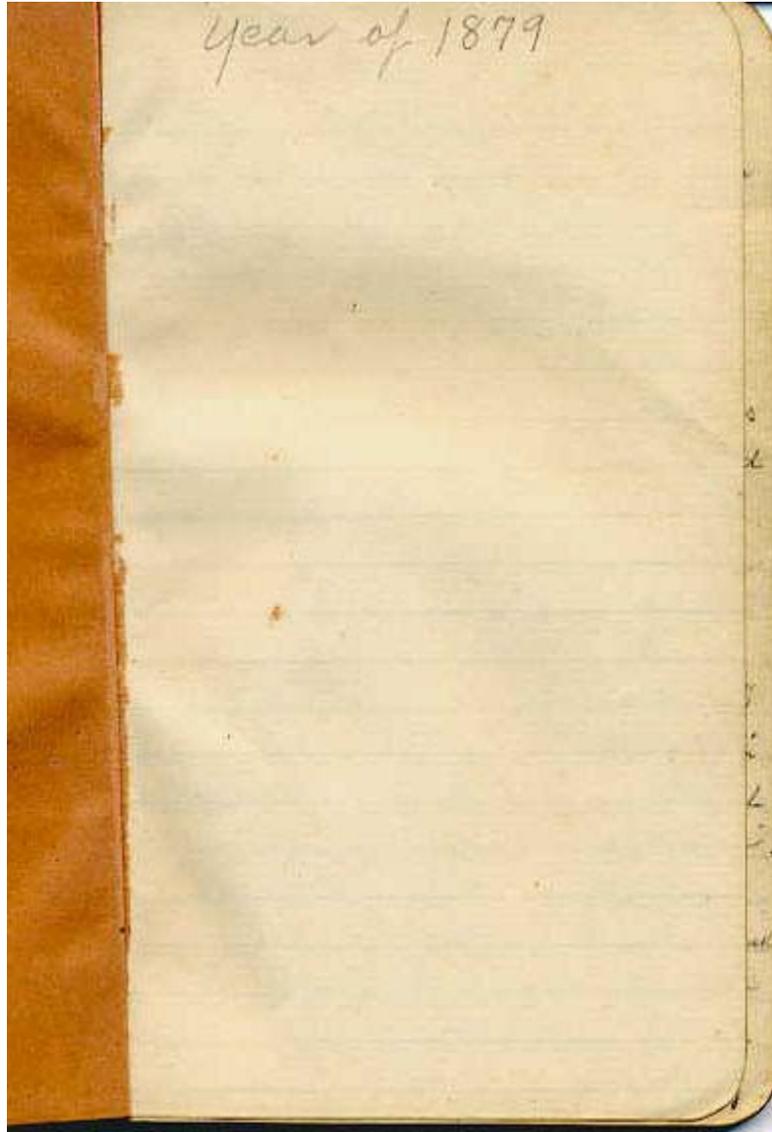
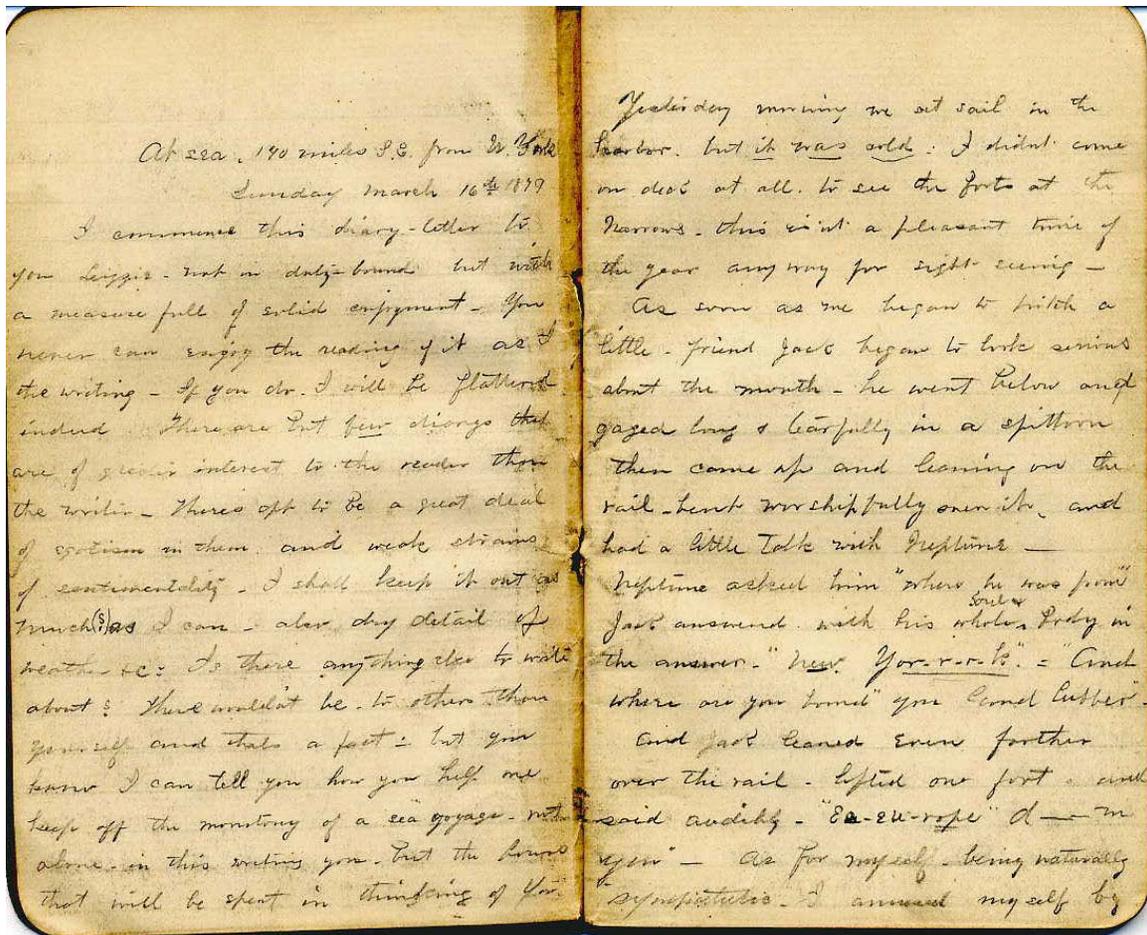


