



[William Crosfield Letters](#)

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New York
Monday December 5. 1859

My dear Mother,

Saturday brought me another letter from each of you, and convinced me still further that it was only your kindness that prompted you to send me back to the West Indies and that you do expect me home right off. The Europa not as I said in mine by the "Ego" the "Niagara" is my choice or I should rather say the fourteenth is my date for the ship is quite a secondary consideration.

The weather is now very severe in New York on Friday people were all complaining of the heat; that evening I came in about eleven o'clock a very extraordinary wind was blowing the dust down broadly in thick clouds and made me think that a change was coming, still it was not cool. I was hardly prepared therefore when I got up to my room to find a bitterly cold reception from the open window. The distance is not far from the street to my bedroom but it was enough; I am told that the fall was as much as forty degrees near the river. My friends had told me of twenty degree fall in a few hours but up to last Friday I had not experienced this

form of American climate. It is quite a colony of Englishmen near me. Mogley on one side and a man of the name of Stafford near door on the other. Last night we three went down to supper and found only one man in the room with me a Liverpool man (friend of Mr. Gammall). The civility in this house is rather strong. I am not sure that it is quite the best (though the pleasantest) thing everyone to be trying how to spite you. E.g.: The other morning, on going down to breakfast, I found that as I was late there was no paper left but "the Herald". I expressed my natural disgust at having to buy such vile trash and suggested that I should be obliged to get up earlier or unpleasant alternative. "Oh sir your number 154. I think I'll send them up if you like." Their power of identity is a great peculiarity which I have only been in the house three days. The clerk handed me a letter as I was walking backwards and forwards in the hall. How he could know me and think of my letter surrounded by "all the concourse of people" I cannot think but that is just the way they do

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everything. I was saying something of the change in the weather; the bitterly cold wind blew all Friday night and Saturday but it did blow, snow a little in that afternoon and then Sunday such weather as would establish in one day a reputation for an entire winter in England, wind cold rain heavy, and frost sharp, formed such an amalgam on the footways as once seen or felt would be thought enough.

I have been looking round to find something to take back to friends at home and can find nothing, as a last resource I went to Upington's feeling "certain sure" that in a book-store the size of the Lyceum newsroom I should find at least a rifle. I explained my wants nothing English that I should lose at the Customs house. After a time he brought me "Washington and Mount Vernon" a book with a few ordinary plates and said "This is the only thing we have purely American." I looked into his face but he did not even blush. However they had one redeeming feature by dint of printing at last found Bradshaw's for November, put it down to their credit. I also tried to find some eggs for Cornie but they seem in a very happy state in that respect for to judge by results I guess

that bird's nesting is a crime
unknown in the statute book
I have sundry lists in my desk
which speak of eggs as "boiled" or
"scrambled" but none of them
mention the whereabouts of what
she wants.

Found that there is plenty birds
in this city my programme has
been Tuesday, William James - dinner
Wednesday, Mr. Archibald - At home
Friday Sam. Cowell ^{Arthur Cople}
Saturday Mrs. Bradley - dinner
future
Monday, Mr. Booth - dinner
Tuesday, Mr. Mannwright - dinner
Wednesday

I called on Miss Maury one day
and was fortunate enough to find
her in the evening very anxious to hear
further accounts of Cousin Sam. C.
Also Miss Stokes she was very -
never mind, she looks very pretty and
on the whole it is more evident
why so many of my lady friends
were so frequent in their praises.
It was my first visit on a young
lady as far as I can remember
though I have called at many
before I hope to do again. I was
doing it in English fashion
till reassured by both father and
mother who went out. What a
blessed state of society! We must

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see what a joint committee
can do towards Radical Reform
at home or the Social Science
Assn. might well direct its attention
to so laudable an object. I could
give you some examples of the
very pleasant way that the
system works, but I refrain till
I get home and can set someone
to work at a paper for next
Autumn's convention. Yesterday
morning I went to Dr. Adams's
church on the opposite side of the
square by reason of the weather as
above the McHimsey family
were not out in such numbers as
usual. The sermon was decidedly
fine like the church which latter
reminds me of the Crystal Palace
was - much as it is painted in
imitation of the Alhambra. Miss
James I understand will be more
likely to give you a good impression
of it than I shall. Of the sermon
I can say in the best way, so many
critics, it was of the right sort. In
the afternoon I went to a Mission
School service in Avenue D where
young Mr. Booth works. That's a fact.
My occupation in the evening was
sufficient in many persons estimation
to give me an interest in the inside

of a burratic asylum - (D'Cheene
was to preach on "The martyr and
the martyr's triumph" I went to hear
him rather as a small tribute to
the brave old Brown than any desire
that I should hear the D. The German
was good though I thought his style
rather too wild. I have been to another
of the Sutton St prayer meetings. My
opinion of them is unchanged. I
was glad to see a black man among
the crowd and when he got up to
speak the manner of (D. S. K. R. S. D.)
in ^{the conclusion} reciting him was even more
gratifying. He told us of his work
in the most polished English and
found that he is a Missionary
in Demerara. May it not be that
as he is a Briton the assumed
right which his poor American
brethren have forgotten by reason
of long oppression?

It is exceedingly flattering to
find that my account of Phillips
Mississippi was sufficiently strong
to make some of you long to see
it for yourselves. It is what every
Englishman should do. But they
certainly are hard cases out west
and require a large degree of com-
-tentment to make them at all
palatable to an English taste
however little aristocratic feeling

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they may have in the matter. I have
like returning civilization to find
the Illustrated London N. in the window.
Tuesday

This must be finished today as
the Africa sails early tomorrow and
so I shall not be able to reply to letters
per Persia which I hope for but do
not expect. My ap at P. D. H. S. has
just closed very satisfactorily I think
and much as I expected. I shall try
to call on the late Miss Wainwright
now Mrs Storey (!) but shall not commit
myself to Mrs S without some certain
information as to her identity.

I was up at the Central Park the
other day this is not to be confound-
ed with "the park" a collection of
broken railings near the Astor house.
The Central is bound to be a very great
place as regards extent you might
put six Princes Parks into it and
not know where to find them
when you had done. They speak
of 10 miles of carriage drivers which
supplies what has always been a
want in New York for the Fifth Avenue
is not fit to bring a good carriage
into at account of the pavement. The
carriages of the city are very heavy
and have not nearly so much show
or even elegance as I should have
expected among such a showy set
as the N. Y. upper crust. The best description

of them is "lively mourning".
The horses are certainly full but
not so much so as to stop Mowbray
from talking very large about "the
horses" as I remember he always.
The ladies dress a great deal and
go the entire length of the fashion
is most assuredly too far (for the
pink) bonnets and "puffed skirts"
I have been among the ladies -
not the most beautiful though
seem the most favourite form
of dress. I am at a loss for something
to say but after so long a series of
yawns I will not now begin to
blanch paper because there is nothing
to tell. I see by Liverpool papers that
all the world is joining the Anti-Slavery
Society at Lyell quay if not even
this day week at the near prospect
of leaving this Great Country where
I have enjoyed so much that in pictures
and pictures are mixed however
other things to give spice to the whole.
You need not expect to hear from
me direct till I turn up. This is
enclosed will tell you that I
be heard of in town. Please our
more remembrance to all the
friends who are so kind as to
of me and Believe me, my dear
mother your son

W. Grosfield

If not to breakfast with you a
merry happy Christmas to you all