serenaded by the military band. We expect Jenny Lind here in a few days. She is engaged at Berlin, but has had a week's leave on purpose to come to Weimar.

Last night the Russian Ambassador threw open his *salon* to the *haute volée* of Weimar ; that is, we had a ball in a room considerably smaller than mine ; indeed, most of the balls here are given in much smaller rooms than mine, and I think it would be a good plan for me to give one, if I could get the ladies to come. The dancing is now set in, but the only good balls are in the public rooms. The Court balls are stiff and in small rooms, and besides the society is limited to

about twenty girls, and at the private houses where the Court is invited, the same people only are present. Now, besides that the girls in the second society are much prettier, it is a great thing to have a more extended choice of partners than is possible at the Court.

I send you the cast of our performance :

*Portia*, Miss Fane.

*Nerissa*, Mrs. C. Horrocks (a very *gauche* creature).

*Bassanio*, Mr. B. Currie.

*Antonio*, Mr. Marshall (Secretary to the Princess and a little turn-up-nosed Scotchman, but agreeable).

*Gratiano*, Mr. C. Horrocks.

*Shylock*, Mr. T. Horrocks.

*Tubal*, Mr. Horrocks.

*Duke*, Do.

There has been a conspiracy discovered at Posen and at Erfurt, which is a Prussian military *dépôt* near Weimar. The soldiers have all received ball cartridge, and are to be marched out. I see that the Militia are to be called out in England. Are the Yeomanry also? If so, let the privates in the East Norfolk beware, for I shall be a martinet.

I am pretty well now and have got rid of the chest oppression. The weather is fine and mild. With love to all and a pinch to Maynard for his laziness, believe me, your affecte. son,

B. W. C.

P.S.—I think my grandfather might make me a Captain of Militia. One gets £300 a year. One of the Horrockses, who has been a captain in the 15th Foot, is very anxious to get such an appointment. Perhaps in the E. Norfolk they want *army* men.

Weimar, Tuesday, January 27, 1846.

My dear Father,

Though a considerable time has elapsed since I heard from you, I will continue my regular communications in the hope of soon receiving a reply. Your speech, which I have read a good many times, is, I think, splendid. I showed it to an Englishman, who is living here, a Mr. Marshall, a man of a good deal of talent. He is delighted therewith, and says it resembles the style of Carlyle. But as he compares everything he is pleased with to this favourite author, I think the resemblance may be imaginary. I trust that you are bottling up a tremendous anathema to be hurled at Sir R. Peel if he does not declare for total Repeal. By this time, however, the Queen's Speech has declared the intentions of Government on this point.

Weimar has within the last few days been the great centre of attraction for all the neighbouring States, on account of the visit of the celebrated Jenny Lind, who arrived here for a week on last Thursday. On Friday, she sang at a concert at Court, and the Swedish national songs were beautiful. Since that we have had *Norma* and *La Sonnambula*, and her acting, especially in the latter, is perfectly astonishing. I never was so pleased with any exhibition in my life. She is not pretty, but has a very interesting expression, and acts in the most refined and touching manner. The people here were tremendously enthusiastic. Her voice is extremely fine and melodious. In *Norma* her acting was also most delightful, but she is too young

for the character. I think if she comes to England that she will make a tremendous sensation. She is entirely different from any singer I have ever seen, being wonderfully natural and captivating. The stories about her are very romantic. They say that she is engaged to a Swedish pastor, and only acts for a short time in order to obtain money enough to marry, and that she will then leave the stage. She gives a concert to-morrow, and after that goes back to Berlin. The Duke of Gotha and all the neighbouring Princes came in to Weimar, to be present at the representation of *Norma*.

We had a capital ball at the Prince's about a week ago, on the occasion of the birthday of the Queen of Holland, and on Tuesday next is the birthday of the Grand Duke, when there is a splendid ball in the hall of the Palace, which is only used on the birthdays of the Grand Duke and Duchess. The second birthday takes place on the 16th February, and these are the principal annual events in Weimar.

I have not heard from Eden for some time, but he spoke about coming back in the beginning of February, in which case he will, I suppose, soon be here. And I wish you would ask my mother to entrust to his care the things I wrote to her about. She also speaks of a great-coat of mine which perhaps might be put together with the other things into a box and confided to the care of our friend. It is so long since I have received any intelligence from home, that I don't know whether Maynard is at home, or gone to his tutor's. Pray, if there is anything very good in *Punch*, send me a stamped copy. It only costs me about 2d. or 3d. if sent by Rotterdam.



The American Senate seem turbulent. What is the opinion about the probability of war in London? *Galignani* is filled with the accounts of Protection meetings and dinners.

They roared, they dined, they drank, they swore they meant  
To die for England, why then live?—for rent.

This morning some snow has fallen, but I fear it will not lie. Pray write soon and tell me something new. I saw a little time ago a flaming account of Mr. J. G. Rebow's marriage. Who is Lord Norbury? Was not the late Peer of that name murdered in Ireland?

When my mother sends me these before-mentioned things, perhaps she would enclose a few of the newest polkas, as they have very bad ones here, and it would be a great *coup* if we could get some new ones—the *Annan* particularly, which is so very pretty.

Your affect. son,

B. W. C.

*Weimar, Monday, February 2, 1846.*

My dear Mother,

As I have got an hour to spare to-day, between the congratulating of, and the feeding with, the Grand Duke, I will devote the time to answering your last letter. This is one of the grand festivals at Weimar, being the first of the two birthdays. At two o'clock we are to have a splendid banquet in the hall of the Castle, and the whole town is swarming with hungry Prussian officers, who have come in from all quarters to enjoy old Weimar's feed. There is also a

grand representation in the theatre to-night, where we must all appear in full dress.

I admired Sir R. Peel's speech on the first night very much. It must have been listened to with intense interest.

I see there is a new morning paper<sup>1</sup> come out, of which *Galignani* tells us Boz is the editor.

I was much interested in the extracts from George's letter. I cannot make out whether his companion is Lord Langford or Longford. If the former, I was in the same remove with him at Eton; the latter, Horrocks informs me, is an extremely stupid fellow, but a swell and keeps a drag.

I heard the other day from Eden, but as he neither sends direction nor date of his letter, I cannot answer it. He talks of starting on the 10th. If you should see or hear of him, pray tell him that I would recommend his being here on the 16th of this month, as that is the birthday of the Grand Duchess, and the only good ball there will be here. I wrote a letter to my father a few days ago, in which I begged him to ask you to entrust some things to Eden's care. I also mentioned how delighted I had been with Jenny Lind, who left us after staying here for a week.

You ask me in your letter if I should like to stay here longer. I think the best plan would be for me to stay till the 20th of March, at which time my term of lodging will be over, and the weather will be more propitious than at this time, for travelling. Or, if you prefer it, I should be very happy to stay till the 20th April, by which time I should have been away exactly a year from England. Although there are no

<sup>1</sup> The *Daily News*.

great charms or amusements in the life here, yet I like my situation very much, as I am independent and a great deal alone, which suits me very well. At the same time, it will of course give me great pleasure to see you in Hyde Park Terrace again. I hope my equestrian prowess is sufficient for the E. Norfolk Yeomanry Cavalry.

I am reading Locke *On the Human Understanding*, and have found out some new arguments against the existence of *innate* ideas!

I hear of a new arrival *in prospectu*, a Mr. Grant, a Scotchman I believe, who is to come here in a few days. There is an agreeable Frenchman at present staying in the inn.

I had a recurrence, for the second time only since I left England, of my headaches the other day, and as usual at a very inconvenient time, having just sat down to a very *recherché* dinner at Mr. Parry's. It seemed to come on without any reason, except that of disappointing me of my dinner (the only good one in Weimar, not excepting the Grand Duke's, which are execrable), as I had not been riding or taking any violent exercise and live extremely moderately. In fact my diet is that of a hermit. I take a cup of coffee in the morning, dine very badly about half-past two, and have sometimes a cup of tea at seven, but often take none. I have got some splendid tea from Frankfort, and could give you as good a cup as even the boasted brew of H. P. T. could produce.

I have read the *Cricket on the Hearth*, and have been obliged to buy up a quantity of copies to give to the young ladies here, who are very anxious to read it, and pretend they can understand it. It is published

by a man at Leipsic for a shilling, and I suppose costs five in England.

With love to all at home,

Believe me, your affect. son,

B. W. C.

*Weimar, Sunday, February 15. 5 p.m.*

My dear Father,

I have this moment finished your very interesting letter, which, through a mistake of the postman, has been but just delivered. I am lying up at present with an extremely unpleasant eruption in the face, which is the more unfortunate, as to-morrow is the birthday of the Grand Duchess, which is celebrated by a banquet, and a ball on the following day; I hope, however, by dint of cream, senna, and fasting, to get rid of it before to-morrow: if not, I fear I shall be unable to appear, as it is very disfiguring. The ball on the 3rd was splendid. The hall is an immense room, square and with a gallery all round, supported by pillars on two sides. It was beautifully lighted with a fine chandelier in the middle, and wax lights placed singly and close to each other on the ledge of the gallery. The effect is capital, as the glare of light is avoided, while at the same time the room is very brilliant. On the night of the birthday there is a show-piece in the theatre, where the Grand Duchess scintillates in diamonds. She has the most splendid jewels I have ever seen, having, with the Queen of Holland, inherited the whole of the diamonds of the Empress Paul of Russia. We had several royal and

august personages and some very handsome uniforms present. I am afraid the introduction from Maltitz will not be attainable, as I fancy that, though a relation, he is quite a humble friend of such a great officer as M. Brunow. I am not very intimate with him, though he has been extremely kind to me. He is rather a heavy talker, and his parties are very dull. I will, however, cultivate him more, in order to get a letter out of him if possible.

We have now a Scotchman staying here of the indefinite name of Grant. He is a very good fellow, about twenty-four, and has improved his mind by foreign travel, having been in South America, Australia, Van Dieman's Land, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. He was at Weimar six years ago, and since that time has been constantly travelling for pleasure or improvement. He will appear at Court in the Highland dress, which will be something new, and will create a sensation.

The kissing scene in the play was *manipular*. Portia would not have objected to the *facial*, but the young ladies here, who are very invidious, would probably have been much scandalized at it. There is a great deal of prudery in Weimar. One may not speak to a young lady in the street; and after dancing with a girl, she does not take your arm, but offers you the tips of her fingers to hold. At Court they all stand in a formidable semi-circle, and if you are talking to a young lady in the corner of a room, she will all at once make a bolt to the main body.

Pray give Mary my congratulations on her late birthday. I had meant to write to her, but confess I was unable to fill a large sheet with sufficiently inter-

esting matter. I heard shortly from Maynard the other day. I am glad he has received so many "tokens of esteem" from his Eton friends. Are there any nice books among them?

I am reading a book which is very prettily written by an American (Longfellow), with the ambitious title of *Hyperion*. I have finished the second part of *Faust*. It is very long—comprising alone a thick volume.

We have had a good deal of snow, but it does not last. Last night, in coming home from the theatre, my hat was covered an inch deep in five minutes, but it all thawed in the night. I asked my mother to send by Eden, if you would (as you, I think, offered) let me have it, the dress which I wore as Prince Bambini. There is to be a fancy ball at Gotha, and I could have it altered here at a small expense. I hope you will write again soon. My letters lately have been "few and far between." With love to my mother and all at home,

I remain, your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

Whether the Prince Bambini dress ever arrived, whether the ball at Gotha was attended, or even whether it were possible to take part in the festivities of the morrow, does not appear, as there are no further letters preserved of this year's residence in Weimar. The letters afford abundant proofs that the future man of business had at eighteen as great an enjoyment of dancing and festivities as any of his contemporaries; and that he was not then wholly indifferent to a good day's shooting, which to those who only knew him later in life comes as somewhat of a surprise.

WEIMAR TWO YEARS LATER.

Two letters remain, written during the visit to Germany in 1848, recorded in the autobiography (p. 22), which may find a place here. Unfortunately those from Aix-la-Chapelle and Homburg have not been preserved.

*Weimar, Tuesday, September 12, 1848.*

My dear Father,

I am still at this place, having found it—as is usually the case with me—more agreeable after a week's residence than at first, and I have half made up my mind, if the weather be fine, to make the tour of the Thuringian forest on foot, which will be a great sacrifice to Hygieia. If the above comes off I should leave this in about a week, and at any rate be in London by the end of the month. Before leaving Germany I should like to take a week more of Homburg, the effects of which I now feel were to a small extent certainly beneficial. If you will write to me soon after the reception of this, to the care of Weissenborn, I will take care to have the letter forwarded.

I saw my old flame Marie yesterday for the first time. She has got a baby, and looks very happy, though in small circumstances. I continue in the belief that she is prettier than any girl or woman in London of my acquaintance.

I have, since my last, dined with the Dukes old and hereditary, where things are much the same as

before, except perhaps that the champagne is dealt out with a more sparing hand, and the *gaieties* are strictly confined to dull dinners, balls being considered likely, in the present state of public opinion, to irritate the people.

Old Weissenborn, as formerly, is my grand resource. Time seems to have very little effect on him, and he is the same quaint old fellow as before. I have now (5 o'clock p.m.) just come in from a long walk with him, to and from a village where we eat fish and potatoes. The shooting has been given up entirely to the peasants, who are killing everything with four legs that they can find. The partridges are safe, as they are entirely unable to hit them—Horrocks being the only man in the Weimar territory who has any idea of shooting in our acceptation of the word. I have nothing more particular to tell you of: the life here is very monotonous.

*Weimar, September 25, 1848.*

. . . Your letter found me this morning still here, retained by the various attractions of Weimar, of which the principal has been a *chasse de cerf* at Ilmenau, a neighbouring dependency of our Crown, where the Prince entertained us for two days. The sport is very fine, the game being red deer, of which we saw a very fair quantity, and the country very beautiful, hills covered with pine forests in which the animals reside. I had one shot at a stag simultaneously with another man, and we each put a bullet into him. To-day I was invited to shoot pheasants with the Grand Duke,



but the weather being bad, the shooting was commuted into a breakfast at one of his *chateaux*, from which I have just returned.

In a few days more I shall be ready to start, but first there is a ball to be given to the heroes who have returned from Schleswig Holstein (without ever having seen a Dane), at which I must be present. And secondly, the Prince has invited me to partake of the above-named stag at an entertainment which he is preparing.

You have heard, I suppose, of the repetition of the days of June at Frankfort. The riot appears to have originated in a plot on the part of the ultra minority on the Schleswig question to upset the Parliament. The greatest disaster that occurred was the barbarous murder of Prince Licknowsky, who was one of the most remarkable of the deputies, and whom I saw several times at Frankfort. He had distinguished himself by extraordinary gallantry in the Carlist wars in Spain, was apparently quite a young man, very handsome, and renowned for his *bonnes fortunes*. He was the leader of the extreme right, or aristocratic party, and as such made some remarkable speeches. He was about to marry Comtesse Bergen, the widow of the Elector of Hesse, with an immense jointure, and was altogether perhaps the most talked-about member of the Frankfort Assembly. During the row, one of the Horrockses, who lives at Frankfort, had three bullets fired into his house.

At Berlin they are expecting a crisis. A measure has been carried by the Parliament, requiring all officers in the army who do not accept the present state of things, to resign their commissions. The

late Ministry have retired rather than enforce this measure, and the King has commissioned General Pfuel to form a Government, which is also opposed to it. Meanwhile the Chamber insists, and the question must soon be referred to force if neither side yield. This measure is of the greatest importance to the Constitutional or Progressive party, as the officers of the army are composed entirely of the aristocracy, and are notoriously *reactionnaires*, and the object is to deprive them of their influence over the soldiers, which would be used against the Liberals in case of disturbance.

I read of the death of my uncle<sup>1</sup> in *Galignani*, extracted from a Norfolk paper, and was very sorry to hear of it.

Your most affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

<sup>1</sup> The Hon. and Rev. Alfred Wodehouse.

LETTERS FROM SOUTH AMERICA.

1849. 1850.



II.

LETTERS.

1849. 1850.

*Off Devonport, March 5, 1849.*  
*H.M.S. Driver, Monday morning, 9½.*

My dear Mother,

I have just arrived after a very successful journey in the railroad, and having washed, am now writing in the Captain's cabin. The *Driver* came into the Hamoaze at 11 a.m. yesterday, and would have been off but for me, and we now expect to start in about an hour. The weather is beautiful, and this place very picturesque. I have not yet exactly made out where I am to sleep. Captain J.'s sister occupies one of the cabins. There seem to be several officers. I have just breakfasted with them in the gun-room.

Pray don't forget my things to Rio Janeiro. You shall hear from me by the next opportunity.

With kindest love to all,

Your most affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

*H.M.S. Driver, Saturday, March 10th.*

My dear Father,

As I hear there is some chance of our not being able to stay at Madeira, in case the weather is unfavourable, I think it better to have a few lines

ready to put into the port there, to which I can add if opportunity offers. We are now sailing along with a strong N.E. wind, and are about opposite to Lisbon, having left off steaming on Wednesday in obedience to the orders of the Admiralty, who, to reduce the consumption of fuel, desire that the steam power is only to be used when sailing is impossible. For some days we have had very little wind, and have progressed slowly, expecting to arrive at Madeira on Monday or Tuesday.

We got out of Plymouth Sound about noon on the 5th inst., and during that and the following day I was very bilious, but now feel pretty well, and with the exception of sleep, which I can't get, am comfortable. The sister of the Captain occupies the best cabin. She is a middle-aged person, and up to this time has hardly appeared on account of continued sea-sickness, but I imagine she will not be a very dangerous *compagnon*. I occupy a cabin in the middle of the ship, which was vacated by the assistant-surgeon, who has no right to a separate cabin. The Captain is a very pleasant little man, and, I daresay, a capital sailor. He has been at sea for twenty-one years, almost without intermission, and in all parts of the world. His *cuisine*, however, is very moderate. He tells me he never knows what he eats, nor when, and that when alone he sometimes forgets to dine at all. You may imagine that upon this point there is considerable difference of opinion between us. Nothing good is to be got, and many necessaries not at all. Butter, milk, tea, coffee either do not exist or are execrable.

The other officers I know little of; those belonging to the ship are four in number, but we have a quantity

of supernumerary young sawboneses going out to join their ships. I understand Mrs. Anderson's son was to have sailed with us in this manner, and that we have got his luggage on board, but that he did not appear in time. We have two hundred and five souls in the ship, and six guns of the largest sizes, and are altogether rather formidable; but our pace is not very considerable, and we roll dreadfully, so much so that I have great difficulty in making this present writing legible. I find that I ought to have provided bedding, and towels, and basins, &c., but the Captain has very kindly managed to get together most of these indispensables for me. Washing is difficult, but I hope when the weather is milder to get on better. Up to this time I have worn my great coat and perceive no difference in the temperature, but we have had continual north winds, which may account for the cold.

*Sunday, March 11th.*—I go on working away at the Spanish translations with a dictionary, and learning dialogues. Last night we had a considerable gale, which has rather subsided this morning, and we are travelling along very comfortably. I suppose when we are in the tropics the voyage will be more agreeable; at present it is terribly tedious, and from the rolling of the ship and the odours of bilge water decidedly unpleasant. How any sane person can choose such a profession as that of a sailor I cannot make out!

*Tuesday morning, 8 o'clock.*—We are anchored off Madeira, and the health officer has just arrived with the pleasing intelligence that we are not to land, a quarantine of five days having been ordered on account of cholera! So we shall be off again in about an hour, as we want no coals or water, and have only to deliver

the mails. This is rather disquieting, after eight days at sea, to have to leave the only green place one has seen since England. The view of the Bay of Funchal is very pretty and the air soft and agreeable. Poor Johnson must do without his wine and I without towels and a variety of things which I want. We expect to make Rio in twenty-five days or thereabouts. If by any chance my things should not have started, I should like a couple of wide-awakes of a largish size. I have lost mine overboard. This letter will start for Lisbon to-morrow, and, I suppose, will reach you in ten days, by which time I hope to be on the Line.

. . . Tell Mary that I am sorry that I can make no inquiries about the "dorg," but he would not be allowed to come on board. We have hoisted our yellow flag, and no boats are allowed to come within speaking distance, and this when we have not a single case of illness of any kind since leaving England. I should like to bombard the town.

*Rio de Janeiro, April 11, 1849.*

My dear Father,

My letter from Madeira, which I hope you received in due time, informed you of my arrival at that place and disappointment at not being able to land on account of the absurd quarantine laws. After I had despatched my letter, it was found necessary to delay a few hours longer in order to pick up an anchor which had been left by another ship, and I took the opportunity of putting myself in communication with Mr. Stoddart through the officer of health, and re-



questing him to send me a quarter cask of the choice old London Particular, £11 10s., which he did, accompanying the same with a letter eulogizing his vineyards, and regretting profoundly the impossibility of our meeting. I am glad that I had the chance of showing this small civility to Johnson, though I am afraid the gift is rather inappropriate, as he is the most temperate of men. After it has been round the Horn and back it will be in splendid condition, if there is any truth in common report, and will do for an Admiral if one should chance to come on board.

The remainder of our voyage to this place, comprising twenty-seven days, was like most sea voyages, I believe, entirely devoid of incident. We got the N.E. trade wind about the Tropic of Cancer, and ran near the Cape Verd Islands, but without seeing them, crossed the line with the usual ceremonies on the 27th of March, and losing, or rather not finding, the S.E. trade wind, were obliged to burn a few of our coals, greatly to our skipper's grief, who parted with his coals with much more difficulty than with his money. Finally, we made Cape Frio on the evening of Easter Day, and at five in the morning of Monday steamed into Rio Harbour by moonlight. It is certainly very beautiful—on each side a succession of mountains of the most fantastic shapes, and indented everywhere with little bays surrounded by villages. Behind all the Organ mountains tower. To these I intend to betake myself to-morrow for several reasons, and firstly because I am not at all well, which I hear is the case with most people arriving here from England, and is attributable to the great heat. My symptoms, however, are not very alarming and are such as I am

used to—a horrid bad tongue, loss of appetite and sleep, and general languor. My second reason is that this town is without exception the dirtiest, dearest, hottest, and most stinking place I have ever seen or heard of. The population consists of nude and odoriferous negroes, numerous in proportion to the Brazilians, who are almost as bad; and the inn where I am now staying, at the moderate rent of 8s. 6d. a day for a room, is full of the most cut-throat looking Yankees bound for California. Not less than a thousand have arrived within a few days and are refitting.

Mr. Hudson is very unwell, but I sent to him this morning Mr. Mellish's letter, and offered to call and see him, and am going to do so this evening, and shall then get further information about the village in the mountains, which I am told is delightfully cool and cheap. I think that if Captain Johnson had stayed a few days longer here, I should have been tempted to go on to Buenos Ayres with him, but he was off yesterday evening (Tuesday, April 10th), having only arrived on Monday. I took leave of him with many regrets, for he is a very nice, amiable little fellow, and understands his business capitally. I cannot trace my bilious attack to his *cuisine*, which was that of an obscure hermit, combining extreme frugality with great filth; but not through his fault, for he is a most liberal fellow, but in the hands of an unjust steward as far as regards his diet. In fact, any one who places the *summum bonum* in *comfort*, rightly understood, might as well seek it in Nova Zembla as on board a ship, or at least on board H.M.S. *Driver*, for one can neither sleep nor wash, nor eat any manner of clean thing.

I went this morning with an Englishman, who has some connection with our Embassy, to a sort of private hotel in the suburbs, very superior to the one in which I am, but even dearer: a cab with two mules there and back for one and a half hours cost ten shillings. My companion is a friend of Elwes, the second son of old E., whom I remember to have heard of as being in South America, whither he exiled himself because his father would not let him marry. I heard of him last at Valparaiso, and going to the South Sea Islands. I saw some drawings which he had left of this place, which are excellent. He made the journey across the Pampas. Mr. Hamilton, whom I also saw, is *attaché*, and is, I think, a child of the sun as represented by old *Camco*, your chairman; at least they told me that his father had been an ambassador, and that his brother was a sea-captain. He does not appear to inherit his father's tastes, for I found him mending his canoe and nets outside of a little cottage close to the water.

Since writing this I have been to see Mr. Hudson, who has recommended me to go to Petropolis, which is the name of the place I spoke of. He also showed me a letter from Elwes, who was thirty-seven days going from Buenos Ayres to Valparaiso, including stoppages, but only seventeen across the plains to Mendoza.

I find that the packet starts for England on Sunday next, the 15th, so you may get this in the beginning of June, and I think you had better write to Valparaiso and Lima—to the Consuls, but the letters will go by Panama, so you must not write at the time of the Rio packet; at least, I am told that this is the case, but you will, of course, be able to find out in London.

I am afraid correspondence will be difficult and rare after I cross to the westward.

Tell the Count that I have read three volumes of *Gil Blas*, and can now understand them quite easily. I worked away at Spanish exercises on board ship, and, till the tremendous heat came, very assiduously. When we were steaming across the line the heat was prodigious—no wind, and the addition of the fires to roast us.

*Friday morning, April 13th.*—I find myself rather better, and have no doubt that as soon as I can get into the country my recovery will be rapid. Yesterday I dined with my bankers, Messrs. Maxwell, Wright, and Co.—regular Yankees, and the richest merchants in the place. They dined at half-past two, with all their clerks and a few merchant captains, and had, what appeared to me, after so long an abstinence, a very decent feed. Their conversation was exactly such as I had imagined from descriptions of Yankee boarding-houses. My worthy friends formerly corresponded with Reid Irving, of whom they told me they were the largest creditors. Mr. Wright informed me that I should find the same table at that hour every day I liked to come, and made a general offer of his services. I have not yet been to Naylor and Co., the other merchants to whom I have a letter, but shall go when I return. An U.S. sloop has just arrived from California with a large freight of gold.

I am preyed upon by mosquitoes to an awful extent, and my hands look like the paws of a leopard. To-day I am going to dine with the Captain of H.M.S. *Hydra*, a small steamer looking out for slaves, in the harbour; and to-morrow I shall certainly be off, having been

delayed by washing clothes, and the general laziness of everybody here.

The currency of Brazil seems to be in a most curious state. The only issue and legal tender is paper. Silver and gold are perpetually fluctuating, and always below the nominal value; and for small change, every banker and innkeeper and other shopkeeper issues his notes from 1s. to 2d. or thereabouts, which circulate in the town. When one of these gentlemen smash, there must be a general loss, one would think, unless the creditors take it out in labour.

I am afraid I shall have to stay here six weeks, but I suppose that, like all other places, it will improve. You will hear whether this is so in a month or thereabouts.

With my love to all, and hoping they may be breathing a purer atmosphere than I am, and under a more temperate sun, I remain,

Your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Hyde Park Terrace, April 3, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

We have not yet heard of you from Madeira, but are hoping to do so daily, as we think you possibly got there by the 14th ult. You will receive by this mail accounts of a complete victory over the Sikhs. We have no details, but, in spite of old Gough's magniloquence, there seems every reason to believe that it was a settler. The old Irishman, however, was completely outmanœuvred by the Sikh general, and

the unexpected *rencontre* with Whish, who happened to be moving up from Mooltan in the line Shere Singh had taken, appears to have been the proximate cause of our success. The *Times* of to-day has a good article on the subject.

H. G. Ward is to be High Commissioner of the Ionian Isles, and pays Messrs. Currie and Co. "that 'ere trifle."

Lord Panmure is dying, so Fox Maule will vacate the Secretary of Warship. *On dit* Tufnell to be Secretary to the Admiralty, and John A. Smith Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury; but the Whigs pretend to say that, if beaten on the Navigation Law repeal in the Lords (of which there is no doubt), they will resign. Stanley avers that he is quite ready to take the Government. He would dissolve, and go to the country with a supposed reactionary cry against Free Trade, but his party in the Commons is too absurd to think of as an Administration. I cannot believe it possible, though many well-informed persons certainly expect it. The theory seems to be, that the required junction of Whigs and Peelites can only take place in Opposition, and that the above is a phase through which we must pass before we get a Government. Meanwhile Johnny has got a hornet's nest about him by his Rate-in-aid, taxing Ulster for the South and West of Ireland. The debates have been even duller and more Irish than usual.

Miss Mills marries John Micklethwaite, a former crony of poor Alfred's, a nominal parson, said to be heir to his uncle, Sir Peckham M., to some contingent £5,000 per annum—but impecunious now. He will probably stick to Camelford House for his outlet.

Maynard is at home and in force; they are going to-night to hear Jenny Lind at Exeter Hall. George goes to Kimberley Easter week.

Rush's trial is protracted by his rambling and endless examinations of the witnesses, which lead to nothing. He is his own counsel. His conviction is considered quite certain and may be in to-morrow's paper.

Poor, dear old Morier died after a short illness, congestion of liver and apoplexy. Edith Musgrave complained of head-ache, and died (a few mornings since) without any illness, in the most sudden manner imaginable. I think I told you this, and that Dr. Hall marries Lady Hood, a widow in delicate health, with a large family. She was a Miss Tibbets, with a large fortune, and is said to have £12,000 a year.

I wrote a few lines by the *Comet*, and sent Crowden's box with many additional letters by the *Touch-me-not*. I now send a letter from Mandeville to de Guido at Rio. I have letters from Captain Eden for the *Inconstant* and the *Asia*, and also for Lima, which I will forward to Buenos Ayres.

We have now mild, showery weather, after most horrible easterly winds and darkness. Crowds are gone to Paris. The utter defeat of the Italians, and Charles Albert's flight and abdication seem to promise settlement, and Austrian supremacy.

Ponsford, after all, has determined to coffer-dam. I have not seen him. He has laid the first brick in March, on the land side.

We depend on very long and full accounts from you as often as opportunity occurs: *all will interest us*,

and if you will keep a sort of journal by you, you can send off a good bit thereof when a ship offers.

Ever yours affectionately,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS MOTHER.

*Moss' Hotel, Petropolis,*

*Sunday, April 22, 1849.*

My dear Mother,

I wrote a letter to my father, which was despatched by the packet exactly a week ago, announcing my arrival at Rio Janeiro on the 9th (Easter Monday), and I shall send this by H.M.S. *Alceto*, which has arrived from the River Plate with despatches, and sails in a few days, and will very probably arrive in England before the packet. I am now staying in the mountains, about eight hours' journey from Rio, at a private hotel lately established in this place, which is a colony, formed by the Emperor, of peasants from the Rhine provinces, and which has become in the last few years a retreat for the Rio people in hot weather. The situation is very beautiful, and the temperature almost European, and I shall probably stay here for some weeks, for Rio Janeiro is most detestable, and in fact uninhabitable, from the heat and stench. It is situated in a marsh: there are no drains, and the pavement is so bad as to be almost impassable, and, being shut in on all sides, the heat is intense. I was very glad to leave it a week ago, after having got my things washed, and am quite



re-established in health by the pure air of this place, which would be charming but for the want of something to do. The people with whom I associate are the wives of three English merchants (of Hebrew extraction) who have cottages here. The brother of one is the landlord of this hotel, of which I am at present the only inmate. The house is comfortable, and the charges (for this country) moderate. I pay about 9s. a day for board and lodging. But my principal associate is a certain Dr. Manico, ex-lieutenant in H.M. Navy, and now practising medicine. He is an old fellow, having been lieutenant to Lord Collingwood, and a very good companion. We generally repair in the evening to the house of one of the ladies above-mentioned, and have tea and lose our money.

To-day I have been making an expedition to a waterfall about five miles distant, with a large party of Brazilians, Swiss, Germans, &c.—the inmates of another hotel, where we breakfasted and rode about the woods. The roads are practicable for horses or mules only, and all communication is carried on by the assistance of one or the other. Long troops of mules convey the imports into the country, and return with the productions of the mines. I suppose I shall make an expedition into the interior, but I hear there is nothing extraordinary to see, and I have no great curiosity about mines. The Emperor is now here; his palace is a most seedy edifice, and his turn-out like that of a tenth-rate German prince. The German colonists are employed in making the roads and building, as the Brazilians are too lazy to work at all, and the blacks do not know how. The last are very

numerous, and seem to be well treated. By a clause in our absurd anti-slavery law, no English subject is allowed to possess slaves, so the English are obliged to hire them from a slave-owner, by which they get the refuse of the population as domestic servants, and have to pay exorbitantly for them.

I shall have to stay here or in Rio till about the middle of next month, when I hope the packet will arrive from England with letters from you. Forty-eight hours after, a packet starts for Buenos Ayres, in which I shall embark, and arrive there in eight or nine days.

My journey to this place was rather unpropitious. I started at 11 a.m. in a steamer which should have arrived at its destination at two o'clock. Instead of which, the intelligent Captain ran us on to the mud, where we remained for six hours, and I had an opportunity of studying the Portuguese character, which developed itself in utter indifference to our situation and to all remonstrances. Having arrived at the port in a pouring rain and half-starved, we found an omnibus, but the mules, frightened at the lightning, would not stir. Eventually, at 8 p.m., we arrived at a village about half-way to this place, and as it was too late to proceed, had to sleep there. I shared my room with a very dirty French fellow-passenger and his monkey, and my bed was a platted straw mattress, half an inch thick, covered with a sheet. However, the next day was beautiful, and I started at six on a mule, and rode up the mountain by a zig-zag road, surrounded by the most profuse vegetation — palm-trees and cocoa and cedars covered with parasites, and cacti and aloes and rhododendrons, and com-

manding a most splendid view of the surrounding mountains and valleys.

*Monday morning.*—I am obliged to finish this letter in a hurry, for the post to Rio is uncertain, and I have an opportunity of sending to-day by a private hand. If you should get this before the 4th or 5th June, about which time the packet sails from Falmouth, I think you had better write to Buenos Ayres (care of Mr. Southern), and I will get the letter forwarded if I am at Valparaiso, but after that time Valparaiso and Lima will be the best places.

I think I shall return to Rio in a week, and establish myself in a private hotel out of the town, as I have several things to get, and I am anxious to have a Spanish master, which I cannot here. The house where I am now living is built of lath and plaster, and is one storey high, with a quantity of small rooms very bare of furniture, and a verandah cased with glass in front. Behind, there is a small garden, on the slope of the mountain, which has been cleared from the forest. The feeding is copious, and pretty good when one is used to it. Beef, mutton, and chickens are in great abundance, but tasteless and stringy; milk, butter, and cream do not exist. Fruits, at this time of year, are out of season, and they do not grow up here. For wine, the people drink nothing but port, which is singularly inappropriate to the climate. There seems to be no agriculture in the country. Wheat will not grow, and the flour, which is imported in immense quantities from the States, feeds the white population almost entirely, the blacks being contented with Indian corn. I am afraid I have nothing more to tell you—things on the whole being much the same as I have

found them elsewhere, with the exception of a few externals. With love to all at *home*, wherever that may be when this reaches you, believe me, my dear mother,

Your most affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

*Rio Janeiro, Sunday, May 6, 1849.*

My dear Father,

This is the third letter you will receive from this place, and I fear I have exhausted all my memoranda, and can remember nothing very worthy of remark either in the manners and customs of the people or in the way of personal adventure.

I am once more domesticated in this city, or rather in its suburbs, which together, it is said, contain 350,000 inhabitants. I find no reason to recall my first impressions of it. Situated in a marsh, undrained, and ill-paved, and at present flooded from a four-days' deluge, it is the only unpleasant spot I have seen in Brazil, and seems, with the usual discernment of the natives, to have been chosen for its demerits. All around the country is beautiful, and many of the merchants have charming villas and gardens. The Exchange, where they "most do congregate," is filled with English and Americans in a large proportion to other nations. Very few of the Brazilians engage in commerce; indeed their lives are mostly devoted to jobbing and intrigue.

I left Petropolis (as I told you I intended doing in my letter per H.M.S. *Alecto*), where I had, strangely

enough, fallen entirely among the Caucasian race. My landlord's name of Moss I found to be merely an abbreviation of the respectable Moses, while his wife and her sister were *nées de Levi* and of the strictest sect of the Pharisees. There seems to be no prejudice in this country against the oppressed race, and I have no doubt they might obtain a seat in the legislature if it were a more desirable concern.

Johnston's Hotel, from which I write, is situate about a mile and a half from the centre of the city, and connected with it by an hourly omnibus. It is clean, well furnished, and comfortable, but vastly expensive. My *meals* (as Mrs. S. would say) are enjoyed in private, and the only fellow-lodger with whom I am acquainted is my prime counsellor, Mr. Wright, of the United States and the firm of Maxwell, Wright, and Co., a regular Yankee, and, though not very young, a star in the fashionable hemisphere. He is kind enough to introduce me into the most inaccessible *salons*, and one evening I was much bored at the house of a lady of the ancient family of Benjamin! but compensated the next by a tea *en famille chez* Mr. Jones, also of the firm, and possessed of a comfortable villa and a daughter confessed the Rose of Rio. Isabel, for such is the dear creature's name, has lately emerged from a boarding-school at New York, where, from seven to seventeen, she has been educated with every care, and has imbibed that charm of manner and that peculiar refinement characteristic of her countrywomen. She has a very pretty face. On Monday I hope to have a chance of renewing our acquaintance, for then the season opens with a grand ball at the *casino*. Hitherto

the rain has been so incessant that I have not been able to call on my friend Jones.

Mr. Baring's letters have procured me in both instances one or two feeds, but General Guido, to whom I have sent Mr. Mandeville's note, and my own card, holds out. Proud Spaniard! I can only suppose that he has no feed worthy of my acceptance.

It will, I hope, be agreeable to my mother, who was anxious that I should have an attendant across the Pampas, to hear that I am in treaty for a flunk, a young man of Scotch descent, born in Buenos Ayres, possessor of the English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese languages. He is anxious to leave his present place, that of waiter to the club, and to travel, *pour étendre ses connaissances*, and if he can content himself with a comfortable home and small salary, I am inclined to take him. He has been servant to a French *diplomate* and his brother lives with Mr. Mandeville. Here is sufficient information for my aunt herself, and from such data she may work out the problem of his name, age, and appearance, with a conjecture at his ideas of moral responsibility.

I am again obliged to write some days before the sailing of the packet, for I mean, on Tuesday the 8th, to prosecute my researches further into the interior, going first to Petropolis to pick up my friend the doctor, and then to the estate of an Englishman, a large breeding farmer, who keeps a sort of hostelry, much visited by the resident English. It is a journey of two days from Petropolis, and I purpose being absent about a week, by which time, if my letters from England arrive in due course, it will be time for me to ship myself for the River Plate. Unfortunately, of

the two packets that make the voyage, I shall have to sail in the worst, an old tub of a schooner and dreadfully slow. The other is a beautiful little yacht bought by the Government from Lord Yarborough and has a capital commander, a most important item, as upon his liberality depends entirely the style and manner of living. The packets in this direction, and those to and from England, are the property of H.B.M. The passage-money in the first is £20, in the latter £50, and, having paid his shot, the passenger is handed over to the mercies of the captain, of whom some have the reputation of enforcing a very moderate diet.

There is a club of some thirty members, of which I am an honorary one, but the only purpose of it seems to be gambling, which the merchants carry on to an extent not very favourable I should think to the credit of their respective paper.

By-the-bye, pray keep me informed *in re* White, Ponsford, and Co. We ought to do a fine stroke of business in this country if the people were civilized enough to appreciate a superior article. The import of American flour is enormous, and all paid for by bills on London, the only place on which bills can be sold. So much for our credit even after the disaster of 1847. The merchants are said to be very speculatively inclined, but there must be a capital business doing. The States take annually coffee to the amount of two millions sterling. The largest amount of imports are English, being half the entire consumption of the country, but our vessels are in very bad repute. One of the principal merchants told me they had orders not to ship in English bottoms, as they deliver their cargoes in worse order and at a longer date than those of any other nation.

A letter from George, which reached Rio on June 21st, gives a short and summary account of events public and private.

*London, May 4, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

My mother has been writing you a long letter for to-day's mail, but I will add a few words.

We heard from you at Madeira, and I suppose you are at Rio long before this. Numerous inquiries have been made after you by deserted damsels in the *salons* which I frequent. The other day I went to Almack's, where a maiden desired to be introduced to me (having heard my relationship to you) and who I found to be none other than your ally Miss Keats (of Homburg). She poured her tender regrets into my bosom.

I heard the other day that Ned Baring was at Vera Cruz, and that he was going to Lima, where Mrs. Adams, the wife of the Consul, is a relation of his; possibly you may fall in with him.

There is nothing particular going on here. I will send you some newspapers. The Whigs will carry on some time longer. They declared they would go out if beaten in the Lords on the Navigation Laws. So the Lords will let them pass, by a small majority, next Monday, to avoid such a catastrophe as Lord Stanley attempting to form a Government.

German unity is all gone to smash. The King of Prussia declines the imperial dignity, and with great difficulty keeps his own kingdom together. The Austrian army has been routed by the Hungarians,



but is quite victorious in Italy. Denmark appears to be getting worsted by the Holsteiners and their German allies. The Indian war, after some disasters, has been brought to a conclusion, and Napier, who was sent out by Government in spite of the East Indian Directors, who had quarrelled with him, will have nothing to do when he arrives.

Here in the City there has been very little doing—money much too abundant. White and Ponsford are working away at the mill, and Bovill is enamoured of a scheme by which he is to supply all England and London with gas manufactured in Wales on the coal-fields. Mortimer, of Streatfield and Co., asked us the other day if you would like to undertake a commission in hides and tallow, and my father told him “of course, if you were well paid for it.”

London is beginning to be gay again—balls, &c., as usual. Strauss has come over with his band from Vienna; Jenny Lind has re-appeared on the stage, and both operas are in full force.

Hudson has been blown out of water by a succession of *exposés* of jobbing and rascally mismanagement on all his lines, and there is a great cry for Railway Commissioners and governmental audit of accounts. The Colonel B. W.— has been obliged to fly the country, pursued by creditors, for his railway debt; but having become thereby qualified for a colonial appointment, he will shortly receive one. Ward, another insolvent and our debtor, has got the governorship of the Ionian Islands.

Write and tell us about Rio. I fancy the climate delicious, the tobacco ditto, and the women splendid. Is this bosh or reality? Here the climate is beastly

and the tobacco generally filthy. I shall have to take refuge in matrimony soon on nothing a year. Can you get anything good to eat at Rio? With this all-important question I will conclude and remain,

Your very affectionate,

G. W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Cambridge, Thursday night, May 3, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

As to-morrow is post-day I shall write a few lines here, at the Bull, Cambridge, and take them up with me for the mail.

I came down in accordance with a promise to Maynard and Fisher, and have had a fine day and rather a fatiguing one. If I were a few years younger, I might be tempted to take the Château Fisher and cultivate the Dons, but, if there were no other objections, the climate (which I am sure must be damp, cold, and relaxing) would be a sufficient one. The house is comfortable and respectable, and the place in perfect order. You will hear all about our plans from your mother.

Sykes is absent for his mama's grand ball, to which, he tells Maynard, fourteen duchesses were invited.

I saw Ponsford and White a few days since. P. assures me that he is getting on satisfactorily with the building. White has got Butcher (Kidd's salesman) in his service, and is quite surprised by some trials on

the *same* wheats between his own manufacture at Burghfield, and Waters, a Norwich man, who has the patent. This makes them more anxious than ever to get to work, and they are going, I believe, to fit up the Shadwell mill, with as little delay as possible, with the patent. The valuations came out higher than they expected, amounting to 4,200 and odd pounds. Ponsford, who likes a bargain, was in great dismay, and as I wished to deal handsomely and keep them in good humour, I (after they confessed they were entirely in my hands and appealed to my forbearance) consented to take that which I had originally asked, viz., £3,800. They will finish it with the patent for £1,800, and have a very cheap mill.

The Blackwall engines are to be sold next week. If they do not get them there are several very good on the South Devon.

Your mother saw Mrs. H. Baring a few days since, she said that Edward Baring was in Mexico, so I hope you may meet at Lima. Letters for the West Coast and the ships in the Pacific, of which I have several, I shall forward direct to Valparaiso.

Wodehouse, I believe, comes up Monday to vote for the repeal of the Navigation Laws, when Ministers feel sure of a majority.

Grant writes me word that you had a cask of very superior wine, in spite of the quarantine, from his friend the Consul. I shall, in the absence of letters to the contrary, direct my next to Buenos Ayres. I fear we cannot hear from you till the end of this month (May), which is a great bore, but I am sure you will comply with our earnest wishes and write regularly and by every opportunity. You have so much before you

to accomplish that I hope you will not stay at Rio longer than you find absolutely necessary for the Spanish.

You have escaped the coldest and most disagreeable spring I ever remember. George met your friends the Keatses at Almack's, very anxious to hear of you.

Old Bates is gone to America, but you doubtless hear from Baring.

They say Cliefden will be sold, as old Sir J. Warrender left very little behind him. Hudson is completely blown out of the water by the reports of the Eastern Counties Committee. Money is a drug; the brokers will not take it at  $1\frac{1}{2}$ . We hold fifty thousand Consols at  $92\frac{1}{8}$ . The funds are only kept to that by the unsettled state of Europe, which, so far as Germany and Italy are concerned, gets worse and worse. The successes of the Hungarians surprise people, and Austria looks shaky.

I sat by Lady Morgan at dinner yesterday, who is still very lively and amusing. D'Orsay is gone to Paris, and Lady Blessington sold up. Adieu, dear B.

Ever your affectionate father,

RAIKES CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C.

*Rio Janeiro. May 12, 1849.*

My dear Mother,

If you should open this letter before that which I have addressed to my father, you had better delay reading it till the other is finished, as the date of the latter is six days prior. The packet has been for some reason delayed, and I have made use of the opportunity to send you a few words with the latest accounts of my progress.