Chester Jackson's Journal/Letter to Lizzie Keys
Enroute to Antigua
March-April, 1879





At sea, 140 miles S.E. from N. York

Sunday, March 16th, 1879

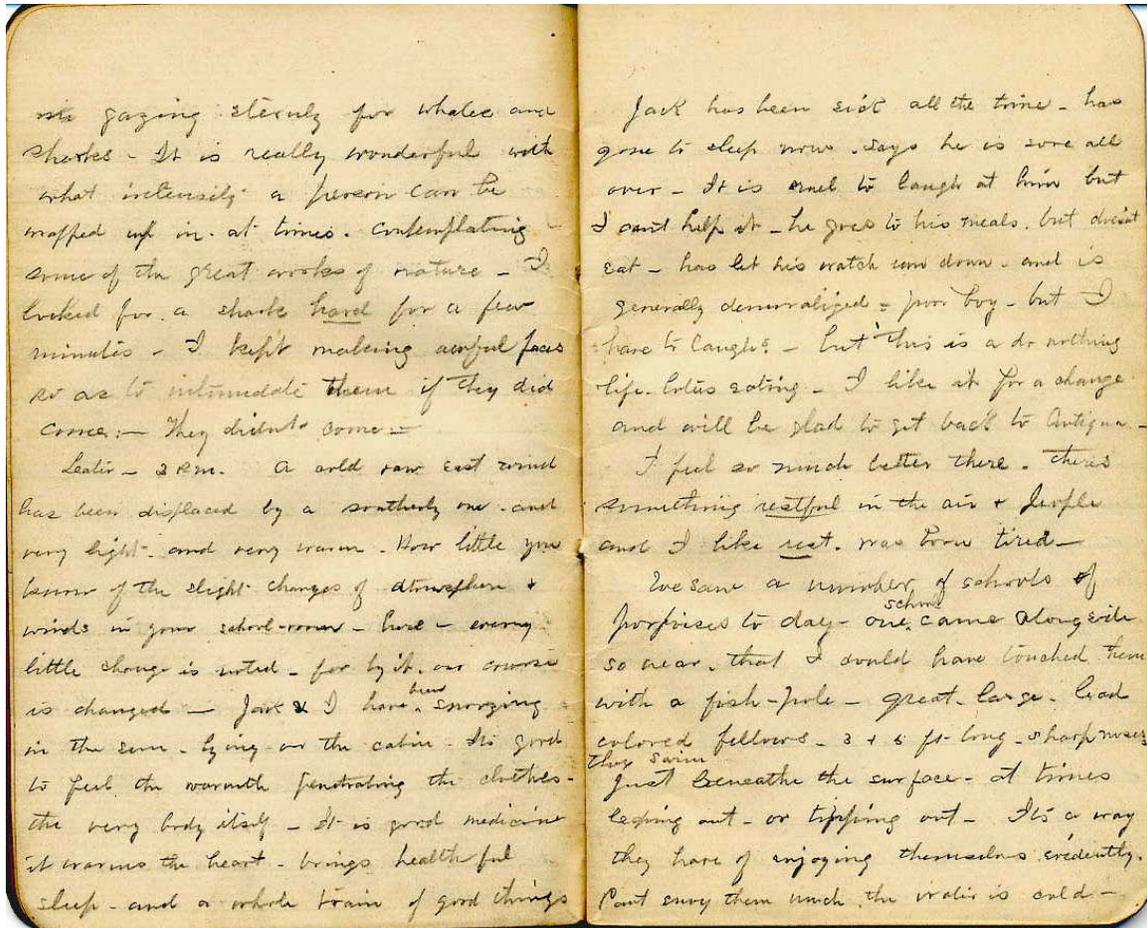
I commence this diary-letter to you Lizzie — not in duty-bound but with a measure full of solid enjoyment. You never can enjoy the reading of it as the writing. If you do I will be flattered indeed. There are but few diaries that are of greater interest to the reader than the writer. There's apt to be a great deal of egotism in them and weak strains of sentimentality. I shall keep it out as much (?) as I can. Also dry detail of weather, etc. Is there anything then to write about? There wouldn't be, to others than yourself and that's a fact. But you know I can tell you how you help me keep off the monotony of a sea voyage — not alone in this writing you, but the hours that will be spent in thinking of you.

Yesterday morning we set sail in the harbor, but it was cold. I didn't come on deck at all to see the forts at the narrows. This isn't a pleasant time of the year anyway for sight-seeing.

As soon as we began to pitch a little friend Jack began to look serious about the mouth. He went below and gazed long and tearfully in a spittoon then came up and leaning on the rail bent worshipfully over it and had a little talk with Neptune. Neptune asked him

"where he was from." Jack answer with his whole soul & body in the answer. "New Yor-r-r-k." "And where are you bound you land lubber."

And Jack leaned even farther over the rail, lifted one foot and said audibly, "Eu-eu-rope d_n you." As for myself, being naturally sympathetic, I amused myself by ...



... in gazing sternly for whales and sharks. It is really wonderful with what intensity a person can be wrapped up in at times, contemplating some of the great works of nature. I looked for a shark hard for a few minutes. I kept making awful faces so as to intimidate them if they did come. They didn't come.

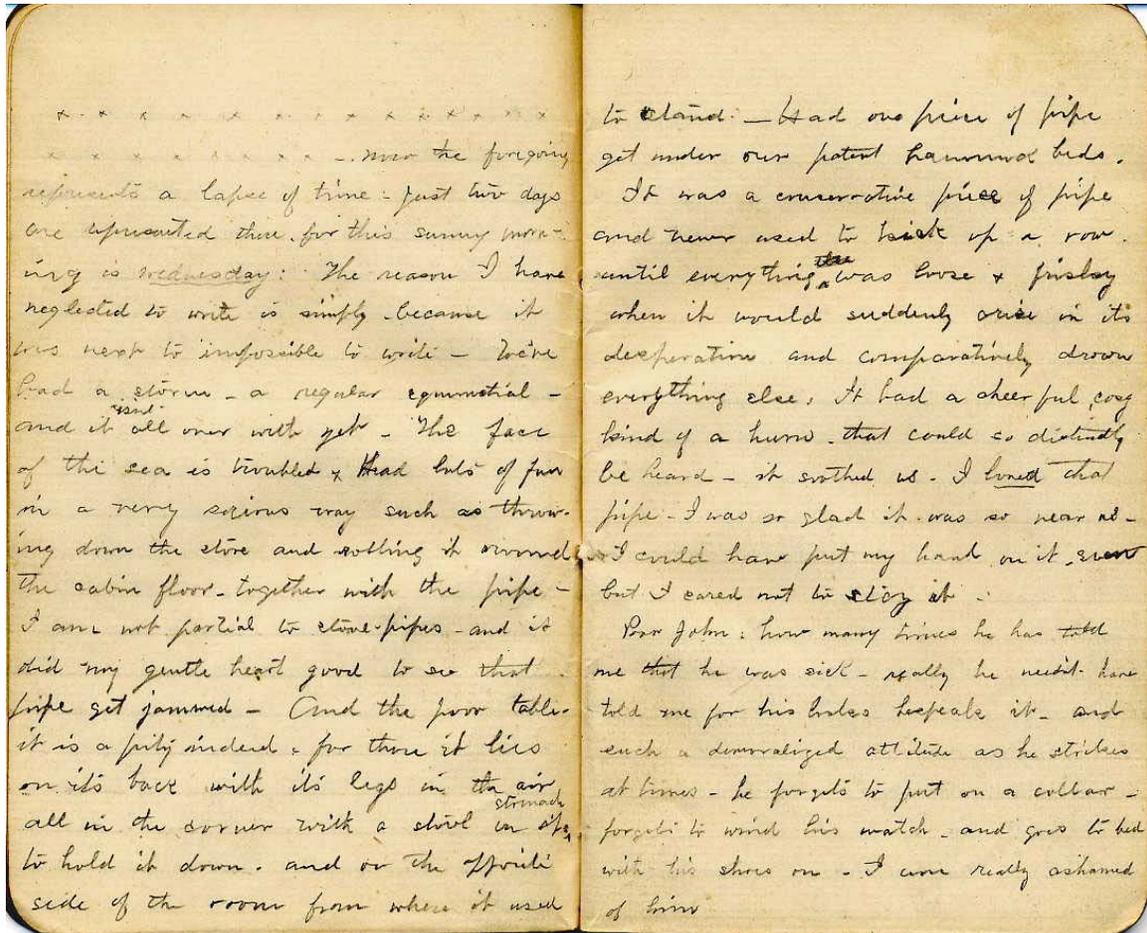
Later [?] — 2 p.m. A cold raw east wind has been displaced by a southerly one, and very light, and very warm. How little you know of the slight changes of atmosphere & winds in your school-room — here — every little change is noted — for by it, our course is changed. Jack & I have been snoozing in the sun, lying on the cabin. It's good to feel the warmth penetrating the clothes, the very body itself. It is good medicine; it warms the heart, brings healthful sleep, and a whole train of good things.

Jack has been sick all the time, has gone to sleep now, says he is sore all over. It is cruel to laugh at him but I can't help it. He goes to his meals but doesn't eat — has let his watch run down and is generally demoralized. Poor boy, but I have to laugh? But this is

a do nothing life. Lotus eating. I like it for a change and will be glad to get back to Antigua.

I feel so much better there. There's something restful in the air & people [?] and I like rest. Was never tired.

We saw a number of schools of porpoises today. One school came alongside so near that I could have touched them with a fish-pole — great, large, lead colored fellows, 3 & 6 ft long — sharp noses. They swim just beneath the surface, at times leaping out, or tipping out. It's a way they have of enjoying themselves evidently. Can't envy them much, the water is cold.