I have made several acquaintances in this place, among whom are Mr. Hudson, and Captain Skipwith, of H.M.S. *Hydra*, and Mr. Reeves, who has a place in the packet, or post-office here, in the gift of the English Government. We dine a good deal together, and amuse ourselves as well as the nature of the place admits. Society there is none, Brazilian or diplomatic. The former are exceedingly jealous of strangers, and seldom admit them into their houses, and the only *réunions* are those of the English and American merchants, who stay here long enough to make a fortune, and then retire; so that in most of the houses there are junior partners only, and those not particularly remarkable for education or refinement. The prices of all commodities seem to me immoderately dear. The smallest coin, or rather paper, in use is 1,000, or a *mil*, *reis*, equal in value to 2s., and it certainly does not go further than 1s., or, in many cases, 6d. in England. The custom duties are enormous, on manufactured articles often 80 per cent. Washing clothes cost 4s. for a dozen articles of whatever sort, whether shirts or

socks, and I hear that round the Horn it is much dearer, from the scarcity of water.

I have to-day taken the servant mentioned in my other letter, and have bargained with him for 40 *mil reis*, or £4 a month, out of which he is to keep himself, and I do not undertake to send him back to this place if dissatisfied with him. On the whole, the terms are moderate, and in Rio Janeiro would be too low, but I hope, in Buenos Ayres, to find a cheaper market.

I have been reading to-day a book which, so far as I have gone, is amusing, and which (as I may perhaps visit the country) you would like to see, called Ruxton's *Adventures in Mexico*, and published by Murray in the Home and Colonial Library. Like Head's, and other books of the same kind, it is, I think, rather exaggerated and highly coloured, which may add to its interest as a readable book, though not to its value as a guide.

I heard from Johnson from the River Plate. The small-pox has broken out again on board—we lost one boy on the voyage—and they had been put in quarantine in consequence. He, however, was about to start again for the Straits of Magellan. We have had very stormy weather lately, and the heat is not oppressive. The mosquitoes fasten upon me voraciously, but are beginning to slacken, as they soon get tired, being lovers of novelty. A fresh arrival from England is always victimized, while the old inhabitants laugh at them.

The nights are very beautiful, and the stars of the southern hemisphere certainly excel the others both in number and magnitude, although the Southern Cross, about which one hears so much, disappointed me.

Humming-birds and snakes are not very plentiful in this neighbourhood, as they are so much pursued by naturalists, and I have seen but few alive. From the feathers of the humming-birds artificial flowers are made, and they are very pretty, and proportionately expensive. I would send you some as a curiosity of this place, but am deterred by the idea that they would be utterly useless. In fact, there are no productions here except those of nature. The ornamental shops are filled with *bijouterie* and bronzes from Paris, increased in price by an enormous duty, and still larger profit; and the more substantial, with English calicoes and cottons, equally taxed. Upon my unfortunate boots and shoes, if they should land, I should have to pay eighty per cent. on an appraisement by the custom-house, which would be above the intrinsic value, but I have taken measures to tranship them into the River Plate packet, by doing which I am liable to lose them entirely.

My movements are principally performed on horseback, and I have a very decent animal, hired from a large English stable, upon which I ride up to town, and hear the news on the Exchange, which occasionally arrives in merchant-vessels, and once a month in the packets. The California fever rages in this place, which is a sort of first station for the Yankees bound thither. They are distinguished by their peculiar dress, and more particularly by their hats. I was obliged to drop a favourite wideawake in consequence, as the boys in the streets cried out, *La California*, and in the shops I was regularly asked if I was not going to the gold regions. The mining people in this country imagine that when the gold which has been collecting on the

surface undisturbed has been sacked, it will only be obtained by great expense, which rarely repays the speculator. The mines in Brazil are carried on by English companies, and worked by Cornish miners and negroes, and at this moment there is only one company which pays its expenses, and, I believe, not one which has done so throughout its existence, although at first the gains were enormous. I have written this scrawl in a great hurry, but I thought you would like to have the latest news of me. I hope, in another week, to be off for the River, from whence I will write.

Adieu, my dear mother. From your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Rio Janeiro, May 23, 1849.*

*Johnstone's Hotel.*

My dear Father,

As in your letter of the 3rd and 4th April, which I have this day received per packet *Linnet*, you charge me to miss no opportunity of writing, I will not allow Her Majesty's Transport *Adventurer* to sail without a few lines from me, although by this time you must have a considerable accumulation of correspondence from Rio Janeiro. I am in great tribulation about the *Touch-me-not*, which has shown no sign, and the consequence to me will be the delay of a month *at the least* in the possession of my dry goods; besides, I fear inconvenience at the custom-house about my letters. I leave this house to go on board the *Spider* to-morrow, the 24th (Her Majesty's birthday), and she sails at



daybreak in the morning following. She is a small and ancient schooner, and the passage in her will much resemble premature interment. Happily there are few or no other passengers, as the accommodation is of the most limited nature, and for a gentleman of my height, peculiarly disagreeable. I shall think myself fortunate if I escape with a passage of fourteen days, as the weather is very rough, and the prevailing wind south-west.

Since I wrote to you and my mother by the packet *Crane*, on the 13th inst., nothing of consequence has happened to me. I have been with Captain Skipwith to Petropolis for a few days, and made various excursions in search of appetite and scenery. I have also been upset in a canoe in Botafogo Bay, but not very far from shore, and a few strokes brought me on standing-ground.

Hearing that a gentleman had arrived here from Buenos Ayres who had crossed the Pampas, I called upon him, and got some information. He is a lieutenant in the United States navy, and crossed in March, from Mendoza, travelling with the postman in twelve days. The hardships he represents as not very great, and the danger from Indians nil; but he tells me that at present the Cordilleras are impassable, and that October will be the earliest month in which I can cross them, so that supposing I arrive in Buenos Ayres in the middle of June, I should have to stay three months. However, I must at any rate be some time there in order to learn Spanish, which is absolutely necessary, and which as yet I have had no chance of speaking, or hearing spoken. Mr. Southern I hear a good deal of; he stayed six weeks with Mr. Hudson on his way out.

He appears to have risen from a very low position in society, having been, I believe, a bagman. They all allow that he is very clever, and he seems to be on good terms with Rosas, though he has failed in getting any concessions from that wary old gentleman. The state of the fleet in the river must be miserable. They are not allowed any communication with Buenos Ayres, and are anchored four miles from Monte Video, which is blockaded by land, and in a state of utter destitution. I shall probably stay there (at Monte Video) only two days, the time which the packet remains, before going to Buenos Ayres. Mr. Gore is the only resident, and I hear he is a very good fellow. Hudson I like very much; he is only *locum tenens* till Lord Howden returns, or some one else is appointed. I suppose if the Whigs resign, the Foreign Office will be committed to Dizzy? I believe they will prefer *him* to Lord P. Skipwith is also my excellent friend; he is commanding officer here, and has a very nice steamer, and authority over some six smaller craft; but we have no very imposing force in the harbour, and no ship of sufficient size to salute to-morrow, which ceremony will devolve upon the United States frigate *Brandywine*, "a regular clipper, I presume, sar." The Yankees here are very thick, and their conversation delightful, but impossible to reproduce. There are a few capital stories of them in Ruxton's book, which I mentioned in one of my letters.

You will probably not receive this letter for fifty days after its date, unless the old ship make a very good passage. My next opportunity of writing will be from Buenos Ayres, in about five weeks' time. If there should happen to be a packet starting soon after this

arrives, I think you might fly a letter to Buenos Ayres, as I can have it forwarded. My idea at present is, after Santiago, Valparaiso, and Lima, to go to San Blas, and through Mexico to Vera Cruz; from thence to Havanna and New Orleans, but I will write to you of this from the river. You must not expect to hear so often of me in future, as the chances of men-of-war going home are very remote, and any other conveyance besides the packet is uncertain, but you may be sure that I will lose no chance of writing. I have seen no papers, and shall see none till I get to Buenos Ayres, which is a source of great distress. I should be grateful for some, and by the packets, or man-of-war, they cost nothing. . . .

*Buenos Ayres, June 9, 1849.*

My dear Mother,

My last letter was from Rio, dated the 23rd May, and sent by Her Majesty's Transport *Adventure*. A fast merchant-vessel, the *Commodore*, is on the point of sailing for Liverpool direct, and will probably anticipate the packet of this month, so that I will send you the account of my progress by this opportunity.

I left Rio on the 25th ultimo, in the *Spider*, a schooner of 180 tons, commanded by a lieutenant in the navy, and arrived at Monte Video eight days afterwards. We had some very rough weather, and the vessel, which is the smallest in Her Majesty's service, pitched about like a cock-boat, meeting with two *pamperos*, the celebrated south-west gales of these latitudes, which, coming from the cold regions, are

tremendously wintry and disagreeable. At Monte Video we stayed two days, during which I was hospitably entertained by Captain Gore, *chargé d'affaires*, and Consul General. He is an ex-stag and man about town, and a very good-natured person, living as comfortably as is possible in the most uncomfortable place in the world. The town has been now besieged for six years by land, and is in a state of great misery and want. We called upon one or two Spanish ladies, who gave us *matté*, and presented us with their houses, but otherwise I saw nothing remarkable, except perhaps in the great contrast between Spaniards and the Portuguese whom I had left at Rio. Having arrived on a Saturday morning, we left for this place on the Monday, communicating *en passant* with Commodore Sir T. Herbert, whose frigate, the *Raleigh*, lies about six miles off the town. She is a splendid ship, and the only English man-of-war in the river. The next morning, Tuesday, we came in sight of Buenos Ayres, which, as every traveller has remarked, is situated on a dead flat, so much so that from a distance the churches and the houses are the only objects which break the level of the sea, which otherwise one might suppose to extend indefinitely. The river, being muddy and shallow in all parts, is especially so at Buenos Ayres, and landing from the ships is a very tedious operation. The vessels cannot come within six miles of the town, and even the boats are not able to come within one hundred yards of the shore, which part of the voyage is performed in a cart. As all merchandise must go through the same process, and boat-hire is ridiculously dear (the passage to the ships in a small boat being an ounce, or £3 5s.), the commerce of

Buenos Ayres labours under considerable disadvantages as compared with Monte Video, if the latter were in a flourishing state.

Having, through these various perils at length arrived, I went to Mr. Southern, who received me very kindly, offering me everything except a bed, which he had not. The difficulty of getting lodging in this place is hardly credible. I went into four or five inns before I could get the room I now occupy—a very small one in a second or third-rate inn—and I have been engaged ever since, assisted by Mr. Southern and a most influential native, in trying to procure lodgings, but as yet unsuccessfully. The place is immensely full of Monte Videans and others; and the Spaniards do not understand the law which makes the demand regulate the supply. Mr. Southern has, after waiting several months, obtained, through the influence of Rosas, a house (the property of some exiled individual), but he is obliged to build rooms to accommodate his establishment. He seems to have made considerable progress already, and perhaps will succeed in his mission. I suppose part of his policy consists in maintaining a very grand exterior. His house is beautifully furnished from Paris, and he has a host of English servants, and very good carriages. His cook is also unexceptionable, and he is decidedly, next to Rosas, the greatest man in the town. The despotism here is the most delightfully absolute, extending even to the dress of the natives. A red ribbon round the hat, a bright red waistcoat, and a ribbon in the button-hole with the motto, "Long live the Federals! Death to the Unitarians!" is a *sine quâ non*, and any Buenos

Ayresian found without these three appendages is imprisoned, and has a very remote chance of getting out again. Blue and green are absolutely forbidden, and even foreigners would be committing rather an outrage in wearing them, which is unfortunate for me, as my limited supply of neckcloths lies chiefly in the proscribed colours. As to interference in politics, or freedom in speech or the Press, the people have long ago given up anything of that sort. They rebel in secret against these incarnadine waistcoats, but dare not complain. The motto about the Unitarians (which is a regular humbug as there are no such people) is repeated *ad nauseam*. Every public paper and letter must be headed with it. Even the paper dollars (worth 2½d.) bear it on their face, and the watchmen bellow it about the streets at night.

I went yesterday with Southern to call on Doña Manuelita and present my letter, and found her most gracious, offering me not only the house, which is the regular compliment to a visitor, but the services of the Governor and herself. The old tyrant is never seen, and few of the inhabitants have had a view of him for several years. He himself carries on all the business of the State, and is shut up all day and night with his papers and decrees. Manuelita is about thirty, average looking, and, like all Spanish women, very good-natured and extremely well-mannered.

To show that social democracy is not incompatible with political despotism, as some revolutionists do vainly assert; in this place, where there is an autocrat entirely absolute, social equality is more developed than I have ever seen it. Butchers, tailors, and Ministers of State are all equal, and Manuelita, for

instance, is accessible to any snob who likes to call on her, and would be just as familiar with him as with Southern or the Prime Minister.

The climate here differs exceedingly from that of Rio, resembling the temperature of a cold October in England, and requiring all one's warm vestments, of which I am unhappily destitute. Horses are very plentiful, and I have taken to ride with Henderson, private secretary to S., and native swells. I have engaged a master, who comes to me at 7 a.m. and stays till 9, to the astonishment of the natives who cry out: "How mad these Englishmen are to begin work at such an hour." This virtuous resolution, you will think, is not much in my way, but it was formed in a rash moment, and because I could not get my master at any other time. Last night I went to persecute two unoffending young women with the result of my studies, by carrying on a conversation in Spanish. I hope in six weeks to be able to get on. Without Spanish this place is very poor fun.

I told you in my last that I shall have to stay here some time. At present it is impossible to cross the Andes, and even in October it seems to be very difficult, but then, I must and will do it. I am much bored by this disappointment, as there is no particular attraction to detain me here so long.

I am still anxiously expecting my shoes and boots, which have had time to circumnavigate the globe. In another month I hope to have them, and shall try to make one shoe do till that time. The weather here, though not so luxurious, is much more propitious to the sons of the north than that of Rio, and I feel its effects favourably on my health and spirits. If I have

another chance of writing I will do so. In the meantime, with love to all, believe me,

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

I have written in a great hurry, but have told you all I think that is new or instructive.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

June 16, 1849.

My dearest B.

We have this morning received your letter from Petropolis, dated 21st April, and it has given us great delight to hear that you were better. I fear that you must be a long time without hearing, as this letter must now be addressed to Valparaiso.

We, *i.e.*, your mother, Mary, and I, have accomplished our long-talked-of trip to Paris, and spent three weeks very pleasantly, from 11th of May to 2nd of June. The Demidoff was very kind, asking us to a family (Bonaparte) dinner, only eight in all, and introducing us to other houses. She is very good-looking, very lively and clever, and understands English perfectly. A ukase confines *M. le Mari* to Russia. . . . We became acquainted with Prince Murat, a jolly fellow, and his wife, an American; he was returned at the head of the poll by 134,000 votes for the department of the Seine. We went to the Elysée reception. The President's manner is *posé* and quiet; he waltzed and flirted with a pretty little



Mrs. John Stanley, who was a Mlle. Talleyrand. Normanby stands by, looking patronizing.

Since we returned, the cholera has been fearfully fatal at Paris, and at this moment the city is in a state of siege in consequence of the socialist demonstrations, though with 80,000 regular troops under arms, I cannot think that Ledru-Rollin and his adherents will attempt, or at least maintain, any serious fighting. What the army, the only real power, may do hereafter, is another and more serious question.

Home politics are much as you left them. A majority in the Lords on the Navigation Laws Repeal, has rather given the Ministers a lift, and they will rub on at present. Business is slack; money worth from 2 to 3 per cent.; ours tolerably well employed and things very quiet. Ponsford has settled to coffer-dam and is getting on steadily, to be roofed in against the winter. They have bought the Blackwall engine, 275-horse, boiler and gear, all for about £4,000—said to be very well bought. Shadwell was finally valued at £4,200, much to old Pon's dismay, but I generously knocked off £400 and took £3,800, which was the sum originally offered by Bovill. They are reinstating and fitting up the mill for four pairs of stones, and hope to get to work by harvest. This will pay well, and give Butcher something to do (Kidd's man whom they have now got). Dives is doing wonders, selling his own patent flour, and buying from other millers to meet the demand. I hear from all quarters that the trade are dreadfully alarmed. So much for business.

We have really got Taplow Court! at present only for twelve months, but with the refusal afterwards. The Duke of Sutherland has bought Cliefden (which

is in fact in our grounds) for £40,000. Lord Stafford is to be married to Miss M. in a week. She is staying at Cliefden with his father; they come to our church. We hope to move at midsummer. I have about forty acres of land and shall keep a few cows.

I hope you will, perhaps ere you receive this, fall in with Baring, who is going to Lima, and, I believe, Valparaiso. I trust you will return with him to the States. I do not like to dwell on the prospect of your long absence, but we must hope that we may be all permitted to meet again. Do, dearest B., take care of yourself in all ways.

Wodehouse and Florence are just arrived in London for a month. They dine with us next week. The drawing-rooms are finished and certainly successful: they light well.

We saw poor old J. Cockerell and family at Boulogne. The Berkeleys are there—the gallant Colonel waiting for an appointment in the Ionian Islands, which H. G. Ward promised him at my request. In Paris were Mrs. Grote and Jenny, of whom we saw a great deal. Harris seeing J. L. depressed and *distrainé*, told Mrs. Stanley to say to her, that if she repented he released her though the settlements were drawn. She walked up and down the room for two hours, and finally determined to give it up, and then came off at once to Mrs. Grote at Paris. We dined at Hawtreys for the 4th June—a very good 4th, fine, with the Queen and Prince of Wales. Boys to have an extra week. God bless you, dear B.

Ever your affectionate,

R. C.

Mrs. Raikes Currie wrote by the same mail, June 15, 1849.

My dearest Bertram,

Your father's letter contains all the news we have to communicate, but you will like a few lines from me.

Our Paris trip amused me very much. We used to drive about the town, which is quite free from smoke and blacks, and the public buildings and fountains give an air of beauty and even grandeur to the city. We saw the *Prophète*, Meyerbeer's last opera—a fine spectacle—not pleasing music. Two days we passed at Versailles. We were fortunate in coming away before this new outbreak, and the increase of cholera. People seemed very uneasy when we were at Paris. No subject was talked of, even by the women whom we saw in society, but the political state of their unhappy country, and no one seemed to have any confidence in the stability of anything.

Since we returned we have been busy with dinner engagements at home and abroad. One day in next week we are to have at dinner: Mr. and Lady Caroline Lascelles, Parkes, Henleys, Lord Carlisle, Mr. Vincent, D. Fortescue, Sir D. Dundas. The drawing-rooms are very successful.

I must tell you a couplet on Jenny Lind's retreat to Paris after throwing off her suitor.

Sweet Jenny Lind has changed her mind  
And run away to Paris;  
So Betsy Prig was right, we find;  
There is no Mrs. Harris!

We are all pleased at the prospect of spending the summer at Taplow Court. We hope to move there the end of the month.

I have been writing to a Miss Stewart, who did live as governess to Miss Sophy Copley, to try to get her in the place of Mdlle. Bidault.

While we were at Paris there was a Mayor's dinner at Northampton, which your father should have attended. George went down and appears to have made two very good and appropriate speeches. Lord Henley seemed to have been quite astonished at his flow of words.

You seem to be very badly off for society, but the extreme beauty and luxuriance of the country must be a great delight. You will, I suppose, train yourself before you begin your long ride across the Pampas.

FROM GEORGE W. CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Cornhill, June 15, 1849.*

The mail for Valparaiso goes to-morrow. We got your second letter (from Petropolis) this morning, having received one about a week ago written on your arrival at Rio. . . . The climate and scenery of Petropolis must have been charming, and no doubt you found the Hebrew ladies kindly disposed towards a foreigner. I hope you will meet Ned Baring at Valparaiso. I heard from him from Mexico and he was going south, and said he had written to you and hoped to meet you.

There is nothing very new here to tell you of.

W. and Ponsford's works are progressing. I pass the spot frequently going out of the City by water. The coffer-dam is fixed and a good deal of the side walls built.

My father and mother with Mary made an expedition for three weeks to Paris, and were entertained by the Princess Demidoff, the President, Mrs. Grote, &c. Since that the cholera has been raging there, and killing five or six hundred per diem. The socialists have made this week a great demonstration, but have been put down by the immense military force, without fighting. The French Government have got into a great dilemma by the absurd expedition to Rome, which they are now taking by storm, having been once or twice repulsed. In Hungary, the War of Independence goes on furiously, and Russia has now marched an army there to help Austria, but even so, it seems doubtful whether the Hungarians will not have the best of it. All Germany is more disorganized than ever. It seems that this year the whole Continent will be almost closed against tourists.

Balls, &c., are now at their height, but there are not very many. I go to a few. You will hear from my father of his having taken Taplow Court: they are going there directly, so that there will not be many entertainments in the newly-decorated drawing-rooms at Hyde Park Terrace.

Business continues very dull, money 2 to 3 per cent., and the funds (for want of other secure investments) keeping up at 92, in spite of all the continental rows.

Jones Loyd and Baring, &c., have been getting up another subscription for the Irish, who are starving

by hundreds, and are going to send over Count Strzlecki again.

Your friend, Miss Keats, having desired to be introduced to me, asked me to dinner. She was very anxious to know your direction and I have no doubt is writing to you by this mail, so that I need not repeat all her messages: I am afraid you have been trifling with her affections. Write and tell us about the Pampas.

FROM B. W. C. TO MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Buenos Ayres, July 14, 1849.*

My dear Father,

My last letter, per *Commodore*, was dated the 9th June, and informed you of my arrival at Buenos Ayres. I purpose to send this by the packet which arrived from Rio a week ago, without, however, bringing me any letters, with the exception of a few lines from George, in which he says that my mother was engaged in writing a long letter to be sent by the same opportunity, and which has not arrived, so that I imagine it was too late for the post. To console me for this loss, my box of books and letters was forwarded from Rio, having suffered considerably from the curiosity and awkwardness of the custom-house authorities there, who charged me duty and postages although I was absent. In this place, the Chief Commissioner of Customs being my friend, I had no trouble of the sort, and my box was sent up to me immediately without having been opened.

You will see by my last letters that my travels have for the present come to a full stop, very much to my

annoyance, as I have no inducement to stay here for more than a few weeks. Unfortunately, I arrived in the very worst season, when the country is almost impassable, when all communication between the town and interior is frequently stopped, and when the passage of the Cordilleras is absolutely impossible, and the worst of all is that this place is completely isolated. There is no opportunity of going round the Cape except in small merchant vessels, which perform the voyage to Valparaiso in four or five months, no towns in the interior to visit (the nearest being several hundred miles distant, and possessing no separate interest or difference from Buenos Ayres), and no communication with any seaport except Rio Janeiro. However, the absurdity of having made a tremendous voyage to come from London to Buenos Ayres (which is nothing more than a fifth-rate European town) is so great, that I have half formed a plan, which I shall very likely not be able to carry into execution, of going up the River Paraná to Corrientes, and possibly to Paraguay. Besides considerable hardships and difficulties by the way, I believe there is nothing to be seen different from this country, except that the dead level is broken by some small hills and trees, and that the climate is more propitious. There are two books written by a Mr. Robertson, published by Murray, which will give you information about the country, which is in a very primitive state of civilization. Paraguay is a sort of *terra incognita*, and ever since the death of the famous Dr. Francia (who kept it entirely shut out from the rest of the world for twenty-eight years) has been very little explored, and here there is not much information to be got respecting it.

My chief difficulties are the bad state of the roads and the want of a companion, for the race of travellers is unknown, and every one is occupied with business of some sort. At any rate, I shall leave this place in October and make for Chili, though whether I shall then be able to cross the Andes or not is very questionable. Once on the other side of the continent, there is no difficulty in proceeding northwards, as, besides H. M. ships, there is a monthly steamer from Valparaiso to Panama.

However, as it seems that I am condemned to be a resident here against my will, I will endeavour to give you some description of the place, which has been already done in various books, the authors of which seem to have omitted nothing worthy of remark. The houses are not bad, though rather seedily furnished, and are generally one storey high and run back a considerable way, with a succession of paved courts. The roofs are flat and railed in, so as to form a promenade. There are a few large churches towering above the rest of the town, but all built of brick and mostly unfinished. The other public buildings are not remarkable except for the vividness of their white-wash. The streets are badly paved and full of great holes, and in wet weather very unpleasant to walk in. We have an opera house, which is crowded every night of performance, with an Italian company, of whom one, a soprano, is very good.

Of society there is not much. Mr. Southern, who, I believe, intends to entertain, is papering and decorating his house. Manuelita receives (in one rather uncomfortable room of the Governor's unfinished palace) every evening, when there is no opera; but



few people go there, and mostly those who have got places and are obliged to toady. Visiting in other houses, *with a few exceptions*, is rather a formidable affair. It takes place either in the afternoon at two, or in the evening from eight till bedtime, and is conducted with great formalities—all the family ranged in a semi-circle, and the stranger placed in the middle and assailed with a battery of questions and compliments. One advantage there certainly is in the society—that it is ornamented by a very large proportion of pretty girls, who, though not very learned, are for the most part agreeable and have a good deal of tact. The only complaint I have to make is the difficulty of seeing them, for the theatre is comparatively small, and the boxes are all let, so that there is no variety in its visitors, and there are very few balls. I am going if well enough (for I have a horrid cold) to my *first* to-night (I send you the invitation as an Argentine curiosity<sup>1</sup>), so that the only resource is to visit them in their houses, which, as I have before said, is a great bore, and admits of very little private conversation. Moreover, at this time of year they do not ride or

<sup>1</sup> The translation of the quaint invitation is as follows:

Long live the Argentine Confederation.  
Death to the savage Unitarians.

---

SEÑOR DON HENRIQUO BELTRAN.

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Gregoria Rosas and her family do themselves an honour in inviting you to a dancing party which will take place on Saturday, 14th July, at nine in the evening.

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At *your* house,  
34, Maypu Street

walk out, except perhaps to a shop, though I have persuaded one of them, Eduardita, the niece of the Governor, and daughter of the nicest woman here, to accompany me *sola* in my rides occasionally. This, though not often done, is not, I believe, considered irregular. All the women, married and single, are known only by their Christian names, and those generally abbreviated or *endearred*. I am popularly styled Beltran or Beltrancito (a diminutive), and sometimes *el viajero Ingles*—"the English traveller." Although I fancy they are not remarkable for strict morality, there is not the slightest sign of any such deficiency on the surface; in fact, there is a great propriety of manner among all classes.

Manuelita Rosas I think I mentioned in my last letter. She is not young or pretty, though, according to the gossipers of Buenos Ayres, Mr. Southern is desperately in love with her (?), but apparently very frank and good-natured, though rather *exigeante* in the matter of visits and attentions.

About three weeks ago, a party of four, including Mr. Southern's secretary and myself, went about thirty miles into the Campo or country to one of the Governor's estates, and having mentioned to Manuelita that we were going there to see the mysteries of Gauchos and the amusements of the Pampas, found on arriving that great preparations had been made for our reception. Cooks, beds, food, and soldiers had all been sent from the town, together with the special commands of the Governor that everything should be placed at our disposal. Finding ourselves in such good quarters, we stayed a week, and saw to great advantage all that was to be seen—the unbroken

colts caught by a lasso, and then mounted by a Gaucho; ostriches caught with the *bolus* and bulls with the lasso; but all these things are written in the book of Head, and an account of them would be too much for my paper.

We passed the days in galloping about after bulls and ostriches, and came home at night to a very copious dinner, prepared after the manner of the country—lamb roasted whole, beef cooked in the hide, and other delicacies. My companions on that and most other occasions were (1) Mr. Henderson, Southern's secretary, and a good ordinary sort of young man; (2) a native of these parts, and the smartest man in Buenos Ayres; and (3) a young Chilian who has passed all his life in Paris, London, and Madrid, and who has come here lately to try and reclaim from the Government a large amount of shares in the bank, which are unpaid, belonging to his father, who is said to be a man of great fortune.

Since the raising of the blockade, Buenos Ayres has been in a most flourishing state, and at this moment people are flocking from Monte Video and the Banda Oriental. Lodging, labour, and goods are all got with difficulty and paid for exorbitantly. A raw Irishman on arriving gets instant employment in a slaughtering establishment at five or six shillings a day and his food, and all labour of a superior kind is paid proportionately high. The difficulty of getting lodgings is hardly credible. For a whole month I was living in the worst inn in the place, paying six shillings a day for one bad room, and at last I have induced a man to turn out with all his family in order to let me the rooms which I now occupy, and for which I am

paying £15 15s. a month, although they are furnished in the most trumpery way, and by no means particularly good in any respect. The prices of manufactured goods—coats, boots, and shoes—are in the same ratio. The only thing cheap is the raw material of *beef*, and the labour of cooking that is so highly paid that it ceases to be so. The interest of money is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  and 2 per cent. per month. My friend Arcos (the young Chilian above mentioned), who has set up a sort of discount business, lends paper money *upon ounces* or *dobloons* (a gold coin worth about £3 3s.) at 16 *per cent.* per annum! The currency is paper dollars depreciated from 4s. to about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., but now rather on the rise. The exchange on England is quoted in ounces, the exportation of which is prohibited.

Business, though it cannot be safe from the fluctuation of the paper money and the dangers of political changes, must be tremendously profitable.

But the most remarkable thing in this place—at least, that which has struck me most—is the extraordinary power which has been assumed by the Governor Rosas, and which is more absolute, I should think, over his subjects than that of any King or Kaiser. One part of his policy seems to consist in secluding himself entirely from public view, partly on the plea of ill-health, and partly on that of the laborious business of the State which he carries on alone. I have seen him but once, and then by accident, walking on the roof of his house.

He has so completely subjected all the people, by fear and a regular system of espionage, that no opposition is dreamt of; the mere fact of his having spoken

well or ill of any person is enough to change the conduct of the whole population towards that person. To be in favour with him is to be toadied by every inhabitant, and the contrary is to have a very good chance of having your throat cut. Among other edicts, he has issued one compelling every native to wear a red waistcoat, red ribbon round the hat, and badge in the button-hole, and every woman a red bow in her hair, proscribing at the same time the colours of blue and green. These rules extend to the actors, and we nightly see the Druid priests in *Norma*, and the Roman Proconsul, with two long red ribbons called devices hanging from their side, proclaiming "Death to the Unitarians." The other day, *Norma* appeared with a wreath of very dark-green oak-leaves, which the chief of police ordered to be immediately removed. But a more difficult case arose on another occasion in a piece in which the Devil was to appear, and the lessee being in doubt whether he should decorate that individual with the device or not, referred the question to the police, who decided that the devil was not exempt from the Governor's orders. However, to form an idea of what absolute power is in Buenos Ayres, it must be seen and felt. We individually have nothing to complain of, and if the people like being bullied by Rosas, so much the better; at least we have peace and security of life. Mr. Southern is in high favour, and has certainly played his cards well. In his attentions to Manuelita, who represents the Governor socially and has some influence over him, he is unremitting, and generally comports himself so as to be popular with all classes. To me personally he has been very kind, feeding me always while he had a

house in order, and giving me a seat in his box. However, his time is so taken up with visits and formalities which are necessary in his position, that I do not see a great deal of him at present. He is, I think, intelligent and well calculated for his place, which involves a great sacrifice of comfort and a considerable expenditure of humbug for a given object—the more difficult for him as he is not gifted with a very good manner or captivating address.

This long letter I have written under the influence of a bad cold, and must now conclude. I will write by the next packet. If I should not, you must conclude that I have gone up the Paraná, in which case I shall not be able to write, but I will at any rate inform you of that before I start. I hope that you will be able to form some idea of what I am doing, and what sort of a place this is. It cannot be said to be very amusing, and its peculiarities seem much better on paper than in reality, but I shall at least derive one advantage—that of learning a new language. I find my master worth very little, and all the progress I have made is owing to the Señoritas, who are very willing to talk and instruct.

*Seven o'clock p.m.*—I have just had my dinner, consisting of some cold bouillon and bad cutlets, and my cold is so bad that I shall not honour the Doña Gregoria Rosas to-night. This climate is most productive of colds in the head, the throat, and jaws. I have had a sore throat, swelled jaw, and all the varieties of that class of maladies. It is owing, I suppose, to the dampness of the air; otherwise I think the place very healthy, and the climate agreeable and invigorating. I am keeping, in remembrance of your

wish, a daily account of my adventures, which at present are not very full of interest. My principal amusement, if it can be so called, is in riding, but this can only be done agreeably on one road, which leads to the Governor's *quinta* or villa, about four or five miles out of the town, and thither I repair regularly every day about 3 p.m. and return by 5, after which there is the opera. For the last day or two we have been celebrating the anniversary of Argentine Independence, with parades and fireworks and grand representations at the theatre, but now all is quiet again. My movements are so uncertain that I hardly know where to tell you to write, but I think Valparaiso and Lima the best places. . . . As your letter in answer to this will reach me in December or January, pray tell me what you think advisable as to the extent of my travels. If I come home direct, it must be by Panama and Chagres, but I shall then miss Mexico and the United States, which are much more worth visiting than anything in this continent.

The West India mails leave Southampton twice a month. Do Mary and the babe get on with their German? I find on trying to talk it that the Spanish has driven it out of my head.

Your most affectionate son,

B. W. C.

FROM B. W. C. TO GEORGE W. CURRIE.

*Buenos Ayres, July 14, 1849.*

I have written this evening a long letter to my father, comprising all that I have to say about this place, but will add a line to you to thank you for your letter of May 4, the only one I received by that mail. My mother's letter, of which you speak, never made its way here; whether it was not sent or stopped at Rio I know not.

Buenos Ayres is not a place which I should choose for a residence, though on the whole superior to Rio Janeiro. The advantages of the latter consist solely in its beautiful scenery and climate. The town is filthy beyond imagination, the inhabitants unsocial and brutal, the shops bad and dear. There are no amusements and no society, and the few Christians who live there in the shape of merchants are in the steady pursuit of means to enable them to leave it. This place, on the contrary, owes nothing to nature. It is situated on the banks of a muddy and shallow river, and cannot be approached nearer than six miles by ordinary-sized vessels, and is surrounded by flat, marshy plains, without trees or shrubs, except an occasional ombus or American aloe. The air, though damp, is clear and agreeable. There is no public promenade, and very little amusement, but though spoiled by frequent revolutions and by the present despotic and depressing Government, the difference between the Spanish and Portuguese origin is visible in the society, habits, and faces of the people. The



women of Brazil are for the most part hideous (I never saw a good-looking one in Rio), and entirely secluded by the jealousy of their husbands. Here, on the contrary, they are remarkably pretty, and very sociably disposed. In fact, they redeem this place from positive barbarism. Superior in every way to the men, who are crouching, civil rascals, who would cut your throat without any compunction if you stood in their way, they form the society and only amusement of the town, and were it not for the policy of the Governor, which discourages coteries and *réunions* of any sort, would make it much more agreeable than it is. The great difference which I remark between this and a European town of similar size is in the want of population and competition, and consequently of commodities. Furnished lodgings, for instance, are not to be met with, and a traveller wishing to spend some time here must choose between an enormously dear and bad inn, and hiring an empty house, for which he has to buy furniture exported from Europe at a profit of about 200 per cent. After looking about for a month, assisted by the most powerful interest, I have at last got the front of a small house which calls itself furnished, consisting of a *sala* or sitting-room, a bed-room, and small room for a servant. They are all paved with brick, and very damp, with no furniture but a few Yankee chairs and rotten tables, and a matting on the floor; but I am considered rather fortunate than otherwise, and owe my success to great patience and perseverance.

Money is so plentiful and so easily earned that it possesses by no means so omnipotent an influence as in more civilized countries.

The people with whom I am most intimate here are a small clique who associate with Manuelita, and form the members of her nightly *tertulias*. They are either nearly related to the Governor, or else are high in office, in which case they are entirely dependent upon and obliged to toady him, as the profits of their places are derived from cheating and robbing the public, in consideration of which privilege they consent to be the abject slaves and creatures of his will. As long as the present state of things lasts (which it is likely to do until the Governor's death), they are, of course, at the top of the political and social tree, but I doubt if they are the most honest or respectable. Among them are a few very nice girls, from whom I have learnt to speak Spanish pretty fluently. They are very independent, and allowed a great deal of liberty. They are also very precocious. My principal friend is only fourteen, but looks and talks like twenty-five. We have very few balls, and these not worth much, as they dance the valse of the early Britons, and the floors of the houses are of brick, covered with a rough carpet.

*July 16th.*—The packet has been detained till the 18th instant, so that I will leave my letter open in order to tell you anything which may occur to me. I have been this morning to a great slaughtering-house outside the city, to see the animals killed, and to breakfast with the proprietor. The rate at which they kill is a head per minute, or sixty in an hour; but this includes flaying, cutting up, salting, and every other process. The animals, to the number of one thousand (a day's work) are brought up from the interior, and divided in smaller numbers through several

pens. At the end of the last is a platform running on rails, on to which one or sometimes two oxen are dragged by the lasso and killed with one stroke of the knife in the vertebræ of the neck. The platform is pulled out, they are dragged by another lasso on to a paved court, and there cut up to the number of twenty at once in the time I have mentioned. Men with wheelbarrows are waiting to carry off the different parts, which all have their places. The heads are ranged in rows—at the time we were there, 11 a.m.—amounting to four hundred, the number already killed in the day. Although the machinery is somewhat primitive, the immense profusion of animals and the skill of the workmen (who are all Irish) makes it a very curious, though somewhat disgusting sight. The average price of an ox is 6s., which is the value of the hide, the beef counting for nothing. Much of it is boiled down into tallow, a small part jerked or dried, and the rest left about for the dogs or birds, which congregate in millions round the place. The smallest wages paid to any man are 7s. 6d. a day with food, and many receive as much as £1. The stench is not so bad as one would suppose, particularly when there is, as was the case to-day, a south wind. Old Mortimore would have been delighted at the profusion of *korns*, though he would find it difficult to raise money upon them. They are so plentiful that fences 8 feet high and 4 broad are made of them.

I mentioned to my father that I have some idea of going into the interior. The hardships of travelling, particularly at this season, are by no means imaginary, and, to a person who has no peculiar object in view, either business or science, hardly repaid by any advan-

tages ; but I am so bored at being kept a prisoner in this place that if I find it practicable I shall probably make a strike inwards. The best accommodation at night is a mud hovel of one room, not generally airtight, without a chimney, full of smoke and Gauchos, and then, having swallowed some beef burnt over a fire, without bread or plate, the traveller wraps himself up in his cloak and tries to sleep. I have seen one or two of this class of hotels, and they are not very tempting. However, the exercise and beef diet ought to cure one of dyspepsia for life.

There are no English people in the society here, though I believe they form one among themselves. Mr. Southern is, next to the Governor, the most important person in the town, and travellers, being rarely met with, are *rather* lions. As is always the case in a small society, one half of the population (more particularly among the females) is engaged in warring and intriguing against the other : the grand object for which they contend being to attach everybody whom they fancy of importance to their family and circle, and, by abusing their rivals, to seduce as many as possible of their adherents. The difficulty, therefore, is, not to make acquaintances, but to escape from being overpowered by their attentions and offers of services.

To any person who likes being made much of, I would recommend a visit to Buenos Ayres, though, I suppose, after a time the lion gets stale and ceases to roar. In the meantime, I am very tired of it and want to get on. Pray write to me to the Consul at Lima, and believe me,

Your affectionate brother,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Buenos Ayres, August 11, 1849.*

My dear Mother,

My last letter (a long one) dated the 14th July, told you of an idea I had formed of making an excursion into the interior. That idea I am now on the point of carrying into execution, and in fact have delayed only until the arrival of the packet should bring me news of you, after a silence of three months.

I am, however, again disappointed, having received only letters dated 3rd and 4th of May, which should have been here with the last mail. The letters are addressed to Rio—to Messrs. Finnie Brothers (who, as far as I am aware, have no existence) instead of Maxwell and Co., and to this is attributable, I suppose, their delay. My father, in his letter of the 3rd May from Cambridge, says that he will write to Buenos Ayres by the next mail, but I have received nothing. I hope you are more fortunate. This is the eighth letter I have written from Rio or Buenos Ayres to you or my father (four to each) and, including the above, which came a month after their time, I have received but four.

To return to my expedition. My furthest point will be Corrientes, in S. lat. 27.30, and if you follow on the map the course of the Paraná from Buenos Ayres by San Nicolas, Santa Fé, and La Bajáda, you will see my direction. I shall probably ride the whole way and perhaps return by water. The distance is 261 leagues—perhaps 700 miles—and I think that thirteen days will allow of stopping a day or two at the few intermediate towns. The posts are distant

from one another from two to ten leagues, and are generally but a mud hovel with a few Gauchos and horses, so that some preparations for sleeping are necessary. I take, besides my saddle, a *recado* or saddle of the country, composed of a hide and several cloths, and used by the Gauchos as a bed. One cargo horse will be enough to carry the two leathern bags, degraded from camel to horseback, and a gun.

My dress is a camisette of blue cloth, turned up with red, trousers, a black wideawake, and a leathern pouch round the waist to carry money and cigars, with a knife stuck in behind, and if cold, I can add a poncho. The Governor gives me his passport—a great favour, and a perfect bank-note in this country, letters to all the commandants, and, I am afraid, an escort, which will be a great bore, but which, of course, I cannot decline, so that the hardships of travelling will be lessened. In about six weeks, or towards the end of September, I hope to be back in Buenos Ayres, and I shall then, after one or two weeks, start for Mendoza and Chili. For one month I am afraid I must forego the pleasure of writing to you, as there are no internal posts in this country, and I shall be far from Buenos Ayres when the September packet sails, so you must imagine me careering away upon seedy-looking horses with coats three inches long, or arriving after a ride of one hundred miles to a piece of burnt beef, or making the most elaborate compliments to a governor of a province, with spurs a foot long, and linen drawers a yard wide.

Of Buenos Ayres I have nothing new to say. It is a dreary place to live in, particularly when your house is damp, as mine is. I have a succession of colds and

a touch of rheumatism. Mr. Southern's dinners are good, and the opera *passable*, and beyond these two I have not much amusement. I am afraid that Chili is exactly the same thing, and I shall probably not trouble that interesting country with a long stay. In fact, I am inclined to agree with Darwin that a man who has neither business nor scientific resources to occupy and encourage him, should weigh well the question before he embarks for South America. There are no fine buildings or pictures, no antiquities, no venerable traditions or associations in these *new* countries (for before their independence they hardly existed except as a source of jobbery and monopoly for the Spaniards), and, though interesting to the political philosopher, they are rather wanting in attractions to a commonplace tourist. In comfort they are a hundred years behind Europe, and in most of the qualities which make life agreeable.

In Mexico and Peru there are at least the remains of former magnificence, but in this country, whose wealth consists in the patriarchal article of herds of oxen, and whose resources, such as they are, have never been developed, there is a want of "ancient riches," and consequently art and civilization have not reached a high pitch. Reasoning in this manner, I suppose the race of tourists have avoided these regions, and the only predecessor I hear of is Robert Elwes (companion of Ralpho of Damascus), who, I remember to have heard in England, was unhappy in love, and wished for a total change of scene to efface the remembrance of the false one.

On the other hand, if I were an American, the first dollars I could scrape together should be spent in

paying my passage to Europe; for a man can scarcely be said to have lived in the nineteenth century who has never left the shores of La Plata. However, I am convinced that something is to be gained in knowledge or experience from all places, barbarian or civilized, and at any rate one is making a large investment of recollections from which to draw upon one's memory afterwards.

*Monday night, August 12th.*—I had written last night, when to-day I saw the Governor, who has given me his passport describing me as an “*appreciable* traveller, recommended by H. E. Don Henrique Southern and other Englishmen worthy of the friendship of the Argentine Confederation,” placing everything in the province of Buenos Ayres at my disposal, and requesting all other Governors to entertain and assist me in every way at the charge of this Government. I am to be accompanied by a police officer!

The Governor told Mr. Southern for my instruction, and afterwards sent a written message to the effect, that disturbances having arisen in the provinces of Corrientes and Entre Ries, it was possible, though not likely, that I might meet with some inconvenience from the enemies of the English alliance, or from those of his own Government, and that though he did not wish to dissuade me from taking the journey, he thought it his duty to acquaint me of this fact. In consequence of this, my travels may perhaps be limited to Santa Fé, after which I shall make use of a large discretion as to proceeding or not. I believe the truth of the matter is that the Governor imagines that some of the disaffected provinces might mistake me for an English agent sent to encourage insurrection, for they



do not contemplate the idea of a person travelling merely from curiosity; and during the quarrel with Rosas, the English Government have once or twice tried to incite the provinces against the central power of Buenos Ayres. Perhaps he suspects himself that this is my object, but I think this is not probable. The effect of all this will be to render my movements still more uncertain. All I know is, that on Tuesday morning, the day after to-morrow, at 8 a.m., I shall start on horseback in a northward direction, and shall be absent perhaps a month, perhaps six weeks; and that in the month of October, if still in existence, I shall set off for Chili. Write to *Lima*, where I hope to be in January at the latest. After that there are four courses open to me. I must either return by Panama and the West Indies to England, or go to St. Blas, and Mexico, or up the Mississippi to the United States, or both. According as you recommend I will follow, and if you write to any of the principal towns in any of these routes, such as Mexico, New Orleans, or Kingston, I shall get the letters. This letter you will, I suppose, receive in October; in November you will probably not hear from me, but will, I hope, in December. After that I will write from Chili, and then I shall be drawing nearer to England every time I move. It is necessary to mention all this long beforehand, for an interval of five months must elapse before an answer can arrive from England either here or in Chili.

It is now two o'clock in the morning, and I can think of nothing to tell you about this place which may not be found in any book which treats of the subject. I am afraid I have written you a very dull letter, but my last, if I remember rightly, was full of jaw about

the society, manners, and that sort of thing, so that I have exhausted my stock. You must remember that if you get stupid letters I get none at all, and compassionate me accordingly.

I was very sorry to hear that my dear babe had been unwell. She has such a capital temperament that I have no doubt she soon recovered, and before this will have forgotten she ever was poorly. With love to her and all, believe me, my dear mother,

Your most affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Taplow Court, July 16, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

I am vexed beyond measure to have missed the mail at the beginning of this month, owing to a mistake in Cornhill. I greatly fear you will have been disappointed in not receiving letters at Valparaiso a second time, and scarcely know whether I do right in directing this to Lima, but think you must arrive there before September.