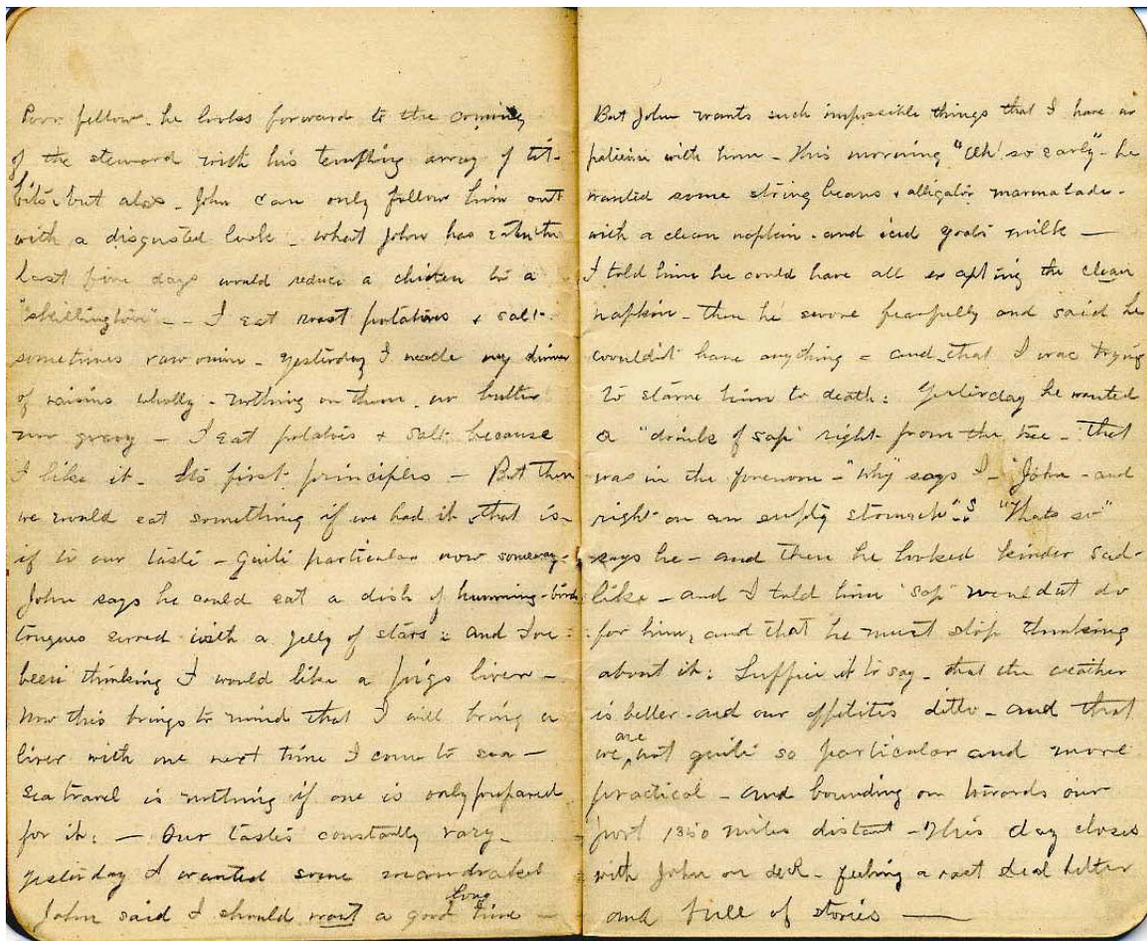
***** Now the foregoing represents a lapse of time, just two days are represented there, for this sunny morning is Wednesday: the reason I have neglected to write is simply because it was next to impossible to write. We've had a storm, a regular equinoctial* — and it isn't all over with yet. The face of the sea is troubled. Had lots of fun in a very serious way such as throwing down the stove and rolling it around the cabin floor, together with the pipe. I am not partial to stove-pipes, and it

* - A violent storm of wind and rain occurring at or near the time of the equinox.

did my gentle heart good to see that pipe get jammed. And the poor table — it is pity indeed, for there it lies on its back with its legs in the air all in the corner with a stool on its stomach to hold it down, and on the opposite side of the room from where it used to stand. Had one piece of pipe get under our patent [?] hammock beds.

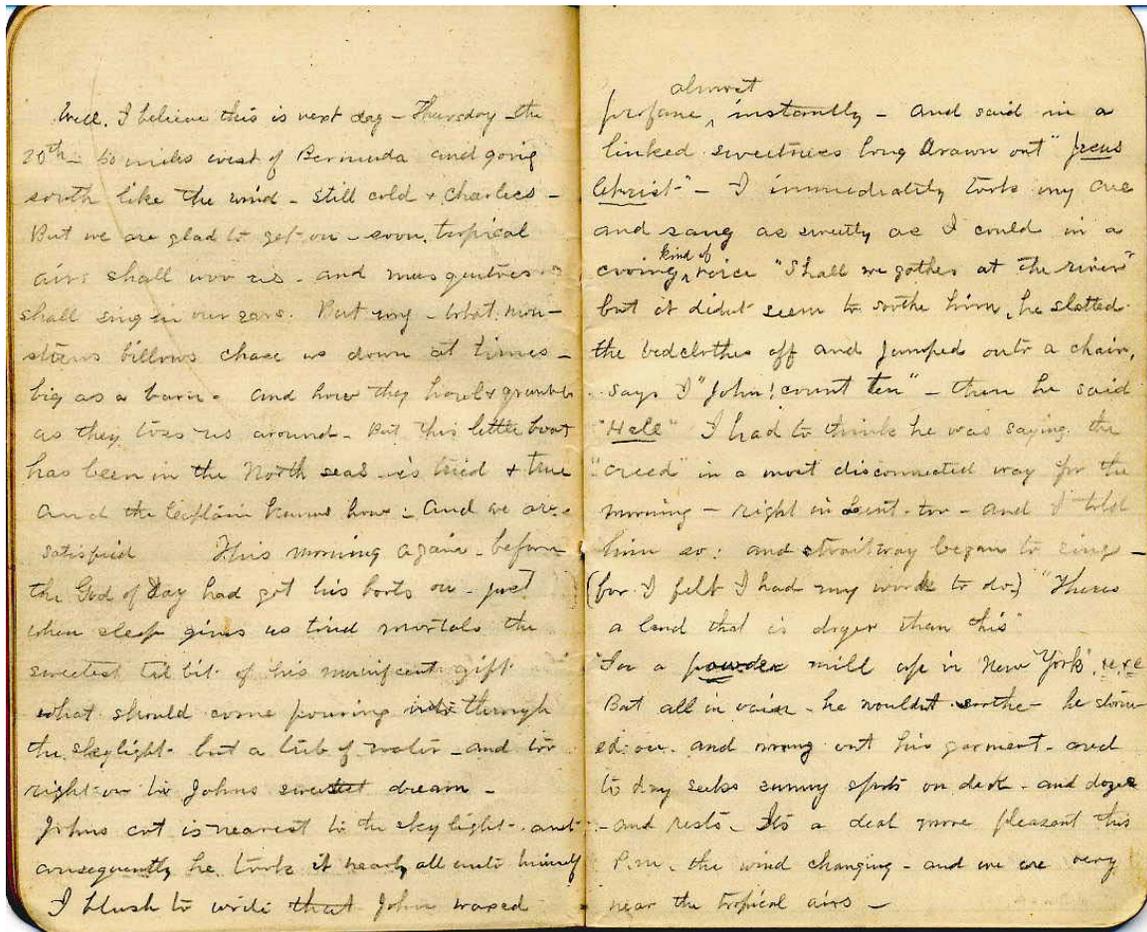
It was a conservative piece of pipe and never used to kick up a row until everything was loose and frisky when it would suddenly arise in its desperation and comparatively drown everything else. It had a cheerful, cozy kind of hum that could so distinctly be heard. It soothed us. I loved that pipe. I was so glad it was so near us. I could have put my hand on it but I cared not to slay it.

Poor John: how many times he has told me that he was sick, really he needn't have told me for his looks bespeak it — and such a demoralized attitude as he strikes at times. He forgets to put on a collar, forgets to wind his watch, and goes to bed with his shoes on. I am really ashamed of him.



Poor fellow, he looks forward to the coming of the steward with his tempting array of tidbits, but alas, John can only follow him out with a disgusted look. What John has eaten the last five days would reduce a chicken to a “skillington” [?]. I eat roast potatoes & salt, sometimes raw onion. Yesterday I made my dinner of raisins wholly — nothing on them. No butter nor gravy. I eat potatoes & salt because I like it. It’s first principles

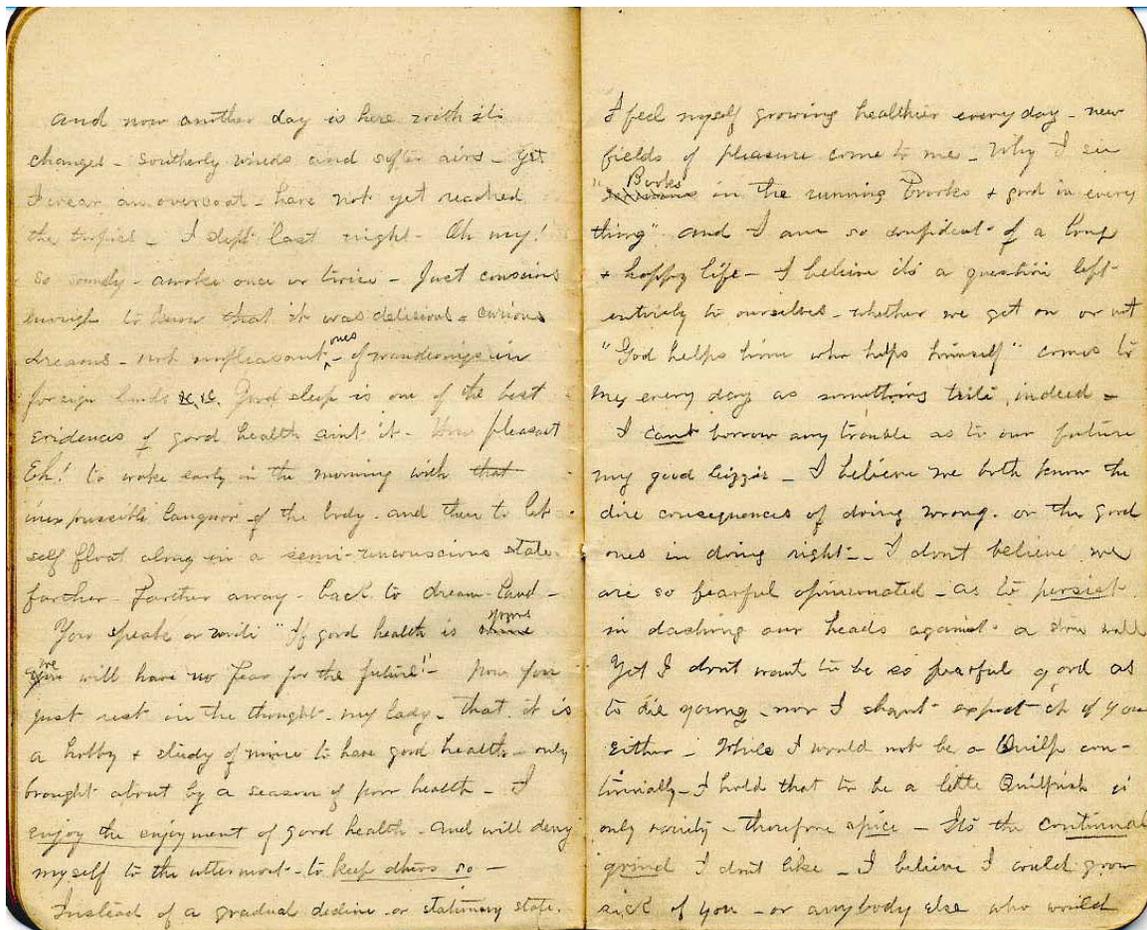
— but then we would eat something if we had it — that is, if to our taste — quite particular now someway. John says he could eat a dish of humming-bird tongues served with a jelly of stars. And I've been thinking I would like a pig's liver — now this brings to mind that I will bring a liver with me next time I come to sea. Sea travel is nothing if one is only prepared for it. Our tastes constantly vary — yesterday I wanted some mandrakes. John said I should want a good long time. But John wants such impossible things that I have no patience with him. This morning "Oh! So early" he wanted some string beans & alligator marmalade, with a clean napkin and iced goat's milk. I told him he could have all excepting the clean napkin. Then he swore fearfully and said he wouldn't have anything, and that I was trying to starve him to death. Yesterday he wanted a "drink of sap" right from the tree — that was in the forenoon — "why" says I — "John, and right on an empty stomach?" "That's so," says he — and then he looked kinder sad-like, and I told him "sap" wouldn't do for him, and that he must stop thinking about it. Suffice it to say that the weather is better and our appetites ditto, and that we are not quite so particular and more practical — and bounding on towards our port 1350 miles distant. This day closes with John on deck, feeling a vast deal better and full of stories.