We were very much pleased to receive, 5th July, two agreeable letters, 6th and 13th May, in which you spoke of leaving Rio in a few days.

We have now been three weeks settled at Taplow Court, and enjoy the place extremely. The air is delicious, and the woods, and walks, and views beautiful. Mr. Hay Mackenzie died at Cliefden last week, and all the Sutherland party are gone into

Scotland for the season. They called on us, but we did not see them.

John and Florence and the infant Wodehouse have just left us after spending a few days. They go to Kimberley to-morrow, and George goes down to them on Wednesday for the agricultural meeting. He has lately made an expedition to Falmouth with John.

You would, perhaps, see by the *Times* of the 3rd or 4th that I proposed Rothschild at Guildhall, and gained some κῦδος at least from the Hebrew race. Old Pattison is dead, so we shall have another election, and, I suppose (after Lord J. Manners' defeat) some Liberal will walk over the course.

The Grotes are at Burnham Beeches, only just come there from London. She breakfasted with Milnes the other morning to meet Metternich. Grote declined, saying gravely to Milnes, "I have something better to do with my time than to spend it on the oppressor of mankind!"

Young Selwyn marries Miss Copley (the elder one) after a very short acquaintance. Poor old Coltman is dead. Mr. H. Currie and daughters are just starting for a three weeks' tour in Scotland. Money is more and more a drug. Stocks are steadily rising.

Before leaving London we had two or three parties, and one *soirée* with some fifty people, in our drawing-rooms, which are extremely pretty and light beautifully. They have two very handsome glass chandeliers and eight plated Queen Anne sconces, with six candles each, on the walls. My letter has a strange *Ollapodrida* of events, like a schoolboy's in *Punch*, but I am obliged to chronicle items as they occur to me.

I shall be truly glad to hear that you have met

Baring; it is more satisfactory to think of you with the society of an old friend. Mandeville sent me a letter a few days since which he had received from Guido, professing a determination to pay you *every possible attention*, so I hope the wretch's feed was forthcoming.

Ponsford gets on slowly at Puddledock, and will not, I believe, be covered in this winter; they say positively that they shall be at work at Shadwell by September.

I have requested Charles Mellish to write to our Consul at Valparaiso, but I fear too late to be of any use to you. Your mother is writing to that place for the chance of your being still there. We often see Philip and Henry. To-morrow some dozen boys come by land and water and have a picnic at our spring. Maynard is at home and reads pretty steadily. Mary and the babe are flourishing and enjoy the place. I shall not have a regular keeper here, but a vermin-killer, one Gedge from Witton, who will also be a boatman, if wanted, and keep people off the grounds.

Strzlecki is administering relief again in Ireland. Parliament will sit till first week in August. D'Israeli's field-day, and the large majority against him, have strengthened the Government, who seem likely to be rather stronger, the Peel party drawing nearer and nearer to them. How the French will get away from Rome now they have possession of it, or how any Government can be established there, no one can say. There is at present a reaction in favour of the moderate party in France. German politics are beyond my comprehension; every one must wish that the Hungarians may successfully resist Russia and

Austria. There is a very intelligent envoy here from Kossuth, whom I have seen.

You may suppose how anxiously we shall look for letters from Buenos Ayres to know how you fare with the Donna M.

Dear B., we often talk and oftener think of you. God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

R. C.

Bertram's letter from Rio of May 23rd reached London on July 20th, four days after the preceding letter from his father had been despatched. Mr. Raikes Currie at once wrote again, addressing this time to Buenos Ayres, repeating what he had said before; enlarging on the charms of Taplow Court and on the possibility of his acquiring it as a permanent residence; yet he considered the house "indifferent and inconvenient from having only two sitting-rooms." It is to this letter that allusion is made in the following.

*Buenos Ayres, October 13, 1849.*

My dear Father,

My last letter, dated August 12th, I wrote on the eve of departure for a tour in the interior, and prepared you for my silence of last month. On the 3rd inst., I received your letter of the 20th July by the *Douvo*, and a few lines by the August packet from my mother, which explains to me the absence of all letters for *five months*, my last previous news of you being dated May 3rd. Happily I have not been so badly off for public intelligence, as Mr. Southern is well supplied with newspapers, and I read your speech in nomination of Rothschild a little more than two months after its

delivery. I thought it capital, and the quotation,<sup>1</sup> which I remember well, most appropriate. It seems to have been so considered by Lord John Manners, as I see that in revenge he calls you a grey-headed man, intimating that he prefers his own moustache to that venerable ornament.

I am glad to hear that you have found a place which you like, as I know you are rather critical about air, soil, and other qualities not often united in one spot. Of all your previous transactions, including the visit to Paris, which you mention, I am entirely ignorant, but hope to be enlightened at Valparaiso.

Of what I have done myself, a detailed account would be long and rather uninteresting, but I will try to give you an idea of the general effect of what I saw.

Immediately after the date of my last letter, that is on the 14th August, I left Buenos Ayres, and arrived in eight days at Santa Fé, a distance of three hundred and fifty miles. I was accompanied by my servant and a *vigilanté* or *gendarme* sent by the Governor at my request, and was furnished with H. E. passport, setting forth that, "Inasmuch as D. Beltran, &c., an English traveller, sets forth solely with the desire of becoming acquainted with the provinces of the Argentine Confederation, and has been recommended by H. E. Henry Southern from England, and by other gentlemen worthy of the friendship of the Republic, the undersigned Governor orders all authorities of Buenos Ayres to assist him in every way and to provide him with all he may require, and the post-masters to furnish him with horses. And with respect

<sup>1</sup> See p. 19.

to Their Excellencies, the Governors of the provinces through which he may pass, the undersigned Governor recommends to them strongly the 'apreciable' traveller D. Beltran, &c., hoping that they will furnish him with everything necessary for the safety and convenience of his journey for account of this Government, and with everything else which he may demand or require."

The country through which I rode is the same which Head and others have described, an immense grass plain occasionally intersected by rivers, which in the summer are dried up; so thinly populated that one rarely sees a man or a house between one post and another; covered in many parts with cattle, and towards the north with low wood. The post-houses are mud hovels, generally full of holes. Their owners kept a number of horses which, on the arrival of a traveller (a very rare event), are driven from their pasture into the *corrúl*, or pen, an operation which, with saddling and loading, generally occupies an hour. When the pasture is good, the horses are capable of going a long distance. Their pace is a gallop of about nine miles an hour, and is kept up from one post to another, a distance from two to seven leagues. The fatigue I did not find very great, and it was more occasioned by want of sleep at night than by the exercise of the day. Bs, fleas, cockroaches, rats, and others varieties abound even in winter, and in summer must be overpowering.

At the few small towns at which I stopped, I met with great attentions from the authorities, passing the night in the house of the mayor or military commander; but I generally preferred the discomforts of the post-houses to the oppressive politeness of the

citizens. On arriving at a town at sunset, I ride up to the house of the principal authority, present my passport to him and am received with great civility, and an immediate offer of the house. Three or four hours (most painful periods of my existence) are then spent, without having washed or unbooted, in conversation with the *señoras*, aided by *matté* and native cigars. After the few questions about Buenos Ayres, which most of them have heard of only as a vast metropolis, have been exhausted, one has to make an effort to say something, of the difficulty of which you have no conception, as there is no subject, political, moral, or religious, about which they have formed any ideas, and an attempt to be jocosely would be badly received. Perhaps at ten (p.m.), the *señor* comes in and tells you that supper is ready, and, having eaten nothing all day, you sit down with him to a series of most indigestible and disgusting compounds in which nothing is to be recognized but oil and spices. After supper, the quantity of which is regulated in proportion to your dignity and the compliment to be shown to you, you are allowed to go to bed and sleep, if you can after such a feed. The houses, though entirely unfurnished, are air-tight, and the beds, though instinct with animal life, are tolerable to one who has been twelve hours on horseback.

If your fortune leads you at night to a post-house, you find half a dozen Gauchos sitting on the floor and a few women, generally half-Indian, with long matted hair and excessively dirty. After a few dexterous compliments, you propose something to eat, and inquire anxiously after a lamb or chicken. If these are not to be had, you can at any rate get beef,



of which a broad slice two inches thick is put on an iron skewer and roasted over a wood fire. Then the skewer is stuck into the ground, and each person cuts off as much as he wants. Forks and plates are unknown, but nobody is without a great carving-knife stuck in his belt. After this, as the water is generally too bad to drink, one has a *matté*, of which I am become a great admirer. My bed on these occasions was a mattress placed either in the hut or "sub Jove," and my sheets two Scotch plaids. There is certainly, as everybody has said and written, a feeling of satisfaction and independence at being reduced so nearly to the state of nature, for the mattress and plaids are a mere superfluity, and in hot weather one would be better without them.

At Santa Fé, I was treated magnificently. The Governor gave me the best house in the town to live in, a secretary of state, an orderly, and a black flunky to attend on my person, and sent from his own kitchen a most elaborate dinner every day. The town is one of the oldest in these provinces, but has suffered much in the thousand revolutions since the declaration of independence, having been sacked, I believe, seven times. It contains some tolerable churches, and about eight thousand inhabitants, but its only pretension to beauty consists in the number of orange-trees which fill the court of every house. The inhabitants are most polite, but ignorant and primitive beyond belief. As the weather is hot, they sleep the greater part of the day, going out only to Mass, and spending the rest of their time absolutely in doing nothing. The women dress in Manchester cotton, and wear a shaw. or handkerchief over their heads. The Governor,

General Echagüe, considered a great statesman, is a little less ignorant than the rest, and a very worthy good sort of fellow, ruling his subjects with a more merciful sceptre than his fellows, and drawing his wisdom from treatises on government and law, published some hundred years ago.

From Santa Fé, I crossed the River Paranà, which is full of low wooded islands, to the town of La Bayada del Paranà, the capital of the province of Entre-Rios. The Governor of this province, General Urguiza, is perhaps, next to Rosas, the most remarkable man in the Argentine Republic. He is particularly distinguished by his ferocity, having, at one sitting, cut the throats of more than one thousand prisoners of war. His Government is most frightfully despotic, and his is a perpetual reign of terror. As every one is obliged to serve in the army, any individual is liable to be called away from his home, shut up in a barracks or sent upon an expedition, is neither paid nor clothed, and is liable on the slightest sign of discontent or disobedience to have his throat cut. It is quite lamentable to see the want of population and progress in the country consequent upon the wars and assassinations of this tyrant. He neither respects person nor property, claiming absolute power over both for the service of *the State*.

This worthy does not live in the capital, but at an *estancia* about fifty leagues distant.

From La Bayada I crossed the province of Entre-Rios to the town of Concepcion de la China, on the Uruguay, and called *en passant* on the Governor, whom, much to my regret, I did not see. From Concepcion I rode twenty leagues to Gualequaychú, a small town

on the Uruguay, where I was kept some days by contrary winds, and from whence I embarked in a small schooner for Buenos Ayres, and arrived on the 19th of September, after a long voyage of five days.

The province of Entre-Rios is wooded and undulating, and, in these flat regions, has some pretensions to the picturesque.

Of the two great rivers which form the Rio de la Plata, the Paraná is the largest, but so full of islands throughout its whole course that it never presents so great an expanse of water as the Uruguay. The latter, from Gualequaychú downwards, is five or six miles in breadth, but shallow, and navigable only in certain channels. The land on both sides is low and wooded.

Thanks to the Governor's passport, I met with great attention everywhere. Horses, vessels, and accommodation were provided for me free of expense, soldiers sent to accompany me, and everything done to facilitate my object of becoming acquainted with the provinces of the Confederation.

Though rather *desillusioné* as to the pleasure of a ride of a thousand miles, I am on the whole glad to have undertaken this small expedition, as I have seen a country, not particularly interesting certainly, either from natural advantages or from its inhabitants, but one rarely if *ever* visited in the way I have done, and very much unlike anything I had seen or even imagined.

It also improved my Spanish, and I have got some experience which will be useful in the greater journey to Chili. As to my health, it is not much benefited, for the good produced by the exercise was fully

counterbalanced by the irregular hours and unaccustomed quality of feeding.

Since my return to Buenos Ayres nothing particular has happened. The Commodore, Sir T. Herbert, arrived from Monte Video to take leave of the Governor, as he is about to be relieved, and we had a *fête* at the *quinta* to celebrate this event, and a great deal of embracing between him and his Excellency.

Mr. Southern is anxiously expecting the approval of H.M. Government to his convention, and it seems that we wait only for the co-operation of the French Government to settle the question.

I have changed my house, and now live in some rooms belonging to a Yankee comb-manufacturer; they are neither better nor worse than the previous ones; but by this time, as you may imagine, I have ceased to be critical. After returning from the country, Buenos Ayres seemed quite unnecessarily luxurious.

I heard from Ned Baring from Mexico, May 12th. He was to proceed by Panama and Lima to Valparaiso and cross to Buenos Ayres. I hope we may meet, though of course he will not turn back, and I cannot. It is unfortunate that we should have chosen routes diametrically opposite.

My march to Chili takes place in a few days, and I hope to arrive at Mendoza in the beginning of next month, which is the earliest time for crossing the Cordilleras, and even then I may be delayed if the snow is melting.

As to writing, you must make use of a large discretion as to where you direct, but I think you might still send a few lines to Lima, as the distance from

England is comparatively short, and I may be delayed in Chili or elsewhere longer than I anticipate.

My idea is to stop a few days at Santiago (the capital), go on to Valparaiso, and then perhaps make an excursion by land northward, and wait for the steamer which goes, I believe, every month up the coast.

It is a pity that I have spent so much time in this part of South America, which is probably the least interesting, although, as far as towns are concerned, Buenos Ayres is one of the most flourishing. I shall leave it with some regret, as one does every place, not that I have many *male* friends among the natives (for they are a sad rascally lot), but because the climate is pleasant and the women pretty, and I have spent four months very tolerably.

With love to my mother, brothers, and sisters, and hoping they may spend a pleasant Christmas (generally the hottest day of the year where I shall be), believe me, my dear father,

Your most affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, September 14, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

We heard from you last about a month ago, date June 9th, a few days after your arrival at Buenos Ayres per *Spider*. The packet—which arrived ten days since (having made a quick passage), brought

letters to the 12th July, but I regret to say, no tidings from you. I shall direct this to Lima, where I suppose you will arrive by the end of November.

We are all well, and very stationary at Taplow Court. Strzlecki has just arrived there from Ireland, and will stay some time. George is at Kimberley with the Henleys, &c. Ogilvie, who was to have been there, has become Lord Airlie, and cannot leave home. Maynard is staying at Horsley, where Mr. Henry Currie is very busy *returning* Evelyn in Denison's place, but there is a sharp contest.

The Pulzkys (the Hungarian Envoy and his wife) have been again staying with us. She is a very clever, refined, and agreeable person, better acquainted with English literature than all but one in a hundred of educated females here, plays, draws, &c. The Grotes dine with us occasionally. Tom Phillips has been with us for a fortnight.

There are signs of reviving commerce. Money is rather more in demand. The returns of exports and imports for the quarter are a great justification of Peel's policy.

The Bishop of Norwich died suddenly in Scotland, a great loss.

I have got a sort of keeper at Taplow Court, one Gedge, from Witton, who traps a large cat almost nightly: he has caught fourteen. I have the Cliefden Woods as well as my own.

European politics are too large a subject. The President is playing in a trimming manner Louis Philippe's old game of family, or rather, personal aggrandizement, and supposed to be the humble servant of Russia, who, by the prostration and depen-

dency of the Austrian Empire, becomes more powerful and dangerous. I send you the *Examiner*, with a letter Weissenborn sent to me (being his third) on German politics. Hungary is completely flooded; but can Austria govern it?

Shadwell Mill will be opened in November. The coffer-dam is at length completed at P.D. White is on the Rhine, to place his second son at a school to learn German. The eldest is here, and doing well. Old Dives is driving a devil of a trade. Some very rich millers in Lincolnshire—Seeley and Co.—made overtures to be taken into your partnership, which, of course, I declined.

Things are excessively quiet with us. Pray do write by every occasion. If you feel indisposed to write at length, send a few lines to say how you are. At these tremendous distances one feels uneasy at not hearing.

The cholera continues fearfully prevalent, and in Lambeth and some other districts most destructive—deaths in London district 2,000 weekly. I am, dear B.,

Ever yours affectionately,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*Santiago de Chile, Nov. 28, 1849.*

My dear Mother,

My last letter was dated from Buenos Ayres, October 13th, and I have to-day received from Valparaiso a joint letter from you and my father of *June 16th*, one from George of the same date, and a

line from my father of *September 14th*, telling me that you were all well, and that he had written to Lima; but none of July, nor any of introduction, which my father, in a former letter, mentioned as having sent.

You will see by the heading of my letter that I have passed the dangers of the Pampas and Cordillera, and arrived in the capital of Chili. On the 27th October I left Buenos Ayres, and arrived here on the 25th November. At the Governor's recommendation, I accompanied the courier of the post (who is despatched once a month to Mendoza), and was also attended by the *vigilanté*, who went with me to Santa Fé and the Paraná. General Rosas again gave me his passport, and was exceedingly kind in ordering that I should be particularly attended to and have everything that I wanted. The postman proved of great service from his knowledge of the road, of the best places to sleep in, and the proper day's journey to make.

I took, besides, my servant, an improvement upon the former one, who has left me. He is an Englishman, born in Buenos Ayres, and brought by Mr. Southern from England, from whose service I took him. We formed a party of four, with generally two or three postillions, and eight or nine horses.

The road is so entirely uninteresting that really I hardly know what to tell you about it, except that we galloped from sunrise to sunset, and generally had roast beef for supper. I was not much tired, and suffered more from the sun than the fatigue. The weather was excessively hot, and a north wind drove clouds of dust before it, and deprived me of the skin



of my face. My fat man, however, was knocked up, and we were obliged to put him in a cart.

By sending on a copy of the passport, with which the postman had been provided by the Governor's orders, much delay was avoided in the post-houses. Of the Indians we heard a great deal in the exposed provinces, but I think the danger of falling into their hands very remote. In one part they gave me an escort without my asking for it, as I put very little faith in their assistance. However, the Indians served to lengthen our journey; as, to avoid the possibility of being surprised at night, it is necessary to sleep in the fortified posts, and the day's performance is thereby lessened. For three days successively we galloped thirty leagues and once thirty-four, which, with baggage horses (and in some parts with a cart), is a considerable undertaking. In San Luis we were delayed twenty-four hours for the letters, which delay reduced our journey of 323 leagues to 12 days. I cannot say that the voyage across the Pampas is amusing, but it is better than that round Cape Horn, which lasts two or three months.

At Mendoza I stayed ten days, preparing for the passage of the Andes and recruiting my epidermis. Like all the provincial towns, it is dull and sleepy; but the neighbourhood is rather pretty from the cultivation of fruit-trees and clover, which are artificially watered by the streams descending from the Andes. The Cordillera, or highest and middle range, is not seen from the town, on account of its position immediately under the mountains.

On the 19th of November I left Mendoza, and arrived in Santiago in six days. My company con-

sisted of the *arnin*, or master of the mules, his man, and a boy to lead the *madrina*, or godmother (a mare with a bell round her neck whom the mules follow), a man whom I engaged for the journey to assist generally and to cook, my man, and myself. We had thirteen animals, including a horse and a mule for me, mules for the rest, and three for the baggage. We took with us food of all kinds, and dined and slept in the open air. The scenery is very grand, the mountains are entirely barren, and rise almost perpendicularly to an immense height; but I was much disappointed in not obtaining from any point an extensive view. Even on the summit of the Cordillera—12,000 feet above the sea—we were surrounded by higher mountains. The cold was very great, and one night there was a slight fall of snow. On the Chilian side of the Cordillera we had to pass between walls of snow five feet high, but many of the higher mountains were entirely covered.

After the gallop across the Pampas the journey did not appear very arduous, for though we were on our mules nearly the whole day, we could always stop and eat where there was a sheltered spot, and we had a plentiful supply of food; beef, lamb, bread, biscuits, ham, tongues, rice, onions, and other delicacies which an old gentleman in Mendoza had supplied me with.

On this side of the mountains the valleys are cultivated, and look green and pretty, but there is no grandeur of vegetation, and the beauty of the Andes consists in their immense size. The dangers are much exaggerated. The *laderas*, or narrow paths along the side of a precipice, look rather alarming, but the mules take them very coolly, and few accidents occur. Not-

withstanding, a few minutes before we passed, a loaded mule belonging to a troop had fallen, and we saw it at the bottom with its thigh broken.

Santiago seems a dull town, not so large as Buenos Ayres, but I have not explored it much. The father of my friend Arcos, a reputed millionaire, has just established a bank, and I went to dine with him last night.

What my plans are I really cannot say, as I have only just arrived, and not been to Valparaiso, or able to get any information, but I suppose in about a month I shall be in Lima. Before leaving Chili I should like to see something of the country. This morning I had a line from Ned Baring, dated Lima, November 11, telling me of his arrival at that place, but nothing about his future plans. I hope we may meet, but he will of course wish to see Buenos Ayres and Rio, and my road lies the other way. The post for Valparaiso leaves to-day, from which place the steamer starts on the 30th. I have only just found this out, and am obliged to write in a great hurry. I hope to find at Lima letters telling me what to do—whether Ponsford requires my services or not, &c. I will write again by the first opportunity, till which time, with love to all, believe me, my dear mother,

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Taplow Court, October 14, 1849.*

We were delighted to receive your letters (one to George and one to myself) of July 18th. The mail being twelve days overdue, we only got them a week ago.

As you will have made yourself an accomplished Spanish conversationalist, it seems certainly worth while to see Mexico if a favourable opportunity offers, but I think that the United States tour should be kept in view as *your main object*, and therefore you must consider what you can accomplish so as to get to New Orleans (if you go there) and leave it for the north before the unhealthy season there. I am afraid that the beginning of April is the latest moment at which you should be there. I shall be truly glad to have you in England again, but as far as Wright, Ponsford, and Co., are concerned, I think you may safely stay till Midsummer or July. If the weather continues open they will make rapid progress with their building; the dam is completed and they are filling in the foundations. Very great millers in Lincolnshire, Keyworth and Seeley, who have mills at Lincoln and Boston, have opened negotiations for the patent in that district. They offered a cheque for £5,000 for the right to use it in their Lincoln mill. This of course could not be listened to, but is satisfactory as showing their opinion. W. and P. are going to meet them at Peterboro, on Tuesday. There is a new mill there unlet, built by Lord FitzWilliam,

and though I daresay nothing will come of it, it seemed worth inquiring whether an arrangement could be come to for working the patent there under a temporary partnership with them. They are men of undoubted wealth and respectability and eminently successful.

Strzlecki is still staying here, and the Scotts are now with us. J. Lefevre is coming for a few days. Maynard returns this week to Cambridge.

The Emperor of Russia's insolent demand for the delivery of Kossuth and Co., and Sir. S. Canning's firmness have made some persons anticipate a break with Russia, but the affair will, I think, be patched up.

Our life is so very quiet and monotonous that I really have nothing to tell you. We went to stay a night at Mr. R. Hibbert's (Chalfont Park), a very pretty place eleven miles from this. We see the Irbys occasionally, but are little troubled by neighbours. Henry Currie and the Horsley girls seemed to enjoy their visit. Things in Cornhill are flat and uninteresting. We shall (if we can make the house warm) stay on here for the present. . . . John<sup>1</sup> has been addressing the agriculturists and labourers and spoken admirably—plain good sense. He is acting as J.P., Chairman of the Guardians, &c. Stanley<sup>2</sup> is a sad loss to Norwich. . . . The reaction in European affairs seems to be so abused by all the Governments, Prussian, French, and Austrian, that I think a terrible day of reckoning will come. Financial ruin overhangs them all, and popular opinion must in the long run upset the Government by military force. As to the French

<sup>1</sup> Lord Wodehouse.

<sup>2</sup> The Bishop.

President, I believe he seeks his own personal aggrandizement, and is the humble servant of the Czar. Old Weissenborn has written to me frequently. He has been engaged in a correspondence with Lord Cardigan, Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, and latterly with Prince Albert, endeavouring by these great instrumentalities to extract £2 5s. 6d. from one Garland, formerly a pupil of W.'s, now a cornet in Prince Albert's Own.

Your mother has, I find, written you what little gossip we have, and therefore I will conclude.

In Mrs. Raikes Currie's letter, alluding to the visit of M. and Madame Pulzky, the “Hungarian Rebels,” to Taplow Court, she says, “I remember you felt no sympathy for the poor Hungarians at the commencement of their dispute with Austria, but I think their position was not then understood in England.”

George Currie wrote from London, 16th Oct., 1849:

I was very glad to receive a letter from you early this month from Buenos Ayres. . . . We were amused with your accounts of South American society, &c., though you do not paint what you see *en couleur de rose*. One thing I do sincerely envy you—climate. The detestable brumal season has set in again, and for the next six months we shall have nothing but N.E. winds, fogs, snow, rain, and smoke, with corresponding catarrhs, &c. I am at this moment suffering from these influences. My father and mother continue at Taplow Court, where they have been receiving a succession of distinguished visitors. The house,

however, is very cold, and the journey from hence long, so that I do not go up and down much, generally sleeping in Hyde Park Terrace, and dining at the Alfred Club. . . .

. . . The Hungarian war is all over: the revolution crushed by the infamous intervention of Russia, and the Austrian scoundrels are now doing the hanging and butchering after the fray is over. The end of the business has been the most exciting. Kossuth and the other Hungarian leaders took refuge, when all was lost, in Turkey, and the Czar immediately made a demand on the Ottoman Porte for their extradition; to which the Sultan, encouraged by England and France, refused. It was thought this would be a *casus belli* between Russia and Austria versus Turkey assisted by England, and it may possibly be still, if the barbarian perseveres in his demand, but this he will not do.

The talk of the papers just now is an insane outcry of the Sabbatarians and bigots against an alteration in the Post Office. Lord Winchilsea, in a long letter to the *Times*, attributes the scourge of cholera to, (1) a worldly speculation in railway scripts, (2) the threatened opening of the Post Office on the Sabbath, (3) the omission of the name of the Almighty from the coin of the realm—*i.e.* a new two-shilling piece which has not the words *fid. def.* after the Regina! The Count says, "I do believe this planet is the mad-house of the Universe."

Talking of Lord Winchilsea, he is about to marry thirdly a Miss Rice whom you know. Your quondam master at Eton, Neville major, has married Miss Florence Maude (Lord Hawarden's daughter). One

of Oswald Smith's sons has married a Miss Maberly (Mrs. G. R. Smith's half-sister), a good deal his senior ; but this was a long time ago, and you have probably heard it.

The preceding letters were addressed to Lima, as also are the following written in November and December.

TO B. W. C. FROM HIS MOTHER.

My dearest Bertram,

On Thursday, 25th October, we received a letter from you written the day before you started on an expedition along the Paraná to Corrientes, and giving an account of your equipment, &c., which interested us much ; but I was extremely vexed to find you had only received four letters. The truth is, not having the least notion your stay at Buenos Ayres would be so protracted, our letters were not directed there. Some have been sent to Valparaiso which I hope will reach you. You have been very good about writing, and your letters are fully appreciated ; that of July 14th was a long and entertaining one—indeed, they have *all* been very interesting to us. Though I fear you have been considerably disappointed in your expectations of instruction and amusement, up to the time of your last letter, I trust that before your return to England you will have seen enough to repay you for crossing the Atlantic, and for all subsequent *désagréments*. . . .

1st November.—I shall make this letter a sort of journal. Last Saturday we were asked to dine at



Danesfield, to meet Lord and Lady Portarlington. It is eight or nine miles from hence and belongs to Mr. Scott Murray. He became a Roman Catholic a few years since, and married a daughter of Lord Lovat's. We did not go; it is too far and moreover I had settled to go to London that morning.

Count Strzlecki has been with us for several weeks, and we find him a most agreeable guest, always cheerful and amusing. Last week he went into Yorkshire to visit the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and this week he is at Bowood, but returns to-day. Next week I believe he goes to Wickham. . . .

George went out on Monday with Mr. Sartoris, who lives close by with his aunts the Miss Tunnes, and keeps harriers. They met near Amersham and had good sport. George seldom comes down now, except at the end of the week, and has been in constant attendance in Cornhill.

The Queen was to have gone to the City yesterday to open the Coal Exchange, but had the chicken-pox and could not go. Prince Albert and the two elder children went in state.

We talk of going to Brighton, to the Bedford Hotel for a fortnight, to avoid the worse part of the fall of the leaf; but, up to this time (the beginning of November), the weather has been so fine and bright, we do not care to move. This is a very dry soil, and the situation so high that the air never feels damp. We all like the place extremely, though the house is not all we could wish; but the country is pretty and cheerful, and the vicinity to the station its crowning merit.

*November 7th.*—Mr. John Lefevre came down on

Saturday. His family have been spending the summer in Scotland near Jedburgh at a house they hired for the season.

George went to Mr. Humphrey Mildmay's near Sevenoaks on Saturday, with Mr. Bingham Mildmay. I hope you and Ned Baring have met. Your uncle Berkeley and his family are gone to Genoa. Aunt Fanny is recovering from the serious illness she had at Boulogne.

Mrs. Balfour and her family have been spending the summer at Bembridge, a quiet village in the Isle of Wight. She hears from Harrington, who has been living in Mr. Bethune's house ever since he went out to Calcutta, that the climate does not agree with him, but she hopes he will try a change of residence, by going up the country, before he returns on sick leave.

Mr. John Drummond's second son, the stockbroker, is to marry one of your little "Brigstocks." I don't know which. Lord William Fitzroy's son espouses Miss Duncombe, daughter to Lord Feversham. Your cousin Mary Ward is to be married on Wednesday to a Captain Kennedy, late of the Indian Army. I hear he is neither pleasing in manner, nor in personal appearance. We will hope he is worthy! They will have about £500 a year to live upon.

Walter Raikes has decided on returning to Canada. I fancy that he was not likely to succeed in this country. He spent some weeks in Ireland, with the idea of taking a farm there, but it ended in no result.

12th November.—Mr. and Lady Sophia Tower, who live in this country near Ivor, called here yesterday. We are engaged to dine and sleep at their house a short time hence.

Mary has not been very strong through the summer but is better now, though she looks thin and pale. Edith is as fat as ever, and as lively and intelligent. She has just been writing, under the superintendence of Miss Thun (a German who has been with us three months), a German letter to Count Strzlecki to thank him for a very pretty illustrated German book he sent her. . . . Maynard seems to be going on steadily at Cambridge: he has got the brown pony (*Montresor*) this term. The Eton holidays begin on the 3rd December, unusually early. Henry is to move into "tails" this Christmas. Philip grows very tall, and is thin and lanky. . . .

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Taplow Court. Nov. 14th, 1849.*

Your last long and interesting letter to your mother (date Aug. 11th, just previous to starting on your excursion to Corrientes) is receiving a rejoinder of ample size from her pen, which must make a clean sweep of the little gossip and small news our quiet life affords. Much do I regret that you have received letters so seldom and so irregularly. . . .

I shall set about procuring letters for the United States from Lord Carlisle and others. Bulwer is at last starting for his Embassy.

This mail takes you a credit from Baring's for £200 on various places. I am told that you should take special care to avoid the unhealthy season at New Orleans.

John Lawford has been seriously ill with an attack of rheumatic fever; he has been entirely confined to his bed for ten days. . . . He is I hope getting better. George has had the whole responsibility of Cornhill thrown upon his shoulders; a capital thing for him, and when driven into a corner he does his work very well. Of course we see very little of him at Taplow. Bullion at the Bank is 16m. higher than it has been since 1846. Brokers refuse money at 2 per cent. Consols 93 $\frac{1}{4}$ . I believe there is a very good trade doing quietly—wheat about 40s. or 42s. the qr. Revenue very good and improving. . . . Louis Napoleon seems determined to play the forward game, and to be independent of his Ministers.

Holmes and his wife go to Demerara by the packet which takes out this. Our colonies seem in fermentation from the Cape to Canada.

*Thursday, 15th.*—I wrote thus far last night. With regard to your future direction, I must leave it to your own judgment and discretion. Times and seasons weeks hence are so uncertain. I shall be truly glad to have you home again, but, being across the Atlantic, I think you should see the United States and the best men in them. If, as I greatly hope, you have met Baring you will have an excellent opinion. . . . 5 o'clock.—I am now just returned from an exciting scene, where George and I have been for four hours. Cliefden is burnt down, but the books and pictures are saved. We have been very active and I hope useful. The Duchess is in Scotland. Workmen were in the house.

Mrs. Raikes Currie says :

As I write, Mary runs down from the schoolroom to say the house at Cliefden is on fire. We all rush up, and see the flames blazing furiously. Now they burst through the windows—the roof falls in; a magnificent scene, but one grieves for the destruction of so much property. I forget whether Sir J. Warrender had sold it, before you left England, to the Duke of Sutherland for £40,000. Alterations were in progress in the house, and I daresay we shall hear the fire was caused through the carelessness of workmen. Your Father and George ordered their horses and galloped off to Cliefden the moment they heard of it. An engine belonging to this house was despatched in charge of the coachman, and all our servants flocked to assist. A strong north-west wind and the elevated situation of the house, must render all attempts to check the flames fruitless. We can see that the whole house is in flames.

To-day, Thursday, 15th, is a day of public thanksgiving for the removal of the cholera, which has almost entirely subsided within the last three weeks. The Queen's Proclamation has made it a holiday, so George came down last night and goes back this evening.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Taplow Court, Dec. 15, 1849.*

My dear Bertram,

Since I wrote to you one month ago, affairs have moved so quietly with us that I have little to communicate. We very often think and talk of you and earnestly wish to have you here, and on your birthday I tasted the "unusual grape" to your health and safe return.

I finished my last letter when Cliefden was still smoking. Barry dined and slept here a few days since, having come down to make his plans. He proposes to rebuild the house (which was fully insured in the Royal Exchange) in the likeness of an Italian villa. Lord Frederic Gower, a youth of seventeen or eighteen, is the only one of the family who has been down. He dined here and went round to thank the neighbours for their exertions.

We have been staying for a night with Ch. Tower and Lady Sophia at Huntsmore, an old family place in this county. There we met the Bishop of Oxford who is particularly agreeable. We met him afterwards at Labouchere's, where we had a feed you would have approved, and a particularly pleasant party—Grottes (Grote in great force), Le Marchant, Fazakerly, and the Bishop.

John Lawford is just recovering from his very severe illness; he was entirely absent from business for five weeks. . . . George came out very efficiently, and took the keys for the whole time. It has been an

excellent thing for him and forced him to exert himself. Money is cheap and becoming cheaper. We discount at rates from 2 and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 per cent. Our Stock investments will do well, as Consols to-day were ex dividend  $96\frac{1}{2}$ . Parliament meets 31st of January. The Queen Dowager was buried yesterday. Lady Louisa Elliott marries Mr. Ponsonby, Lord Bessborough's brother, a clergyman.

We find this place so comfortable that we intend staying here till Parliament meets. At Christmas the Captain, his wife, and Albert, with the Chamberses and Armine are to come here. The Colonel and family are at Florence, hoping to be summoned by Ward to rule the Greeks.

White hopes to be grinding at Shadwell by 1st of February. They have negotiations going on for granting Royalties to different parties in distant counties, upon the plan of dividing the proceeds with Bovill. . . .

Edith has made extraordinary progress in German, which she talks fluently with Miss Thun. . . . The Childerses paid us a visit for two or three days. The Scott Murrays from Danesfield and Laboucheres met them.

With kindest love from all here, I am ever,

Your affectionate father,

R. C.

Two letters to Mr. Southern were returned by Mr. Henderson after Mr. Southern's death, and are here inserted.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS EXCELLENCY HENRY SOUTHERN,  
H.B.M. MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY, BUENOS AYRES.

*Santiago, Sunday, Dec. 2nd, 1849.*

My dear Mr. Southern,

I send a line by the postman, who goes to-morrow to Mendoza, and returns with the letters from Buenos Ayres, there being but one in the service of the Chilian Government. We hear accounts of the capitulation of the Paraguayans to Urquiza, which I imagine must be without foundation, and various other reports about the intentions of H. E., who finds no favour with the Unitarian Editors of Chili.

I accomplished the passage of the Andes in six days, and found the journey very easy compared to the gallop across the Pampas. The weather in the mornings and evenings was cold and on this side of the Cordillera the road passed through walls of snow five feet high, but the scenery is grand, the air clear and exhilarating, and the bivouacks at night very pleasant. One advantage in the rarified atmosphere is that *pulgas* and *chinchas* cease to exist in it, and one may pass the night unmolested. Wood and water are plentiful and the latter excellent, so that with the admirable preparations made by D. Benito we always had a good supper.

Santiago, where I arrived last Sunday, appears to be smaller than Buenos Ayres; but it is so furiously hot that I have not been able to explore much. The



Alameda is good, a broad walk about six or seven *caradens* in length, with a double row of poplars and an *asequia* on each side. In the evening a few people appear there, and afterwards sit at home to receive. The circle is preserved as at Buenos Ayres, but there is not half the *franquéza* or *laissez aller* of the charming Pateñas.

The house of Arcos is by far the pleasantest I have entered. He has a capital cook, and the sons are very nice young fellows. His bank is now established. In setting it up he has met with immense opposition directed principally by the English at Valparaiso, and the papers are still full of controversy on the subject.

I heard the other day from young Baring, who has arrived at Lima, and have written offering to remain a month here to wait for him, and then go on to Lima. To Valparaiso I have not yet been, but shall probably do so in a few days. The *Driver*, in which I came out from England, went out of port yesterday as well as the Admiral's ship, so that I shall be badly off for society, as there is no English man-of-war left in the harbour.

Your ex-fat man has suffered much from his travels and is reduced considerably in size. He does not abound in intelligence, but I find him on the whole superior to his antecessor.

I wrote to Manuela from Mendoza, but forgot to mention how excessively kind Trigoyen had been to me. If you have an opportunity, will you be kind enough to express my feelings of gratitude for that as well as for other favours? In the Hotel Ingles, where I am living, is a most offensive Argentine named Mur, who claims friendship with you. The only thing I

have to reproach Trigoyen with is his having introduced me to him.

I cannot write more before the post goes. Begging to be remembered to Henderson and all my friends,

I remain very truly yours,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Lima, Dec. 29th, 1849.*

My dear Mr. Southern,

I arrived here four days ago by the steamer from Chili, and find my particular friend Edward Charles Baring, on his way to Buenos Ayres, where he will arrive about the beginning of May. By the last mail from this place, he addressed a letter to the Governor, under cover to Zimmermans requesting a passport, or at least all the necessary facilities for passing the Pampas from Mendoza.

The object of his travels is to combine amusement with information respecting the state of commerce, the character of houses, &c.; and he expects to find at Buenos Ayres instructions to make some further arrangement with regard to the payment of the debt. Perhaps this will be no great recommendation in the eyes of His Excellency, but, as the house is well known to him, he will not, I suppose, refuse the favour. At the same time, Baring is anxious to have his request conveyed in the best manner possible, and would have written directly to you, had either he or Mr. Adams had the pleasure of your acquaintance.

Will you be so kind as to support his petition in whatever way you think most advisable.

The British crown and dignity has received an affront here in the person of Mr. Sullivan, its unworthy representative in Chili. He arrived a fortnight ago in the steamer from Panamá, in company with one Potter, the North American consul at Valparaiso. . . .

(There follows an account of the quarrel between these gentlemen, which, as it is fully narrated in the succeeding letter, may be omitted here.)

This place is more of a town than Buenos Ayres, but the women are not so pretty (as indeed where are they?). The *sago* and *manto* are no more, and of course this is the wrong time of year for everything. To-morrow we are to have a bull-fight, and I shall see something more of the people. I was last night at a Madame Bergmann's—Pateña, *née* de Rubio.

Adams is a good fellow, with a pleasant wife. To-morrow the Admiral is coming up with his women, who are dowdy and slow. I will write again before leaving, which will be perhaps in two months. Pray write to me *here*, care of Alsop and Co., and tell me how your politics are getting on. I see in the paper that Garibaldi is to return to Monte Video.

Believe me, very sincerely yours,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C. TO MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Lima, Jan. 12th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I received with great pleasure your letters of November 16th, the first (with one other exception) that have reached me directly, the rest having experienced delays varying from two to five months before they fell into my hands.

My last letter was from St. Iago, November 28th, written as soon as I got to Chili, and sent by the monthly steamer, the only opportunity this coast affords. As I was anxious to get on after the long delay at Buenos Ayres, and heard from Baring that he intended to stop a month or two in Lima, I took steam on the 14th December for this place. On the 30th of each month the Pacific Steam Navigation Co.'s vessels start from Valparaiso to Panamá touching at all the intermediate ports for the mails, and there is in addition a steamer in the middle of the month from Valparaiso to Lima. The vessels do not excel in accommodation and are much crowded. The voyage lasts ten days, from the necessity of stopping every day a certain number of hours at one of the small ports. These are the most wretched places which can be imagined. The coast of Peru, Bolivia, and Chili is a desert; and the towns being consequently in the interior have each their sea-port, to which the products of the mines, silver, copper, nitrate of soda, &c., are brought, and by means of which they communicate with the coast. Their supplies of food and water are

brought in ships from the cultivated regions of the north. The only object of any interest in the voyage was in the Chincha Islands off the coast of Peru, which are now supplying the world with guano. In some cuttings the manure is 200 feet deep. The Government have granted a monopoly in England to Messrs. Gibbs and Co. in consideration of an advance which that house has made to them. It appears there is a considerable demand for this article, and everybody talks guano from the President downwards.

I was much pleased to meet Ned Baring on my arrival. He is staying with Mr. Adams, the *chargé d'affaires*, whose wife, *née* Lukin, is a niece of Mrs. Baring's; he means to cross the Pampas from Chili, and get to Buenos Ayres in April or May. He was much pleased with Mexico, where he stayed six months, having run through the States in a few weeks. Adams is an old Foreign Office bird, a little official, but a very good fellow, and has a cook (British) who deserves encouragement. His wife is a clever, pleasant little woman.

On my first arrival I met Sullivan (since gone in the *Driver* to his post), the new *chargé d'affaires* in Chili, and nephew of Lord P. who met with a misfortune during his short stay, which perhaps you may have heard of. In consequence of a dispute about the right to some rooms at an hotel, between him and one Potter (the North American consul on his way to Valparaiso) in the course of which the Potterites say that Sullivan called Mrs. Potter a cook-maid, Potter, after exhausting the abusive terms contained in the American language, broke a thick stick across Sullivan's face, and kept off all interference

by presenting a loaded revolver at the bystanders. Sullivan wrote home an account of the proceedings, offering in case of the disapproval of H.M.'s Government his resignation, but he bore his stripes most humbly, and has I believe no warlike intentions. He is certainly an uncommon ass and most unfit for his appointment. Potter, who is a *Southern* man (as the Yankees say by way of excuse), I did not see.

Lima is a larger and better town than Buenos Ayres or St. Iago, but from the fact of Baring and the Adams being here, I live little with the natives. As usual it is the wrong season for everything, and all the people are going off to a bathing-place for the carnival. We have an occasional earthquake to talk about, and last Sunday a bull-fight, which all the old Spaniards said was a contemptible affair, but which was pretty well for America, though the bulls and men might certainly have been better.

With regard to the future, as soon as this packet leaves I shall go with the rest of the world to Chorillos, a sea-bathing place four leagues distant, where everybody possesses a marine villa in the shape of a mud cottage, and where the great purpose of life is bathing and swinging in a hammock.

On the 30th inst., I go with Baring to a port two days down the coast called Islay, from thence to Arequipa, and thence cross the Cordillera, either to Cusco, or to the Lake Titicaca (of which Prescott speaks so much), and, spending a month in our journeyings, recross the Cordillera to Arica, where I take the return steamer to Lima, and he goes on his way southward. I have animated Baring to this expedition because I think in our vocation of travellers

we are bound to see something of the country (which nobody does here); because in this tour we shall twice cross the Cordillera, decidedly the most interesting object in South America; and also because an American traveller, whose letters I saw, describes this lake as the most interesting object in the world, and where the most perfect remains of the Tuca's civilization are to be met with. Of course we shall be disappointed and should be much more comfortable in Lima with Adams and his cook, but I am convinced that the *after* effect of fine scenery and travelling (not by railroad, but as conducted in these countries) is agreeable, and I even begin to look at the Pampas through a distance in which the many things that were disagreeable are lost, and the few agreeable sensations brought into relief.

Having returned to Lima, I shall leave it for Panamá on March 15th; arrive there in ten days, and from Chagres take the steamer for New York, arriving there about the 10th or 15th of April. The only thing that can interfere with this arrangement will be, that *if* I find the expedition southward agreeable, I shall spend a month at Guayaquil and Quito on my way to Panamá, and for this chance I think you may write me a few lines to the care of the consul at Panamá.

Mexico I give up with reluctance. Baring gave me an account of the country which makes me long to see it, as it is undoubtedly the richest and most interesting part of Spanish America, but he agrees with me that there is no use visiting these countries in a hurry, and that to see Mexico three or four months are necessary. The same is applicable to every place I have passed through, and if I had stopped but a month at Buenos Ayres I should have known nothing

of it. The facilities of communication are so few, and the ideas of the people so slow, that it takes time to see the country and to understand the inhabitants.

I am sure that the four or five months I shall have to spare will be much better employed in seeing something of the States, than in attempting to run through too much and understanding nothing. If I had afterwards time, I should like to go to Mexico as well as to Jamaica and Havana, said to be the most beautiful place and the finest island in the world.

My reasons for going to New York direct are that the spring is the best time for seeing the Northern States, and the Americans tell me it is the best point for beginning a tour from. Will you, therefore, direct thither all letters of introduction you may have for me. If Mr. T. Baring be in England, I think he could give me some, or Bates. Ned Baring was so short a time in the country that he hardly knows who the best people to know are; but I believe Webster, and Prescott the historian in Boston would be useful, and there are some old Virginian families in Pennsylvania, who are said to compose the best society in Philadelphia. My address will be "Messrs. Goodhere and Co., New York." I have written to George to send me some clothes to the same point—it being impossible to get anything to wear in these countries.