Well, I believe this is next day — Thursday the 20th. 50 miles west of Bermuda and going south like the wind. Still cold & [??]. But we are glad to get on — soon tropical

airs shall woo us, and mosquitoes shall sing in our ears. But my, what monstrous billows chase us down at times — big as a barn. And how they howl & grumble as they toss us around. But this little boat has been in the North seas is tried & true, and the captain knows how, and we are satisfied. This morning again, before the God Day had got his boots on, just when sleep gives us tired mortals the sweetest lil bit of his munificent gift, what should come pouring through the skylight but a tub of water, and too right on to John's sweetest dream.

John's cot is nearest to the skylight and consequently he took it nearly all unto himself. I blush to write that John waxed profane almost instantly, and said in a linked sweetness long drawn out, "Jesus Christ" — I immediately took my cue and sang as sweetly as I could in a cooing kind of voice, "Shall we gather at the river," but it didn't seem to soothe him. He slatted [?] the bedclothes off and jumped onto a chair. Says I, "John! Count ten," and then he said "Hell." I had to think he was saying the "creed" in an ost disconnected way for the morning — right in Lent, too — and I told him so: and straightway began to sing (for I felt I had my work to do) "There's a land that is dryer than this." In a powder mill up in New York." Xoxo. But all in vain — he wouldn't soothe — he stormed on and wrung out his garment and today seeks sunny spots on deck and dozes and rests. It's a deal more pleasant this p.m. The wind changing, and we are very near the tropical airs.



And now another day is here with its changes — southerly winds and softer airs. Yet I wear an overcoat — have not yet reached the tropics — I slept last night, Oh my! So soundly, awoke once or twice. Just conscious enough to know that it was delicious — curious dreams — not unpleasant ones — of wanderings in foreign lands, etc., etc. Good sleep is one of the best evidences of good health ain't it. How pleasant Eh! To wake early in the morning with that inexpressible languor of the body, and then to let self float along in a semi-unconscious state farther farther away — back to dream land.

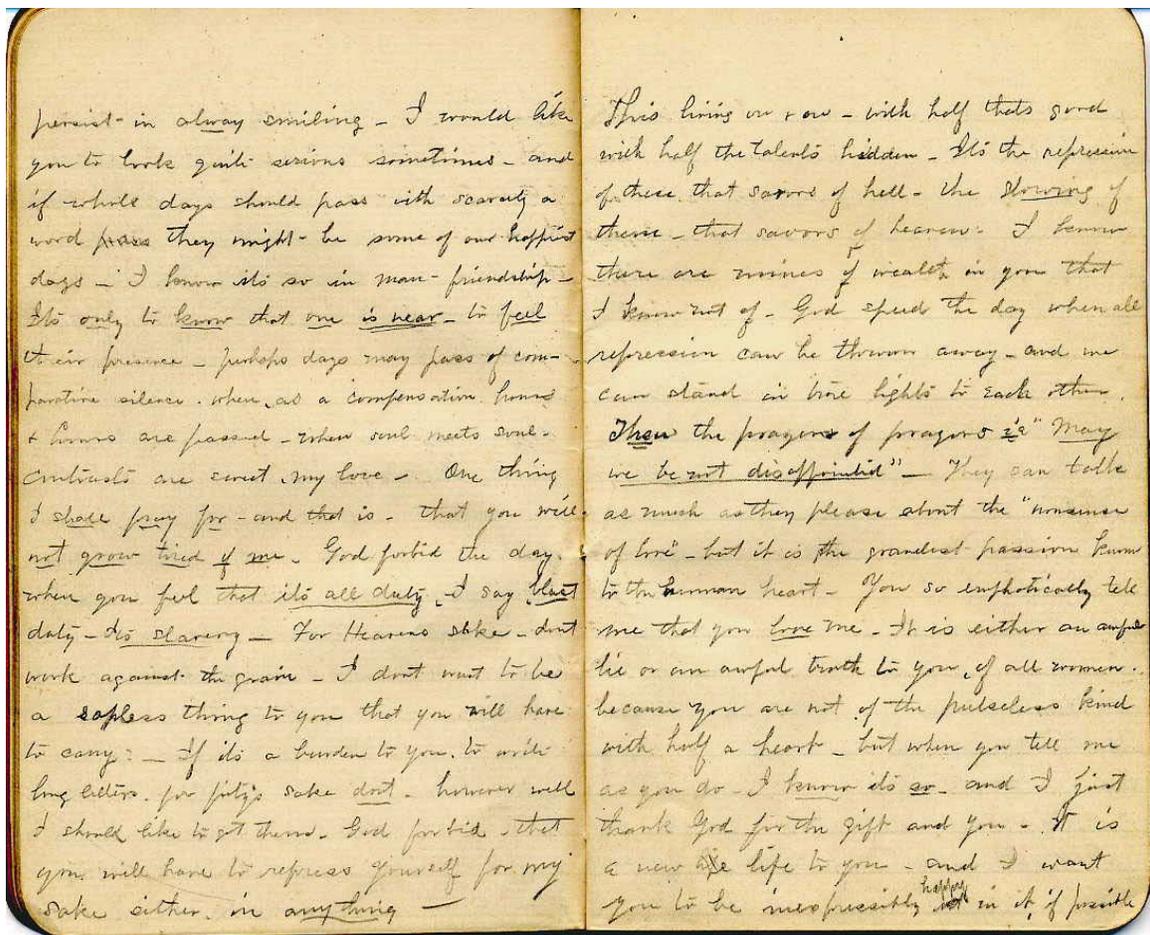
You speak of write “If good health is yours we will have no fear for the future.” Now you just rest in the thought, my lady, that it is a hobby & study of mine to have good health, only brought about by a season of poor health. I enjoy the enjoyment of good health, and will deny myself to the uttermost to keep others so.

Instead of a gradual decline or stationary state, I feel myself growing healthier every day — new fields of pleasure come to me — why I “Books in the running brooks & good in every thing,” and I am so confident of a long & happy life. I believe it's a question left entirely to ourselves, whether we get on or not. “God helps him who helps himself” comes to my every day as something trite, indeed.

I can't borrow any trouble as to our future, my good Lizzie. I believe we both know the dire consequences of doing wrong, or the good ones in doing right I don't believe we are so fearful opinionated, as to persist in dashing our heads against a [??] wall. Yet I don't want to be so fearful good as to die young, nor I shan't, expect it of you either. While I would not be a Quilp* continually, I hold that to be a little Quilpish is only variety — therefore spice. It's the continual grind I don't like. I believe I could grow sick of you, or anybody else who would ...

* - From Dickens' *Old Curiosity Shop*: “Daniel Quilp, a malicious, grotesquely deformed, hunchbacked dwarf moneylender. In the end, [Nell's grandfather] gambles away what little money they have, and Quilp seizes the opportunity to take possession of the shop and evict Nell and her grandfather.”

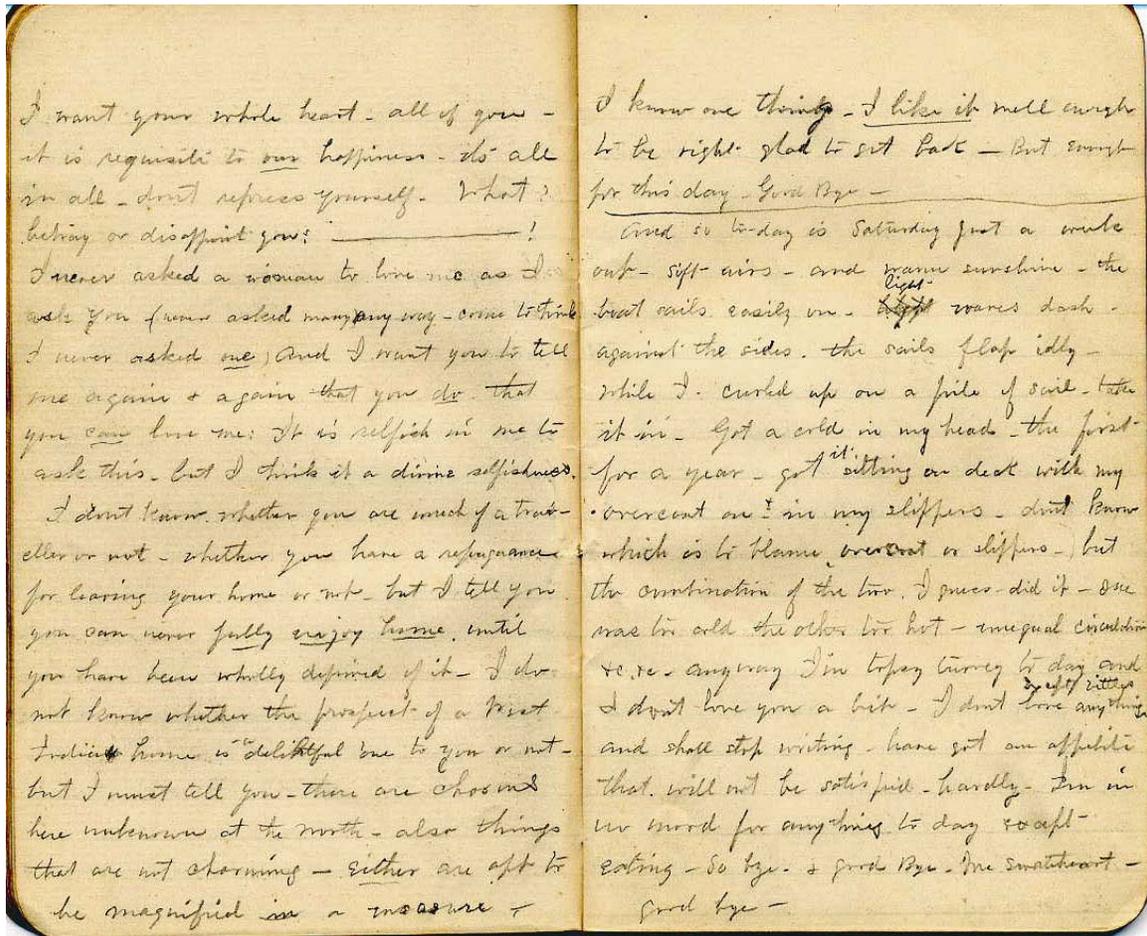
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Old_Curiosity_Shop.