The credit for £200 on various places I have received, and hope not to have occasion for, till I leave Lima, having practised a most praiseworthy economy.

Baring assures me that the Yankee merchants dispense their civilities in proportion to one's means or reputation for them, and strongly recommends for the United States a credit from Messrs. B.B.C. for



£1,000. If you are not afraid of trusting your money, it would, I think, be a good plan, and require no advance. I would of course draw for no more than I could help, as I have done before, and, in fact, if I had wished to exceed my credit, I should have found no difficulty from the merchants here. However, if you have any misgivings, pray do not think anything more about it.

I am much interested with your account of W. and P. The Shadwell affair seems to have been a protracted one, having been, according to your different letters, to *be* ready in September, October, November, December, and finally the new year, but old Ponsford is rather a *testudo* in his movements. I hope you make them submit all their treaties with other millers to you, and preserve an absolute veto. I think we are entitled to this. How was the arrangement about the machinery settled between White and Bovill? . . . I shall write a few lines to my mother, and am

Your most affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

The distance from New York to London is so short that I shall be able to tell you my plans as they are formed.

*Lima, Jan. 12th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

You will see by my letter to my father that I did not stop long in Chili, and in truth I found both Santiago and Valparaiso very uninteresting. At the former place I spent but ten or twelve days, and had it not been for the family of my Buenos Ayresian friend Arcos, should never have been able to stand even so short a stay. The Chilian women are far behind the fair Argentinas in beauty, and are proverbially slow. As the country is more civilized and imitative of Europe, society has lost its only charm—its originality—and reminds one of that of a second-rate town in Europe. The country, however, is pretty; there are hills and cultivated valleys artificially watered, and trees of moderate size, but the town of Santiago is so immoderately hot (hotter than this, which is in lat. 12°), that I was unable to explore, and hardly stirred out during the daytime.

From thence to Valparaiso, along a mountainous road, I went in a sort of pre-adamite gig, and, to avoid the sun, by night. About five in the morning I came upon the Pacific, gratifying (as an enthusiastic Yankee, whose letters I saw, exclaimed) the earliest dream of my childhood.

Valparaiso is almost English, and devoted purely to commerce, and I only indulged myself with five days of its pleasures, spending the evenings profitably in the society of literary and scientific American females. With my usual good fortune, both the

flagship and *Driver*, which had been in harbour for months, sailed for Callao the day before I arrived, and there was no man-of-war in the place.

I had previously written to Ned Baring at Lima, proposing to wait till the end of the month in Chili and then go northward, but hearing that he intended to stay some time in Peru, I took the first opportunity of shipping myself, and arrived there after a ten days' voyage.

I found here Captain Johnson of the *Driver*, who having left me ill at Rio, and not having heard of me for eight months, had concluded that I had made my exit from life, and was astonished at my re-appearance. Indeed his sister whom I saw at Valparaiso plainly told me so, and could hardly believe in my material existence.

Since then the *Driver* has been sent to Chili, and will return in a few days and then go to the Sandwich Islands. Johnson wants me to make the cruise with him, which, if I had the time, I should not mind. Elwes, my antecessor, is or was there. He, I believe, intended to return to Europe by way of China and India.

The Admiral (Phipps Hornby) is still here, but lives principally on board, surrounded by some of the plainest women that the United Kingdom has produced, who fortunately for us prefer their ship to Lima. Mr. Stanley, his nephew, is at Quito, gathering, I suppose, honey for the protectionist's hive. He (S.) comes from Jamaica, where he has collected facts for a crushing attack on Lord Grey in the forthcoming session.

I think I shall very likely spend a month in the

republic of Ecuador and reach New York in May. Before that month I hear that it is cold and unpleasant, so at all events write to me at Panamá as well as to New York. Less than a month one cannot stay, as that is the interval between the two steamers; but if I get much bored I shall probably go on directly to the United States. By going straight to New York, I shall quiet your apprehensions about yellow-fever, though there is none at New Orleans till July. Will you ask my father to send me a letter to Panamá to the consul, Mr. Perry, which may be got from the Foreign Office. He is a son or brother of Sir Erskine Perry.

I am glad you are so well suited as you seem to be at Taplow. Not knowing whether you have yet left, I shall direct to Cornhill.

Ned Baring has just been with me. He seems to have amused himself a good deal in his travels, and takes great interest in imports and exports, mines, custom duties, &c. It is a great thing to have an object, however small, in travelling.

Chailles, the bathing place, whither I am going next week, is a curious place in a desert on the coast. The whole society of Lima meets in the water. I have ordered a complete dress for the ceremony. Adieu, my dear mother.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, Jan. 26th, 1850.*

My dearest Bertram,

We were rejoiced this morning to receive an interesting and long letter, dated Buenos Ayres, October 13th, from you (the mail being three weeks and more after its time). I have flown one line (to say that we are all well and flourishing) to Lima, Panamá, and Chagres, respectively, but hope that you will be at New Orleans by the time this arrives or soon after. I will write more at length when I know where to direct and to send letters of introduction in the States to. One piece of news I have to tell which is really a profound and well-kept secret here, but may be told to you across the Atlantic. At Easter our excellent friend, Samuel Jones Loyd, will take his seat as Baron Overstone of Overstone, in the county of Northampton: does not this amuse you? It has literally been pressed upon him, not as usually *said* to be so. He is out of the firm, though not known to be so, and Henry Norman, G. W.'s brother, comes out of Bouveries (where he has been a partner some years), to be a steady working man with Lewis and Long-ears.

S. J. L. is taking an active part in Prince Albert's commission for the Great National Exposition of Manufactures in 1851, and Prince Albert is much struck with his power. Our friend was to have come out noble with the new year; but two others from the House of Commons cannot vacate their seats (for

some reason or other) before Easter. I guess Hobhouse and Labouchere, or possibly Lord R. Grosvenor. Is not all this, all things considered, rich! I give Lord John great credit for it.

The Protectionists are making idiotic exhibitions, and will be well belaboured when Parliament meets. The Plate question has been a great political *champ de bataille* in France. I envy you your United States tour. . . .

R. C.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS MOTHER.

*Lima, January 29th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

To-morrow I start on the expedition of which I told you in my letter of the 12th inst., and will leave a few lines to be sent by the February steamer, that you may not be entirely without news of me.

Nothing has happened, since I last wrote, worthy of record. Latterly I have been staying at Chailles in a cottage lent me by my banker, and living with Mr. and Mrs. Adams. The sea bathing was very agreeable and the sea air charming in this hot weather. We swung in hammocks, and rode about, and passed a very pleasant lazy sort of time. Indeed, I was sorry to come away, as the bathing season is but now beginning and the place getting fuller every day, till it reaches its height at the Carnival, when Lima is entirely deserted and left to the blacks and browns (of whom there are some twenty varieties).

I have not yet determined whether I shall spend a month in Ecuador before going to the United States, and shall be influenced principally by the weather and state of the roads in the journey we are about to make. The rainy season is now at its height, and everybody tells us that the roads are impassable, but I have been too long in South America to believe anything I am told, particularly when the information regards travels and difficulties to be met with.

I have nothing more to add. Direct to me at New York until further notice. By last mail I sent you a full account of my proceedings, and will write again in March to tell you of my experiences in Bolivia, till which time, with kindest love to all, believe me, my dear mother,

Your most affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Panamá, March 26th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I wrote a few lines by the last West Indian steamer, dated, however, some time before the mail left Lima, as I was setting off on an expedition to the south of Peru. I am now on the point of crossing the Isthmus to Chagres, there to take my passage to New York. If I succeed in doing so, you will hear from me, before this arrives, from the United States, but in case I should not find a passage, I leave a few lines here to be sent by the West Indian steamer, which will start on the 29th or 30th inst.

This place is in a state of great confusion from the quantity of Americans on their way to and from California. Yesterday a steamer sailed for San Francisco with 500 passengers, and there are 650 more waiting at Chagres for a passage to the United States. Inns and accommodation are unattainable. I am living with Mr. Perry, H.M.'s consul. Lima I left on the 13th inst., having returned safely from my trip with Ned Baring. I will defer the account of our expedition till my next letter ;<sup>1</sup> if that has not arrived before this, you must suppose that I failed in getting a passage to New York, and had to wait for a fortnight or so for another steamer.

Ned and I separated at Arica; he to proceed to Chili and I to return to Lima, where I spent a fortnight very comfortably with Adams and his wife.

Before leaving I drew on Messrs. Baring Brothers and Co. for £300 to pay my expenses on the coast since leaving Buenos Ayres, making in all £700 since leaving England. I am afraid this is rather alarming, but everything is atrociously expensive, heightened by the Californian adventurers. I have had to pay £105 for steamers alone on this coast and have now got to disburse for the passage of the Isthmus and to New York. It is to be hoped that in the States the expenses of travelling are more moderate, as indeed I believe they are cheaper than anywhere else.

I hope to find in New York letters from you in

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately Bertram must have forgotten his intention of giving an account of his expedition with Mr. Baring. The two letters which follow, though written but ten days later than the preceding one, do not refer to it at all.



answer to my first from Lima. Here I picked up a few words, dated January 16th, telling me you had written to New Orleans. Perhaps I shall have to go there on my way to New York. Everything about the steamers is unknown here, and I shall think myself very lucky if I get away this month. With love to all, believe me,

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.



LETTERS FROM JAMAICA AND  
NORTH AMERICA.

1850.



III.

LETTERS.

1850.

*Kingston, Jamaica, April 5, 1850.*

My dear Father,

You will receive by this steamer a letter from Panama, written just before I started across the Isthmus, with the hope of catching the steamer for New York. In that attempt I was unsuccessful, and therefore took the opportunity of the West Indian Mail Steamer to come on to this place, from whence I hope to be able to start for New York in a week or ten days by one of the steamers from Chagres which touches here.

I crossed the Isthmus of Panama in about thirty hours. The breadth is ninety miles, of which twenty-five are performed on horseback, and the rest on the river, which joins the Atlantic at the small village of Chagres. From the extraordinary emigration to California, the road is covered with passengers, and I met at least fifteen hundred persons on my way. At Chagres, where there are a few wooden houses called hotels, the confusion is at its height; the rooms filled with beds, sometimes to the number of sixty, and food to be procured with difficulty. As it was impossible to live on there, I went on board the steamer as soon as

she arrived, although we did not start till three days later.

From Chagres, in two days, we went to Cartagena, a dilapidated old Spanish town, and from thence, in two days more, to this place, whither we arrived this morning. The steamer starts again for England on the 9th, but I write immediately, as I think of going to Spanish Town to-morrow, to pay my respects to His Excellency, and perhaps to go up into the mountains. This town is a poor-looking place, built principally of wood, and there are few ships in the harbour, and little movement in the streets. I have got a room at a sort of lodging-house, which seems tolerably clean.

The *Tay*, the steamer in which I came, is a fine ship, and well provided with food. My fellow-passengers were, many of them, the same who came from Peru. Besides these was Mr. Chatfield, the *chargé d'affaires* in Central America, who is staying in the same house with me.

The scenery in Panama is pretty, but the road atrocious. One has to descend the river in a canoe half filled with water, and constructed on the most primitive plan. The land part of the journey is worse; for the road is so bad that the quickest pace practicable is about three miles an hour. The whole is a good specimen of South American want of enterprise. Hoping to be soon in New York, from whence you shall hear immediately on my arrival, believe me, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

Kingston, Jamaica, April 5, 1850.

My dear Mother,

I have given a letter of introduction, addressed to you, to a lady who will arrive in England by this steamer. She is of one of the best families in Peru, and wife of the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs in that country. The husband is paralytic, and goes to Europe for his health, and the education of his daughters, one of whom (aged fourteen years) has pretty black eyes. They will probably pass a few days in London on their way to Paris, and if you can show them any kindness, such as taking them a drive in the Park, or to see anything remarkable, they will be very grateful. She is a very nice person, and a good specimen of a Limeña, a species of the human race which you may perhaps have some curiosity to know. I believe they possess a little French, and the father has some idea of English, but from the nature of his illness he is a fixture. Mary might fraternize with the girls, who are lively, and, being fresh from America, rather curiosities. I hope you understand that my friends are highly respectable, and quite the *crème de la crème* of Lima society.

I was much annoyed at losing the steamer to New York, but still hope to be there by the end of the month. This place is very uninteresting, and I have come only to escape from Chagres, which is uninhabitable.

The Californian emigration is a most curious fact. Every month there are arrivals of several thousand Americans (one steamer, the *Georgia*, brought 1,300),

who are not generally of the lowest class, and have all some funds ; in fact, the journey to San Francisco, at the lowest computation, must cost them £100. Although they talk a great deal here about their ruffianly appearance, they seemed to me to be generally a fine-looking set of men, and by no means offensive, though some are acrimonious enough.

I made a great friendship at Chagres with Colonel Smith (they are all colonels or majors), an engineer in good business, with a large family, who was nevertheless going out to try his luck for two years, and expected to come home full of gold. When we parted, he told me not to think him a snob, because he was so dirty. He and his companions set off in a very small canoe, in which they had hardly room to sit, and for which they paid £3 a head, to go up the river, and be broiled for two days under a tropical sun, after which they will have a walk of thirty miles along a most execrable road before they arrive at Panama. Such is American enterprise !

*New York, April 27, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I send you a line from the counting-house of Messrs. Goodhere and Co., who promise to forward it by an American steamer, which sails in an hour for Liverpool. I got in yesterday afternoon in the *Crescent City*, a steamer which runs between Chagres and New York, and which picked me up at Jamaica. We had a tolerable passage of seven days. My companions were chiefly homeward-bound Californians, and not very agreeable.



As I left Jamaica on the 19th inst., I spent about fourteen days there altogether. The climate is fine, though very hot in Kingston, which is on the level of the sea. By ascending the range of mountains behind the town, one reached a delightful temperature of about 65°, 70°. I was, however, unable to see so much of the island as I wished, from the necessity of being in Kingston, when the steamer arrived, as it only stays there a few hours to take in coal. Sir Charles Grey I saw at his seat of Government in Spanish Town. He was very kind, and begged me to stay with him, which I declined from the reason above mentioned, and also because his *ménage* did not strike me as lively, although he seemed to be a *very* well-informed man. With the Bishop, Mr. Aubrey Spencer, I made great friends. He possesses perhaps the prettiest place in Jamaica, a charming cottage, 3,700 feet above the sea, with a view from it which surpasses anything I have seen in my travels.

Mr. Chatfield, the *chargé d'affaires* in Guatemala, was my principal companion, and I found him a very agreeable person.

I have written so far, because I knew you would like to hear of my arrival, and shall postpone further details till the English steamer, which will sail on the 1st proximo. Excuse haste and headache, of which I have a considerable touch this morning. With love to all. Your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

P.S.—The weather is quite cold, and the fog reminds me of London.

Pray thank my father for his letter enclosing the credit, and for several of introduction.

New York, April 28, 1850.

My dear Father,

I had just time to write a few words by the *Atlantic*, a new American steamer, which sailed for Liverpool on the 27th, and which, according to the New York papers, is to surpass anything on the ocean, not excepting the famous Cunard line, which now meets with competition for the first time. I have received your letter, enclosing the credit on Goodhere and Co., and various letters of introduction, for which I am greatly obliged. Though I have not yet had time to experience their effect, I am sure they are very well chosen, and will be of great use. As I left Panama in March, I did not receive your letters of that month, but they will, I have no doubt, be forwarded to me from thence.

New York seems to me a great emporium, after my experience in South American towns. Broadway is as wide as Oxford Street, the shops are as good, or better, and the omnibusses and foot-passengers quite as numerous. I am living at an hotel kept by an Italian, called Delmonico's, which is reputed the best for Europeans, and civilized persons, who dislike a *table d'hôte* of 500 at two o'clock, and wish to be quiet.

The entrance to the harbour, which is beautiful, I did not see to great advantage, in consequence of a thick fog, which lasted the whole day of our arrival, and delayed us several hours. To-day I have been occupied the greater part of the morning in getting my box out of the custom-house. The forms to be gone through were most complicated and troublesome, and

the duty (£10) I thought rather a shame in this lightly-taxed country. I was glad enough to receive my clothes, which arrived just in time to save me from being reduced to a state of nature, and which will now enable me to sustain the part of a "dandy Broadway swell." The only omission of any consequence in the box is the want of visiting-cards, which I shall have to leave in packs. I must try and supply the want here.

As yet I have formed no plan for travelling, but I think my first move will be to Philadelphia, Washington, and Baltimore, stopping some days at each. In the months of June and July, the population of New York moves to the north, and I shall then probably go to Niagara and Canada, stopping first at Boston. If you can get me letters for Lord Elgin, and any other Canadians, I think it would be well to send them at once, directed to Goodhere and Co. Of course I am unable to say whether I shall want them, but as a month must elapse before I can get an answer from you, it is well to be prepared beforehand.

You do not tell me anything about the mill, though my mother mentions casually that it progresses slowly. I hope there is no hitch of any sort. I have heard nothing of it since December. What has become of Jones, Loyd, and Co.? Is it carried on by Lewis Loyd and his brother unaided? How does the proud baron of "Overstone and Fotheringhay, of Manchester and Lothbury" bear his honours? Is Macaulay coming out soon with some more history?

If you will send me the *Spectator* or *Examiner* by the weekly steamers, I shall be grateful. The *Times* may be read at the Exchange, but I see nothing of the other English papers.

I hardly remember whether I gave you an account of my proceedings since Panama. At Jamaica I stayed perforce a fortnight. The population is almost entirely black, the principal shopkeepers in Kingston Jews, and except the officials, there are few Europeans in the place.

Kingston is a poor town; the largest houses are turned into lodgings, and let or sell for a mere song. The private hotels are atrociously bad, kept by people of colour, and the black servants are dirty and lazy. I should like much to have explored the island, which, from the specimen I saw, must be beautiful in the interior, and being provided with the unusual commodity of good roads, not difficult of access; but after the 13th inst., the American steamer was due, and kept me at Kingston in readiness to start.

*Tuesday morning, April 30th.*—Since writing the above, I have delivered some of my letters and received invitations to dinner. Dr. Macvicar (Mr. Senior's friend) is a professor of moral philosophy and political economy in a college. Mr. Bancroft I called upon yesterday, and am going to his house to-night. It appears that the balls and gaieties are all over, and the party will be of men only.

Last night I was at the opera, where the company from the Havana was performing, among them Marini and Salvi.

The *Cambria* has not yet arrived, though due at Halifax some days. I hope to get letters by her from you. In a week the next steamer will start from hence, and I shall be able to tell you

more about New York and its attractions. With kindest love to all,

Affectionately yours,

B. W. CURRIE.

P.S.—I hope you do not give up Taplow.

There are several travellers here. Among them Lord Durham (who is in very bad health), Mr. Coke, and Mr. Calthorpe. Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley and daughter are at Panama *en route* to California, without a man of any sort to accompany them. I think she must be mad.

The following letter from his mother, containing news of various members of the family, was received by Bertram on his arrival at New York.

*Hyde Park Terrace, March 21st, 1850.*

Your letters from Lima rejoiced us much. It is a comfort to think of you as so much nearer home. I hope the expedition to Lake Titicaca will have proved an agreeable one, and rewarded you for the exertion of leaving Lima, where you were well *fed* and housed. The various articles of clothing, &c., which you desired George to order, were packed by Sanderson, and sent into the City to be forwarded yesterday. Your father wrote last week to Panama, and told you any news, domestic or political, which you may like to hear.

The papers will tell you of the strange proceedings of Ministers on Tuesday last, when they threatened to go out, if beaten on the question of retaining the

African Squadron. The *Times* of yesterday, which I sent you, has an amusing article on the subject.

We were at a party last night in Downing Street (Lady John Russell), having previously dined with Mr. Vardon in Chester Square. I cannot say much for the Premier's reception: rooms dirty, dingy, and not half lighted, and I could see no *refreshment* of any kind. Mrs. Vernon Smith inquired after you. George was very attentive to Miss Vernon, and I think he believes himself to be in love with her. Lady Listowel has brought out another daughter.

We are all pretty flourishing. Your father has been better than usual through the winter. Mary is not as strong as I should like to see her, but she is not unwell, and Edith continues fat and merry. Our new governess, Miss Stuart, gives great satisfaction, and Mary works hard with her. She is a good German scholar, and well-informed generally—very gentle and unassuming in manner.

Philip came home yesterday with a good character from Pickering: he has taken sixth in his Remove at Trials, having been twenty-seventh before. The result of "My Tutor's" trials will not be given out till next half. Philip is very much grown and must move into *tails* in the summer. Maynard got through his little-go last week, and is now at home, but goes back to Cambridge to-morrow. He goes *somewhere* with his Tutor for the long vacation, to read. They did talk of the Isle of Man, and Killarney is also mentioned. Whymper has engaged to be one of the party. Maynard likes him, and says he shall then be independent of the others, whoever they may be. Maynard was invited one day to dine with his uncle

Mr. I. G., who has got this year a magnificent house in Cavendish Square (Lord Gainsboro's).

Your Aunt Anne has just bought No. 24 in Upper Brook Street, the house that did belong to my grandfather, old Lord Wodehouse. She buys it of Mr. Curzon, who has improved it by throwing out a bow at the back. It is a very comfortable house.

John has hired a house in Grosvenor Street. He takes a great interest in colonial matters, especially in the new Government for Australia. . . .

We think of going to Taplow on the 27th for a fortnight. The weather has been very cold and wintry for the last fortnight, and, unless it improves, *I* would rather stay in London. We have not yet made any arrangements for taking Taplow on, and our term in it ends on the 1st of June. Lord Orkney is a difficult person to deal with: he expects a high rent, and will only grant a lease of seven years. The house requires to have a great deal done to it: there are unfinished rooms to be carpeted, which we, of course, could not undertake without a long term in it; altogether our continuing there is doubtful. The air agreed so well with your father, and the place itself has so very much to recommend it, that we should be very sorry to give it up, and shall if possible come to some arrangement with Lord O. *If* we are to leave it, we think of spending the month of May there.

We have seen a good many of our friends at dinner since we came to London. To-day we entertain the Cecil Fanes, Col. and Mrs. Gascoigne, Mr. Mandeville, "The Count," and your uncle the Captain, who is come to London for a few days and is in great force. Your Uncle Berkeley with his family have left Florence

and are now at Bastia in Corsica, where they have taken a house for three months. Sir H. Ward has renewed his promise of giving him an appointment in the Ionian Isles, whenever there is a vacant one, but I fear it may be long before this occurs. . . .

The High Church party are in a state of great excitement at the decision of the Privy Council in the case of "Gorham *v.* Exeter," as you will see by the papers.

Your father will tell you that the mill progresses but slowly. We have talked over the subject of your prolonged absence from England, and I believe agree in thinking that if you still wish to visit Mexico, there is no real objection to your remaining away another winter, beyond our own feeling of regret that we are altogether deprived of your society, and I assure you, my dear Bertram, that we do very much wish to have you amongst us again; but as there is small probability that you will ever cross the Atlantic a second time, it would be well that you should derive every advantage that can be gained from a visit to the New World, and we believe that you are able and willing to profit by it. I look forward with very great interest to a sight of your journal.

Your father has sent many letters of introduction from different people. I hope he will get one from Lord Carlisle to "George Ticknor," the author of the *History of Spanish Literature*.

Tell me, when you write, something of the state of the Church in the United States. Have you heard any good preacher? Mr. Boone continues to preach eloquent discourses, but, to my mind, unprofitable ones.



Our drawing-rooms are very pretty, especially when lighted up in the evening. . . . On Thursday night I went to three parties with George—a concert at Mrs. G. R. Smith's, where I saw Eric Smith and his bride, who looks *old*, and Mrs. Harvie Farquhar, *née* Colborne, who looks *sick*! Then, to Mrs. Crompton Stanfield's—Mrs. Wickham's sister—finally to Lady Fremantle's. We all send our kindest love. When I told Mary of the *possibility* of your staying away another winter, she exclaimed, "Oh! I am so sorry—and how old we all shall have got!"

With every affectionate wish, dear B.,

I am your very affectionate mother,

L. S. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*New York, Sunday, May 5th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I proceed to give you the results of my week's experience of New York, to go by the steamer on Wednesday. To-day has been so unremittingly rainy that I have not been able to leave the house, and on the strength of having nothing to do, have been writing a long letter to Ned Baring, who is probably now in the midst of the dangers and difficulties of the Pampas.

As I think I told you, the season for balls and diversions is over, so that I have not been to any, but my letters have been productive of several dinners, not remarkable, however, in any way, and including only the families of the respective Amphitryons.

Dr. Macvicar regaled me with pork and political economy, in the college of which he is a professor, and I have dined with one of the firm of Jas. G. King and Sons.

At the house of a lawyer to which Mr. Bancroft took me, I met the judicial and legal world of New York, and according to the American custom, was introduced to some dozens of people in succession as "Mr. Currie of England." (What would Mr. H. C. say?) The only opportunity I have had of seeing the "best people" was at a morning reception given by a newly-married couple on their return from the country, at the house of the lady's father. Here were assembled the old Dutch families, who form the basis of the acknowledged aristocracy of New York, and here too was Mrs. Jones, a lady not of ancient family, for her father was a shoemaker, but overpoweringly fashionable, and the leader of a set.

The girls struck me as being very young, decidedly pretty, and not differing substantially in appearance from English girls of the same class, except in being much better dressed. The house, though small, was very showily furnished, and not unlike one in Eaton Place in arrangement. Of course there is nothing to be seen here of the peculiarities spoken of in the various books on American society, and I see and hear nothing, except a few Americanisms (to which from my absence from England I am not very sensitive), which has not its parallel in Tyburnia or Belgravia. At the same time there is (particularly among the men) a want of refinement, less of manners than of ideas; and though they do not chew tobacco or expectorate immoderately, they would certainly not

be quoted in England as models of gentlemen. However, I must postpone my remarks till I know more of them, more particularly as New York society is by common consent exceptional, and not to be taken as a specimen of the rest of the States.

I am very comfortably lodged at my hotel, which is situated in the business part of the town, and about three miles from the centre of the fashionable world.

New York is increasing rapidly to the north—the east and west sides being bounded by the rivers of these names, and the correct thing seems to be to live on the outskirts of the town, while the houses that were fashionable ten years ago, are being gradually appropriated as shops and counting-houses.

I have seen the Bancrofts several times, and am to dine with them to-morrow or the next day, when she is going to take me to some party.

From all this you will gather that New York is not at present excessively lively, and that I spend a good deal of time in mine inn. Moreover, the weather is cold, and the trees have not begun to blossom, so that there is no temptation to make inroads on the country.

You ask me about the state of the Church, of which I will try to get some information. In the meantime, I should think the diocese of New York must be in a state of spiritual destitution, for the Bishop has been suspended for his “evil life and conversation,” and, as he declines to retire, the Church is divided as to the course to be pursued—some arguing that he should be summarily deprived, while others contend that there is no power vested in anybody for this purpose.

By the constitution of the Episcopal Church, there is a Bishop for each State, the oldest of whom is the head, and they together elect new Bishops, but on points of discipline their authority seems to be no better defined than that of London or Philpotts.

Within the bosom of the Church there exists, I believe, every known shade of opinion; at least I know that the Puseyite party has its parallel here, and of course includes those who are for keeping the immoral Bishop above mentioned. Curiously enough (for political economy and Puseyism have not much affinity), Dr. Macvicar (Mr. Senior's friend) is a chief of this party and, as he himself told me, a great ecclesiologist—a word which Aunt Harriet will be able to explain, but which from its derivation I should suppose to be a person who talks about churches (*query*, instead of going to them). For the other party there are May Meetings, at present in session, where I understand they are very hard upon slavery and the Southern gentlemen.

Here you have all the facts I know on this subject. There are, I believe, some eloquent preachers in New York, but I was not able to go to church to-day on account of the unceasing rain.

By-the-by, did I tell you that Mrs. Spencer (the Bishop of Jamaica's wife) is a great admirer of Mr. Boone's, and a constant attendant in the evening; admitted by favour of Mrs. King<sup>1</sup> into our own "porochial" pew. Here was a bond of sympathy for us—added to which the Bishop has received a

<sup>1</sup> The pew-opener at St. John's, Paddington (see p. 1), and wife to Mr. Raikes Currie's coachman.

presentation copy of that deeply interesting work on *One, Manifold*.<sup>1</sup>

Adieu, my dear mother, till next week. With love to all, I remain, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

I have been rather disappointed at the arrival of two steamers without letters.

*New York, May 21, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I wrote to you by the last steamer, under the effects of a bilious attack, which, combined with sore throat, kept me for a week in my room. I am now convalescent, and have been out to-day to see a grand trotting match about ten miles off.

The weather is still cold and ungenial, and I start on Friday, 24th, for Washington, where, it is to be hoped, the spring is more advanced. On Thursday, I am to dine with Mr. Barclay, our worthy Consul, to celebrate, I suppose, the Queen's birthday, which, however, according to my calculations, comes off on the next day. The Bishop of Jamaica has arrived from his diocese, and I have seen him, but, owing to my illness, I have been obliged to decline several invitations, and have nothing to communicate in the way of gaieties.

My time has been spent entirely in my room, with occasional visits from the doctor and other friendly

<sup>1</sup> *One, Manifold; or System.* Introductory Argument in a Letter addressed to Raikes Currie, Esq., M.P., by the Rev. James Shergold Boone, Perpetual Curate of St. John's, Paddington.

individuals, and has been as uneventful as possible. I hardly know what to tell you about. American politics are a bore; a description of New York you will find in Mr. Mackay's book, and there is really nothing different from what I have been used to all my life, either in the people or the way of living.

The trotting match which I saw to-day was between the two most famous horses. The course is a circular mile of hard ground, and the heats were three miles each. The horses are driven in light two-wheeled carriages, and the three miles were performed by the winner in seven minutes forty-four seconds. The sight was very pretty, more interesting to the uninitiated than an English race, and the pace extraordinary.

I wish in your next letter you would repeat a little about the mill. As I have missed all your letters between December 19th and April 26th, I am in entire ignorance on the subject, not knowing whether the building is finished or the machinery commenced, or anything of the views and intentions of my worthy friends, W. and P.

Of domestic news I am likewise in arrear, but I hope for a letter by the *Europa*, which is telegraphed to-day from Halifax.

Excuse the shortness of this note. I will write more fully from Washington if anything turns up.

The *Europa* brought important domestic news in a letter from George, dated,

*Hyde Park Terrace, 10th May, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

I sit down to write you a piece of news, which is no longer news to any one here; but which I am sure will interest you very much.

I am engaged to be married to Evelyn, daughter of Mr. Vernon Smith. You will remember, perhaps, my talking to you about her a long time ago (two years ago, I think). Since that, I have become more and more convinced that we were intended for each other; and, after a vast deal of difficulties about settlements, &c., with her father, it is at length, thank God, finally and satisfactorily arranged. All the family (our family) are, I am happy to say, much pleased with it. They are quite delighted with my future wife herself, as well they may be; and they are pleased with the connections and the fortune which R. V. S. gives his daughter. . . .

. . . You will, I am sure, be charmed with Evy, as are all the family; she is most sensible, clever, and affectionate, very agreeable to everybody, and has a most fascinating voice and manner. She is as good as gold, both head and heart. She is much improved in health and in looks; has a slight, pretty figure and a very expressive face, pale, but varying very much with her health. It is pleasing to me to find how very fond of her all her friends are, and every one who knows her. She and I have received endless letters of congratulation from all sorts of people.

V. S.'s mother was a Miss Vernon, a half-sister of a Lady Lansdowne (mother of Lord Lansdowne) and a Lady Holland, and own sister of Lady Warwick. The name of V. S.'s children was changed in the regular way by Act of Parliament some years ago. The mother of this Miss Vernon was by first marriage Countess of Ossory. . . .

V. S. gives his daughter the house, &c., at Cheam, where old Robert Smith lived, and to which she is much attached, from having been there a great deal as a child; but I think we shall let it and make our home in London. . . . I trust your things will all arrive in good order. I took all due care in complying with your instructions. I shall hope to hear from you. I am ever,

Your most affectionate brother,

G. W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C.

*Baltimore, May 26, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I was obliged to write in a great hurry in answer to G.'s interesting announcement. From my father's former letter I guessed how things would turn out, and forebore from any condolment on the cruelty of the Governor. I am glad to hear that you *approve*, as I am sure that if you really like the young lady she must be a very amiable person. You seem to have stood up to Mrs. V. S. most manfully, and made her surrender at discretion. I suppose George, always of a susceptible turn, is now in the seventh heaven and



generally to be heard of in Savile Row. I can hardly yet *realize* (as they say here) him as about to enter into the awful state of matrimony. It seems but a year or two ago since we were together at Cheam. To you it must seem still more strange. The pecuniary part of the affair is very satisfactory. It certainly is a recommendation to have a father-in-law in the consols, independent of the more immediate advantage of the £20,000. What do Fitzpatrick, "de Gorham," and the other young nobles think of this alliance? Are they in London? Pray write and tell me all the particulars.

I write this, as you see, from Baltimore, having arrived last night. This evening I start for Washington, which is about two hours railroad distant. I am suffering from a regular English cold in the head, brought on by the continual bad weather. Though this should be the finest month in the year, we have nothing but rain and the temperature of an English March.

I slept the night before last at Philadelphia, where, in consequence of the rain and my cold, I saw nothing except an old *compagnon de voyage* in the Pacific, who lives in that city.

You will see in the papers the account of the piratical expedition against Cuba. We have no particulars and know nothing of its success or failure, though I think the latter is *certain*, from experience of Spanish-Americans. Though it is a most outrageous violation of treaties and even common honesty, there are very few who do not sympathize with it even among the highest and (what would be with us) the most respectable classes. I trust the gentlemen of

the expedition will get what they deserve—plenty of cold lead.

I would beg to call your attention to the fact that the mail now sails for Liverpool once a week, and that letters are highly appreciated by your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

Love to all. Mary of course is delighted at these matrimonial events. Take care I don't bring you home a Yankee beauty with countless dollars.

In one of the missing letters addressed to Panama, Mr. Raikes Currie announced his intention of sending the large credit asked for,<sup>1</sup> having perfect confidence in his son. He says:

We are on very short commons with the wretched  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and I know that in your *actual* expenditure you will be as moderate as you can.

Do make the most of the great advantages of an opportunity of getting well acquainted with the constitution and practical working of the Federal Government and the States, with the public men and the literary men. Ticknor's book on Spanish Literature is written in the purest English and is (Hallam says) *facile princeps* on the subject. He and Prescott are, I believe, at Boston, where every one says there is most agreeable society. I hope you will some day take a part in public affairs here, and looking to the future, I cannot imagine a more useful field of study for a political man than the United States.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 321.

In the letter of April 26th, Mr. Raikes Currie says :

Overstone and Wodehouse have both made their maiden speeches, the first declamatory *versus* Brougham, the second argumentative on the Transportation and secondary punishment question, best reported in the *Morning Chronicle*. W.'s was considered a speech of great promise. O. over-praised Albert (whom he greatly admires), but spoke powerfully.

Mr. R. Currie's next letter is dated Cornhill, May 17, 1850.

My dear Bertram,

We were very glad to receive your second letter from New York, date 30th April, yesterday—just sixteen days. I look forward to a similar favour weekly. Your letters are a great pleasure to us, and I am much interested in all American news, social, political, commercial, and typographical, having much to learn on those matters.

George's letter, and your mother's last, will have told you how all was settled with the Vernon. That she is a clever, agreeable, loving little creature, with a very pretty, taking manner and sweet voice, and conversational powers very uncommon in girls of her age, cannot be doubted. The *per contra* you know as well as I do, and the consequences of such a very early marriage come heavily home sooner or later. . . .

. . . We had a very splendid party last night at Devonshire House, the whole thing beautifully done.

Evy, who is Lord Lansdowne's godchild, dined with G. at Lansdowne House previously.

Tuesday we went to Harrow to see Greville V., and lunched with Dr. Vaughan and his wife (C. Stanley). Poor I. G. C. is reduced to extreme decrepitude by his late illness, though he still comes here and crawls about.

I have requested White to write to you by this post, though I don't know if he will have time to do so. Innumerable little petty delays in details (perhaps unavoidable in starting, but aggravated by Pon.'s obstinacy) have delayed starting Shadwell till this time. The general promise of the patent is, I believe, quite as good as ever. Puddledock looks imposing, two stories being up. Old P. seems to find funds without an effort, and is pushing on. He is living in a splendid house in Kensington Palace Gardens. White has paid in £2,000 more, and I have altogether advanced £6,217 on your account.

Business is dull, our money fully employed, but at very low rates. We do a good deal on demand with Cunliffe, who allow 2 per cent., Gurney only  $1\frac{3}{4}$ . Our funds are steady—about 96; would be higher, but for the deep conviction of a row in France sooner or later.

. . . The girls went to Taplow Tuesday, and we follow in a day or two for our short term till June. I cannot afford now to live there except I gave up London, which would be hardly fair on Mary. Edith is a greater pet than ever, and has said all sorts of good things on this love affair. George is not to be married till the middle of September, in Northamptonshire.

Overstone takes his glories very quietly, and seems

extremely happy. I told you that Norman (from Bouverie's) joined the two Loyds as a working partner, and old Edward L. is in the firm at their back. . . .

We talk of Germany on H. Currie's return—say on 20th July. Mary is far from strong. Homburg, or whatever Spa seemed best for her, would be our destination. After the happy couple have had their holiday—say seven or eight weeks—I should excessively like to go abroad for the winter.

We shall under any circumstances be right glad to see you again in England, but if you are happy, not living at much expense, and gaining health and information, I do not see any prospect at present of *business* calling you home.

Charles Bruce will write a very special letter of introduction to Colonel Bruce, Lord Elgin's right-hand man, and I will ask Lord Grey, as soon as I can see him, for a private letter to Lord Elgin. Palmerston, as usual, is boiling the pot. France has been scurvily treated by our settling the Greek affair after our own fashion, having accepted their mediation. Drouyn de Lhuys went off on Wednesday, but whether in dudgeon or not is not known. Old Brunow is utterly disgusted, and Bavaria and Austria. Meanwhile, our Viscount looks as gay as a lark.

The Vernon Smiths go to-morrow to Farming Woods for the recess. Fitzpatrick V. is at present private secretary to Lord Seymour. Adieu, dear B. Pray write very fully and very often; and with our united kindest regards, believe me, most affectionately yours,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

Washington, June 2, 1850.

My dear Father,

I have received your letter of May 17 by the *Asia*, the new Cunard steamer, which made the quickest passage on record—from Liverpool to Boston in less than ten days. They have just started an opposition line at New York, and there is a most lively interest taken in its success here. The *Atlantic*, by which I wrote, was the first of the line, and made the passage in thirteen days to Liverpool, so that as yet the Cunarders are unconquered.

I wrote by the last mail from Baltimore, on my way hither from New York. I passed the day there with an old acquaintance of Rio Janeiro, and came on the following morning to this place. Unfortunately the Congress has been adjourned during nearly the whole of the week, so that I have had no opportunity of hearing any speeches, but to-morrow, I believe, they resume their session.

I have seen most of the “*most* remarkable men”—the President, Webster, Clay, &c., and met at dinner and elsewhere some very intelligent members of both Houses. Sir Henry Bulwer is very civil, and I have dined with him frequently. Altogether, however, Washington is a very dull place, and has none of the qualities of a great capital. The houses are small, and the members of Congress live generally in the hotels, of which they are the oracles, and rule supreme at “the ladies’ ordinary at five o’clock.” This is not

the season for entertainments, certainly, but I should think they can never be very brilliant. Sir H. Bulwer's dining-room will only hold eight people, and there are very few houses larger. The official receptions are open to all the world, and rather amusing from the extraordinary mixture of the company. I went on Friday to the President's *levée*. The rooms are good, but there is nothing to eat or drink, and anybody who likes may come in and shake hands with the President, who stands close to the door all night with his arm working about like a pump-handle.

A companion in exile has just arrived here—Humphrey Mildmay, Junior. He is on his way home after a year's travel in the States, and has given me some information which will be useful for my guidance.

I think of leaving this place in a week or more, and returning by way of Philadelphia to New York, from thence up the Hudson to Albany—Niagara—thence to Canada, and then perhaps by the lakes to the west, where I shall strike the Mississippi. However, this will all depend upon what I hear. It is very difficult to get good advice upon the subject, for, if I ask a man what is most worth seeing, he always tells me his own state, and there is no guide-book nor even a good map.

Whenever I am within reach of mails, I will keep you advised regularly of my progress. I heard a day ago from Baring; he had crossed the Andes to Mendoza, and was about to start on the 16th of April for Buenos Ayres. In case his mother has not heard from him, she may like to know this.

I hope George is still in an ecstatic state of happiness. These are what are popularly considered the happiest moments, and with him they will last

some months. Mildmay knows *la bella innamorata*, and says she is charming.

White wrote me by the last mail a rather discursive letter. He attributes the delays to the difficulties of *foundations*, both at Shadwell and P. Dock, which it seems Ponsford could not get over. I hope you urge on the latter, as you have more influence with him than any one else, and represent the three-fold loss we sustain by delay—viz., expiration of the patent, accumulation of interest on our capital, and advances to Bovill, who, I suppose, by this times requires feeding again.

If you go to Homburg this summer and stop at an hotel, the *best* is opposite the Kur-saal, but there are some private lodging-houses which I should think would suit you better.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Taplow Court, Thursday, 23rd May.*

Dear Bertram,

An agreeable letter dated Sunday, May 5th, but which arrived in thirteen days from New York, which it left the 8th, reached your mother here yesterday. I am keeping my room from a sore throat and cold, but will begin a few lines for to-morrow's mail.

I suppose you will not prolong your stay at New York, as there seems little to be done there. The weather here, as with you, has been cold and ungenial, from a very long continuance of easterly wind, though latterly accompanied with hot sun. We have been down here for the Whitsun recess. Parliament meets



to-night, and I suppose "Palmy" will be called to account for his extraordinary and most purposeless squabbling with the French Government. As long as Lord John sticks by him, he cannot be dislodged, but there is a growing resolve to get rid of him. The Court make no secret of their wishes on the subject, and quiet people don't like to have their consols knocked down every four or five weeks some one or two per cent. by his contemptible blustering. Unless he jobs in the funds, I cannot conceive what he is about.

George is in London, awaiting the return of his beloved from Farming Woods. She is coming here on Saturday to stay till we leave, the middle of next week.

I am to have a sale of my effects, corn, hay, &c., which I hope (though much smaller) may in its way be as successful as at Albyns. . . . It is as well you have not known this charming place, that you may not regret it as much as I do.

The papers give a letter (probably a forgery) from Bulwer to Chatfield. Does the Nicaraguan question excite any interest in the States?

I think I told you that Mr. H. C. intends to take his girls to Switzerland on the 10th of next month, and to be absent till the 25th of July. We hope to start a day or two before his return, and go to Homburg or Schwalbach, or to such other Spa as the doctor at Frankfort may recommend for Mary, who is far from strong, languid with constant headaches and a return of hooping-cough. I hope we should take Edith with us and be absent six weeks. In September we are all to go to Farming

Woods for the wedding. Shall you be home for it? The happy pair are to abscond for some two months, whither does not seem easy to determine. Sir David Dundas has offered them his house at Ochtertyre. On George's return, I should much like to go abroad with your mother and the girls for the winter. If in Europe, why should you not go with us? I am right glad that the yellow fever did not set in at Rio when you were there; the accounts now seem frightful.

Your Aunt Fanny writes us very amusing accounts of Corsica, which seems to unite beautiful scenery, a charming climate, with abundance and extreme cheapness. The Colonel is working all day (without any apparent progress) at Italian. This scrawl is very redolent of headache, gargle, &c., so I will only assure you how glad I shall be to see you once again, and how sincerely I am, dear B.,

Your affectionate father,

RAIKES CURRIE.

Mrs. Raikes Currie adds a few lines.

Your father seems to wish that you should do as you yourself think best about returning to England. . . . The plan of going to Nice for the winter would be very agreeable if put in execution, but I dare say there will be various impediments to our going; at all events, we should not get away before December. It is rather tantalizing to have come down here at the moment when this place is in its highest beauty, to leave it altogether at the end of the month;

but Lord Orkney is not a man of sound mind, and is quite blind to his own interests. He will not give us a longer term than seven years, and asks a very high rent. We have just heard that workmen are coming into the house as soon as we leave it, to finish rooms already begun, but so ill-planned, that the house will be very much spoiled. It is a lovely place, and I much wish we could have remained, but as we ought now rather to diminish than to increase our expenses, it is more prudent to leave it.

I think I told you in my last letter that we were all very much pleased with Miss Vernon, or *Evy* as we now call her. We have had letters from her since we came here, and she seems looking forward to her visit on Saturday with great delight. I am almost sure that you will like her, and I know you are a little *fastidious* about women especially. She is simple and unaffected in manner, and lively and agreeable. George seems thoroughly happy, but not at all excited.

FROM B. W. C.

Washington, June 9th, 1850.

My dear Father,

I have received your letter of May 23rd from Taplow, which I am sorry to hear you have definitely settled to give up. Although the steamer which conveys this will not leave Boston till the 12th, I am obliged to write to-day, in consequence of the irregularity and delays of the post.

My life here is so slow, that the events of a week

hardly suffice to fill up a letter. I have heard a debate in the Senate, in which Webster, Clay, Cass, and others of note took part. I think that the speakers in facility and neatness of expression are superior to the common run of the House of Commons; but this is not surprising, as they are mostly men of great experience, having passed through all the grades of public life from the Legislature of their own State, and often its governorship, to their seat in the Senate, which, with the sole exception of the Presidency, is the highest object of ambition.

The House of Representatives is, I should hope, inferior to anything in England, even to the Paddington Vestry. The speeches are seldom listened to, which is not of much importance, as they are addressed to the speaker's constituents rather than to the House, and are invariably printed by him for distribution among his electors.

In neither House did it seem that much progress was made in the business before it. The whole day I passed in the Senate was wasted in personal explanations, and as there is no limit to the number of times a speaker may rise, the debate became a disputation between two or three members, who followed and refuted one another *ad infinitum*.

The question of Cuba is very curious, and many people think a war between Spain and this country inevitable. The Secretary of State has already made a demand for the extradition of some of the prisoners, which the Spaniards will certainly not accede to, and has sent a fleet to support the Consul and protect American interests.

In the meantime, although by an Act of Congress

the fitting out of hostile expeditions against a friendly power is a punishable offence, the Government is unable or unwilling to convict even Lopez, the Commander-in-Chief of the expedition, who is at present at large in this country. The truth is, as Bulwer said in his letter to Chatfield, that although the intentions of the Government may be good, it is unpopular and afraid of increasing its unpopularity, and there is no doubt that a war with Spain, or any other country which has something to lose, which it is too weak to defend, would be very popular in this free Republic.

The Nicaraguan question is settled by treaty, in which we and the Americans mutually bind ourselves not to colonize or protect any States of Central America, and engage that the canal (which will never be made) shall remain neutral, and open to all nations.

These and the Californian question, which is long and uninteresting, form *la haute politique* of the day.

I should like very much to go with you to Italy in the winter, so much indeed that I would cut the *South* altogether in November or December for that purpose. At the same time, if you do not go, I think it would be worth my while to spend the winter here. In the former case, I should visit Niagara, the lakes, Canada, the St. Lawrence, Quebec, &c., and sail from Boston or New York. In the latter, I should go down the Ohio and Mississippi to New Orleans in December, through Cuba to Charleston, and return by the northern cities in the spring. I suppose till your return from Germany you will settle nothing finally.

I hope George is happy in the society of his enslaver. I suppose his table is spread for the most part in Savile Row, where I think I have heard you say that

the feeding is good. I hear of his brother FitzPatrick from Sir Henry Bulwer, whose *attaché* he was in Spain. Mr. Fenton (Sir Henry's secretary) is his intimate and correspondent. He tells me that old V. S. always represented himself to his heir as hard up, and unable to discharge the latter's incumbrances, which he has at length done after a delay of two years, perhaps in celebration of the "auspicious event."

There are not many people here whose society is entertaining. Sir H. Bulwer is agreeable and miladi good-natured enough; the rest of the *corps diplomatique* not brilliant. The French secretary and *attaché* are "*des rouges très forts*," and one was a "*chef de barricade*" in June. Madame Calderon (wife of the Spanish Minister), whose book on Mexico you have perhaps seen, is one of the best. There are no balls, the weather being too hot—yesterday the thermometer at 90°. I have been spending a good deal of time at the dentists, who are famous in this country. I think I shall go to Baltimore in a few days.

With love to all, I am, your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS SISTER MARY.

Washington, June 17, 1850.

My dear Mary,

I was much pleased to receive your letter and will lose no time in answering it, though I am afraid I have nothing very amusing to tell you. I live here in a dirty inn, and spend a great part of the day in my room to avoid the heat of the sun. Sometimes

I take a carriage and drive to the Capitol—a fine building on a hill overlooking the town—in which the Sessions of Congress are held, and either listen to the members making speeches about California, or read a book in the library.

As Washington was intended to be the principal city in the United States, it was laid out on a very large scale. The streets are as wide as Regent Street, and of great length; but from the absence of trade, and the few residents besides the Ministers and official people, the place has never been filled up, and it looks like a large straggling village. The Americans call it the city of magnificent distances.

There are a good many young ladies in the town, and most of the people have a day on which they receive, when one may go and make a call, but the season for balls is passed and the weather is too hot for amusements out of doors.

In the summer I shall go to a place called Newport, in the State of Rhode Island, which is the Brighton of this country, and filled with people from all the principal towns. They live in great hotels, which hold five or six hundred people, and dine together about two o'clock, and meet again in the evening to dance. Single gentlemen, who are so much esteemed in other countries, are rather under a disadvantage here, as the best rooms, the best places in the railroads, and the best dinners at the inns, are appropriated to ladies and the gentlemen who accompany them. So that there is a great temptation to follow George's example.

I suppose you are looking forward to the wedding with great interest, and have determined upon the dress, &c.

I hear that the brothers of your stout friend, Bessie Marshall, were here in the winter under the charge of a youth, half-companion, half-bear-leader. The elder brother they describe as a great cub, but the younger, a young lady told me, was "quite a darling."

Besides these, the eldest son of our friend, Sir Jean Boileau, has been here, and is said to have trifled with the affections of a niece of the President's. What would Mdle. Bidault say?

I am glad to hear you get on in German. I had nearly forgotten mine, the Spanish having driven it all out of my head. I am losing the latter for want of practice.

Give the babe many kisses for me, and with love to all, believe me, your affectionate brother,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Washington, June 23, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I am still at this place, though I hardly know why, except that in this hot weather travelling would be very disagreeable. We have jumped from winter to summer without any preparation, and have a steady temperature of 90°—92° all day. Of course walking or driving, except in the evening, is impossible, and then there is generally a thunder-storm.

Sir Henry Bulwer is in New York with his secretaries, and I have very few other friends or associates. I shall certainly be off this week, and am waiting principally for letters from you, which I directed to be forwarded here, but which, in consequence of the



long passage the steamer has made, have not yet reached me. By the telegraph from Halifax, we get the heads of intelligence about two or three days before the steamer arrives in New York, but they are often incorrect or unintelligible, and refer principally to the price of cotton, the all-absorbing interest in this country. By the last mail I received a letter from Mary, which I answered. I hope she will write to me again: it will be good practice for her hand-writing.

The Cuba business seems settled for the present. The Spaniards have behaved with great moderation and have not given these people a chance of quarrelling with them; but further attempts on the part of the Americans are very probable, and if made, under a Democratic President, will be probably connived at more or less by the Government.

At New Orleans, General Lopez, the chief of the pirates, has been received with enthusiasm and serenaded in his hotel, and the attempts to bring him to justice are quite unsuccessful.

The question of California continues to occupy the whole time of Congress. The dispute is between the free and slave States, hitherto equally matched (fifteen on each side in the Senate), as to the admission of California as a State. The latter oppose her admission without some equivalent by way of compromise, as she, having declared herself a free State, her admission would give a majority of free votes in the Senate and destroy the balance between the Northern and Southern States. Mr. Clay has come forward as the mediator, and has formed a compromise which, it is believed, will pass the Senate, though its progress has

been lamentably slow. The session of Congress which ends generally in July, will last, they say, this year till October.

About myself I have nothing to tell you. My only companion is the *attaché* to Sir H. B., Mr. Pennell, and we generally drive together in the evening. I sometimes walk with a certain Miss Adelaide Smith, an exceedingly pretty girl, but either I am very hard of heart or the American nymphs are incapable of exciting *la grande passion*, for I confess that I soon get bored with them. I don't remember whether I have told you that the custom of walking or riding alone with young ladies obtains here, and I am indulged as often as I like with long *tête-à-têtes* in the soft hours that wake the wish, &c. Why, even George is not more privileged. I am glad he is out of harm's way, for such opportunities would inevitably have brought him to a declaration. Love to all.

*Baltimore, July 1st, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I have to acknowledge two letters received since my last, and will endeavour to write more at length as you desire.

I told you, in a former letter, how much I should like to accompany you in your travels, at the same time that I thought it would be a pity to miss seeing the Southern States merely for the sake of arriving in London a few months earlier.

With regard to the monetary question, I have endeavoured to envisage *ma position financière*. I find

that my expenses amount to about £50 per month, which sum I can undertake not to exceed (from the £125 drawn for in May, must be deducted £30 for passage money from Jamaica to New York and £10, 30 per cent. duty on a box of clothes).

I have had great compunction in spending so much money, and am quite ready, if you think the above too much, to return home, as I am most unwilling to abuse your kindness. The great expense has been incurred in actual travelling: for instance, the passage from Lima to Panama, and from Chagres to New York, together occupying but twenty days, cost £80; exclusive, of course, of transit of the Isthmus and disbursements at Panama and Jamaica.

I should certainly prefer spending the winter with you in Italy to passing it here, and in case you remain in England, I am quite willing to do whatever suits you best, and to return to the fatted calf when you think advisable.

You will see that I have left Washington since I last wrote, and shall probably pass on to Philadelphia and New York in a few days. This is a flourishing place of 150,000 inhabitants, exporting bread-stuffs from the Western States, with which it is connected by canals and railroads, and importing coffee and sugar from Brazil.

I find an old Rio Janeiro friend, Mr. Wright, of Maxwell, Wright, and Co., and my female acquaintances are certain Miss Macleods, whose mother (sister of Madame Calderon) keeps a young ladies' school.

The weather is even hotter than at Washington, and I think than Peru or Ecuador.

The Cuba business is not settled, and a row with

Spain still seems probable. The Spaniards have captured two American vessels with their crews on the high seas, and have brought them into Havana charged with the intent to commit piracy. The United States Secretary of State has instructed the consul at Havana to demand their extradition, and has met with an evasive answer from Roncali, the Captain General, who wishes to get instructions from Spain before he acts in the matter. If Clayton persists in his demand, as he intended when I left Washington, it will be difficult to arrange the matter amicably. The papers here are indignant at the strong expressions used by the European press in treating of the Cuban affair, and probably the Spaniards will be encouraged thereby to resist the American claims. I don't know whether all this interests you particularly, but it seems by the papers to be making some stir in England.

I wrote to White in answer to his letter and put down some queries for my information. By the last mail I hear from Mortimore, making inquiry about some leather-dealer in New York. Will you tell him that I will try to find out the state of the individual in question when I return to New York and write to him from thence?

Sir Henry Bulwer has taken a house on Staten Island, in the harbour of New York, and means, I believe, to spend the summer there. He is very popular in Washington, and will make a capital Minister—the rather that he understands the art of flattery, of which these Yankees will devour any quantity. I like him very much, and get a good deal of information from him about Spain and other matters.

I am much amused at hearing that fat Cowie has been hit by the archer and that "love has taught our Henry to be wise." Between the two amorous swains they will turn Cornhill into Arcadia, and make the shop resound with the praises of their respective Phyllises. There only remains for John Lawford to transplant some nymph from Blackheath to No. 29. I suppose in reality that Mr. H. C. does not mean to countenance such an absurdity as the marriage of that unhappy youth, his son.

With love to all, your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

The following is the first of the two letters from his father to which Bertram referred in the preceding letter.

*Cornhill, 6th June, 1850.*

We received your two last (latest 21st May) together, and hope that you soon recovered. I shall be anxious for your next. As you make no comment on George's affairs, I suppose you had not heard of them, tho' I thought my letter of the 26th April (which you acknowledge) was written at the first crisis.

Mr. H. C. starts to-day with his girls for Switzerland, to be back July 25th. John Lawford is to attend them as far as Ghent. H. Wm. has a season ticket, rides every day to the station and back, lives alone at Horsley, and at present attends here with exemplary regularity. This is the effect of all-powerful love: he hoping if he behaves well to be some day united to Miss Parsons, who captivated him at Malta.

Hawtrey gave a very grand entertainment on the 4th of June to two or three hundred people in Upper School. He sat between Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Van de Weyer. I did not go, but Maynard went with your mother. Maynard goes to the Isle of Man on the 15th, and is now visiting Alderson at Oxford.

The V. Smiths gave a family dinner on Wednesday to Wodehouses, H. C., Dundas, G. Hibbert, &c., with a large assembly in the evening to Whig notabilities, &c.

We went down yesterday to inspect the Cheam property (part of Miss V.'s dower), which they will let. We were amused by an old Mrs. Jones, a tenant and pensioner of Miss Vernon's, recognizing George as having *washed him* some twelve years ago, preparatory to the vacation.

I requested White to write fully about the mill, which he assured me he did, but if you will write to him with any "queries," he will be most happy to give you all information. . . .

I have finally left Taplow and sold my effects, which went off pretty well.

Your friend Cary Pepys moves into ladyhood, and her brother "Crowhurst" is more "heavy" than ever.

I trust you will think seriously about accompanying us to the South of Europe in November. I very much wish to spend the winter abroad with the girls, and after your long absence, we should be truly glad to have you with us. I do not think that P. Dock can possibly be going before the spring.

Mr. I. G. C. has moved to Bush Hill: he comes here constantly, but is very weak. Wodehouse has made another very successful speech on the Australian

Government Bill. I think he will very probably be in the Government next year.

Overstone feeds no one, but is going to give concerts. Banking is very quiet and not very profitable. Tom Baring (who was staying down at Brighton in consequence of his sister's death) tells me he thinks of going to the States in August. Emma Wodehouse (Mrs. Alfred) comes to stay with us in Hyde Park Terrace next week.

Pray write a little more at length. All you say or think is amusing or interesting to us: also all comments on what we tell you.

FROM B. W. C.

*New York, July 9th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I received no letters by the last steamer, and know not whether you will be in England when this arrives. I have not time to say much, having just arrived from Philadelphia by the night train—it is now midnight—and having to send off my letter early to-morrow morning.

I have been for the last six days in and about the Quaker city, where I found an old friend and companion on the west coast of South America to show me the sights. Otherwise, there is nobody in the cities at this time of year, and nothing to detain the traveller for many days. The 4th of July, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, I spent in the country, but in a flat and unpicturesque part of it.

Philadelphia, from being the largest city and port in the United States, has now fallen to the third place among the northern towns, but the State possesses great wealth in its coal and iron, and, from the large interests involved in the manufacture of the latter, is the most active in agitating for a return to protection. The present duty on iron rails is 30 per cent., but this does not prevent a large importation from England, and consequent depression of the Pennsylvanian works. The coal, which is of the kind called "anthracite," is exported, to the value of a million and a half sterling, to other parts of the United States.

I am afraid that the cause of free trade is not advancing much. The Whig party, which contains the majority of the commercial class, is avowedly protectionist, and the present Government are pledged to a modification of the tariff of '46, which established *ad valorem* duties on manufactured goods, averaging about 30 per cent., but fortunately they are in a minority in both Houses, and will probably be unable to make any alteration—at all events during this session—as the Congress is fully occupied with the admission of California, and the questions arising therefrom.

Philadelphia is a clean and rather pretty town, and has more remains of antiquity than New York or Washington. The hospital, built by Penn, is still surrounded by the trees he planted, and the citizens are very proud of their State House, in which the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, and in which the early Congresses met. The streets are laid out at regular distances, and planted with trees which are both ornamental and useful, as the heat is excessive. The thermometer rises here as high or



higher than in any other part of the world. Already this year we have been at 99.

I am very anxious to see the account of the debate in the House of Commons on Roebuck's motion and Lord P.'s defence, and hope my father supported him; for to judge from the speeches of Lord Aberdeen and Stanley, I think his policy decidedly preferable to theirs, though he certainly manages to carry it out in an unfortunate manner.

How are the lovers? and what are their intentions about housekeeping? Is *she* experienced in domestic matters? For I should think George is rather green in that respect.

I heard from Maynard by the last mail, but his letter was dated 14th June, and had lain a week in the London P.O. I have written to him in the Isle of Man.

It is now one o'clock, a.m., and my candle is going out. Adieu, dearest mother.

Your affectionate,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, 28th June, 1850.*

We are here in the extreme suspense of one of our party "crises," and the result of the division more than usually uncertain:—unless Tufnell has interviews (like Perkes's at Eatenswill) with many Protectionists, I see not how the Government can get the majority of forty which they seem to say is their "minimum."

As you will see my name among the presenters of Palmy's portrait to Lady P., I must tell you that in the summer, when I was much interested in Hungary and the Hungarians, and afterwards when he stood up to Russia against the extradition of the refugees, I put my name down in the list. The scene with "miladi" was really touching;—as to Palmy, "the tears coursed one another down his innocent nose," and he spoke admirably.

If the Government resign, the result must surely be amalgamation, and a reconstruction with Graham, Cardwell, and Co., instead of Johnny, Palmy, and I hope Grey. By-the-bye, I send you a private and special letter from him to Lord Elgin—being the third letter to Lord and Lady E. I think that you are right well introduced there.

I was much interested by your last agreeable letter from Washington. Sir H. Bulwer writes much in your praise.

The lovers are as lovers should be—the little woman in particular. How she will wait for September I cannot tell. She will just suit you, being perfectly refined, with a very sweet voice, and a quiet, easy, natural manner, and a continuous but gentle flow of pleasant talk, as remote as possible from boring in any way. Her health and looks are much improved, and she seems generally considered pretty. She certainly looks interesting and thoroughly refined. They have got a very nice house, 10, Hyde Park Street, furniture and all (formerly Elliot McNaughten's), a great bargain; it will stand them, including all things, in about £250 per an. I suppose they will not be back in town till December.

We hope to be off somewhere on the 20th, but as, I am thankful to say, *Je me porte bien*. I think it possible we may cut German waters and go on to Switzerland, where, located on some Alp, we might inhale pure air instead of Bubbles from the Brünnen.

We had a jolly Greenwich party in a private steamer, Wodehouses, Henleys, G. G. Glyn, Airlie, Emma Wodehouse, Macdonalds—in all twenty-one. The weather has been fervid for some time, but is now cooling.

This day, the 28th, is our “Silver Wedding.” Van de Weyers, R. V. Smith, Carlisle, Parkes, Dundas, &c., to dinner, and “a Drum” in the evening. On Saturday we go for three nights to the aunts, who have Lord Vaux’s house near Bagshot for the season. Evy has consented to sell Cheam, which is a good thing, as it will make the settlement “homogeneous.” She puts £20,000 to G.’s £5,000, which gives them all events £1,000 a year. *You* will no doubt command a much higher figure, not however I trust paid in dollars.

You will see the account of an absurd blow struck yesterday with a cane over the Queen’s forehead. She came to the opera afterwards, and as a man who saw her tells me, she had a wheal or bump as big as a plover’s egg from the switch.

The intensest interest is excited by the division of this night, or rather to-morrow morning, some say 10, 20, 40, 50. Never was greater uncertainty. Peel and his party vote against Ministers. I hear only of Corry and one or two others for. And Drummond, Blackstone, Goddard, Sturt, and some other Pro-

tectionists; but perhaps Tufnell has induced many to be absent.

Dundas has given Evy a superb dressing-case; he is a great friend, and she in her delight offered to kiss him. Sir David said, "No, no, dear little woman, not in this world but the next."

Maynard writes from the Isle of Man. Philip is to go abroad with us. Emma Wodehouse and her two children have spent three weeks in Hyde Park Terrace, and are just returned to Norfolk. Another Miss Gosling marries a son of Lady Ann Wilbraham. Lady Clanricarde, who has always said her plain daughter "was intended for the Church," marries her to Mr. Weyland, a good match.

We were at a breakfast at Mrs. Horsley Palmer's yesterday, and are going to Lady Howard's next week. On the 17th we are to feed the Speaker and a party, which will, I hope, terminate London gaieties with us. Geo. and E. go to a few balls together. Next week they have Lady Carington and Lady Waldegrave, who is a great ally of Florence's and an immense entertainer.

White is waiting for the completion of a very large tank for water supply which Boville has had great difficulty in putting down into the beach of the river, from its unnecessarily large size. Puddledock looks very imposing and goes on rapidly. White shall soon write to you again. God bless you, dearest B. I wish you could be with us to-day, but we shall think of you.

Yours most affectionate,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

Newport, July 15th, 1850.

My dear Father,

I have but half an hour before dinner to answer your agreeable letter accompanying an introduction to Lord Elgin. They were forwarded to me from New York, and only arrived this morning. I am fresh from a dip in the sea, which was so rough as to give me a headache, and have just been through a long process of getting the salt-water out of my hair.

I made a short excursion from New York up the Hudson River to West Point, which is prettily situated on the wooded hill through which the river runs, and on Saturday the 13th, came on by railway to this place, which may be considered the Brighton of New York and Boston. The season has as yet hardly begun, but though the hotels are not filled, there appear to be several pleasant people living in their cottages. The air is charming and invigorating.

To-morrow I leave for Boston (about four hours distant), to be present at the commemoration, or commencement as they call it, of Harvard University. Bancroft, who is there to enter his son, advised me to go, and I shall probably see Mr. Everett and others of the *illuminati*. From thence I shall strike for Lake Champlain and Canada, and return by Lakes Ontario and Erie to Buffalo, Niagara, Saratoga, and this place, which will then have reached its culminating point of fashion.

I shall probably be unable to write by the next

mail, but will not lose any opportunity of doing so that may offer.

Our principal event is the death of the old President, which they are at this moment celebrating with half-hour guns. His death was occasioned by cholera, induced by a "hearty meal of cabbages, milk, cucumbers, and wild berries," eaten at night, after having passed the whole day under the burning sun. What will people think of the habits of a President of the United States when they read this in the papers? I think the old gentleman is really a loss, for he was undoubtedly honest and patriotic, and less fettered by party pledges than any other public man in the country. He was elected by the enthusiasm of the people excited by his victories in Mexico, and owed nothing to politicians of either party. His successor, Mr. Fillmore, is a regular Whig, and will be guided by the traditions of his party. It is supposed that Mr. Webster will be Secretary of State, in which case he will have the real authority. The discontent between the North and South seems on the increase, and a great many Southern men *talk* of dissolution of the Union, but I fancy it will end in talk. The advantages to both parties are too great to be easily sacrificed.

I am looking very anxiously for Lord Palmerston's speech, which I hope to see at Boston. I conclude from your letter that you supported him.

I am very glad to hear that George has got a house that will suit him, and that he is so happy. There are heiresses in this country, but £20,000 is considered quite unwieldy, and the interest would be enough to live upon.

I thought of your *Silberne Hochzeit* on the 28th, and hope the celebration went off well. It would have been a good day for George to have begun his matrimonial duties. I am invited to dinner, and must positively conclude.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Cornhill, July 4, 1850.*

The death of Sir Robert Peel (after seventy hours' sufferings from the injuries occasioned by a fall from his horse on Constitution Hill last Saturday) entirely absorbs public attention, and is felt by every thinking man as a great national misfortune. I would not (as you well know) have given him for a whole wilderness of Whigs!

Is it not grievous to think of so much accumulated political experience, such stores of knowledge, such immense influence—latterly always exerted for the public good—all up to the fatal moment remaining fully effective from unabated intellectual vigour—crushed and lost to the country and the world?

There is scarcely a question on which his advice and opinion will not be sensibly missed, his absence in the House felt every day. I send you the *Times* of the 3rd and 4th. He never spoke with more moderation, more good feeling and good sense than on foreign policy this day week. Some persons allege that what the horse did, a start, or a caper, was not enough to have thrown him, but that he fell in a fit, and pulled his horse over upon him. However this may be, he was perfectly well and cheerful a minute before.

The Ministerial majority, forty-six, was larger than

most men expected; but alas! this is a Government which its well-wishers can have no real satisfaction in supporting. We still intend starting on the 20th, but whether for Homburg or Kissingen is not quite decided. The Count is at the latter place, but leaving soon. H. Mildmay is in London. I have not yet seen him. Mary was much pleased with your letter of the 19th of June.

White is grinding, and has sent me some excellent flour. He will write to you next week.

We had a dinner-party yesterday, but Evy and G. went away early to Savile Row, where R. V. S. was entertaining the Palmerstons, Shelburnes, &c. We *were* going to-day to Lady Howard's breakfast, but it pours.

Lord Petre died yesterday. I have lately introduced his youngest son to an excellent business—Cooper, Currie, and Petre—Currie, a son of Sir Frederick. They bank here. Charles C. has passed the East India Coll. with great *éclat*, and is now going out.

Thorburn is painting Evy for R. V. S. Mr. I. G. C. is certainly better in general health and spirits, but sadly weak. He is here early and late and daily—I believe chiefly to escape from his home. I went with my womenkind to visit the aunts from Saturday till Tuesday. They have a pretty place of Lord Vaux for the season on Bagshot Heath. . . .

To-night we are to decide whether the Monster Exhibition shall or shall not take place in Hyde Park. Old Campbell of Stratheden is furious against it.



FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, July 19, 1850.*

I am so very busy to-day that I can send only a few hasty lines to acknowledge your letter from Baltimore. We have arranged everything for a start on Tuesday the 23rd to Dover, and propose to cross Wednesday morning to Calais, and proceed *viâ* rail to the Rhine, stop at Coblenz on Saturday till Monday, and spend two or three days on the Rhine, as our rooms at Homburg are taken from the 1st of August. The place is excessively full—the G. Glyns (junior) are there, the two Lady Morleys, Miss Stewart Mackenzie, Phillips, and, I believe, the Count, &c. Our party includes Edith, Mary, and Philip. We have a courier who travelled with me twenty-five years ago. I send Nosey and the barouche and horses, and two saddle-horses, to be all conveyed, without changing boat or horse-boxes, from London to Mayence, for £12.

We had a capital party on Wednesday. Bear Ellice, the R. V. S., and Evy, the Speaker and Mrs. L. Portman, Lord and Lady Lilford, and the Van de Weyers. The last, very great friends of Evy's, are great additions to our acquaintance. R. V. S. supplied an excellent haunch of Farming Wood venison, and I found the tortoise.

Thorburn has painted a most beautiful miniature of Evy for her father—an excellent likeness. Mr. H. C. is to meet me at Calais. Mr. I. G. C. is still *hors de combat* with his eyes and hay asthma.

The legal appointments, at least Wilde's, are queer—he is (if they divide the office) to be Lord Keeper. But can the Whigs last? I think that the Protectionists, throwing the farmers over, will join the Peelites, and then little Johnny goes.

We were a few days ago at a charming breakfast at Holland House. He has done it up with perfect taste and great *luxé*, and the gardens, &c., are beautiful—about two hundred of the smartest people and prettiest women.

Adieu, dear B. Pray continue to write constantly, as your letters will be forwarded.

Your affectionate,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*Saratoga, July 28, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I wrote to you last from Newport, and have since received letters by two steamers. I have also heard from Ned Baring, who has passed the perils of the Pampas without danger or loss—even of leather. It would seem from his account that Rosas' position is not so strong as when I left Buenos Ayres; and as the French have a large force in the river, which would be an important auxiliary to his enemies in case of war, perhaps the old tyrant's reign is drawing to a close. I think, however, that he will outwit them all, for he is as cunning as a fox, and his subjects fear him so, that they hardly dare think of opposition.

This place is the Baden of America, and is resorted to from all parts of the Union for health and recreation. For the last few years it has had the reputation of being fashionable, which in this free country is sufficient to destroy anything, and now the really decent people have moved off to some quieter spot, and left the field to barbarians from the west. At the head of society we have Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Rush, the former immediately descended from an eminent tailor, and the latter a millionaire of Philadelphia. Our young men are mostly addicted to drink, and are seldom in the full enjoyment of their faculties.

Of amusements the programme is as follows. In the morning we play tenpins with the young ladies, drive in the afternoon, and occasionally dance in the evening, which last, to do them justice, they do very well. But the people have so little gaiety or light-heartedness in their nature, that with all this dissipation we are very dull.

Nor are there wanting certain *farceurs* of the class who frequent Homburg and Baden. We are honoured with the presence of S. E. Monseigneur le Duc de Calabretta, and of a distinguished Hungarian nobleman, but their popularity seems on the wane in consequence of some disclosures affecting their personal identity.

But the most remarkable man of all is a prodigious swell named Garnum, who has been kind enough to claim acquaintance with me on account of an intimacy with Mrs. I. G. C., a man with a wooden face, large moustache, and florid style of dress, cultivating intimate relations with the English nobility, and frequently referring to them in his conversation. He seems to

have great success here, and has the reputation of being "an elegant man," or "quite a beau." There are several other Englishmen, but not of a brilliant order.

A few days after I last wrote to you, I went to Boston to be present at the annual festival of the University of Cambridge, and made the acquaintance of Mr. Everett, and several other intelligent people. After spending two days there, I stopped in my way hither at a little village in Massachusetts, very prettily situated, where a lady I knew in New York was spending the summer, and saw something of the rural life of New England. Though the country was beautiful, I missed the old church tower and picturesque cottages which make an English landscape so interesting, and instead of the respectable-looking building of the Establishment, there were half a dozen heresy shops of most novel and hideous architecture. The Americans have inherited and improved upon our proverbial bad taste in building, and disfigure the face of the country with their wonderful combinations of bricks and mortar.

In politics there seems little new. "The god-like Daniel," having been made Secretary of State, a new senator will be chosen for Massachusetts, and it is said that Mr. Everett will be appointed. I hear from Washington that the new President is thought very well of, and his Cabinet contains the foremost public men of the Whig party. Sir Robert Peel's death made a great impression in this country, as it seems to have done everywhere. I fear we shall have no more Ministers so disinterested and so respectable.

I am glad to hear that Miss Florence Anderson at

last meets with a husband. I think I remember Lord A. Compton at Eton. Mildmay, who you say dined with you, was with me in Washington. He had travelled a good deal in the different parts of the country, and is almost the only English gentleman I have met; excepting Mrs. Marshall's cubs, who have no clear title to such a distinction. However, I was not particularly delighted with him, and prefer the brother in Bishopsgate Street. Egerton, if it be the one in the navy, is a very good fellow, and I liked much what I saw of him at Buenos Ayres. I suppose he is now a commander in Her Majesty's navy.

I leave this place to-morrow for Utica and Sharon, another watering-place to the westward, and thence to Buffalo, which is close to Niagara. When I have seen enough of the Falls, I shall go to Toronto, the seat of Government in Canada, and thence up the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec, return to Montreal, and descend through Lakes Champlain and George to this place, or Newport.

I hardly know what to tell you about this place which will be amusing. The young ladies are, on an average, pretty good-looking, and some have moneys. They are divided into two classes—those who aspire to refinement, and in the pursuit of it forget nature altogether, and those who consider amusement as the chief good. The latter are addicted to mint-juleps, and dinners at the lake, and are rather free in action. I doubt if there be a sensible woman at present in the United States Hotel, which contains six hundred persons.

I am glad to hear from you that Mr. Wright has

begun to bring grist to the mill, and hope soon to hear from himself a favourable account of his experiment.

In answer to a letter from Mr. Mortimore, inquiring about the substance of some New York leather-dealer, I had the pleasure of informing him that his friend was in a very unsatisfactory state of finance. Love to all, from your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Sharon Springs, August 5, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I have not heard from you since I last wrote, a week ago, and have nothing particular to communicate since that time.

The place from which I write is about seventy or eighty miles west of Saratoga, and famous for its sulphur springs, which attract the maimed, halt, and cutaneous in great numbers. The situation and neighbouring scenery are beautiful, and the air is healthy. I have been spending a week very pleasantly in the society of a lady from New York who is staying here, but not in consequence of any of the above-mentioned infirmities. She is the wife of a millionaire, and one of the leaders of fashion in New York, rather pretty, and very well dressed.

The hotel, an immense building with Grecian pillars, is full of people, and we have the usual amusements of bowling and dancing, the latter to the most abominable band I ever heard. The sulphur baths are very pleasant, and the drives in the neighbourhood picturesque in the extreme.

I am off to-morrow on my way westward, intending to see Trenton Falls before Niagara, which will, of course, cast all other falls into the shade, and then to steam up the St. Lawrence to Quebec.

This is a tour which is made every summer by hundreds of people, and I shall find all the hotels and steamers crowded. Indeed at this time of year the whole population is on the move, and the discomfort occasioned by such a quantity of travellers very great.

The only tolerable mode of travelling in this country is by steamers, which are to be found on all the numerous rivers, and are fitted up with a great deal of comfort, and even magnificence, and which travel quite as fast as the railroad carriages. The latter are abominably uncomfortable, and are constructed on an entirely different principle from those of the London and North-Western, &c., being of the shape of an enlarged omnibus, with seats placed transversely, and each made to hold about fifty people. The dust, smoke, and heat are all excessive, and at the end of a day's journey one has to undergo the most elaborate ablutions to restore oneself to a decent state.

I hope you are enjoying yourself at Homburg, or some other equally lively place. I am getting on pretty well, meeting occasionally with a pleasant person, though the mass are certainly anything but agreeable. I am afraid my letter will be hardly worth the trouble of forwarding to Germany, but it will let you know that I am alive and well, and ever yours affectionately,

B. W. CURRIE.

The sheet of paper on which the following letter is written contains a view of Niagara Falls, and is dated,

*August 11, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I send you the above work of art as a better representation than any I can give of the view from my windows at this present writing. I arrived the day before yesterday from Buffalo, having left Sharon Springs (from whence I last wrote) on the 5th inst. On the way, I stopped a day at Utica, in order to see Trenton Falls, which are very picturesque, and intend to-morrow or the day following to go on to Toronto.

I have received your letter of the 19th July, written on the point of departure, and imagine you now enjoying the dissipations of Homburg, with its society of Russian Princes, French ladies, Polish Counts, and other equivocal personages.

There is very little to tell you of since I last wrote. I have found a companion in my walks and drives in Captain Campbell of the 42nd Regiment, and last night Messrs. Stuart-Wortley and Coke arrived on their way to the far West.

During the day, from the heat of the sun, we are obliged to content ourselves with the above prospect, and in the evening we walk to the points which command the different views of the great wonder. You will see that there are two distinct falls, the one on the American and the other on the Canadian side. The island in the centre divides H.M.'s dominions from those of the United States.

I am living under the flag of our beloved Sovereign,



because the inn is better and the view far more beautiful. The great cataract, called the Horse Shoe, is truly magnificent, and increases my admiration every time I see it. It sends forth a continual roar like that of the sea during a storm, and makes the earth tremble around it.

I wrote from Buffalo, where I had to wait some hours for the steamer, to George and Maynard (the former is now the only lineal representative of Sir Piers left in the land of his forefathers, for I suppose the Isle of Man is a sort of colony or dependence), and congratulated George on the now rapidly approaching "auspicious event."

From White I have heard nothing, and hope his silence is to be accounted for by the number of buyers who engross his time. The principal query I addressed to him was concerning the machinery of Puddledock. I should think it would be desirable for the internal part of the mill to be completed as soon as the external, and in this department Pons cannot interfere with his coffer-dams and other impediments. With regard to the money already expended on the building, and whether it exceeds Pons' estimate, I suppose no information is to be got till the whole be completed, though it is important to know, as the more he puts into the building the less will he have for other uses. I have no doubt this has all been considered, but, from hearing nothing about it, one naturally imagines all sorts of possible difficulties and dilemmas.

How is that great speculator Bovill? Are his finances in a more healthy state than when I left England? I remember the account S. and B. used to give great grief to Mr. H. C. If he still continues

the manufacture of iron rails, he might perhaps export them with profit to this country. The Pennsylvania iron-masters are up in arms against the large importation which has taken place during this year, and one of their representatives in Congress made a violent attack upon Sir Henry Bulwer for writing a note to the Secretary of State, deprecating any increase in the duties on British iron.

Stuart-Wortley, who has just arrived, tells me that the Whigs do not talk of going out. To us at this distance their position looks extraordinary, and I should think no Ministry ever held office on such terms. They appear to be unable to carry any of their measures, and, even after the abandonment of the most important ones, to be constantly defeated in the House of Lords. Whenever I see the lists of divisions, which is rarely the case, Wodehouse's name appears on the Government side. I hope he has not attached himself and his hopes of office to Lord Grey and his colleagues, for, though the measures of the Whig Ministry appear popular, the individuals composing it are decidedly the contrary.

With us in the United States there is little of general interest in politics. The new President, supported as he is by a Cabinet composed of the first men in the country, is universally popular, and is said to be much more competent for his duties than his predecessor. He has risen from the ranks of the people, having been himself a clothier, and having at present a brother working as a blacksmith. At the time he was raised to the Presidential chair, his daughter was teaching in a school. The newspapers are delighted with this practical illustration of re-

publican equality, though it is another proof of what is undoubtedly true in this country, that the higher and wealthier classes take no part in politics. Of the members of the two Houses, at least three-fourths are lawyers, showing that "vocables" are the sure way to power, a fact of which Mr. Carlyle would not approve. Have you read the Stump Orator and the other Latter-Day pamphlets? I have been doing so in my railroad journeys, and cannot help thinking that there is a great deal in them; at least there are one or two ideas most ingeniously and forcibly illustrated, and the result is exceedingly amusing.

So is *not* my letter, but I am not up to a description of Niagara, and had nothing else wherewith to fill my letter. At least you will know that I am well and prosperous.

FROM GEORGE CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*London, August 27, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

I was very glad to receive a letter from you to-day, as, since my father and mother have been abroad, I have not been able to share in your letters to them, and have heard nothing of you. I expect them back about the 12th proximo, and the 19th is the day fixed for my wedding. This is to take place at Farming Woods, from which place I came up to-day, having been there as usual from Saturday to Tuesday. The house is very comfortable and the arrangements of all kinds good: the country pretty in summer, but damp. There is a deer-park, or rather

forest, round the house, producing excellent venison. The place belonged to Lord Ossory, and came, with quantities of plate, pictures, &c., to V. S., and is entailed on his eldest son. It is reached by a station on the branch railway from Northampton to Peterboro', and is distant from the former place about twenty-five miles. Sir G. Robinson, a celebrated Northamptonshire Tory, is to perform the marriage ceremony, and we are to go to Lord Lansdowne's villa at Richmond for a few days, preparatory to starting *via* Paris to Nice or Genoa. We shall be back early in December, and about Christmas settled, I hope, in Hyde Park Street. The house I have got is No. 10, almost in Hyde Park Square and looking into it—on the opposite side to what was Sir T. Harrington's, therefore on the east side. It is a nice-looking house, clean, and has all the *necessary* furniture. Our trustees are to take it as an investment (that is, the lease of the house eighty years), and the fixtures, &c., some money of Evy's will pay for. I don't like the situation except for old associations' sake, but one cannot ask any woman to live in the *streets* so many months in the year. I can hardly believe myself that I am actually going to be married so soon, but I am quite sure on reflection that it is the best thing to be done, living the sort of monotonous bucket-in-a-well sort of life that one does, and must here. I am quite sick of a single man's life in London, with no *penates* of one's own, and no time or money to plunge into other amusements. Then I am very fortunate indeed in my choice, as everybody else will tell you. I will not enlarge now on the merits of my intended wife; but I may say that I discover them more every day.

I *began* in the right way—by a *conviction* that she was good and sensible, and better fitted for the situation than any one I had ever seen, and have *ended* by falling desperately in love.

I have written to Maynard to-day, who is still in the Isle of Man, and told him to inquire for a letter from you. He will be coming back soon.

Your partner White showed me a long letter the other day he had written you. I think they are as sanguine as ever, but have met with endless delays in getting to work in the experimental mill at Shadwell. White is always there, and seems to have his whole soul in it. The Puddledock edifice (which White says is the "Glory both of Englishmen and foreigners!") will be soon, I should think, ready for roofing. It is now a conspicuous object from the halfpenny steam-boats. Everything here in London is just as when you left it, and I can hardly fancy you have been away so long.

If I were you, I would come back and winter in the Old World. Italy and the Mediterranean are before you, and better, I should think, than the barbarous West. My father's idea of going there will of course end in smoke. I have seen Mildmay and Egerton, who met you in different parts of America, and heard of you from Bulwer thro' F. Vernon.

Mr. I. G. C., who has been very bad, has rallied wonderfully, and comes now constantly to Cornhill. The West End is deadly dull; everybody who can get away to the moors or the Rhine having gone. Pray write to me again at your leisure. I am ever,

Affectionately yours,

G. W. CURRIE.

Maynard, who was at this time in the Isle of Man, wrote :

“The Douglas society offers no temptations which it is beyond my powers of resolution to resist. The Attorney General, Mr. Ogden, and his wife and daughter, to whom Lady H. Wigram sent me an introduction, are kind and pleasing.

The Government here is purely aristocratic: the House of Keys is self-elective; and there is an Upper House consisting of the Governor and half a dozen great swells. The people have no share whatever in the legislature, but possess the privilege of petitioning for or against any Bill proposed by either House.

Gold is almost unknown on the island. The circulating medium consists of £1 notes, for the amount of which, security in landed property is said to be deposited.

The people seem poor, but there are scarcely any paupers, and those few are nearly all Irish. They are supported, not by a rate, but by the collections which are made every Sunday in all the churches.

There are no turnpikes, and the roads, which are very good, are kept up by a small tax upon wheels. This is almost the only tax on the island. The import duties are very small, and a very drinkable sherry may be bought for 2s. a dozen.

The land is divided into small holdings of from twenty to one hundred and twenty acres, with the exception of one large estate, the property of Mr. G——, the wealthiest inhabitant, at whose house I dined and slept the other night.

I am surprised at finding no remains of ancient churches and abbeys, which certainly existed at some earlier date. At Castle-town, the castle, which is still inhabited, is (some of it) one thousand years old, and there are remains at Peel which I have not seen. This last place was the scene of Fenella's appearance in *Peveril of the Peak*.”

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Coblentz, July 29th, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

We received your letter (written to your mother on your return to New York) before we left England. We crossed to Calais on Wednesday

morning, the 23rd, met Mr. H. C. and daughters for half an hour and saw them embark for England, slept at Ghent. Thursday, 24th, to Aix, where we slept at Grand Monarque. Friday, 25th, to Cologne, Disch's Hotel. At the *table d'hôte* there we met Meyer Rothschild and his bride, Miss Cohen, whom we promised to visit at Frankfort. Saturday we had a lovely voyage to this place, where we have been staying on the east side of the river in a very quiet, new hotel—the White Horse. Nosey, four horses, and the barouche spent last night in the steamer here, and are off to Mayence this morning. We are going to-day to Bingen, and mean to linger about the Rhine till Thursday, 1st August, on which day we enter upon our rooms at Homburg. T. Phillips writes me word that they are the best in the place, which is excessively full.

We are a very comfortable party. Edith chatters away German most amusingly to the natives. Philip enjoys his first tour. Even Sanderson is reconciled to “these furriners.”

As a courier, we have a capital old Swiss—Girod, who has been butler at Rotherfield, and travelled with us south in 1825.

The weather is very fine, with occasional heavy showers. The views yesterday evening were lovely.

I presume you were told that Lord Darnley marries Lady H. Pelham, Lord Chichester's daughter. I cannot recollect any other matches.

Wodehouse spoke remarkably well at the Exeter agricultural meeting and is tolerably reported in the *Chronicle* and *Herald*.

We shall look forward to your letters, which will

be forwarded to Homburg—if we like the place and the waters suit us we may stay four weeks. Evy Vernon writes very nice affectionate letters to us, and counts the hours to the 19th September. Her £20,000 goes into the consols, and she has a few hundreds over which she gives George for furniture. I think she is just the sort of little woman you will like to talk to—a good, intelligent listener, with plenty to say in a very sweet voice, taking all things easily and quietly, and perfectly refined, not at all commonplace, and quite unlike an average young lady. She will in a quiet way manage George, and, I hope, much improve him. It is a great thing to marry into a family in which there are no bores.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO B. W. C.

*Homburg, 10th August, 1850.*

I wrote to you while we were *en route*, and have had the pleasure of receiving here an agreeable letter from Newport, 15th July. We arrived 2nd August, and have a very nice suite of rooms *au premier chez* C. Theis, at the entrance of the place as you come *in* from Frankfort, on the left hand; our windows look down the road which leads to the wells. Nosey, the barouche, and four pads are in a comfortable stable behind.

We think the air delicious. Mary is drinking the Elizabeth, but I do not venture on it, as there is lime in it. We have some pleasant people here, as you may see by a list of a few I feed to-day at two o'clock



at the Belle Vue—T. Phillips, Dowager Lady Morley, Lady Morley, Hallam, Lord and Lady Galway (she is M. Milnes' sister), Mrs. Yorke (a very pleasing widow), Mr. and Mrs. Hildyard (she is Rochfort's sister), and Mrs. Cecil Fane. Miss Stewart Mackenzie and mother come to-day. Lord and Lady Castlereagh are here, Lady Farquhar and daughter, and many queer people. Philip danced away at the Kursaal on Wednesday, and we went there.

The Count waited at Frankfort to shake hands with us, but is off to Boulogne. Greffalte of Paris is here. All the Legitimists now at the various *Eaux* are mustering at Wiesbaden to pay homage to the Comte de Chambord, who arrives there from Gratry. I have had an invitation from the Rothschild at Frankfort (Anselm) to dine, but declined.

I am glad you are off to Canada. Niagara and Quebec must be well worth seeing. . . . The marriage stands for the 19th September. We are to go from Farming Woods to Kimberley.

FROM MRS. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Homburg, August 18th, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

Your letter dated Saratoga, July 26th, reached me this morning at an early breakfast, soon after eight o'clock, and gave us much pleasure and amusement. From your account of the young ladies they cannot be very attractive to any one who has lived in good society in England. Refinement at the expense of nature is scarcely worth having.

We get on very well here, though the life one leads does not particularly suit me, being in society all day long; but there are some people, those with whom we chiefly live, who are very agreeable. Old Lady Morley is a host in herself, and the younger Lady M. is very pleasing and ladylike. Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, but especially her daughter, are great acquisitions. The daughter is clever and agreeable; she joins your father and Mary in their rides.

I find that you lived at the Hotel de l'Europe. Mr. Round, who is here, tells your father you generally drove over to Frankfurt to dine! Certainly the dinners here are for the most part as bad as possible. . . .

We have been to two balls at the Kursaal. The last was a very gay one. Lord and Lady Cowley came from Frankfurt, and Mr. Petre, Lord and Lady Sidney, Lady Pollington also, and she danced the whole evening, with very great Tigers, waltzes and polkas, looking fat and vulgar. Mary went, only to look on, and was much amused. The waters seem to agree with her, and we shall probably stay till the end of the fourth week, which will bring us to the 30th August. We have promised to be in London by the 12th of September.

This morning's post brought a letter from George. He had been down to Farming Woods the end of last week and stayed till Tuesday, and was going there again on Saturday. He describes the place as a desirable residence only in very hot weather, being down in a hollow and surrounded by woods with a clay soil. The house, he says, is very comfortable. Fitzpatricks, Lilfords, Stopfords, with *all* of us, and probably Lord and Lady Shelburne, are to be at the

wedding, which is to be at Brigstocke, their parish church, a mile and a half from Farming Woods. They have settled to cross the Channel a week after the wedding and to go probably to Geneva, as they hear the Lake is in great beauty in October.

One of the prettiest drives we have been in this neighbourhood is from Homburg to Königstein. We saw it one evening when the setting sun lighted up the old ruin of Cronberg; with the village at the foot of it and the extended plain beyond, it was a most beautiful landscape. You, of course, must have seen it as well as all the other places in the neighbourhood. Tomorrow we are going to Königstein again with the Stewart Mackenzies.

A German mistress comes daily to read and talk with Mary. She gets on very much with the language.

George says in his letter to-day: "Mr. H. C. gives us a teapot, Lady Lansdowne an old Sèvres dish, Lady Shelburne a table." Lord Shelburne gave Evelyn a bracelet. They had a great many presents—altogether six inkstands! Your father is very well and finds great *comfort* in Bass's pale ale, a cask of which he brought from England.

The rivalry between Austria and Prussia is very great. The King of Prussia, by his want of decision, lost a great opportunity.

I am always, dear B., your very affectionate

MOTHER.

My letter is a strange jumble. Dr. Hook preaches, and we are just going to church.

Philip has been to luncheon with Lady Cowley.

Wellesley, her son, who is at Eton, introduced him. She was surprised to hear that George was old enough to marry, forgetting that four years have passed since he was at Constantinople.

FROM B. W. C.

*Providence, September 3rd, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I was very glad to hear of you from Homburg, and to find that you were pleased with the place. I think I can make out in my recollection the house in which you live. I occupied a balcony on the *rez de chaussée* of the hotel immediately in front of the Kursaal, which looks down the walk lined with orange-trees, leading to the principal entrance. Perhaps the house is no longer an hotel. I forget its name.

I came on to-day to this place from Newport. It is the capital of the State of Rhode Island, and a small town of thirty or forty thousand inhabitants.

The last week I have spent at Newport, not knowing well whither else to go. It is the best of the watering-places, having the advantage of a delightful climate, and, moreover, an air of respectability uncommon in this country. The town has been built two hundred years, and was formerly of some commercial importance, though its trade has long since departed to Boston and New York. There is an old church of which Bishop Berkeley the philosopher was rector, with an organ presented by him—one of the most venerable *reliquiæ* in the United States. A building

twenty years old is rarely to be met with. Since I have been in New York, the house which was formerly occupied by the Colonial Governors and afterwards by General Washington, has been pulled down and turned into an hotel!

I suppose this will reach you just before the closing scene in George's history. Of course you will send me a full and particular account, giving the confession of the unfortunate man, together with the dresses of the bride and bridesmaids, speeches of the honourable members, &c. I shall think a great deal about him on the 19th.

Yesterday the steamer arrived with Jenny Lind and some other musical celebrities from England. She has been engaged by Mr. Barnum, the enterprising proprietor of Tom Thumb, to sing at one hundred and fifty concerts for £60,000. I doubt very much if the undertaking will be successful, as there is very little musical taste in the country, and not a respectable opera even in New York.

The season at Newport is on the wane. The Bulwers came there for a day last week, but miladi was alarmed at the noise and confusion of the hotels, and fled precipitately. As to quiet and comfort at these places, they are unattainable. At 6 a.m. a gong sounds, and after that, noise of one sort or another is continuous. The dinner is an organized scramble. Food and waiters are provided for about a third of the company, and the competition for both becomes intense. The only amusement is the dance, which generally begins at 9 p.m. and lasts with short intervals till midnight. I have become thoroughly sick of dancing, and rarely join the giddy throng. My com-

panions are Captain Campbell, Pennell, the *attaché* to the legation, and Mr. Duncan, in whose house I am now writing. He is the son of a millionaire, a Scotchman by birth, who is now in England, and, having been educated there, is vastly superior to the native young men. To-morrow, or the next day, I return to Newport, and from thence shall work my way back to Montreal and Quebec.

I am now writing late at night (having been to a party) in order to catch the steamer, which leaves Boston to-morrow, and having nothing but a steel pen, find it difficult to make myself legible. Have you seen or heard of Mrs. Abbot Lawrence, wife of *our* Minister? She is considered vulgar in Boston, and must therefore be very ladylike or more outrageous than one can imagine. The society here is very stupid; those who have anything in them are mostly unpolished diamonds, and the refined part of the community is frivolous beyond belief.

*Newport, September 10th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I wrote you a few lines by the last mail from Providence, and have to-day received yours of the 18th August. I have been now stationary in this place for a fortnight, and have therefore little to communicate. My intention is still to go up to Montreal and Quebec, and I am waiting partly for the chance of meeting a companion. The New York season does not commence till October, and we are still in the finest season of the year, so that I am in no great

hurry to start, and in the meantime find the air and climate of this place very agreeable.

I am not without hopes that Ned Baring may join me here in a month or two, if he can get an extension of leave. I have heard from him three times since he arrived at Buenos Ayres. He seems much pleased, and is on the best terms with all my old friends and flames, the latter of whom, he tells me, have discovered a striking resemblance between us. I hope he may come on here in October or November, so that we may go together to the South.

Affairs in Washington are just now interesting, or rather the interest which has been so long excited, is just over, in consequence of the passage by the House of Representatives of a Bill for the admission of California as a State; together with one fixing the boundaries of Texas, and providing a territorial government for Utah. The effect of these measures has been to satisfy the moderate men of all parties, and to allay for a time at least the vexed question of slavery. I met yesterday at dinner Mr. Charles Sumner, who is very well known in England, and to whom I had a letter from Mr. Reeves. He is a great man among the free soil or anti-slavery party, and, being rather extreme in his opinions, is highly incensed at the passage of these Bills, considering them too great a concession to the South. It is of course impossible to form an opinion as to the danger of an eventual dissolution of the Union, but things have at any rate advanced so far that the idea is familiar to the minds of all men, and I have heard the most respectable Southerners openly speak of disunion as desirable. A good deal I suppose must be put down under the head

of *gas*—as it is called here—and in which north and south, east and west equally excel. Mr. Sumner is a lawyer of Boston, and a very agreeable, intelligent man: indeed, I think him and Mr. Everett the two most agreeable Americans I have known.

You seem to have had a very pleasant party at Homburg. We had travelling here a Mrs. Petre, *née* Stewart Mackenzie (daughter of an ex-Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands). I know not whether she be a sister of your friend.

Captain Campbell, with whom I travelled about for some time, left to-day to return to his regiment at Bermuda. The Bulwers are at Boston, and still talk of coming here, but they are uncertain, coy and hard to please, and their movements most eccentric.

I cannot help thinking about poor old George. It will be quite sad to return and find him flown from the paternal nest, even though his flight be no further than to Hyde Park Street. I hope that when established in his colony he will follow the example of the parent state and become a firm defender of our parochial liberties and a good citizen of Paddington. Adieu, dear mother, till next mail.

Your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

On the 19th I shall be at home to my friends and drink prosperity and long life to the happy pair.



FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Homburg, August 28th, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

Our visit to this place is drawing to a close ; we shall turn our faces homewards on the 30th, and hope to be in London by the 12th September. I believe that we shall go up the Moselle to Trêves and Metz, then post by two days' moderate journey to Chalons, whence there is now a railway to Paris ; and thence home by Boulogne.

George goes down to Farming Woods every Saturday. Old Lansdowne has invited himself to stay there for the wedding. We are to go there *en masse* and afterwards to Kimberley.

The weather has become cold and showery, and I shall be glad to get home. We happen to have had some pleasant people. Old Lady Morley is most cheery and amusing, and the young one a very nice person.

Did you ever see Miss Stewart Mackenzie ? She is handsome, lively, and clever. Her mother, Mrs. S. M., was a daughter of Lord Seaforth's (now extinct), married early Sir Samuel Hood, was with him in India, where she was a *lionne*, shot a tiger, &c., was left a widow, married Mr. Stewart, a grandson of Lord Galloway's, became the heiress of Brahm Castle and a great Highland territory by the death of her brother ; then went successively to Ceylon and Corfu, her husband (who took her name) being Governor and Lord High Commissioner of these colonies, is now

old, but still clever and entertaining from her vast variety of adventure and acquaintance. Peel was staying with her in the Highlands last year. The daughter is twenty-four—a great friend of Sir David Dundas. She is rather restless and ardent, wishing to be at everything. Soon after she arrived, she wanted to be off on a party up the Moselle, but a Lady Bryant, who was to have *chaperoned* her back, fortunately sprained her knee and could not go. I send you a letter of admonition which she (Miss M.) received—premiering that B. means our chaplain, Rev. Butler, who has actually attained what so many aim at—preaching in his sleep; and that the Dowager Morley declines being called “old Lady Morley,” but “the less young.”

“*Man* never is, but always to be blest.”  
 ’Tis yours to soothe, and give the restless rest,  
 To bid our strivings, wishings, wanderings cease,  
 To feel within, then shed around you—Peace.  
 While we aspire, and toil, and rage, and roam,  
 Our better nature whispers still of home,  
 And all the hopes those murmured thoughts disclose  
 Lie circled round by one idea,—repose!  
 Licensed like B., at once to sleep and preach,  
 Such, dear Louisa, are the truths I teach.  
 ’Tis hard to see thee beaming on our sphere,  
 To charm, enliven, decorate and cheer,  
 To think the woods more green, the hills more blue,  
*Because* the landscape wins a smile from you,  
 And just as we begin “to love too well.”  
 Hey! Presto, off! “I seek the fair Moselle!”  
 The fair Moselle! alas! those ardent eyes  
 Will distant hearts and distant rivers prize,  
 Forgetting past and present—will pursue  
 Some fleeting vision which eludes the view.  
 Pause to be happy! formed to bless and shine,  
 Make that which lies before thee, truly thine;  
 Pause to be happy! formed to shine and bless,

'Tis nought to chase, 'tis something to possess.  
 How can I hope to bid such wanderer stay?  
 My verse is feeble and my locks are grey.  
 Yet much discourse with man and woman-kind  
 Tells *me* to value two *you* leave behind;  
 Strong sense with social wit—how rarely found  
 Since Sydney's name became a mournful sound!  
 And she, "still younger"—what a friend is here,  
 Refined, engaging, cheerful and sincere;—  
 It cannot be!—if sighs and tears be vain  
 I rest my hopes on Lady Bryant's sprain!

*Homburg, 19th August, 1850.*

I went with Lady Galway and Philip yesterday to Königstein: the view from the crag and ruin of Falkenstein, near there, of the Cronberg and the valleys of the Meuse and Rhine is beautiful.

On Thursday we attended the Peace Congress at Frankfurt, and heard Girardin and a pure nigger. Cobden spoke on Friday.

Ever your affectionate

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*New York, September 16th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

By the last steamer I had no letters from you, but was glad to hear from George, who wrote in capital spirits. I hope his firmness has not deserted him on the momentous occasion. My movements since last week have been from Newport to Boston, and thence to New York. I stopped but two days in Boston, seeing the Bulwers, who were there, and missing Sir E. Head (upon whom I called on your account), who was passing through.

In consequence, I suppose, of the Canadian Reciprocity Bill, which is coming on before Congress, and for the passage of which the colonists are very anxious, there is quite a gathering of Governors and emissaries. Lord Elgin is here, Sir E. Head on his way, and several colonial dignitaries at Washington. The Canadas have offered the free navigation of the St. Lawrence on condition that their produce be received in American ports without duty,—in fact, that they enjoy all the commercial privileges of the States of the Union. The passage of this Bill through Congress is thought very important to our interests in Canada, as the Canadians will then possess all the material advantages of American citizens, with a much lower scale of taxation, and will have no object to gain by annexation to the Union. As usual here, it seems quite uncertain whether the Bill can pass or not.

The great topic of conversation now is Jenny Lind. She has already given two concerts, at which the receipts were between £5,000 and £6,000 each. On the first night she handed over her share, amounting to £2,000, to the Mayor of the city to be distributed in charity. Of course her popularity is unbounded, but I hear people are much disappointed in her singing, and expected something more wonderful. The other lion is "The Turkish Ambassador," as the papers magniloquently call a captain in the Sultan's navy who has been sent over to get information about the United States for his master. The doings of this individual, as well as those of Jenny Lind, are duly chronicled in the newspaper, and, from the sayings there attributed to them, their conversation seems to turn principally on the glories of this mighty Republic. The first

interview between Jenny and the American eagle was quite touching, and the sight of the stars and stripes positively overcame her. The Turk seems no less expressive of his admiration.

I find that one becomes intensely patriotic here, from the mere spirit of antagonism to the laudation of themselves and depreciation of other nations in which these people incessantly indulge.

The triumph on which they have been congratulating themselves for the last two months is the passage made across the Atlantic by one of their new steamers, which they assert is the shortest on record, and by which they say they have obtained "the dominion of the seas." The Cunard steamers, which have always been obliged to stop at Halifax by their contract, and have lost thereby considerably, are now to run direct to New York, and will, I trust, have the satisfaction of beating the Yankees' heads off, as I have no doubt they can.

I have been reading Tennyson's last poem, *In Memoriam*. I think it is very superior to any of his previous poems, and has some beautiful passages. Wordsworth's *Prelude*, published about the same time, choked me off very soon.

I arrived here the day before yesterday in company with Pennell, and have seen hardly any one else. I still purpose seeing Quebec before the cold weather begins, and am waiting on the forlorn hope of finding a companion. If I go south in the winter, the proper time will be in November, therefore there is no cause for hurry.

New York is full, but only of birds of passage. The inhabitants do not return for a week or two.

The steamer which bears this will sail on the day before George's wedding, which I trust may be the opening scene to a happy life. From all accounts the bride appears to be charming, and the groom will, I think, make a good husband.

Do you think my coming home in the winter would be of any service to the advancement of the mill?

*New York, Sept. 24th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

As the steamer leaves to-morrow I will not omit to send you the usual weekly despatch, though I have nothing new to tell you of. I have been twice to hear Jenny Lind, and that is the amount of my gaieties. Balls have not begun, and dinners, being mostly bad, I eschew. Jenny Lind, supported by Belletti and Benedict, gives concerts three times a week in a building which holds six or seven thousand persons, who pay on an average fifteen shillings for their tickets, and as yet the rush for places continues unabated. The critics profess to be disappointed with her singing, but with the multitude this makes no difference, as they are quite incapable of forming an opinion on the matter. I think if Mlle. Jenny had never sung but in concerts, she would have established a very small reputation in proportion to her present fame. The concert appeared to me a very slow affair, and not worth the crowd, heat, and bad odour, which counterbalance the singing. . . . I have seen the Bancrofts since I came here. They were surprised the other day by a visit from Dr. Holland, who has

since gone off to the northward. If I had met him I should have claimed relationship on the score of George's amalgamation with the Smiths.

Adieu, my dear father. Give love to all from,

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM MRS. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Hyde Park Terrace, Sept. 13th, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

We arrived at home yesterday after an absence of seven weeks, all well and prosperous, and having enjoyed our trip very much. Mary, Phil, and Edith are all good-tempered and easy, and we had no *contre-temps* of any kind; weather on the whole fine, though latterly cold, and we have a good smoky east wind to greet us on our return! London looks unusually disagreeable—the Parks burnt up, dust flying, and nearly every house has its shutters closed. We are off again on Tuesday to Farming Woods for the auspicious ceremony on the 19th. George has been down there at the end of every week, but now, he stays with us till Tuesday. He looks thin and seems rather nervous I think, but very happy. I am going down to Richmond with him to-morrow to take a survey of the house. We must lend them plate, linen, and a cook, as these are not provided. George has decided to remain there only a week. He has engaged a foreign servant, and means to go first to

Paris, and then to Nice and Genoa. I dare say they will not be home before Christmas.

The Eton boys have an extra week, so Philip will not go back till Saturday. Maynard is to be here to-morrow. I have a little shopping to do to finish up the bridesmaids' dresses. Edith is to have a *pair* in a little Miss Stopford. The other bridesmaids are three Miss Fitzpatricks, two Powyses, and Mary—eight in number. They are to be dressed in clear white muslin with silk scarfs of apricot colour, and white transparent bonnets with lilac heath inside, and a bouquet of the same on one side of the bonnet. The two little ones are to have loose silk jackets instead of scarfs.

Now you will want to know the costume of the bridegroom! He brought me his *trousers* to see this morning; they are a thin woollen substance, of a *very* pretty brown colour, white double-breasted waistcoat, blue coat and plain blue handkerchief! very good taste, I think.

We are to go across from Northamptonshire to Kimberley, and I shall go to Raynham to see Aunt Charlotte and probably to Witton for a week, and perhaps to Cromer for a week or ten days. Your father says he must be in London, so he will only go with us to Kimberley for two or three days. Lord and Lady Henley are to be there, and Lord Airlie, I believe.

Aunt Harriett and Mr. Chambers set out to-day on a little trip to Belgium to see churches, and mean to go to Munich and Schaffhausen. We heard that Lord and Lady Overstone were passing through London to-day, so have asked them to dine with us,



and Count Strzlecki, who is also in London for a day or two, is to meet them. The Count has been at Boulogne for sea bathing and is going to Scotland to-morrow. Lord Overstone lent Wickham to the Lefevres for three months till the end of October, he and his family being at Overstone.

Your father will probably write to you by this day's post, and tell you that after leaving Homburg we filled up our spare time by a little tour in Holland, going from Coblenz to Dusseldorf and Arnheim; thence by rail to Amsterdam and so by Haarlem and Leyden to the Hague, where we stayed two days; thence to Rotterdam and Antwerp, and home by way of Calais—out of our way, to shorten the sea voyage, which makes poor Mary so very ill. We were very much pleased with Holland, particularly with Amsterdam and the Hague. . . .

I cannot help wishing *very* much that you were now at home, that we might all have been together on the occasion of George's marriage. It will seem strange to you to come home and find him settled, a married man. Philip is very much grown and bids fair to be tall. Edith grows also, but her face is still very fat. Mary is stronger than when we first went to Germany, but not robust. You will find us all, I guess, a good deal changed outwardly, when you return. I see myself age rapidly, but am thankful to say I am perfectly well, and always, my dear Bertram,

Your very affectionate

MOTHER.

Mr. Raikes Currie wrote by the same post, 13th Sept. 1850.

Our constant locomotion last week prevented me from writing as usual. You well deserve a constant correspondent by your regular and entertaining letters. We are now anxiously expecting one, your last bearing date 11th ult.

I write this hasty line in all the bustle of a first day in Cornhill, after more than seven weeks' absence. I find things quiet, and rather, if anything, more employment for money. Your mother promised to write you by this post.

I have just seen White, who has been dreadfully bothered about water, from Bovill's ignorance of hydraulics. He has now called in a first-rate engineer. As to the value of the patent and the article he can make, and has made and sold, he is perfectly satisfied he assures me. He says he wrote to you at length a month ago.

I assume that your mother has told you that we came home *via* Dusseldorf, Holland, and Antwerp.

I think when your mother stays on in Norfolk, I shall go to John Lefevre, who has the loan of Wickham from the great O, who stays at O.

I hope you have enjoyed Canada. God bless you, dear B.

FROM B. W. C.

*Washington, Sept. 30th, 1850.*

My dear Mother,

I received yesterday your letter of the 13th, and am anxiously expecting by your next a full and particular account of the event of the 19th.

I told you in my last letter that I had formed no plan of movement for the present, and that all I had decided, was to visit Quebec before the cold weather set in. For want of something better to do, I came on to this place with my friend Pennell, whose leave had expired, and am now paying him a visit of a few days.

The Bulwers are still in Washington, and have got a much better house than when I was here before, but they intend, I believe, to go to the north again after the adjournment of Congress. The finest season of the year is yet to come. After the first frost in September or October, there succeeds a period of five or six weeks, called the Indian summer, which is described by every one as the perfection of weather. At present we have alternations of heat and cold, which would be extraordinary in any other part of the world. Friday, the day on which I arrived, was one of the most sultry I ever felt, and to-day (Monday) is clear and cool like a fine October day in England.

I have heard from Ned Baring at Rio. He had not received any of my letters, and did not know what had become of me. I hope he will be here in a month at furthest, as I am much in want of a companion.

The young men of this country do not suit me at all. They are like our gents—and the elder ones remind me always of the class to which Barwell and Sharpe belong in England. The public men in Washington resemble, in dress, physiognomy, and manners, the mayors and aldermen of our provincial towns. The most of them are pompous and formal, and, as to talent for society or charm of manner, I believe they are unknown—certainly uncultivated.

After all I have arrived at the same conclusion with regard to the relative advantages of America and Europe that I suppose everybody else has. This is the country for the poor and unrefined, for as the will of the majority is law, they have everything their own way. For the rich and the refined (if there were any), it is the worst imaginable. There is no provision made for their wants, nor are their tastes or habits consulted. Everything, from hotels and steamboats downwards, is adapted to the million, and there is no choice but to mix with them. Their wealth or cultivation does not exercise its due influence, and serves rather to make them objects of envy and dislike.

As to the form of government, though it ensures a large amount of liberty, it seems to me cumbrous and unwieldy, and so far from being a model to other nations, it is more complicated and unintelligible than our own.

Certainly, if, as Carlyle says, the object of all reformed parliaments and ballot-boxes is to get the wisest man or men to govern, we want some other system than universal suffrage to find them out here.

I have come to the end of the paper, and have given you enough jaw for this week.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Farming Woods,*

*Thursday, Sept. 19th, 1850.*

My dearest Bertram,

I have only time (in order to save to-morrow's post) to say that all has gone off most satisfactorily, and without indulging in commonplaces, it would be difficult to fancy a prettier wedding. The eight bridesmaids looked very nice, and Eva charming. R. V. S. was nervous and terribly cut up, but he behaved firmly. Lord Lansdowne's staying in the house has been an immense break, and made things go on much more agreeably. The Lilfords dine and sleep to-day. About fifty neighbours are arriving to breakfast—a band is playing on the lawn.

I hope you have not been ill. How comes it that you returned to Newport after reaching Niagara *en route* to Canada? Perhaps between the 11th May and the 3rd September some letter has missed, but you do not mention one.

Mrs. Raikes Currie finishes letter.

Dear Bertie,

On coming to my room I find this unfinished letter in my blotting-book, which your father began on first returning from church. It is now 4.30, and the party has dispersed—those I mean who were invited to the breakfast. The "happy pair" left the house at 1.15. Evy showed herself to the guests, but

did not come in to breakfast. George appeared and had just time to return thanks when his health and that of the bride (proposed by Lord Lansdowne) was drunk, which he did in a few words and with good taste. Then came the health of the bridesmaids, proposed by FitzPatrick Vernon, and responded to by the bridegroom's "best man," Maynard, who, after thanking the company in the name of the bridesmaids, said with great *sang-froid*, "that he was empowered by them to say, that they were ready at any moment, at the shortest notice, to take the principal *rôle* in the performance in which they had just acted a subordinate part!" The bridesmaids had been desired to stand up while their health was drunk.

Then Lord Lilford proposed the health of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Smith, and Gowran said a few words in answer. Your father proposed Sir George Robinson, and said a few words very neatly of the obligation he felt to him for having been instrumental in conferring so great a blessing on his son and his family. Sir G. Robinson made a very good speech in reply, with good taste and much feeling and not over-done. There were no long speeches, and everything was *really* in good taste.

I told you of the dresses of the bridesmaids. The three Miss FitzPatricks are bouncing women—the two Miss Powyses pretty—Mary looked very nice, and Edith also.

George had a very neat carriage and four horses, postilions with rose-coloured silk jackets and black velvet caps, new for the occasion. Twelve little girls in white strewed flowers before the bride. There were four triumphal arches decorated with flowers. A band

played on the lawn as soon as we returned from the church. The breakfast was extremely well done. The young ladies danced on the lawn—quadrilles, polkas, and country-dances. The weather was very fine, and the scene altogether a very pretty and animated one. There was a dinner for the labourers and tea for the school-children, and the tenants and servants are to have a dance this evening. At Blisworth the carriage was to be put on the rail. Horses were to be ready at the station to take them to Richmond, which they will reach at 8.30.

I have been writing this with a buzz of voices about me—having come to my own room to be quiet and to write to you. I was followed by Maynard, Philip, and Mary, who talk incessantly. I am very much tired with the excitement of the day, but very thankful for George's prospects of happiness. We all much regretted *you* were not here. Mrs. Vernon has said some civil things about you. Yours, my dear B.,

Very affectionately,

L. S. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Hyde Park Terrace,*

*Thursday night, Sept. 26th, 1850.*

My dear Bertram,

A hasty joint letter was sent off to you after the wedding on Thursday last. Since that a letter from Newport, I think of the 10th inst., reached us at Kimberley. I am now staying here alone,

having been so much away. Your mother, with the girls and Maynard, is visiting in Norfolk, having left Kimberley, Wednesday, the day after I came up, and gone to Rainham: thence she goes to Mr. D. Gurney's, to Letton, and to visit the Captain<sup>1</sup> for some days at Witton.

I went down yesterday to dine with George and Evy at Richmond, and this morning they started to Paris *en route* to Nice. They had a most perfect asylum for the loves at Lord Lansdowne's—a charming house on the hill, "with all appliances and means to boot," and seemed supremely, *i.e.*, calmly and serenely happy. The dear little woman really looked radiant, her eyes bathed in gladness. George, who had assumed for months past the variable spirits and worn aspect of an anxious lover, looked better and brighter than I ever saw him. They have £25,000—her £20,000 and £5,000 in settlement—so need not starve, even if G. cannot learn (but I hope he will) to work. Mr. I. G. C. gave him £100. He, I. G., has bought an excellent house, Lord Templemore's in Upper Grosvenor Street, for £7,000.

The Henleys, Sir A. Campbell, and Mrs. Alfred with Hamilla, were at Kimberley—Lady H. looking very well and very smart. The Wodehouses come to town 1st November, and have taken a house in Lower Brook Street. Lord Lansdowne, who was staying at Farming Woods, told me (what indeed most men say) that John was by far the most promising and rising man in the Lords, not only by his success in speaking,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Admiral the Hon. Edward Wodehouse, Mrs R. Currie's brother.



but by his extreme usefulness and clear reasoning head in committees. Overstone is quite of this opinion. . . .

We were much pleased with Lord Lansdowne, who is excessively well read and well informed, with great kindness and a charming simplicity of character and manner, not without a quiet dignity and extreme repose, which many would mistake for coldness. Just the sort of production which, with all their merits, the States cannot rear.

White tells me he wrote to you about five weeks ago a long letter. He is rather disappointed at not hearing from you, and would, I know, much like to do so, with any information about bread-stuffs, markets, probable exports, and at what prices, mills, &c., you can give him. He is an excellent fellow. The water supply which Bovill undertook with much ignorance of hydraulics has bothered him terribly. The engineer, Mr. Simpson, who came a week ago to Shadwell, says there is a difficulty in river-side supplies, but one to be overcome without *serious* expense, but that he must have some days to consider the best means of doing it. They are anxiously waiting for him, but he is a very great man, immensely engaged, and can't be hurried. Meanwhile they grind enough to show the effect of the patent on the flour, which is talked about and eagerly bought. The delays are really beyond all expression tiresome, but everything which transpires does certainly confirm the value of the patent. I went the other day to Waters' mill at Norwich, who is doing . . . an excellent trade and sending his flour even to Glasgow.

Bovill's trials at Deptford underwent a most searching scrutiny approved by the Admiralty. Grant of Portsmouth being had up for the occasion gives full

four shillings difference on the same wheats, between the best milling in any of their yards and the new plan ; and these were old and dry wheats, where, of course, the difference is the least. The pious Dives has been praying for a wet harvest, which would, he says, have made him comfortable, but it has proved a peculiarly dry one.

I shall be glad to hear that you have moved on to Canada and visited the Elgins, but I suppose Newport has some great attraction. I forgot to tell you that a very fine grass hat has arrived for you from South America, and is carefully put away.

Maynard goes up for his degree in January, and tries for second class.

Your letters always give us great pleasure, and you have been a most regular and excellent correspondent. Pray continue so and give me a good yarn.

I have read Carlyle, and could say a good deal about him. I am by no means sure that he is not *the supreme scoundrel* whom he says we ought, if we could, to catch and hang. I cannot find that he propounds anything intelligible or practical, though he bedaubs all the believings, sayings, or doings of other men with his picturesque or grotesque but most abominable jargon.

Adieu, dear B. I wish you were home again.

TO B. W. C. FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Hyde Park Terrace,*

*Thursday night, October 3rd.*

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 17th from New York. I can quite understand the reaction

occasioned by the continued vulgar *braggadocio* of "Jonathan." We have doubtless our own absurdities, but surely beside the public exhibition of folly in France and America we *are* "a thinking people."

I cannot say that you are *wanted* by W. P. and Co. till the Blackfriars mill is near completion, perhaps in February or March; but if you feel at all disposed to return, it will give us all great pleasure to hear that you are coming before Christmas; but I have felt all along, that having once crossed the Atlantic, *you* must be the best judge of how far knowledge and amusement were making your protracted stay desirable to yourself. I think that when George returns in December, we shall arrange for going with Mary and Edith to Paris for January and part of February. If you were at home, you could reside there with us, and perhaps remain after us: a complete mastery of French will be a requisite in your business.

The monetary affairs of Swayne and B. becoming more unsatisfactory, our course with them has become more "stringent," and they are now, with our full consent, about to move to McGregor's new British Bank! The said bank is to give them a discount credit (you know the sort of bills) for £12,000 on the Millwall mortgage! and a cash credit, *i.e.*, power for overdrawing on the flour patents to the extent of 20 per cent. So much for banking by McGregor. If Bovill can be induced, as he swears he will, to profit by this wonderful opportunity of setting his house in order, to take his various irons *out* of the fire, and concentrate his energies on the patents, he may do well, but he is a miserable financier and madly speculative and sanguine.

Mr. White has received your letter, and will write.

I am leading a very dull life indeed in Hyde Park Terrace and Cornhill. I have been staying two evenings with the J. Lefevres, to whom Overstone has lent Wickham, and I hope about the 12th to join your mother at Witton, and take ten days of sea and country air before we settle in H. P. T. for the season. . . .

I am going on Saturday for the Sunday to John Chandler at Witley, and shall see Mrs. Blunt, who is living in the village.

Lord Eastnor was married to V. Pattle yesterday: he is said to be clever and very agreeable.

There is rather an entertaining article (I suppose by Ford) in the new *Quarterly* on Ticknor's Spanish Literature—a book which I mentioned some time since. Have you seen him? His English style is the purest I have met with from an American, more unadorned than Prescott's.

Our customer, Gilliat, is, in conjunction with others, an immense holder of tobacco, to the amount, I understand, of one million sterling, and a great portion of it, called, I think, strips (not leaf), is now saleable at cent. per cent. profit. If he is wise he will make his fortune and retire.

There is a very good trade doing in the country, but money does not get above  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., 2 per cent. with the brokers. The revenue is wonderfully good; the corn market rather lower, and the farmers floored by a harvest indifferent for the most part in quality and yield, without a chance of better prices. Their 1847 is at hand.

*Friday morning.*—Your mother was to send a letter from Letton, which has not come to hand, but may be posted in the country. She has been making a progress

through Norfolk with Maynard and the girls, and will, I hope, come home on the 12th. I hope you will soon be off to Canada. To us your movements, returning so far, after reaching Niagara, seem rather eccentric.

I am told that the best parties in Paris now are given by a beautiful American—Mrs. Ridgway—very rich and very fascinating. Who is she?

Adieu, dear B.

Ever your affectionate,

RAIKES CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C.

*Washington, October 7th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

In consequence of the late arrival of the steamer, I only received to-day the news of the happy consummation of affairs by the event of the 19th September, and expect very shortly my letters of the 27th with further accounts.

I am much obliged to my mother for so kindly giving me all the particulars of the day, notwithstanding the bustle and excitement of such an event, which I know indispose one for writing letters. She speaks of Maynard and Philip as very talkative, owing, I suppose, to some indulgence in the “foaming grape of Eastern France.” I should like very much to have been there. The whole affair must have been on a grand scale; the *cuisine*, I presume, under the direction of a metropolitan *chef*, and not “in Rincer’s well known style.” The bridesmaids seem to have been

charming. I remember seeing Miss Powys at Brighton with a very pretty face.

By the way, Lady Bulwer told me that the D. of D. had sent poor Miss Florence to the D—, and had given her £100 on her marriage. “Put not your trust in princes” will do for the text of her husband’s first sermon. Does Maynard view this appropriation by a rival parson with indifference? I think he was *épris* either of the young lady or of her mamma.

I am still in Washington, owing to an attack of my old complaint—which showed itself the day before yesterday, and has kept me in bed till to-day. As usual, it is yielding to an enlightened medical treatment, and will, I hope, allow me to proceed on my journey the day after to-morrow.

The Bulwers are going to Canada, and are only delayed by the indisposition of Sir H. Their direction is to Niagara, while I am bound for Quebec.

I should much like to hear of White and his affairs, for, from your letter of the 10th ult., I suppose he has met with further difficulties.

Shall you take a house at Brighton this winter?

*New York, October 15th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

Since my last I have to acknowledge the receipt of two letters, one of which (as it arrived about six weeks after its date) was I suppose sent by a sailing vessel. It contained some verses to Miss Stewart Mackenzie with which I was much amused, and a description of the society at Homburg. The other

gave an account of George's post-nuptial state, which seems to be a most enviable one.

I think from what you say about my travels that one of my letters must have miscarried. I have been to Canada, *i.e.*, to Niagara, Toronto, and Montreal, and only missed *Quebec*. The reason of this was, that my companion, Captain Campbell, of whom I think I told you, was anxious to be present at a grand fancy ball at Saratoga, and we came down from Montreal to attend it, purposing to return by L. Champlain to Montreal and thence to *Quebec*. This, however, he was prevented from doing, and I delayed in hopes of finding a companion.

I have now made up my mind to start to-morrow with the Bulwers, with whom I have come from Washington, and to visit Niagara again, and, once on the St. Lawrence, I shall not return till I have seen *Quebec*.

I wrote some weeks ago to White, and hope he has received my letter, which was addressed to Cornhill. I promised therein to send him some returns of the exports of wheat of this year, but I find they cannot be got without giving Messrs. Goodhere some trouble, and they are really of no importance. The capacity of this country for exporting is almost unlimited, and the quantity will depend upon the price in London. This year prices have been kept up in New York by speculators, the largest of whom, Suydam, Sage, and Co., failed a month ago, for about £500,000. They had an enormous stock of flour on hand, purchased in anticipation of a demand in Europe which never occurred. It appears that flour is exported in preference to wheat, I suppose from its bulk being less;

but there is no difficulty in procuring wheat of any description.

We are still enjoying splendid weather, fine days and cool nights. In London, I suppose you have entered the agreeable fog season.

I am expecting Ned Baring almost daily. He wrote to me from Rio, 31st July, intending to leave for New York in August, and as the passage is about fifty days, he ought to be here in this month.

In the political world there is at present a good deal of excitement. In this State, the nominations for Governor and other minor offices are taking place. The process of nominating is conducted by a convention composed of delegates from the different districts. Each party (*i.e.*, the Democrats and the Whigs) has its separate convention, and abides by their nominations, which collectively are called "the ticket." On this occasion, the everlasting question of slavery has created discord in the Whig camp. At the convention held the other day, about one-third of the delegates seceded from the majority, and the effect will probably be, to throw the State into the hands of the Democrats, who are at present in opposition.

They have also their differences on the same question, being divided into Old Hunkers, or pro-slavery Democrats, and free soilers; but as a party they are more expert tacticians than the Whigs, and will probably unite to a certain extent to defeat them.

This question of slavery is the grand difficulty of this country, and its settlement seems almost impossible. At the same moment that it is dividing parties in the North, meetings are held in Georgia, S. Carolina, and the extreme Southern States, advo-



cating a secession from the Union in consequence of the interference of the North with the institution of slavery. It is worse than our Irish difficulty, for in England all parties are pretty well united on the necessity of doing something, and remedial measures meet with little opposition, whereas here they are diametrically opposed.

TO B. W. C. FROM HIS MOTHER.

*Witton, October 9th. 1850.*

You will have heard from your father of our movements since we left Farming Woods on the 20th. I wrote to you from thence an account of the wedding. Since that time we have been to Kimberley, Raynham—Aunt Charlotte's; she is well and comfortable in a snug little parsonage—Ranston and Letton. Mr. Daniel Gurney has two pretty daughters left. One lately married Mr. Herbert Jones, a brother of the poor man who was killed in Syria. At Letton, we found little Brammy and his family settled in their new home. They have made a garden near the house, which improves the place. Amy Gurdon is to make her *début* at a Dereham ball to-morrow evening. A large party is invited to Letton for the occasion. Lord Wodehouse and Robert Gurdon, Esq., are the stewards. The Boileaus and sundry young men, among whom I heard the names of Newton, Foster, and Ridley, are to be there, also Maynard, who is gone from Witton to-day for the purpose.

Maynard has been going about with us, and will

accompany us to London on the 14th. Your father wished us to stay on in Norfolk, though he was unable to join us, but I have not liked leaving him at all. He and I are engaged to go to Wivenhoe on the 16th, and on the 18th to Ampthill. Mary and Edith must stay in H. P. Terrace with Miss Stewart.

We have letters from George from Fontainebleau, dated Sunday, 6th. They spent a full week at Paris, and seem to have enjoyed themselves very much. They were to proceed on the 7th, *via* Dijon, Lyons, &c., to Nice. He says: "We have hired a capital roomy French chariot for two months for £14, which will be invaluable in returning in the cold weather. Our climate now is delicious, rather rainy but warm—peaches, pears, and grapes, in perfection. In Paris we saw the Radstocks, Ph. Wodehouses, J. A. Smiths, &c. . . . I need hardly tell you that we are exceedingly happy, in fact there is nothing left to wish for. . . ."

Philip is to come to H. P. T. on Saturday, to spend his birthday, 13th, at home. He will be sixteen, as you know. He is very much grown and promises to be tall. At Christmas he must, I fear, move into *tails*: the intermediate coat between a jacket and tails which he wore when abroad suited his figure—a sort of Rochfort.

Maynard is going to Horsley on the 15th, till he returns to Cambridge on the 19th. In January next he is to take his Degree, and intends, he says, to go up for Honours. I have no hope of his taking any but a common degree, for I cannot believe he ever reads or ever will read. He seems to me to have no power of applying his mind to study. In all other respects he promises to be well fitted for the profession he is

destined for. He is quiet and steady in his habits, and chooses his friends well.

Mr. and Mrs. Berney Petre are near neighbours, and dined here one day. They are only lately returned from the United States. She thought she had heard your name, but did not remember having seen you. She is a sister of Miss Stewart Mackenzie, with whom your father flirted at Homburg! not so well looking nor so agreeable. . . .

. . . I suppose you fill up your spare time, of which you must have a great deal, by much reading. I shall be very glad when you are safe at home again, though I doubt not you are gaining much useful knowledge and experience. . . .

Ever, my dear B.,

Your affectionate

MOTHER.

The letter of October 23rd, alluded to in the following, has not been preserved. It is the first missing of the series from America.

FROM B. W. C.

*Montreal, November 1st, 1850.*

My dear Father,

On my arrival here to-day, I found your letter of the 4th October, and one from my mother written a few days later. After I wrote from Niagara on the 23rd ult., I stayed on there till the 28th. The Bulwers left the day after my letter, to pay Lord Elgin a visit at Toronto, but Sir H. Bulwer's secretary,

Mr. Fenton, stayed with me, and we took long walks together, though the weather was cold and rainy. We had the hotel to ourselves, the season for travelling in these parts being over, and suffered some discomfort from cold, against which there is no provision made in the summer hotels. Mr. Fenton, in addition to other merits, possesses that of knowing where his money is safe, and accordingly leaves it in the hands of Messrs. Currie and Co. I have forgotten the account, but he tells me it came from Dorriens. I think I recollect a spinster of the name of Cumming to whom he is related.

To return to my travels. On the 28th I left Niagara, and at the place of embarkation met the Bulwers on their return from Toronto. The passage across Lake Erie is rather tempestuous when the wind is high, as was the case on that day.

I stayed but one day at Toronto, which has no particular interest beyond what attaches to any thriving American town. Lord Elgin does not live at the Government House, celebrated in Head's book, but in a villa outside the town. I had the honour of dining with him there. He seems very intelligent and talkative, and perfectly satisfied with the success of his administration, of which, not understanding Canadian politics, I cannot form an opinion. The disturbances at Montreal and other unfortunate events he looks upon as necessary to the triumph of his system, which is no less than the important one of responsible government. His present advisers, unlike almost all their predecessors, enjoy the confidence of the Lower House, and it was for supporting their measure—the Rebellion Losses Bill—against the

minority (composed of the Family Compact and the Tories) that he became obnoxious to the citizens of Montreal. Lady Elgin is very amiable and pleasing, but has not at all the manners of the *grande dame*.

I left Toronto on the 30th and arrived here to-day, after a long passage of forty-eight hours—the delay being occasioned by fogs and other accidents. All the travellers for pleasure having gone home, the passengers were few in number and uninteresting in quality. I go on to Quebec, if nothing new turns up, to-morrow, and having seen the Gibraltar of the New World, shall hasten back as quickly as decency will permit to New York, as it is by far too cold for comfort in these regions.

I passed to-day the estate of Beauharnois (I always thought it was Bohany), from which you are to receive such a vast revenue. There seem to be villages upon it, and I hear the land is excellent. I dare say the speculation is as good as many of Bovill's. What an ass McGregor must be to think he knows anything of the "mystery" or craft of banking. The career of the British Bank will be short, conducted upon his principles. From what I remember of Bovill he will not have the decency to keep a balance, even with his £20,000 advance.

Jenny Lind has returned to New York, after singing at Boston and Philadelphia. I think the reaction of the recent absurd enthusiasm is beginning, though at present it has only set in against Barnum. I have not been to see her, partly because I think she has probably forgotten the acquaintance, and partly because her *entourage* is anything but respectable. Tell Mrs. Grote that her friend has made a dreadful mistake in engag-

ing herself to such a mountebank as Barnum. Bunn of Drury Lane, as compared to him, is as Lumley to the proprietor of a wild beast show. He is the very type of a calculating Yankee, and Jenny must eventually be more or less identified with his swindles and dodges.

Mrs. Ridgway, of whom you speak, is the daughter of Mr. Willing, one of the principal people in Philadelphia. She is not the first American lady who has made a sensation at Paris. In fact it is a favourite object of ambition with them, and said to be easily attainable by those who will spend money enough. There is a Mrs. Thorn now in New York, who for some years gave the best balls at Paris, and who is consequently ruined. Bulwer told me that the old French nobility who would not go to the native balls, used to be anxious to get invitations to his house, and I have heard that it is the same with Mrs. Ridgway.

I should much like the plan you propose of going to Paris. If you remember, I was anxious to go there rather than to South America, and I still think that there is no advantage to be gained in foreign countries equal to a thorough knowledge of French.

I shall start for the South before the end of this month, and having seen New Orleans and Habana, should be quite ready to return in January, but as you say there will be nothing for me to do, it will hardly be worth while to leave those charming climates for the smoke and east winds of London.

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

I am now in daily expectation of Ned Baring.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS SISTER MARY.

*Montreal, November 2nd, 1850.*

My dear Mary,

I was charmed at receiving your letter this dull evening, and shall hasten to send an answer in time for the steamer. I can make out from it, that in the year and eight months of my absence you have altered a good deal, and among other improvements I notice a great one in your handwriting—a remark which I hope will not displease a young lady who must be almost “out.” So the youngest of your friends, Amy B. Gurdon, has made that important plunge at Dereham. I trust she managed to subdue those “crisped, snaky, golden locks,” for the grand occasion, or perhaps the young gentlemen of Norfolk are not particular in hair. May she avoid poor Charlotte’s fate in being united to a “coarse, vulgar man,” though probably he is a very sensible person, and can offer her a respectable home and good attendance in Portland Place.

I was very sorry to be absent from the wedding, which is quite an *epoch* in the family history. In fact I was very sorry to be absent at all, from the delights of Taplow (which I have never seen), as well as from those of this summer, and when I *do* come back I shall be dreadfully behindhand in all that has happened, and require a great many confabulations with you to put me *au courant*.

I am here, not wind, but fog-bound, having intended to start for Quebec this evening, and being

prevented by a dense fog. To-morrow is Sunday, and the boats do not run, so that I must pass my time here till Monday. It is a just punishment for travelling about at this time of year, when everybody else has gone home. Now that I have come so far I must see Quebec, though I should be glad of an excuse to get off.

I remember hearing of Lakes Superior, Huron, Erie, Ontario, Champlain, &c., in your lessons of geography, and hope you have not forgotten where they are. I have only just found out from travelling on them.

This place is the capital of Lower Canada, and was, as I dare say you know, taken by us from the French. The country is still almost exclusively inhabited by French peasants, who preserve their laws, religion, and language, though they speak the last abominably.

I am glad to hear that the dear babe has not lost her fat face. I cannot fancy her thin. Is she as jocose as ever? Give her a hundred kisses from me, and write again soon to your most affectionate brother,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

P.S.—I wrote yesterday to *le père*, his letter should arrive at the same time as this.



Quebec, Nov. 8th, 1850.

My dear Mother,

At this distance from Boston I am obliged to write to-day to be in time for the steamer of the 12th. I left Montreal on the 4th and arrived here the next morning. The steamers travel at night between the two places, so that I can give you no account of the beauties of the St. Lawrence, and of Quebec, although this is my fourth day, I have seen very little. For the first two days, I could not leave the house in consequence of incessant rain. We are now blessed with a hard frost every morning, and a wind which cuts like a sixteen-bladed penknife. I have been suffering from Mary's annual grievance—chilblains—which I have not had since I was at Cheam.

The principal sight here, after the citadel and the Plains of Abraham, where Wolfe licked the French and died, is the Fall of Montmorency, said to be two hundred and forty feet in height, or about eighty feet higher than Niagara. I thought it my duty to drive there yesterday, in spite of rude Boreas.

To-day I have been all over the citadel with Colonel Gordon Higgins, who is the Commandant and Colonel of the Artillery, and a very jolly Irishman, not of the Anak family to which our Higgins belongs, but brother to the Duke of Gloucester's H. There are two regiments of the Line. One commanded by Colonel Maule, brother of Mr. Fox Maule, and the other by Colonel Hay, *beau-père* of Leonard. I hear that there is a young Currie in that regiment, who I suppose must be the son of our distinguished relation.

After seeing the citadel I went to the Plains of Abraham, where there is, of course, a mean and hideous monument to the memory of the immortal Wolfe. The steep cliff up which he brought his men did not appear to me so difficult as I had read of, and I think any man could get up it without much difficulty. However, the great feat consisted in licking the French next day.

The views from the heights, on which the citadel and a great part of the city is built, are very fine, and the fortress appears to be immensely strong. It would make poor Mr. Cobden furious to see the quantity of money which has been spent here, and certainly without any great reason, as the Yankees, the only enemy to be feared in this quarter, are quite incapable of taking any place with half the strength of Quebec.

I have not quite made up my mind whether to leave this to-morrow or on Monday the 10th.

I am sorry to hear that the C—— is to be married to a snob, though perhaps they are the best husbands. She is certainly a very dull girl, but, with plenty of money, would make a very good, every-day wife. What does the pious C—— book up?

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

TO B. W. C. FROM HIS FATHER.

*Hyde Park Terrace, 24th Oct., 1850.*

Your mother and Mary have written by the two last posts, and I have postponed doing so, because I would not, till after most mature consideration, come to a decision on the necessity of your return. I have been for some weeks constantly in Cornhill up to the 16th, and have given a good deal of attention also to the affairs of White, Ponsford, and Co.

The upshot is, that I think there are so many important points for decision, and so much to be *arranged* and *done*, that I cannot take either the responsibility or labour thereof, and though I have been very loth to bring you home in the winter, I am quite convinced now that *your return is indispensable*. I have not allowed the very strong desire which we all feel, to have you again amongst us, to influence me at all in this matter.

Ponsford has gone on, I believe, altogether satisfactorily with the great building. It will (I understand) be roofed in, in December. He has borrowed nothing from us, or, as far as I know, from any one, and he has done the whole thing off his own bat. Seen from Blackfriars Bridge, with its vast chimney rapidly growing, it is an amazing pile. The great boilers are in, and the machinery in a forward state. The immense influx of visitors to London, calculated by hundreds of thousands, expected in 1851, seems a favourable time for flour producers to start; but there are a great many points wanting undivided attention and a good head to decide upon.

White gives me entire satisfaction. I think he thoroughly understands his business, is painstaking, persevering, honest, and perfectly practical, not scheming, visionary, or over-sanguine. His industry and constant working at Shadwell will turn to good account, and indeed that experimental mill has been and will be *everything* for P. D. I know not what you would have done without it.

The whole manufacture is so greatly modified by the blast and new modes of dressing, that the most experienced miller has his business in some sort to learn, and he (White) has already effected most important improvements in the processes as conducted in Westrop's mill. The present water supply only enables him to work five pair of stones, which of course is disadvantageous as to present profits: but I am the principal sufferer by this, as I cannot in reason take my royalties till the thing is in full swing, and he has had so much to modify in small details of machinery and to learn in various ways, that perhaps this is as well.

There are various ways of remedying the defective supply of water, but it is most important, specially with reference to the future, to find out which is the most *economical* and the most *effective*.

White sells almost entirely to three great and wealthy factors for cash, at prices lower than he could get from the bakers, wishing to run no risk, to interest these powerful persons in the business, and to get his flour known and established.

Bovill has made many mistakes in the machinery and had much to correct, and White is determined to proceed on a different plan with him as to P. D.

S. and B. have been, and are, in a considerable mess, and their account has required all my attention. I have at last got the *whole power over their patent* under agreement drawn by Murray *with power of sale*, i.e., *purchase* peremptorily, into our hands. Dives' present rent amounts to £2,500 per annum, and is increasing, so you will see what an important point this may be. I have felt it more than probable that S. and B. would not get the accommodation they said they were certain of from McGregor's Joint Stock Bank, and it is still quite on the cards that they may be bankrupts. At all events, I have insisted on Bovill selling and giving up altogether his engineering business and devoting himself exclusively to the protection, promulgation, &c., of his patent.

A son of Lord Petre's, a very clever engineer who has £14,000 of his own, is now in town from Glasgow, and in conjunction with Bramwell, a very steady fellow with £4,000, who has been the working man at Millwall, will, I hope, take that business, forming an entirely new firm, and one likely to do their work steadily and with attention. It is extremely difficult to get Ponsford to attend to business (except the actual building), but he is always at Brighton or engaged some way or other, and White is left without assistance on many points, and much impeded because very properly he wishes to consult him on all. In some things, such as drawing cheques for the milling business, P. is crotchety and stupidly obstinate beyond belief. All this your presence would set right; in fact, you and W. could and would act without him, as he is quite useless as a partner for the routine business.

A formal report has been made to the Admiralty

by Grant, the head of the Portsmouth Yard (had up for the purpose), on the experiments at Deptford. This is highly favourable. In consequence of the tricks and obstructions, as well as roguery developed in the course of Bovill's proceedings there among the officials, a court-martial, presided over by Commodore Eden, is now holding on the staff at Deptford, on nine charges preferred by Bovill. He is carrying all before him, and the men will be all dismissed, but meanwhile the whole of his time for days together is taken up there.

If you have at last gone to Canada, I suppose you will receive this there. I do not know anything about the probabilities of weather, but, leaving much to your discretion, I shall depend on seeing you before Christmas.

I was very sorry to hear that you had been indisposed at Washington. I feel every hope that by great care your constitution will naturally improve in a year or two, as I remember mine did after twenty-three.

We have not yet heard from G. and E. from Nice. We have been at Amptill and passed three or four days very pleasantly, meeting the R. V. Smiths, Aldersons, &c. The Stewart Mackenzies are in town for the winter, and dined here yesterday. We do not think of Brighton, but of Paris in January. Ever, dear B.,

Most affectionately yours,

R. C.

FROM B. W. C.

*New York, Nov. 18th, 1850.*

My dear Father,

I received your summons at Montreal on my way from Quebec, and shall lose no time in setting my house in order. The steamers for the next fortnight are, as a matter of course, the least comfortable of the line, so that I have not quite determined on the day of departure, though I think it will be the 4th December. I may perhaps be delayed till the 11th, in case Baring (who has arrived at New Orleans and is on his way here) purposes coming home, but even then I should be with you on Christmas Day.

I am very much interested with your account of the affairs of W. P. and Co., and pleased with their prosperous aspect. I think my presence will be of advantage to myself, as gaining some insight into the business, but of none to the firm, as I am daily convinced that without experience one is good for nothing, especially in matters of business, a conclusion generally arrived at I suppose sooner or later.

This is not a profession of modesty, but what I really think.

After the date of my last letter I stayed four or five days at Quebec, and was much pleased with the beauty of its situation and surrounding country. I found a cousin there in the person of Douglas, son of Leonard, a good-looking and rather bright young fellow, who has certainly improved upon the paternal exemplar. His uncle, Colonel Hay (whom I remember

in the note-book), commands the regiment, and was very civil and kind.

I left Quebec on the 11th, as the cold was becoming rather excessive, and travelled three nights and two days, principally in steamers, to New York. The Bulwers, whom I left at Toronto, have returned here, and are reinforced by the arrival of Mr. Lytton, son of Sir E. B. L., as an *attaché*. They are at present at Boston.

The fashionable world is beginning to attract its votaries, and we have Parodi at the opera, who seems to be a fine actress and singer. The Lind continues her concerts. I am afraid that this immaculate creature is something of a humbug, and not so simple as the world imagines. *A propos* she has really made an agreement with Barnum to sing in London under his auspices. What will Mrs. Grote say?

I do not hear of much preparation here for the Exhibition of '51, but I think the number of visitors will be great. A grand speculation might be made, I fancy, by setting up an hotel on the American plan, to be called the United States Hotel or the General Washington, managed by a Yankee and supplied with the American delicacies and drinks. Hotel keeping here is the best business there is, not only on account of its great profits, but from the social position it confers upon those who follow it. The landlords generally have the brevet rank of General or Colonel, and I have known one who was a Judge. They lord it over their poor customers in a most tyrannical way.

I was much amused with Philip's letter,<sup>1</sup> though from an ignorance of the context I am at a loss to

<sup>1</sup> See page 452.



know what could have induced Hayes to depart so far from the usual formal relations with his alumni; perhaps it is a part of the new system of education, as Chapman would say, *emollit mores*, &c.

I know a good many men of business in New York, and find them generally very shrewd and sensible, though not worshippers of the Graces. There is a grand field for business of all sorts in this city, which is fast becoming the emporium of the West, and I think, if such a thing were not repugnant to the time-honoured usages of London bankers, that the money which is almost useless there might be invested here in bills of exchange with great profit and equal security. From what I hear, I have no doubt that in time a deposit business might be secured by any private banker in good credit. The banks in New York are corporations, and the majority issue notes, though by a recent State law they must deposit an equivalent amount of State stock in the hands of the authorities. Otherwise they resemble our London banks; they allow no interest and charge no commission, and use their capital and deposits in the discount of bills. Seven per cent. is the legal rate of interest, and is charged on the best paper. As to permanent investments, the present seems to be a bad time, as the stocks are very high, partly, I believe, in consequence of the demand in England and from returns having been made largely in that shape. With love to all,

Your affectionate son.

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

TO B. W. C. FROM HIS FATHER.

*Friday, Nov. 1st, 1850.*

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 15th, New York, on Monday last, the 28th October.

As you did not mention health, I hope you were quite recovered. We certainly missed at least one letter in August. I got one from Niagara, dated 11th August, the next after that was "Providence, September 3rd," in which you say, "We came on from Newport. To-morrow we return there, and I shall work my way back to Montreal and Quebec"—but no further allusion to the North; so we missed any account of Montreal, and thought that you did not get farther than Niagara. Did you use your letter to Lord Elgin? Perhaps you will see him now.

You have been a most regular and excellent correspondent over a period of twenty months.

*πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω.*

I hope the next line will not apply—

*πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθει,*

but that you will have a pleasant and prosperous voyage to the "buzzum" of your expecting family. The calf, or rather turkey, is already fattening; please God you come safe back to us, you shall have a hearty welcome.

Every day shows me more and more the necessity of your presence for the progress of W. and P.'s affairs. The financial crisis of Bovill is still impending, and there is some probability, I think, that events will

enable W. and P. (perhaps in conjunction with Dives) to purchase or buy up their own royalties.

White has made a better "loaf of bread" than Dives from the same wheats, which seems to have given him great satisfaction. He, W., is most industrious and zealous, with good sound judgment; a very satisfactory man to act with and I think a thoroughly good fellow. Your tall chimney, from the ground 170 feet high, is rapidly growing to its full standard. The roof will be begun in a fortnight or three weeks.

We are settled in Hyde Park Terrace, but are going to-day to W. Horsley, with Mary and Edith, till Wednesday. We have heard from G. and Evy from Nice, and *en route* to Genoa along the Corniche road. I suppose they will return just before Christmas. The house in Hyde Park Street is now his, purchased with the furniture, &c., for £4,300, of which he got £4,000 from his trustees, and which is I think not more than the value of the *house alone*, but circumstances enabled him to get it a bargain. His trustees are going to lend 15,000 at 4 per cent. to *our* Whittingstall, on a very good mortgage. They, S. and W., owe us all the money. George sold Cheam for the *acct.* to *our* D. Witton, (who bought it on speculation) for £5,000, so *that* money (being lent to G.) was put into his settlement, instead of clogging it with a villa property.

Though profits are very low, business in Cornhill is well kept together, and I think our customers are improving. Balances are large. Both the South Australian Companies are doing well and keep capital accounts.

There is doubtless an excellent trade doing in the

country, but the poor agriculturists are severely punished.

Lady Morley I saw on Sunday passing through to Bowood. From her window in Kent House, the monster Crystal Palace, or rather its skeleton, is already seen rising in gigantic proportions. Prince Albert's speech in the *Times*, 26th October, is admirable.

Mr. I. G. C. has possession of 45, Upper Grosvenor Street, but will not get in for some time, as Madame bestows a thorough renovation on it. . . . He is excessively lame, feeble, and shaky, but in other respects quite as well as ever, more in Cornhill than usual, though we never leave him alone there; but, poor fellow, he perseveres in blotting, blotching, and blundering in the books most painfully. . . .

As you like to hear of Hayes, I send a letter Mary has just received from Philip. Adieu, dear B.

FROM PHILIP W. CURRIE TO HIS SISTER MARY.

*Eton College.*

. . . My tutor's party came off last night. It was splendid fun. He invited all the fellows in his house, and a great many besides—in all about eighty, and the entire number was about one hundred and fifty. We began at seven o'clock by a conjuror—the renowned Spratt of Bond Street, who came down for the occasion. He was, as all private conjurors are, rather painful, and for the last half-hour we had a most vivid and unpleasing representation of the black hole of

Calcutta. After the conjuring was over we began to dance. The little ones danced in the school-room downstairs, and we danced in the drawing-room, where the conjuror had previously been. There were very few of the Eton fellows who could dance; so that we "dancers" had lots of partners. I enjoyed it immensely. There were two or three girls who danced very well, and I worked away incessantly. Two or three of the little boys were carried off to bed at an early stage of the proceedings in a state of intense intoxication; but otherwise all went off very well. The pupil-room, being hung with red curtains and carpeted for the occasion, was used as a refreshment-room, and there was a sitting-down supper in the dining-room. The refreshments were done (as the Brighton paper would say) in a style of unexampled magnificence by Mr. Layton, whose arrangements need only be mentioned to be admired, &c. Sarai officiated at the tea-table arrayed in a new cap ribbon. The Rosy God crowned the feast with plenteous libations, and a certain degree of hilarity was, towards the end of the evening, diffused over all parties by his influence. Hayes himself became *unusually* affectionate, and called me an "old fellow," patted me on the back, and displayed other signs of the influence of the genial Rosy. I have filled up all my letter with an account of this entertainment; but I have nothing else to tell you about. Give my love to the parents, Babe, Miss Stewart, &c., and believe me, darling Molly, to be

Your affectionate brother,

PHILIP.

Mrs. Raikes Currie wrote from Hyde Park Terrace :

*November 8th, 1850.*

Your letter dated Niagara Falls, October 23rd, reached us yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I am very sorry to hear you had been suffering from swelled face and that your journey had been a cold and disagreeable one. *We* also had cold weather the end of October, but since November began, the weather has been mild and fine.

We went to Horsley on the 1st, and only returned home yesterday. Mary had her pony and your father "Sir Tatton." They rode daily with Emmie or Mary, and we had altogether a very pleasant visit. Mr. Henry Currie went to London nearly every day. Emmie and Mary were very nice and pleasing. They were anxious to hear about you, and talked of your being so agreeable and amusing the last time you were at Horsley. We had a Mr. Gifford and Captain Moore, who lives in the neighbourhood, a nephew of Mr. Arthur Eden, in the house, and Dr. Lushington to dinner.

We had a letter from George yesterday, written on the road from Nice to Genoa. Poor Evelyn had been very unwell, and they had been obliged to stop at a place called Oviglia. George sent an express nearly seventy miles over the mountains to Nice for Dr. Travis, an English physician there. He arrived in twenty-four hours. Meanwhile they found a native doctor, who prescribed soothing remedies, and Travis was satisfied with what had been done. She had

<sup>1</sup> It has been mentioned, p. 435, that this letter is the only one missing of the series.

violent pain, fainting-fits, and hysterics. When G. wrote she had been ill five days, was still confined to her bed, but was mending daily and was taking quinine. G. hoped that in a few days they would be able to return to Nice. He would not venture to proceed farther on their route to Genoa. They had found Nice at the beginning of October hot and glaring, like Brighton in July! By this time I dare say the climate is more agreeable. Poor George must have been intensely anxious about her, but I trust from his letter she was going on satisfactorily. I have always felt fearful about her health. She certainly does look very delicate.

The second Miss FitzPatrick is to marry Captain Dawson, brother to Lord Cremorne.

The Pope's Bull, dividing England into dioceses, and appointing an Archbishop of Westminster, &c., and still more Dr. Wiseman's letter, have caused much discussion and given rise to sundry newspaper articles. On the 5th of November the London public showed their indignation at the conduct of His Holiness by burning an immense Pope in effigy, and carrying about "Guy Fawkeses" in the garb of cardinals. Lord John Russell, in a letter to the Bishop of Durham, condemns this late act of the Pope, but is still more severe on certain clergymen of the Church of England. However, you will read his letter. I will send the paper.

We are not going to Brighton this year, but mean to stay in London. Our drawing-rooms are to be ready next week. They are very pretty, but too splendid to please me. At present we are sitting in the library.

While I am writing, a letter from George, dated November 1st, is put into my hands. He says Evelyn

is going on well, but she had been in bed eight days. He hoped to set out on their way back to Nice on the 3rd.

We are going to-morrow to visit the Childerses, who have hired a house near Uxbridge. They wished to be within reach of London for the sake of their son, who has lately got a commission in the Guards. We are to meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer. . . .

You say, dear Bertie, in your last letter that you have for some time past been getting very home-sick. I thought so from your letters, and am not sorry for it, as you will the less regret your summons home. I have been rather regretting that you should return without seeing the Southern States; but your father says your presence is now really much needed in the mill, and I need not tell you how *very* glad we shall be to have you with us again. We are already anxiously looking forward to the time of your arrival. It will be a great happiness to me if I may again see all my dear children assembled together.

Maynard is supposed to be reading for his Degree, which he is to take in January. I cannot believe he will go up for Honours, as I am sure he has never read steadily, and *some* reading must be needed for a common degree. . . .

The Dowager Lady Suffield died last week. She had been for some weeks confined to her bed and was quite blind. Lord Lothian, her great-nephew, who is nineteen years of age, succeeds to Blickling. All the estates which did not belong to the original property are left to Lord Henry Kerr. Your Aunt Emma gets £1,000 and her boy Hubby £1,000. The old Dowager allowed her £50 a year, so she is about as well off as



during Lady S.'s life ; but it will be a great loss to her that Blickling will be shut up, as she used to meet her own family there.

The great building in the Park progresses rapidly. It is to be covered in by the 1st January, to be ready for the reception of goods. It will be a beautiful fairy-like edifice of cast iron and glass. Sixteen hundred men are at work at it.

I think I told you that Mr. I. G. has bought a house in Upper Grosvenor Street. His wife has just taken him to Brighton. He is very lame and weak in body and mind—worse than useless in Cornhill.

Your father is very well. "Little Francis" called on me the other day. He has just returned from Italy, having been to visit his brother William on the Lake of Como, who has built, he says, a palace there.

I will not tease your eyes with crossing, and only add our very affectionate love and that I am always, dear Bertie,

Your very affectionate

MOTHER.

The following letter to his father is the last that Bertram wrote from America :

*New York, November 26th, 1850.*

I have just made up my mind to start on the 4th of December, by the *Niagara*. Baring arrived here a day or two ago from the South, and will, I hope, accompany me home. If we are fortunate we shall be in London before the 18th. The weather at this time of year is very stormy, but the prevailing wind is north-west and in our favour.

By last mail I received a letter from my mother, and am sorry to hear of my sister-in-law's illness. I hope that she and George will have arrived in England before I come.

Baring is in great force, with a beard like a pirate, and delighted with Buenos Ayres, where of course he fell in love with all my old friends. The nymphs of the South are far more attractive than our New Yorkers. I was yesterday at a dinner to which eleven of the principal beauties were bidden, but could see nothing to admire except their faces.

There is nothing new. Sir Henry Bulwer is here with his nephew—a clever young fellow.

I suppose this letter will close my correspondence for some time, and as the post is going out, I must hasten to its conclusion, and remain, with love to all,

Your affectionate son,

B. W. CURRIE.

LETTERS FROM LONDON AND  
SWITZERLAND.

1851. 1852.



#### IV.

##### LETTERS.

1851. 1852.

In the October of 1851, Mr. and Mrs. Raikes Currie, with their two daughters and Miss Stewart, left England in order to spend the winter in Italy. Several letters from George and Bertram, written at this period, have been preserved. Unfortunately I can find none from the travellers, except two notes to Maynard from Genoa and one from Venice. Mr. Raikes Currie's impressions of Rome and Naples would have been particularly interesting.

The following letter from George W. Currie to his father is addressed to the Poste Restante, Nice.

*London, October 25th, 1851.*

My dear Father,

Evy and I both had your letters from Paris. I lost no time in forwarding the air bath thro' Mac Cracken's, who promised it should arrive in time.

You must have enjoyed Paris immensely; indeed, if I mistake not, you will for the present look back to it with regret as the pleasantest part of your journeyings—at least we did so.

Maynard was here yesterday on his way to Wells, but I did not see him, as I had chosen that day to stay at Horsley, where we are fixed till Monday. Evy gets on famously with the two girls. I went

out rabbit shooting yesterday. W. J. Evelyn is staying there. Mr. H. Currie has had a bad swelled face and does not seem very well. He is at home to-day.

We have some thoughts of making a short visit to Brighton if we can find some cheap accommodation there, as Evy suffers from the London fogs which fairly set in just after your departure. In fact (you will read this with satisfaction) there has been a dense, heavy, black fog over town and country for the last three or four days.

Cooper C. and P. are still going on. I cannot learn that Lord P. means to assist them. He has sold stock and paid us off the £10,000; he was here on that occasion and was very friendly, but did not allude to that firm. They, C. C. and P., had a squeak for it the other day when they had a £2,000 acceptance to meet, and wanted further advance on produce, which I declined. They found the money, however. I have had the sugars which we held, put into J. Lawford's name, so that is all right, and on the failure of Temple and Co., on whom we had a £570 bill, they took it away at our desire.

Money since the dividends has been very heavy. The brokers will not look at us, so, after sitting some days with the amount nearly £200,000, we bought 20s. exchequer bills at a high premium, but they are already 2s. higher and we get a small interest. I have written to-day to Drapers Hall to urge the payment of another £2,500 due yesterday. M'Neill talks about 2s. 6d. We have not yet had Murray's opinion, but it does not look well. There are no assets, and he talks about his own note at eighteen months!

Bertram goes down with me to Horsley to-day. We come up on Monday and dine same day with G. Hibbert and meet Lady Morley. . . .

Kossuth has arrived at Southampton. Some of the Radical papers state that an eminent banker and M.P. of long standing, has generously placed his house in a fashionable quarter at K.'s disposal.

Old Wilton has had an auction of Cheam House, but without success. I advise him to advance capital to one of the Cheam ushers who could set up a rival establishment with great success. I would tout for pupils.

We shall hope to hear from you soon; what you think of Nice, &c., and how all of you like the journey, the carriage, Linné, &c.

Kiss the dear Babe from me. Mr. H. C. says Miss Georgiana Currie will certainly marry her landlord. He (the landlord) says he never was aware of the excellence of Miss C.'s port till Mr. R. Currie called his attention to it. Mr. H. C. and daughters are going to Pierrepont<sup>1</sup> on the 6th proximo.

The Screws are screwing away. They launch a large ship on Monday and want Emily to christen it. They have had a great row in their board with Laming, the managing director, who ventured to propose an amendment to a motion of Mr. H. C. They want to turn him out, but he won't go. Ever your affectionate son,

G. W. CURRIE.

<sup>1</sup> The residence of Miss Georgiana Currie.

FROM B. W. C. TO MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*Cornhill, Nov. 7th, 1851.*

My dear Father,

You have certainly chosen a good season to absent yourself from London, as our proverbial weather this year is worse than ever. We have had continual northerly winds and excessive cold for a fortnight.

There is nothing new or important in my affairs. As to Messrs. C. and Co., they received a letter from Edward Lawford yesterday containing a cheque for £11,300, but this I believe you have heard of. Mr. I. G. C. is embarrassed with his riches, £3,000, and asked me to-day when I should want any money. I am afraid I cannot help him at present, as it will not do to let Ponsford see that I have any sources of further advance at present.

Cooper, Currie, and Co. are to go on. Few came here yesterday, and said that they had served Cooper with a notice of compulsory dissolution of partnership, which he agreed to upon receiving a bonus of £100, after having threatened to go down to Liverpool and declare himself a bankrupt. Lord Petre has paid in his cheque on the Commercial Bank for £2,000, and a man named Mason his for £2,500. George thinks the latter is going into partnership with them. I suppose the account will be removed to the Joint, as with the last-named cheque they paid off their loan here.

I dined last night with my Aunt Harriet and met Lady Young and her daughters, devout women of



the Anglo-Catholic persuasion. Otherwise, I have seen nobody in London. All the world is at Brighton I believe, and I shall go there for a few days the week after next, and enjoy the hospitality of Miss Lize Palk.

Consols are to go up to 98 to  $\frac{1}{8}$ , notwithstanding the bad news from the Cape. Lawford has orders to sell at 98 $\frac{1}{2}$ . The Gas shares could be sold yesterday at 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  premium. Are you a seller? I think at 5 premium it would not be a bad move considering all the uncertainties of amalgamation.

Love to all. Yours affectionate,

B. W. CURRIE.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO HIS SON MAYNARD.

*Genoa, Friday, Nov. 14th, 1851.*

We have wished, had it been possible, to spare you all the dreadful anxiety which we have suffered from Monday last. Our darling Edith has been and still is most alarmingly ill, and you may think what that is at such a place as this, where you can trust no medical advice.

She has a pulse of extreme irritation about 120, amounting to fever of the type of bilious diarrhœa. She has taken no food except spoonfuls of milk and water, and once or twice of chicken broth, since Sunday last.

From Tuesday evening she has wandered in a sort of waking sleep, talking dreams with her eyes generally open, being sometimes again quite her own

darling self when talked to by your mother or Sanderson.

Thank God she had last night for the first time some calm sleep, gentle perspiration, and has for a time this morning been quite herself, though too languid to notice anything. Sanderson thinks her rather better. At the same time the pulse continues 118, and the access of burning fever will return, and at the *very best* it must be a case of extreme anxiety for many days to come.

Mrs. Brown, the wife of the consul, a sensible experienced woman, has been very kind, and the old physician she has recommended, Viviani, is, I think, a scientific experienced man. Dr. Giglioli, whom we first called in, was educated partly at Edinburgh, is married to an Englishwoman, seems a respectable man and is very kind and attentive, coming three times a day.

Your dear mother to be really known must be seen in such trying scenes as this, calm, thoughtful, and indefatigable. Sanderson is all a nurse can be. The people of the hotel are very kind and attentive. I endeavour to throw myself in prostrate submission to the will of God.

Write, dearest Mayny, as soon as possible to P. R., Genoa.

Ever your most affectionate father,

R. C.

P.S.—I *cannot* write another letter. I have written to your brothers, so pray send this immediately to my dear sister Marianne, asking her to communicate to L. and Georgina, and write yourself, dear M., to Aunt Harriet.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS FATHER.

*New Steine Hotel, Brighton,*

*Nov. 19th, 1851.*

Your letter has just reached me on my return from dining at Miss Hibbert's, having been forwarded from London by George, and has made me very unhappy. Still, from the tone of your letter and from what I know of the dear child's constitution, I cannot but think we shall have better accounts by your next. Your situation and that of my dear mother and Mary must be distressing indeed, but I sincerely trust that before this it has been materially relieved.

I came down here on Monday, intending to spend a week or ten days, but shall go up to London on Friday. Of course we must anxiously expect your next letter, and till it arrives try to think as well of the case as possible. I can hardly fancy my dear little Edith, who was always the picture of health, as dangerously ill. I feel that long before this arrives the dear child's fate must have been decided. There is nothing to say except to assure you and my dear mother how deeply I feel your sorrow and anxiety as well as my own, and to remind you of my constant affection.

12 o'clock, Thursday.

B. W. CURRIE.

Maynard, who at this time was studying in the Theological College at Wells, wrote from thence.

*November 20th, Thursday.*

My dearest Father,

I do indeed feel very deeply for you all in the sad trial you have had. May God grant that our dear, dear Edith may recover, and may He ever give us grace and strength to bear aright all His visitations.

I have sent your letter to Aunt Marianne, and have written to Aunt Harriet. Of course I shall look with the greatest anxiety for another letter, and I am sure you will have been kind enough not to keep me in a long suspense. From what you say of dear E.'s improvement on Friday I do hope and trust that you will be able to give a better account of her. I am very glad to hear that my dear mother has been enabled hitherto to bear so well such a trial as she has had.

We have had an exceedingly cold season, sharp frosts every day, and must, I think, expect a very hard winter. I had an invitation from Florence to go to Kimberley on the 25th, but I told her that I could not get away from this place.

We have been going on here as usual, without any incident to disturb a very quiet routine. The Bishop of Oxford has been delivering a Charge, which I like very much, though I suppose he will be abused for it by both parties; because, taking himself a moderately high but decided view, he has plenty of margin for all those who, "whatever their shade of opinions," are

“striving in love and self-devotion to do the work of Christ.”

I am sure you will let me know how my dear mother and Mary are, and will give them my very best love. Ever, my dear Father, your very affectionate son,

MAYNARD W. CURRIE.

After a few days, better accounts of the little patient were received, and Bertram wrote to his father from Hyde Park Terrace.

*November 28th, 1851.*

I received your long letter dated the 21st the day before yesterday, and was delighted to hear that the dear babe is in a satisfactory state. Doo<sup>1</sup> begs me to express her sympathy and present joy. I said nothing to her about the babe's illness, thinking there was no use in making the poor creature unhappy, but it seems she heard it through that universal channel of information, Evy's maid, and was very much distressed in consequence.

I left Brighton on Thursday for good, having spent nine days altogether there at the New Steine Hotel, which I found very comfortable. Miss Hibbert repeatedly spread the hospitable board, and on the last night on a grand scale she entertained the V. Smiths, N. Hibbert and G. Hibbert, Lady Henley, and Mr. Robertson.

I also dined with Lord Wigram and met Mrs. Oswald Smith and Froggie, grown a very pretty girl.

<sup>1</sup> A nurse in the family.

Old V. S. stays at the Bristol till Monday next with Mrs. V. S. and Fitz. He is an awful screw, and can hardly be induced to order enough to eat and drink. He dines out with great avidity. . . .

I was much amused with your account of the *affaire* at Genoa. The Chevalier Wykoff is a well-known character at New York, and I should think a regular swindler. . . .

This evening I write to Ponsford to know what arrangements he means to make about the £5,000 acceptance due on 7th December.

I am going on Saturday to G. W. Norman's at Bromley to spend Sunday. He says there are none but old people there.

FROM B. W. C. TO MR. RAIKES CURRIE.

*London, December 6th, 1851.*

I have delayed writing to you for the last few days till I had arranged something with Ponsford about the payment of our acceptance which comes due to-morrow. After writing to him, and having an interview in Thames Street, all I could get him to agree to, was that he would produce the money in fifteen months from this time, and that he would give his note of hand payable at that date. My first impression was to make him accept a bill to that amount, and to get Swayne and Bovill to discount it at Overends, but I found their account was so full there at present that they could not do it; and I was also afraid it might throw Ponsford into their hands in the event of a dispute. On the whole, therefore, I thought the best

way was to deposit it with Messrs. Currie and Co. as security for a loan on demand to White Ponsford and Co. This is not very satisfactory, but it is better than getting nothing from old P., either in money or promises, as was the case when you left, and it provides for our immediate necessities. I went to him this morning, and found him in bed with the gout, and hardly able to sign his name. I hope to get Phillips' detailed valuation to-morrow. The gross amount of the two mills is about £17,000, so that we shall have a claim upon Bovill for something like £4,000, which I am disposed to enforce, as the only way of bringing him to book. The works progress very slowly, and I see no more prospect of their being completed than when you went away.

Mr. H. C. is in great spirits about the railway account, of which he wrote to you. He has to-day got a proof of the prospectus; and a letter from Bircham to say that he thinks it settled that the account will be brought here; the capital one million one hundred thousand, and they say Lord Ashburton is to be chairman of the committee.

I spent last Sunday at Mr. Norman's at Bromley. He is very apprehensive about the effect of the gold discoveries, and the constant arrivals which take place on this side. To-day the steamer brings Three Hundred Thousand from America, but up to the present time there has been no effect upon prices.

To-day was Ashlin's first meeting. George, young Glyn, and young Gurney are to be assignees. Nothing was done but to fix Ashlin's allowance at £4 per week. Murray calculates upon a dividend of five shillings from the estate.

I am afraid this news from Paris will complicate affairs at Rome, and perhaps prevent your going there at present. To-day the funds are at 96½ sellers, in consequence of a rumour that there is disaffection in the army to Louis Napoleon.

Charles Pain has just been in here and says he has a large heap of towels arrived from Russia for my mother. . . . I have been reading Sir J. Stephen's Lectures at Cambridge which are just published; the two volumes bring the history of France down to Louis XIV., and are interesting and very learned.

Bingham Mildmay writes from America, where he has arrived safely.

I suppose you will send directions about shipping Philip, who comes up on Monday the 11th to George's house.

With love to all, and especially to the dear babe, believe me,

Affectionately yours,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C.

*Hyde Park Terrace, Dec. 10th, 1851.*

My dear Father,

I send you a line by the hands of Philip, who trusts himself to the despotism of Louis Napoleon to-morrow.

I suppose you hear the particulars of the revolution as well as we do in London. It has of course made an immense sensation, and all the papers, except I believe the *Morning Post*, are violent in their denuncia-



tions of the President. Now is the time for old Hardinge to bring his great guns into play, as if we ever are to have an invasion, this is the right sort of government to make it.

I hear that Mrs. Grote is in Paris, and a letter of hers describing the first effects of the *coup d'état* appeared in the *Times*.

The funds recovered a good deal last week in consequence of the buoyancy of French Rentes, but have subsided again to  $97\frac{3}{4}$  to-day.

I saw the other day a Mr. T—— on business connected with Thames Street, who told me that Taplow was certainly to be sold, and that he had offered, on behalf of a Mr. Whitlaw (I think), £9,200, for the land round his house. I see by the papers that the Hill farm is also to be sold which is in that neighbourhood. This gentleman told me that Lord O. had borrowed £60,000 at 5 per cent. to pay off a mortgage at 4, and (as he thought), was selling the place himself. The affair is in the hands of a lawyer named Harrison.

There is nothing new in my affairs except that I become daily more convinced of the rascality of Bovill. I hear nothing of his transactions with the Admiralty coming to a conclusion. Westhorpe has been abroad for some months. We have been taken in by a friend of his—Mr. Smith of Brighton, whom you may perhaps remember.

I hope you will make acquaintance with some capitalist in foreign parts anxious to invest in a large manufacturing establishment, as we are dreadfully in want of funds. I can think of no one but old John Barnard, who is immensely full of money just now,

and might like to put a great grandson, or some remote descendant, into so prosperous a concern.

At Shadwell we just managed to pay our expenses and that is all. We have been making some experiments with the finest English white wheat and foreign red—and *vice versa*, the best foreign white and English red—and, Mr. White says, have succeeded in making a capital sack of flour; but to the *query*, Do we make a capital profit? I fear he cannot answer so satisfactorily.

I suppose you will not see Bougleux. I should like to know whether he really uses the patent, and what his success has been.

I have heard nothing of you for some time, but conclude that all is going on well. If it were not so expensive, I think I should have come out with Philip for three weeks or a month. Love to all from your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM GEORGE W. CURRIE.

*Cornhill, Dec. 16th, 1851.*

My dear Father,

I duly received your letter of the 8th from Genoa. I hope this will find you arrived at Rome. Philip left us the night of the 10th, as soon as he could get his passport from the Foreign Office; so I conclude he would reach Rome about the same day as yourselves. I hope to hear soon, and that change of air is strengthening the dear babe. I saw Mrs. J. Scott the other day, who made many inquiries after

her. To-day I have an invitation from J. S. to go and shoot woodcocks at Rotherfield, but have written to decline.

We are to go to Horsley on the 12th of January for a few days. Maynard is going there Christmas Eve.

We dined with the Van de Weyers last night. Bates was there, and Sturges and the Hibberts, including Lizzy and her pretender, young Holland, also Macaulay. Mme. V. de W. had a reception in the evening—Lady Palmerston and lots of foreigners. We dined last week with T. Baring. On Thursday *we* entertain the Van de Weyers, T. Baring, Alexander, Q.C., and the Bulwers (Sir Henry and Lady), with venison from Farming Woods. They have their house full at Farming Woods, and want us to go there, but I do not think we can manage it.

Nobody knows what to think of the French business. They really seem to have to choose between Louis Napoleon and his soldiers, and Cassandière and his *rouges*, and to be utterly unable to keep up a decent constitutional government. I hope L. N. will not remove his troops from Rome, while you are there. Meanwhile the French funds are over 100—having risen 10 per cent. since the *coup d'état*, and Van de Weyer says this is the real feeling of all people of property in France. The future, however, is indeed dark. Thiers, I see, is banished, and every professional statesman driven away and imprisoned, except the few who have been frightened into joining the mock Consultative commission. The slaughter in the streets at Paris was outrageous and unprovoked; many people slain sitting quietly in their apartments on the

Boulevards. Punch has got for the *coup d'état*, L. N. cutting up the goose that laid the golden eggs, capitally drawn.

We are to have the new account, Salisbury, &c., Railway, about which you wrote to Locke and Lord Ashburton, and H. Currie has been making interest with Birchams and S. Herbert, but H. C. says we must take 100 shares (£2,000 when paid up). Lord Ashburton and S. Herbert are chairman and deputy, Locke engineer, and Peto contractor, who is to find the greatest part of the money—when finished at an outlay of one million. The South Western are to work it and divide profits.

The Gas Co. have not got their debentures out yet, and doubt whether they can do so at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. They ought to get them for that, for the security is very good.

The Hudson's Bay add 5 per cent. to capital in February next. H. Currie has not got the contract for Sydney which the Screw Co. counted on as certain, having been under-bid. I do not know what they mean to do about it.

Mr. Palmer of Essex has just been here—a prodigious bore. He asked about a small balance here, which was subscribed to buy a cup, in which the municipality of Adelaide, N.S.W., were to drink to the memory of Colonel Light. He says, you said you would get the cup, and asks if you have got it? I say you have not. He asks, will you send *me* authority to choose one? as he has an opportunity of sending it out, and will have an inscription put on it. Would you suggest such inscription? The balance is £36. If you will write to me about this, I should be

delighted to undertake the selection of the article, and will communicate with Palmer.

Canon Wodehouse, with Lady Jane and Alice, have been staying at old Gurney's house in Lombard Street, over the shop. Lady Jane came up for medical advice. Sam Gurney has persuaded Mr. Bates to take Willy as clerk at B. B. and Co., and has taken him entirely off his father's hands, offering to maintain him for six months. He is to lodge at Evy's friend, Mrs. Mann, at Upper Holloway, out of harm's way; and, if he can go on steadily for half a year, Sam Gurney will do more for him. C. Mills called on Lady Jane and offered anything he had to give, but as they would not let him take a cadetship, that is no good at present. At all events, he has got another good start, and may be put in the way of supporting himself. . . . Your most affectionate son,

G. W. C.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS SISTER MARY.

*Hyde Park Terrace,*

*Christmas Day, 1851.*

Many thanks for your letter from Sienna. We expect in a day or two to hear of your arrival in Rome, where I hope you will find a tender turkey for to-day's dinner. At least there are geese, if the breed of those which saved the Capitol be not extinct.

Maynard, who came to London on Monday, left me yesterday for Horsley, where Mr. H. C. regales him with a local bird. George, as the head of the family,

entertains his poor relations in Hyde Park Street—among whom are Willie Wodehouse and myself. I was invited to Munden, but did not like to leave the parish on this festival. However, I shall go there to-morrow, when they are to have a charade, in which Lizzie Hibbert and Miss Holland (surnamed *Cooley*) perform a scene from the opera of *Tancredi*. The word is *Misconduct*; the first syllable represented by a scene from the play of *Miss in her Teens*; the second by the opera, and the whole by the trial in *Pickwick*, where Serjeant Snubbin is supposed to misconduct Mr. P.'s case.

As it appeared that the performances at Horsley were to be given up for want of something to act, I have compiled a charade, which I believe we shall perform on the 8th of January. The word is *Season*; the first act of which is extracted from *Black-eyed Susan* and the second from *Guy Mannering*. The whole is represented by an original farce called *Mrs. Trotter of Mount Bunion's début in London*. Evy is to act *Black-eyed Susan* and also the part of a sentimental young lady in the last act. The Horsley girls declined altogether to act, so that the play was obliged to be arranged for a very limited number, consisting of George, Maynard, and myself, and is not as you may imagine, a very brilliant affair.

Next month there is to be a play at Farming Woods, in which I am to perform a subordinate part, I believe. Indeed there seems to be nothing else going on this year.

My father will see in the paper Lord Palmerston's retirement from the Cabinet. To-day it is announced that the seals will be given to Lord Granville at a

Privy Council to-morrow. The *Times* seems to think that the difficulty has been with Lord John, and not with Lord Grey, who, it says, has approved of Lord P.'s policy more than any other member of the Cabinet; and that Lord John, by making a young man and a peer Foreign Secretary, evidently intends to keep the principal management of the Foreign Office in his own hands. I hope Philip passed safely through the disturbed districts of France and has reached you before this. . . .

My father will hear all the particulars of Cornhill affairs from Mr. H. C. or John Lawford, so that I have nothing to tell him. The funds fell slightly at the news of Lord P.'s resignation.

Sir Henry Bulwer is appointed to Florence, I believe, and I suppose Mr. Hudson will go to the United States.

I heard a rumour of the babe's hair being cut off, but trust it is untrue.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas. Believe me, my dear Mary,

Your affectionate,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM GEORGE W. CURRIE TO HIS FATHER.

*London, 27th December, 1851.*

Pray thank my mother for a letter received this morning, announcing your arrival at Rome. I hope to hear that Philip reached it the same or next day.

Henry Currie has been writing to you, also John

Lawford, so I have nothing to tell you of things here, that you do not know. . . .

I have had, and have still, a most horrid cold in my head; for which I stayed at home yesterday, and read two new books, neither worth reading—D'Israeli's political biography (Lord G. Bentinck) and Head's Paris book. The *Times'* review is most bitter and able on the former.

You will, of course, have heard *the* news—which has swallowed up the *coup d' état* and all other minor phenomena—the secession of Palmerston. It is all in the dark still; the *Times* announcing semi-officially that it is because he took a line of his own in backing up Louis Napoleon in his military *coup*; and the *Post*, equally oracular, declaring that he has been sacrificed to the continental Powers. I am inclined to believe the latter, to some extent certainly, combined with Lord John's determination to have everything his own way. There have certainly been great remonstrances from the Continent about the refugees. If Palmy can make out that he has fallen in this cause, he will be covered with glory. It is a great pity; it cannot now be long before there is a clean sweep, however, of the wretched remnant of the Whigs. Lord Granville goes to the Foreign Office, and we hear nothing of new appointments.

Everybody is in the country Christmassing. We are to go to Horsley on the 5th, and to have some acting and dancing there one day in that week. Bertram is gone to-day to Munden (Hibberts), where there is a great deal of eating and acting going on. Maynard is at Horsley. My aunt Harriet is to dine with us on New Year's Day. Willy Wodehouse is



installed as a clerk at Baring's, where his handwriting gains him praise. . . .

Your affectionate son,

G. W. CURRIE.

The two following letters were addressed to the Hotel de Russie, Rome.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS FATHER.

*Hyde Park Terrace,  
Saturday, Jan. 31st, 1852.*

Having nothing particular to do, and the day being an average specimen of our charming brumal climate, I occupy my leisure by encroaching upon yours, and take advantage, by the force of imagination, of the clearer skies with which you are favoured.

We are looking forward with some interest to the meeting of Parliament on Tuesday next, though it seems doubtful whether there will be any Ministerial revelations as to the late occurrences. I hear that it is not the custom for an ex-employé to explain, unless his retirement from office be voluntary, which certainly is not the case of the vivacious Viscount. The *Times* this morning announces—as an unimportant change—the retirement of Lord Broughton de G., and promotion of Mr. Fox Maule to his place at the board of Control. The same paper hints that the new Reform Bill will neither enfranchise nor disenfranchise any of the present constituencies, that it will increase some of the smaller boroughs by the aggregation of

neighbouring towns or districts, lower the qualification of the £10 householder to £5, and that of the £50 tenant to £20. It contains, moreover, a speech of Sir Robert Peel at the Mayor's dinner at Tamworth, very violent against the Whigs, and rejoicing that the Peelite chiefs have refused to join them. He quotes his father's words: "I never had the honour of their private friendship, nor have I ever acted with them politically;" and tells his constituents to bear them in mind, although I believe they were spoken in anything but a hostile spirit. He also says that the time has arrived for a Liberal-Conservative party, and though he has done nothing as yet, he may still, &c., &c. Altogether a very absurd exhibition I think, and highly injudicious.

You will see that Lord Normanby has retired from his embassy to be succeeded by Lord Cowley. This appointment has surprised people, as Lord Cowley is comparatively young in the service. I suppose it has been done by the Court, who seem to have everything their own way.

Louis Napoleon's rascalities will make it very difficult for Lord P. to explain his approval of the 2nd of December. I hope he will throw it up altogether and say he was mistaken. The papers (except the *Morning Post*) are unanimous against L. N., and it appears that Louis Philippe's executors have protested by a letter in the *Indépendance Belge*, against the confiscation of the Orleans property. . . .

The meeting with Swayne and Bovill, of which I told you, came off on Monday, but, owing to the stupidity of old Pons and the garrulity of Phillips, ended in smoke. The former let out that he had

never been consulted, and knew nothing about the course to be taken with S. and B., and the latter was for giving Bovill three months more to deliver his accounts in order to make things pleasant to all parties! Of course as he was *our* arbitrator we could make no objection. Ashlin's examination took place yesterday; the meeting was adjourned.

The corn market has been very firm lately, as you have no doubt seen; the rise being now equal to at least 6s. or 7s. per quarter on all descriptions of wheat. Last week the foreign arrivals were only 400 qrs., and *no* flour. I have been fully occupied in checking the ardour of Mr. White, who was for buying largely. We have got a good stock of wheat—about 2,500 qrs.—most of it well bought. Flour is up about 5s., but, as usual, we had to make large sales before the rise. The first cargoes of this year's wheats have arrived, and are very inferior in condition. I think the prospect of the market is upward. It is to be hoped at least that the annual lamentations of the protectionists at the opening of Parliament will be stopped. The farmers have a capital crop and are getting 45s. on an average.

FROM B. W. C.

*Saturday, February 14th, 1852.*

My dear Father,

I should have written to you last week had I not been disabled by a swelling and inflammation in the cubital joint of my right arm, which has at last yielded to the united skill of Phillips and Drury, after giving me a good deal of trouble.

The new Reform Bill is published in the papers this morning, and Mr. Henry Currie is relieved to find that Guildford is not included in Schedule B., which consists of the boroughs that are to be enlarged by the aggregation of neighbouring districts. I suppose they will be altered a good deal in committee, as the Opposition do not seem disposed to throw the measure out altogether.

In the fashionable world the latest intelligence is the elopement of Lady Adelaide Vane, aged twenty-two, and youngest daughter of Lord Londonderry. The miscreant is the Rev. Law, tutor to the son, between whom and the young lady there appears to have been a long attachment.

I had a visit this week from Maynard, who came up to London to consult the tooth-doctor, but happily was enabled to return to Wells without the loss of any of his teeth.

I am going to spend to-morrow at Blendon, Mrs. Oswald Smith's, who has still got two daughters to marry. The Misses Fitzpatrick are staying with her. Emmie has been paying a visit to George in Hyde Park Street. Her sister is with my aunt Georgiana, who entertains a select circle of spinsters (whose united ages amount to something incredible), in Regency Square, Brighton.

The engineers have reopened their factories, so that Bovill is deprived of that excuse for neglecting our affairs. Mr. White went down into the country yesterday to meet Prince Albert at a farmer's near Reading. I hope he will take the opportunity to submit a sample to H.R.H. The wheat trade is rather dull, but there has been no decline in prices.

The foreign arrivals are still scanty, and I think the dulness is attributable to the want of buyers—the millers having purchased largely within the last month.

Mr. Vernon Smith has taken possession of his new office, and Fitz is installed as private secretary to the Minister, and has a charming room overlooking the Park, with £300 a year *pour ses menus plaisirs*, a good deal more profitable than agriculture, to which he had been turning his attention. He came up like Cincinnatus from the plough to serve his country.

George tells me that he has written you full particulars of the election. It seems that Vernon's seat is by no means safe against a combined attack of Tory and Radical. Perhaps Peterborough will suit him better. It is to be associated with Oundle, which is in his neighbourhood.

This I remember is Mary's birthday. Pray congratulate her on my behalf. Consols are 97½. Exchequer bills flat in consequence of a report that the interest is to be lowered. . . .

Your affectionate son,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C. TO RAIKES CURRIE, ESQ.

POSTE RESTANTE, NAPLES.

*Cornhill, February 23rd. 1852.*

I have this morning received your letter of the 14th inst. and hasten to reply, though I believe George has anticipated me in the relation of all the stirring political events. He sends you the *Morning Herald*, with a list of Lord Derby's Government, which I cannot believe to be authentic. The Duke of North-

umberland and Lord Malmesbury will be too much for the public. Of the latter they say he is like a horse, because he only opens his mouth for corn (alluding to his protectionist harangues last year).

R. V. S. is very sore on the Ministerial defeat; not the less that, in a pecuniary point of view, he is a considerable loser. His Cabinet account stands about thus:

Dr.		Cr.	
To fees upon taking office of S. at W. . .	£500	By about fifteen days salary, at £7 per day. . .	£95
Expenses of re-election.	400	Balance. . . . .	900
New state uniform of Privy Councillor. . .	95		
	<u>£995</u>		<u>£995</u>

He apprehends a dissolution, and says that if it takes place it will be immediate. I saw him yesterday, and he begged me to write to you upon the urgency of your return, or, in default of that, of your appointing some person to act for you in case of an election. If you do not come home I think it would not be a bad plan to send us an address in manuscript, which we could put forth in case of need. Something might be made of the visit to Rome.

“Electors of Northampton. Compelled by severe illness (incurred in your service) to absent myself for a time from my duties in Parliament, I have not lost, among the corrupting influences of Italy, that love of your institutions which first won me your confidence. The nearer view of a system which is based upon a union of Superstition and Violence has confirmed my allegiance to these great principles of our constitution, Civil and Religious Liberty,” &c.

Clap-trap seems all the go now. Lord Palmerston's Rule Britannia speech on the Militia Bill is a fine specimen of its success.

As far as I can make out the resignation of Ministers was unexpected, and only a sudden spurt of Lord John's. Hayter is much blamed for his negligence in whipping in. Lord Grey escapes the impending storm though (as Mrs. V. S. was told by Lady M. Wood) much to their regret, as his case was excellent. This does not seem the opinion of the public, who unanimously condemn his despatch in recall of Sir H. Smith.

Philip will tell you how he lost the cheque. In consequence, and on his assurance that he was entitled to it, I advanced him £5 on your account.

I have agreed to sell part of your biscuit machinery for £20, which is, I believe, as much as it is worth. The works at Thames Street are stopped by the continued strike of the engineers. I see no probability of an arrangement at present as they are supported by the contributions of all the other trades, and these subscriptions are increasing.

I have bought for you the two new volumes of Lord Mahon's *History*, as I could not get them from the library. They treat of the American Revolution and are better than his former ones.

Lady Teresa Lewis has written a prosy book on the contemporaries of Lord Chancellor Clarendon.

I have been elected a member of Brooks by Mr. Hayter's assistance. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

B. W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C.

*Hyde Park Terrace, February 28th, 1852.*

My dear Father,

Lord Derby made his declaration of policy last night, while the House of Commons was occupied with the new writs. As was anticipated, he avowed his constant belief in the advantage of a duty on corn, but did not propose any change in the present Parliament. Believing that a dissolution was unadvisable, he appealed to the Opposition for forbearance and co-operation in measures of legal and social reform. He declared against Lord John Russell's Reform Bill; and Lord Fitzwilliam, who followed him, said, that rather than submit to constant changes in their representative system, the people of this country would prefer a *mild and gentle despotism!* Mr. Charles Villiers gave notice of a motion pledging the House of Commons to the principles of Free Trade. Yesterday sixteen new Privy Councillors were sworn in, and the old Ministers gave up the seals of office. On Monday the new men take possession. The Exchequer they call "Benjamin's mess."

Lord Malmesbury's chief qualification for his post seems to be his intimate friendship with the Prince President, and (according to the French papers) his appointment is a proof of the desire of the Queen to consolidate friendly relations with that distinguished person.

Our friend Lord Hardinge has accepted the Ordnance, to the disgust, I believe, of the Peelites.



I saw him last week at R. V. S'. where he harangued the company (including Sir David) on the necessity of exercising the population in the use of great guns. He has now the charge of these dangerous implements and will, I hope, be careful.

George had a brilliant party last night, at which I saw, for the first time since her return, the fascinating Mdne. Strutt. Wodehouse was there too, in great jaw, full of Lord Derby's speech. He says it is a pity that the mantle of Lord Lansdowne has not fallen upon Lord Granville instead of Lord Grey, who, he thinks, will be an unpopular leader for the party. Mr. and Mrs. Reeve were also among the select few. She has no charms or graces of person, is of a tall and lanky figure, and in complexion not unlike her oleaginous spouse. Doubtless his choice was directed to the treasures of her mind, or else to the baser accumulations of the pocket.

You will hear of G.'s misfortune at the Traveller's. The old Captain, who came up to vote for him, is indignant. It seems that the majority of the candidates have been black-balled lately.

Yesterday I met Mr. Rebow at Brooks'. He had been requested to oppose Lord John Manners at Colchester, but thought it beneath his dignity, after standing for the County, unless sure of success. Your happy quotation from the early poems of that noble Lord,<sup>1</sup> has been reproduced, first by Sir B. Hall in a speech to the electors of Marylebone, and afterwards by the *Morning Chronicle*, which says, "that Lord J. Manners will be more innocently employed in clearing away superfluous woods and forests, than

<sup>1</sup> See p. 19.

in making way for the restoration of our old nobility by the destruction of commerce and law."

What do you think of a dissolution? I cannot believe that the Whigs and Radicals will leave the Government alone, and they have the power of forcing them to a division on several questions. I suppose it will not take place for a month or six weeks, as there is some necessary business to be carried through.

We are suffering from a continuance of N.E. winds of the worst quality. Clouds of dust swept along the Bayswater road form into eddies and whirlpools in our porches. Life becomes a questionable advantage.

The Great Central Gas Company's Bill was read a second time yesterday. The ungrateful rascals have not remunerated my valuable services as Auditor.

Love to all from your affectionate,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

FROM B. W. C. TO RAIKES CURRIE, ESQ., M.P.  
POSTE RESTANTE, FLORENCE.

*Cornhill, March 17th, 1852.*

My dear Father,

In accordance with your wishes, I paid a visit yesterday to your constituents at Northampton. Having taken counsel of Gray Kester, who was admirably disposed, I called upon George Moore. He informed me that he was determined not to vote for you again, and was at that time engaged in finding an Anti-State-Church candidate to oppose you. When I asked his reasons, he said that you were no member

at all; moreover, that you made promises which you did not perform (instancing some case of a blind boy, whom you promised to get admitted to Christ's Hospital, &c.); and when I had replied to these objections, he said that you were so inconsistent, that he had heard you pray with one breath, and swear with another, and when pressed for particulars alleged that the words were "D——n it." I replied, of course, that in twenty-four years I had never heard you use an expression of such a nature, and that had I done so, notwithstanding my filial piety, I should have left the paternal roof, &c. This was rather discouraging for a start, but my next visit to the Rev. Burnett was much more satisfactory. He said that in the event of either your or V. Smith's retirement, he was pledged to support an Anti-State-Church candidate, and that either Sir Culling Eardley or Mr. Morley had been proposed in that sense: but that as long as the present members offered themselves, he should support them. From this gentleman I went to Mr. Joel Edens, who was all right, and then to Frederick Parker, also friendly. They all agreed that it would be advisable to put forth a letter, stating that you had no intention of retiring, and I have accordingly written the following which I shall send to Gray Kester this evening.

*To the Liberal Electors of Northampton.*

Gentlemen,

As I understand there is a report in Northampton that Mr. Raikes Currie will not offer himself for re-election at the end of the present Parliament,

I beg, in his absence, to assure you that it is totally without foundation. In a letter, which I have just received from him, he writes, "I decidedly mean in the present state of affairs to stand and fight." In a few weeks he will have the honour of addressing you in person. Meanwhile, I beg you on his behalf, to give no credit to these designs of the enemy, and to be assured that your old member will be ready at the hustings to ask your suffrages in favour of those principles which for fifteen years have merited your approval.

Your obedient servant,

B. W. CURRIE.

I have also requested Kester to get a *communiqué* put in. "We understand that letters have been received from Mr. R. Currie announcing his speedy return to England, and containing the gratifying intelligence of his complete recovery," &c. On the whole, the disposition of those I saw was very favourable, and they appeared confident of success. You will know better than I do, what their opinions are worth. As to Moore, I am told that he is not one of the leaders of public opinion, and it is to be hoped that he will be deterred from his design by the firm attitude we have assumed.

I have seen Vardon, who hears from the Fairfaxes, March 9th, that you are still at Naples. He will write you on the 19th about the chances of dissolution, when it is expected that something will be settled. At present it seems quite uncertain, though the general opinion is that May will be the earliest time.

You will see the account of the debates on the 15th. Wodehouse made a short speech, at the request of the Whigs, but was disappointed that there was no one to answer. Lord Derby was brilliant, and in the Commons Sir J. Graham most effective.

I spent last Sunday at Horsley with Sir D. Dundas. He talks of going abroad, as he is to retire from Parliament in favour of Lord Stafford. Henry Currie is organizing the Peelite party. He told us at Horsley that he had said to Charles Wood that if he could be of any use in giving him advice he should be very happy, and regretting that he had not recommended the reduction of the interest on Exchequer Bills which he said would have been the making of the Ex-Chancellor. . . .

Ever yours affectionately,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

Rosas is positively kicked out at Buenos Ayres, and will probably be here before you.

FROM B. W. C. TO HIS FATHER.

*Brooks, March 23rd, 1852.*

I have received your letter (14th inst.) this morning. The course of post from Naples seems to vary from seven to twelve days.

You will have seen by my last the state of things at Northampton. Since I wrote, nothing new has occurred, but I have seen Mr. Dennis, and had a letter from Kester. The latter had seen Mr. Moore, and heard several accusations preferred against you, which

he says he will not enter into till your return. The only report of opposition which I have seen in the papers is that of Markham, the Tory Attorney who stood against V. Smith, but this wants confirmation. Vardon has promised to write about the dissolution. I can really form no opinion on the subject. The Whigs, as usual, have become quite truculent in Opposition, and slander the unfortunate Government in the most unmeasured terms.

Young Portman is coming forward for Shaftesbury as a free trader. Henry Currie has issued his ukase to the electors at Guildford. As yet, his only opponent is Mr. Thurlow, who was defeated last time, so that his chance of success is pretty good. Lord Pembroke has just died in Paris, so that there will be a vacancy in South Wilts.

Pray tell my mother that I will attend to her injunctions about domestic affairs. I have already seen a candidate for the office of butler, but on enquiring of Lord Bateman, with whom he had formerly lived, I was inclined to reject him. I am also in relations with a cook who is now *première dame de la cuisine* to Lady Ailesbury, and strongly recommended by Lord Foley's *chef*, but I have not yet had an interview.

I have been reading the case of Wykoff and Gamble, which is published in the form of a pamphlet, price 2s. 6d., with a portrait of the principal offender. Mrs. Grote's name appears repeatedly in the letters of both parties. On reading the evidence, I am inclined to think that though it does not clear Wykoff from the imputation of rascality, it convicts Miss Jane Gamble of being a tremendous fool, who deserved no better

treatment than she met with. Our friend Mrs. Grote seems to be unfortunate when she meddles with the love affairs of her friends. You remember the case of Jenny Lind and Harris. She (Jenny Lind) has at last reached the lowest abyss of degradation by marrying a Hamburg Jew pianist.

The girls, Emmie and Mary, arrived yesterday in Hyde Park Street to spend a week with George. He entertains them to-morrow with a ball, for which cards have been issued to the leading members of the *beau monde*.

We have had an extraordinary run of east winds. The park is as dry as a brick, and the streets are all watered copiously to allay the dust.

By the last mails from South America we hear of the total defeat of Rosas, who, with Manuelita,<sup>1</sup> escaped on board an English man-of-war. Old Mandeville expects them here directly.

<sup>1</sup> Whilst these pages were passing through the press the following paragraph appeared in the *Times* of Saturday, September 24, 1852: "The death occurred on Saturday last of Mme. Terrero, at her residence in Belsize Park Gardens, South Hampstead. Manuela de Rosas de Terrero was born on the 24th of May, 1817. She was the only daughter of the famous General Rosas (see pp. 254, 264—266), who ruled the Argentine Republic practically as Dictator for more than twenty years until 1852, when, overthrown by the revolution under Urquiza (p. 290), he took refuge with his daughter under the English flag. They were first taken on board the *Centaur*, Admiral Henderson's flagship, and four days later her Majesty's ship *Conflict* conveyed them to this country, where Lord Palmerston received them cordially. Mme. Terrero was married in Southampton the same year of her arrival to Don Maximo Terrero, who at one time represented the Republic of Paraguay as Consul-General in this country. She leaves two sons, both residing in England. Her mother died when Mme. Terrero was a girl, and she succeeded in doing much to soften the iron rule of her father. She was noted for her personal courage and for her excellent riding. On one occasion she rode twenty leagues to a ball given in her honour, and after arriving danced during the whole night. She was buried at Southampton in the same grave with her father, General Rosas."

I hear of a marriage which will, I fear, disgust our friend the Dowager Henley, between her younger son and a Miss Aldridge, whom you may remember at Brighton. He cannot be more than twenty-one, and she—the eldest of a large and impecunious family—is stated to be twenty-three.

There is a very pretty girl come out in London this year, whom I last saw at Brighton—Miss Ashworth. Her mother's character was not, I think, quite satisfactory to my mother, but she seems to have got over any difficulties of that sort. I hope the world is becoming less censorious, as I hear that the Duchess of Bedford is now engaged in whitewashing Lady Harrington, and has met with great success.

Lady Lilford told me that she had heard from *dear Henry*, who was delighted with you. He has published more of his father's memoirs, very poor stuff.

Roebuck's *History of the Whigs* is rather amusing, though probably untrue. It is the case of Lord Brougham *v.* the Whigs.

P.S.—We have had a paragraph in the papers stating that you are about to return from Italy, where you have been detained for some time by ill-health. This has alarmed some of the family, who were not aware of your indisposition.

The advertisement or notice appeared in the *Mercury* last week with only one misprint—*stand a fight* instead of *stand and fight*. The former looks more bellicose, and, considering the state of your health, most patriotic.



A day later George wrote :

*London, 24th March, 1852.*

My dear Father,

Bertram and I both received your letters from Naples yesterday. I am sorry your weather there has been bad. If you knew what we have been suffering from here you would think it superb. For weeks past we have had a dry, cutting N. Easter, which has now changed to a hot pestilential E. S. E. with yellow fog and smoke that might be cut with a knife. London is more beastly than I remember it, and influenza and illness of all kinds abundant.

I heard from Vardon yesterday, who is still strongly of opinion that the dissolution will be before the middle of May. He says he hopes you will be in Paris by the third week of April, where you might wait according to circumstances. Much as we look forward to having you back again, I cannot advise you to come to this climate an hour sooner than is necessary.

The new Government seem jogging on respectably; the funds, &c., are higher than ever. Money is very abundant and certainly looks as if it would be so permanently. Mortgages, I believe, doing at 3 per cent., but still things are not so dull as they have been.

My partners, whom you say I do not mention, are flourishing. Mr. I. G. C. pretty well; he is here to-day, as is also H. C. You heard of the latter being turned out of his Screw Company. This is a good business. He has taken to politics, and means to lead the Peelite party in conjunction with Gladstone!

GG

Lord Pembroke is just dead, by which S. Herbert will add to his already immense fortune. Poor old Foley Wilmot has been killed off by inflammation of the lungs. Miss Hume is not to marry the Duke of Newcastle—at least it is off for the present.

Lord Henley's younger brother (quite a youth) is going to marry the little Miss Aldridge whom you remember at Brighton!

H. Currie's girls are staying with us for a few days. Evy gives a dance for them to-night, and has got all the beauties. Miss Ashworth (who was a child at Brighton and is the belle of this year), Miss Brandling (beautiful), Froggie Smith, Lethbridge, Goddards, Ladies St. Maur, Lady Jane Stanhope, Florence Compton, Lady Margaret Compton, and other hours.

The Wodehouses have come back to town. Florence is looking very pretty, and seems better. I am afraid Mrs. Alfred Wodehouse is almost in a hopeless state, although they said she was better. Mrs. Wodehouse (Anne) has been, and is, laid up with a broken ankle. Willy W. is regularly installed as a clerk at Baring's with a salary of £70 per annum!

O. Wigram has just been in here and taken £10,000 for two months at 3 per cent. We still hold a large lot of exchequer bills, and by taking in money on them occasionally (at 1 per cent.) avoid disturbing the brokers, who still pay us 2—but will, no doubt, reduce us soon.

Bertram will have told you about Northampton. Dennis was here the other day. There are a *few* people headed by one Moore, a shoemaker, who want to replace you by a dissenter, and have been

agitating for that purpose, but it is only moonshine I think.

Your cook Williams is very "comfortable" in her new place, so I fear she will not return to you. Numerous inquiries have been, and are, making for butler, footman, &c., for you. My mother will be interested to hear that we have got Mrs. Trundle as cook for ourselves, who (at a salary of £20) is really excellent.

Mr. I. G. sold his Sardinians at 93, clearing nearly 13 per cent., and has been buying, I believe, Danish 3 per cents.

Pray excuse this disconnected composition.

I am, with love to all, your most affectionate son,

G. W. CURRIE.

From B. W. C. to Mr. Raikes Currie, addressed to Poste Restante, Turin, but forwarded thence to Venice.

*London, April 5th, 1852.*

My dear Father,

George has already acknowledged your letter from Florence in one he wrote to Milan. I have nothing fresh to communicate, but write that you may not be disappointed on application at the Post Office at Turin.

Philip, who returned from Eton on the 29th ult. with a friend, has gone to visit Maynard at Wells; for which purpose I made him the necessary advances, and begged Maynard to do the same office when he left him. His intention is to take Mr. Scott and Mrs. Fisher on his way to Horsley.

Since receiving my mother's orders, I have been busily engaged in seeing all the houseless butlers and discharged footmen who present themselves, and among them I have seen an individual of each genus—butler, under-butler, and footman—who I think would suit. I shall direct further inquiries before concluding anything. I lost a very promising cook on account of the difficulty presented by Mrs. Sanderson filling the co-ordinate office of housekeeper, and have heard of nothing since.

I suppose George told you of the letter he had from Parker describing the meeting of the district-secretaries and the passing of resolutions favourable to yourself and V. S. Since that, I have heard and seen nothing except a handbill which V. S. showed me, abusing the banker (who, it stated, could do nothing but make clever speeches), and damning with faint praise the Right Honble. Member. Of course it proceeds from the same quarter as the previous opposition of which G. Moore is the head, and which appears to be insignificant in numbers and influence. I am pretty sure that if there is anything wrong, it may be all put right by one or two speeches on your return.

Vardon's silence is no doubt to be attributed to the fact that there is nothing new. The Government have now declared that they intend that the new Parliament shall meet for the despatch of business within the present year, so that the dissolution will probably take place in May. On Thursday the House adjourns for the recess.

Electioneering is going on in all parts. Cardwell has made a capital speech at Liverpool. The address of Mr. Thurlow, Henry Currie's opponent, is printed.

He shirks protection altogether, as the party evidently is prepared to do. It is expected that Montague Chambers, a Radical lawyer, will offer himself for Guildford.

On Saturday we had a grand performance at the Crystal Palace—about 70,000 people present to hear five military bands play God save the Queen. The sight was very grand, but the building is quite unadapted for music.

The East wind continues unabated. The glass, which has been up at an enormous height, keeps steady, and I see no hope of change.

Wodehouse has thrown himself into the Whig ranks, and I saw him calling upon Hayter with Sir J. Boileau and Lord Albemarle: so I imagine he will throw over old Edmund if they can get up an opposition.

George was yesterday elected a member of Brooks'. There are now a number of Liberal youths in that institution. I wish they could expunge — and —, who infest it daily.

The Vernons go out of town on Wednesday, and everybody will do the same for the recess.

I reserve the details of the mill till your return. Ponsford's stupidity and Bovill's roguery have made a sad mess of it, I fear. We are still without prospect of starting it, and have no power of compelling Bovill to expedite it. The corn-market is again much depressed.

Ever your affectionate,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

No further letters from George and Bertram to their father during the remainder of his tour are forthcoming. The preceding letter from Bertram does not appear to have reached Venice when Mr. Raikes Currie wrote to his son Maynard.

*Venice, April 20th, 1852.*

My dear Maynard,

Your nice kind letter to your mother dated Wells, 9th, and forwarded (by directions from me) from Turin, got here on the 16th with wonderful expedition, and we received it as soon as we could get letters, viz., on Sunday morning the 18th. We reached this place from Ferrara (*via* Padua) on Saturday night the 17th.

We have no other letters from England of at all the same date; one from George (*via* Milan) dated April 2nd, is our only other letter, but we were so uncertain, and have so often been obliged to modify our movements, that this is not to be wondered at. We have had excellent correspondents, specially in Bertram, who has usually written most regularly.

We are truly grieved by the intelligence of poor dear Emma's death.<sup>1</sup> We had not heard of it, nor seen it in the papers, though, from the last accounts, your mother fully expected it. Her loss appears irreparable. We must all do what we can for the poor dear children.

We have been most glad, dear Maynard, to think of Philip with you at Easter. I am sure you will have looked after him, and seen him back to Eton, I suppose about the 24th. I am exceedingly grateful to Henry Currie for his kindness to you all.

<sup>1</sup> The Honble. Mrs. Alfred Wodehouse.

Our present plan is to leave this to-morrow and get on as far as we can, say to Desenzano ; next day, 22nd, to Milan, stay there till the afternoon of 25th and go to Novara, next day to Turin and stay 27th ; then to Susa, cross the Mont Cenis, 29th, and get on as far as we can *en route* to Geneva, where we hope to be by the 1st. Please to fly a letter to us there.

I wrote to you from Florence, and told you, I think, how Mary's influenza detained us nine days, and deranged all our plans. She is quite well and has been enchanted with this place. Old St. Mark's, with its Barbaric splendour and thoroughly Byzantine appearance, looks more like a dream or a picture than a reality of these matter-of-fact days, and all around is equally quaint and beautiful.

The Babe<sup>1</sup> is delighted with her gondola. She grows immensely, and to her "partial father," appears a most delightful companion, always fresh, original, and full of feeling and fun. . . . She repeats "Rogers" and Macaulay's Lays, when the perennial flow of her talk intermits for a few minutes. She finds herself perfectly at home everywhere, and it was funny to see her yesterday coolly feeding all the tame pigeons in the Piazza San Marco, who fly down in showers from the old buildings around, where, by ancient custom, their race has been superstitiously cherished for ages, and they will all but eat out of her hand. Our Italian servant Domenico (whom she has named "The Imp") is perfect in his way, and a great favourite of hers. He is so excellent a servant that, though he cannot at present speak one word of English, I think I shall bring him to England. If

<sup>1</sup> Edith Currie.

you could instruct and convert him, he would make you (in my opinion) an invaluable slave. I rescued him from the filthy drudgery of a Chalons steamer, and he now looks almost like a gentleman: in manner he is one, and would I believe follow us to the Antipodes. I should add, however, that the cautious "Monarch,"<sup>1</sup> who likes him much, thinks him "flighty," and "that he would not settle down anywhere;" as it is, however, he perpetually amuses us. Linné (George's paragon) turns out in Italy a thoroughly poor creature. He is the most nervous, fidgetty being I ever met with, cannot speak the language easily, and is a goose. He would do extremely well to go about Germany with two or three old ladies. I think he is honest and anxious, to me an exceeding bore, but packs up well, and does not lose things.

Miss Stewart's pursuit of old frescoes, &c., under difficulties, Philip will have told you of. She has been almost driven mad by delight, and has generally seen some two or three old churches before breakfast. She is wiry and indefatigable.

Your dear mother (who has been wonderfully well) has here a sort of dumb cold with headache, but the weather, though bright, is so bitterly cold again that this is not surprising.

If you see your brothers, pray thank George for a very amusing letter to your mother, date 2nd April, which we had *not* got when I wrote to him yesterday, and beg them to write till 28th inclusive to Geneva, and after that to Paris.

God bless you, dearest M.

With our united love, ever your affectionate father,

R. C.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Raikes Currie.



In the summer of 1852, Bertram made a short tour in Switzerland, the account of which remains in eight letters to his father. The beginning of the tour was unfortunate, and is detailed in the first letter dated,

*Hotel des Princes, July 27th.*

My dear Father,

As you will perhaps read in your morning paper at Rickmansworth of a considerable smash on the South Eastern Railway last night, I hasten to inform you that I am not among the sufferers, except to the extent of a moderate "punch on the head," and consequent ache. The affair happened thus: On nearing Tonbridge the rod which connects the fore and aft wheels of one of the carriages broke, and made a considerable row and dust, and when we arrived at the station it was found necessary to take off the damaged vehicle and tranship its passengers and luggage. This caused a delay of twenty minutes. In the meantime a luggage train or pick-up going towards Dover, expecting our arrival, had moved on to the up line, and was run into at full tilt by the up express train about a minute before our arrival. The effect of this shock was to send one or two of the trucks on to our line, and as we had no signal and no time to stop, we also ran bang into them. Both lines were of course strewn with the wrecks of the carriages, and all concerned received at the least a considerable shock. One of the stokers appeared to be killed: at least when I saw him he looked very bad. The passengers, who were few in number, escaped

with some bad cuts and bruises. We all spent three hours in a drizzling rain at a small station and of course did not arrive at Dover till long after our time. At Calais I found the immense advantage of being without luggage, as I was the *only* passenger who got away by the mail train, which left immediately the bags were on board, and came at a capital pace, landing me here at twelve o'clock, about an hour after which time I am writing, having taken a bath and finding all my things prepared by the faithful Dominico. Love to all, not forgetting *les belles cousines* of all ages.

Geneva, July 28th, 1852.

I have just arrived here at half-past six, making the journey from London in forty-six hours, as I predicted. Baring, however, has moved off to Vevay, *en route* to Chamounix, so that I shall go to the latter place to-morrow and wait for him.

I left Paris last night at 8.5 p.m., and on arriving at Dijon was immediately transferred into the diligence, which now performs the duties of the *malle poste*, and landed here in fifteen hours. We were only allowed twelve minutes stoppage during this time, and the changing of horses and speed was miraculously quick. However, one gets tired of sitting fifteen hours in the same position, particularly when it follows upon seven hours of railway. There is a fine view of the whole lake of Geneva on descending the Jura range from France.

The window from which I write is only divided by the road from the "arrowy Rhone," which is looking

particularly blue. I am about to dine at a *table d'hôte* at half-past seven—a very gentlemanlike hour.

Yesterday I was entertained by M. Arcos, father of M. Xavier, who has a very comfortable establishment in the Rue de la Madeleine, and very satisfactory cook.

The bell rings for the 7.30 entertainment, so that I must leave you for the present, hoping that next time there will be more to say.

*Hotel des Trois Courrones,*

*Vevay, Aug. 5th, 1852.*

I arrived here this afternoon from Martigny and find no letters. I hope the *affaire* Ponsford is settled, and shall not be quite happy in my mind till I hear that such is the case.

I left Geneva the day after my last letter, for Chamounix. At St. Martin, where one changes the carriage for a *char*, Dominique espied in the yard *le courier de Milord Overstone*, and I found him with wife, daughter, and Count, sitting down to dinner. I stayed there about three-quarters of an hour while he held forth upon the state of affairs in England, and eventually arrived very late in a pouring rain at Chamounix, where I found Ned Baring established.

The next day we made the ascent of the Montanvert, and at the *table d'hôte* fell in with Miss Wickham, travelling with her brother and a good-looking Miss Markham.\* The day following we started to make the tour of Mont Blanc, which occupies four days. We were fortunate in the weather, and passed over some rugged *cols*. The second night we arrived at

Courmayeur, a watering-place much frequented by Italians and full of people from Turin. It is opposite to Chamounix on the other side of Mont Blanc, and commands a finer view of the mountains, but being unapproachable from the north, except on foot, is little frequented. Here we spent a day, and the next came through Aosta to St. Bernard, where we enjoyed the hospitality of the holy Fathers, and saw the dogs, &c. These worthy persons exercise an indiscriminating charity, so that at supper we found ourselves in the society of several peasants. The cold was considerable, and the food very bad, so that notwithstanding Mr. Albert Smith's pleasing fictions, I should not recommend the hospice to any one in search of the comfortable.

On our way to St. Bernard, Domenique again met with an acquaintance, who, he informed me, was *le Docteur Pantaleone, qui a guéri Mlle. Edith, et qui dinait souvent avec M. Currie à Rome.*

From the hospice we descended to Martigny, and thence by carriage and steamer to this place. The hotel is magnificent, and if the weather improves I shall stay a few days. Baring will go home on the 9th or 10th. In the meantime please send any letter to the P.O., Geneva, as I fear the smaller places are without regular communication. Love to all.

*Geneva, August 12th, 1852.*

Your letter arrived this morning. I had left directions in Cornhill to send me letters up to the 5th inst. to Vevay, or should have told you my address. I spent five days agreeably at Vevay,

although the weather was generally bad. Monnet's hotel is excellent and the place beautiful. It is amusing to watch the changes in the *personnel* of the guests, and to sit on the terrace which faces the lake, in addition to the charming expeditions to Chillon, &c.

On the 10th I came here to see Baring off by the *malle poste* for Paris. You will probably have met him before this arrives.

Yesterday I dined with the Wickhams, who have a country house close by. The day was rainy, so that I saw nothing of the place, which has no view of the lake, and does not seem anything particular. Some young men came in the evening—Lord Andover and his tutor, Mr. Arnold (son of the great doctor). To-day I have been walking about the town with Mr. Wickham. Madame has a bad leg and is unable to walk. The young man is about to start on an expedition round Mont Blanc with the above-named youths. My intention is to go to the Bernese Oberland and stop at Thun or Interlachen. At the latter please to address my letters. M. Monnet appears to be intimate with the whole family, M. Henri Currie *et ses jolies demoiselles et le gros M. Francis*, who has a special bed made up for him. His hotel is crowded, and twenty or thirty people were sent away daily. The best rooms were occupied by M. Thiers and M. Roger. The English I have met are not agreeable, but there were some young Frenchmen *assez bien*. The clergy appear to be moving in large numbers. I counted six on the steamer.

This place has no remarkable attractions, except that the cigars are very good, and I shall probably be off to-morrow if it is fine.

You tell me nothing of the proceedings at Northampton, though I hear from Gowran that there was great enthusiasm.

Old Ponsford is most annoying. My only fear is that if the place should be burnt down or anything untoward happens, he might try to get off.

The papers speak of the chance of a bad harvest in England. I hope this is not the case. It will affect the money market seriously.

I am going this evening to hear the band play on the island of J. J. Rousseau, a charming little spot surrounded by the Rhone, and afterwards to tea with the Wickhams. The river is unprecedentedly high, and not so blue as usual in consequence. With love to all, believe me,

Affectionately yours,

BERTRAM W. CURRIE.

*Thun, 17th August, 1852.*

My dear Father,

Having partaken of a very late dinner, which makes me afraid of going to bed at my usual hour, I will alleviate the digestive process by writing to you. I remained a day at Geneva after my last letter, and made the acquaintance, at Wickham's villa, of Mr. Herries (son of the venerable member of Lord Derby's Cabinet), and also met Alexander Barclay, descended from the insolvent David, whose paper you hold. No other inducement, however, presenting itself, I embarked on Saturday, the 14th, for Lausanne, and

the next morning early, for Yverdun and Neuchâtel. On the Lake of Neuchâtel we were overtaken by a considerable storm, during which I lost my hat, and most of the passengers their presence of mind. Since Monday there has been a most fortunate change in the weather (which is now lovely), and I took advantage of it to proceed to Berne, which I reached on Monday evening, having enjoyed from the diligence a most splendid view of the Bernese Alps, tinged with the roseate hue, of which one reads so much and sees so little.

This afternoon I came on here in a one-horse shay, and am so much pleased with what I have seen, that, if my impressions are as favourable to-morrow, I shall stay for a day or two.

At the *table d'hôte* I was recognized by a youth, lightly bearded, who turned out to be Robert Henley *avec sa dame*. She is really a pretty little creature, and I have no doubt this first act of their matrimonial existence is agreeable enough. If it were not for the remaining stages of the drama, I should be disposed to envy him the possession of such a good-looking travelling companion. A youth of Oxenford who accompanies them and is engaged in the harmless recreation of reading for his little-go, informed me that Henley had kindly undertaken to coach him!

So the American *nodus* is considered *dignus vindice* of Thomas Baring. I think the business had much better have been left to the regular agents, both because I believe Crampton to be a much better diplomat than T. B., and because the effect upon the Yankees will be to exaggerate the importance of the affair. At the best it is but a stale imitation of Peel's

policy in sending Lord Ashburton to settle the boundary question.

The establishment in which I am living (Hotel de Bellevue) consists of five houses, all belonging to the same proprietor, and all full. Interlachen, I hear, is still more crowded and cockney. Certainly the snobs have taken possession of some of the most beautiful spots in nature.

Dominique gets on capitally. His only weakness is an excessive care of his person and a consequent abundance of wardrobe, which somewhat impedes my movements. At Geneva he found a Colonel Caldwell, *qui avait une grande cave à Rome*, and who, I was therefore not surprised to hear, was *très lié avec M. Currie*.

Thun, August 25th, 1852.

I received your letter directed to Interlachen, this morning, having despatched Dominique to search for it, and to engage a room at the hotel there. This precaution is absolutely necessary, as every bed in every inn is engaged, and people are reduced to sleeping on the floor and other extremities. I am not magnificently lodged here, my room being 8 feet by 16. . . . Since I wrote to you our prospects in respect to weather have been blighted, and for two days it has rained incessantly, with every chance of lasting for a month. Our resources under these circumstances are few. We have what the landlord calls *une bonne musique d'Allemagne*, consisting of half a dozen decayed waiters, who at this moment are playing *Beviam Beviam* at a railroad pace, and awfully



out of tune. Then there is a reading-room with an old *Galignani* of last month, *Bains chauds*, &c., and *une chapelle anglaise avec un ecclésiastique salarié par MM. les propriétaires de l'établissement*. I fancy, however, that the poor man's salary is paid in kind, and consists in being allowed the run of the three *tables d'hôte*, where he is to be met daily performing prodigies with these carnal weapons, the knife and fork.

The only person of European reputation in the hotel is Mr. G. F. Young. He has been here a long time, and is a great authority.

The spirited proprietor of the *ecclésiastique*, and of the other attractions of this establishment, has established a complete monopoly of plunder in Thun. The steamboats on the lake, the guides, porters, and *voituriers*, all belong to him, and he does not fail to take advantage of his position and grinds us *en vrai* protectionist.

Young Henley and his wife are still here, but naturally prefer *tête-à-têtes* to the gay throng of Yankees, Germans, and Jews.

I am sorry to hear of your troubles *in re* Bougleux, and fear that nothing can be done with Ponsford till the trial is over, though perhaps it would be worth while to try and get him to sign the deed of dissolution, as it is evidently unfair that I should continue to incur liabilities after I have given up all chance of profit, and no one can foresee when Bower and Bovill will agree to anything.

I can hardly say what my movements will be. If this weather goes on I shall make a bolt, but the best place to direct to will be Lucerne. I have written to Geneva to have my letters forwarded, but have received

nothing as yet, so that I am without George's letter and the Northampton paper about which you speak. I shall be much interested with the account of the late Lizzie Hibbert's marriage. I thought of her on that eventful day, and hope the weather was not quite so discouraging as it was here.

I am sorry to hear that Taplow is gone for ever. It is a consolation to think that Grenfell has had to pay twice as much as it is worth. Perhaps if we have another 1847 it may come into the market.

Pray thank George for his letter, and Evy for her intended favour. I will answer the former as soon as I receive it.

*Schweizer Hof, Lucerne, September 2nd, 1852.*

I arrived here to-day by the lake from Fluelen, having left Interlaken on the 30th ult., and crossed the Grimsel and Furca passes to Hospenthal on the St. Gothard road. H. Tower was my companion. We went on foot, hiring a man to carry the carpet bags, and saw some fine scenery. The weather was fair, but the expedition was only partially successful. In the first place, both of us were unwell, and in the second, we were very unfortunate in the places we stopped at for the night. Yesterday at Altdorf the *salle à manger* was so horribly offensive as to be untenable, and we were obliged to have tea (?) in our rooms. At this moment I am writing under the influence of a powerful smell of the kitchen, which almost makes me sick. At one place on the road we could get nothing to eat but goat, and at another, 8,000 feet above the sea, we arrived in a pouring rain and were

almost frozen. In our last expedition we met such a number of cockneys at the inns, that I hoped, by avoiding the usual halting-places, to escape from them, but found their absence by no means compensated us for our sufferings. Dominique is quite at home since we arrived at Hospenthal, and points out each inn as the place where Monsieur took lunch, or Madame admired the scenery. I thought the descent from St. Gothard equal to anything in Switzerland, with the advantage of being seen without trouble.

Mrs. Tower and her daughters came here by the Berne road (by which I sent my luggage), and are at a pension where they are done for six francs a day—a very cheap and pleasant way of living. I shall stay here till I get rid of my headache and seediness, and then go to Zurich and *Constance*, so please write to the latter place.

Poor old I. G. C. was quite neglected by those Regans and Gonerils, who derive their subsistence from his bounty. He was so much disgusted that he left his wife, &c., at Interlaken, and went off by himself to Thun. One night, when the people were dancing in the hotel, young Tower found him in the passage fallen on the ground and without his shoe! He is now, I believe, at Geneva, from whence he returns to England by Basle, while his wife goes on to Italy. I told him that he must go and see you at Rickmansworth.

Pray thank G. for his letter just received. I am glad your picture is so successful a likeness.

Do you find Rickmansworth amusing and the neighbours hospitable?

I suppose I shall go up the Rigi while I am at

Lucerne, on the usual fool's errand, but at present, I am too bilious to do anything but grumble, for which this greasy paper affords a good opportunity.

*Lucerne, Sept. 6th, 1852.*

I have received your letter of the 2nd inst., and have already written to you once from this place, where I am still staying, principally on account of my health, which is not quite restored, and partly to enjoy the beauties of the lake, and the society of my friends, Mrs. and the Misses Tower. For the latter purpose I have moved from the Schweizer Hof to the Pension de Tivoli, situated on the lake outside the town, where one is boarded, lodged, &c., with a sitting and bedroom *moyennant* the *modique* sum of nine francs daily. Hitherto our excursions have been confined to after-dinner walks, but to-morrow, if fine, we purpose going to explore the scene of Tell's encounter with Gessler at Küssnacht on this lake. To-day does not promise well for the expedition, as it has poured continuously.

In the course of the week I shall go on to Zurich. The intelligence about Henry William gave me much pleasure, and I trust his confidential advisers will press upon him the necessity of breaking off. I fear his father will be perhaps *over* scrupulous.

There is nothing in the way of adventure to tell you. The life here is tranquil in the extreme, being confined to driving, rowing, and walking. I went out fishing this morning with H. Tower, and saw a man pulled out of the River Reuss, who had drowned himself. His crucifix was tightly grasped in his right hand.

This house is very prettily (though I think not healthily) situated, and the rooms and grub are fair enough. Mrs. Tower has a drawing-room on the first floor, with a balcony commanding the lake, where we sit; and we dine together in a room on the ground floor. I occupy two rooms on the *2<sup>me</sup> étage*. In front of the house is a bathing and boat-house, and the walks are pretty, particularly one to the churchyard, from which there is a charming view.

I shall be surprised to hear that Thames Street Mill is really started. The best chance of getting my affair settled would be, I think, to send for Ponsford and tell him that you insisted upon it, and make him at any rate fix a time in writing at which he would sign the deed.

I should certainly have preferred to act as a tug to old I. G., had he been going northward at present, particularly as he was provided with a carriage. He hired *two* with horses and *voiturier* at Basle, for which he appeared to pay alarmingly. I think you will find that the old fellow's taste for travelling has been cured and that he will settle down to Cornhill again.

You do not say in any of your letters how Rickmansworth answers your expectations. I hope the cook is preparing the winter campaign. There is nothing good to eat here, the only fish being pike. However it is just dinner-time (six o'clock), and I must go through the ceremony. With love to all,

Affectionately yours,

B. W. CURRIE.

One more letter of this year must be inserted. The date of the month and year is omitted, but the opening sentence shows that it was written in the December of 1852, when Lord Aberdeen formed the Coalition Ministry of Whigs and Peelites, with Lord John Russell as Foreign Secretary.

Maynard Currie had recently been ordained, and was curate at Banbury.

FROM MR. RAIKES CURRIE TO HIS SON MAYNARD.

*Hyde Park Terrace, Sunday.*

My dear Maynard,

Wodehouse is to be Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—immediately under Lord John Russell—the nicest appointment he could have had. *If* the Government last, as Johnny can never lead the House of Commons and really do the work of the Foreign Office, this most interesting and important department will almost fall into the hands of our industrious and noble friend. Such is the reward of steady exertion! I have had something to do with it.

Dearest Maynard, we have wished for you, thought of you, and toasted you, and finally you were brought before us in one of several impromptu *charades* performed last night by the Adelphi, “Ban-bury.” In the third scene, three curates appeared, purchasing cakes. Bertram (in your character) explained to the woman (Mary) that they were *not* made in the right way, and pointed out (*very* didactically), how they should be made. One of your brother curates kissed the shopwoman, and the scene broke up with your horrified gesture. “New Holland” was another, in

which Bertram enacted a capital imitation of Dr. H. and Lord Lansdowne.

Can you not come up about the 10th, to stay as many days as you possibly can in that week? Parliament does not again meet till February 10th, so perhaps (when we separate) I may soon plan some departure for Brighton or Paris, so come as soon as you can.

The dear Monarch has a bad cold which keeps her to the house.

We have had a good sermon to-day from a Mr. Hubbard, brother to the Bank Director, who is living at Aynhoe, a *very* High Churchman.

Bertram comes to the Banking House as a partner forthwith, Mr. I. G. giving him a fraction of his share. He will cease to reside with us at midsummer.

I have a very good account of Philip from Morse. I wish I *could* get him a clerkship in the Foreign Office.

Have you seen Cobb? Write to me, dearest M., as fully as may be. I feel, as you well know, deeply interested about you. Tell me how you feel.

As ever, yours affectionately,

R. C.





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