... persist in always smiling. I would like you to look quite serious sometimes, and if whole days should pass with scarcely a word they might be some of our happiest days. I know it's so in man-friendship. It's only to know that one is near, to feel their presence, perhaps days may pass of comparative silence, when as a compensation hours & hours are passed, when soul meets soul. Contrasts are sweet my love. One thing I shall pray for, and that is, that you will not grow tired of me. God forbid the day when you feel that it's all duty. I say, blast duty — 'tis slavery. For Heaven's sake, don't work against the grain. I don't want to be a sapless thing to you that you will have to carry: If it's a burden to you, to write long letters, for pity's sake don't, however well I should like to get them. God forbid that you will have to repress yourself for my sake either in anything.

This living on & on, with half that's good, with half the talents hidden. It's the repression of these that savors of hell, the showing of them, that savors of heaven. I know there are mines of wealth in you that I know not of. God speed the day when all repression can be thrown away, and we can stand in true lights to each other. Then the prayer of prayers is, "May we be not disappointed." They can talk as much as they please about the "nonsense of love," but it is the grandest passion known to the human heart. You so emphatically tell me that you love me. It is either an awful lie or an awful truth to you of all women, because you are not of the pulseless kind with half a heart, but when you tell

me as you do, I know it's so, and I just thank God for the gift and you. It is a new life to you, and I want you to be inexpressibly happy in it if possible.



I want your whole hear, all of you. It is requisite to our happiness. It's all in all, don't repress yourself. What? Betray or disappoint you? _____?

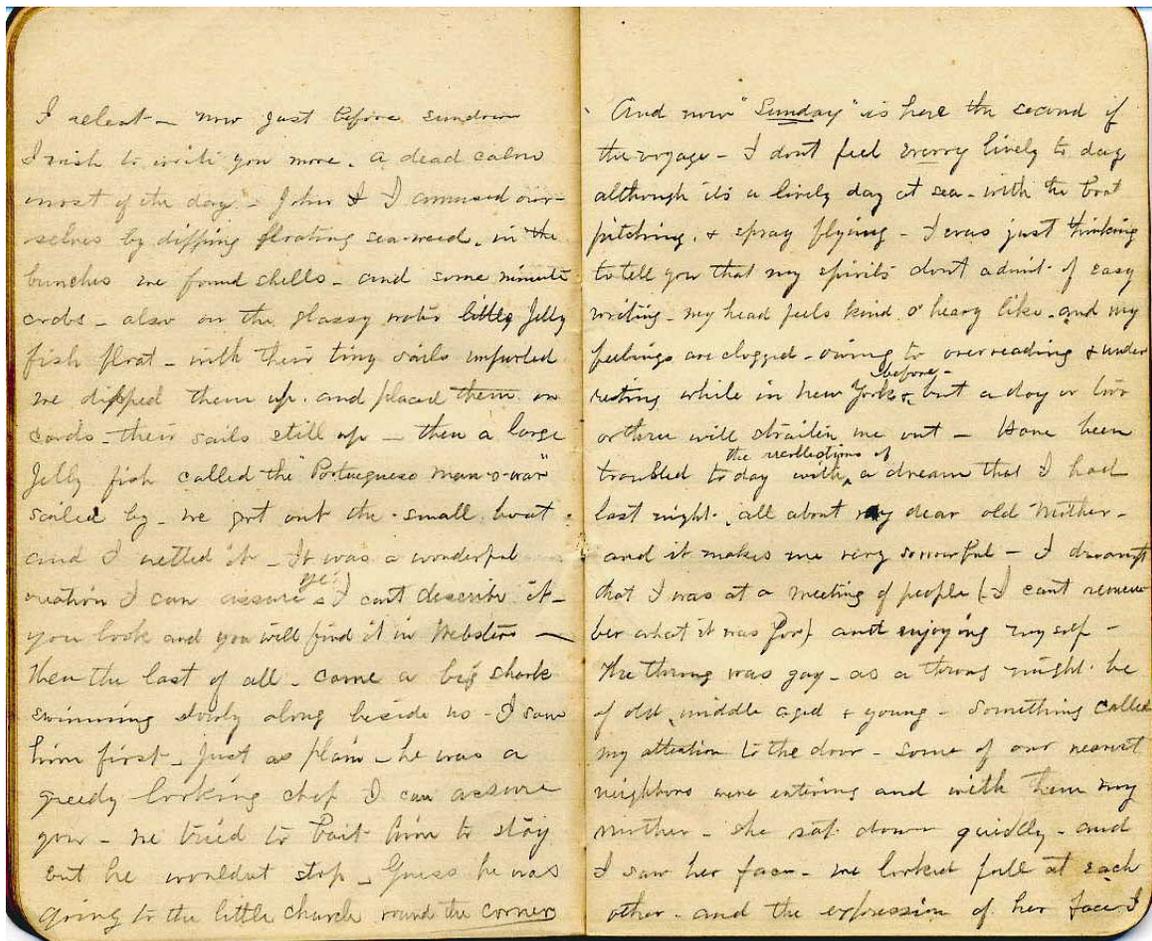
I never asked a woman to love me as I ask you (never asked many anyway, come to think I never asked one), and I want you to tell me again & again that you do, that you can love me: It is selfish in me to ask this, but I think it a divine selfishness.

I don't know whether you are much of a traveler or not, whether you have a repugnance for leaving your home or not, but I tell you you can never fully enjoy home until you have been wholly deprived of it. I do not know whether the prospect of a West Indian home is a delightful one to you or not, but I must tell you, there are [??] here unbeknown at the north — also things that are not charming — either are apt to be magnified in a measure.

I know one thing — I like it well enough to be right glad to get back. But enough for this day. Good bye.

And so today is Saturday just a week out — soft airs, and warm sunshine. The boat sails easily on, light waves dash against the sides, the sails flap idly, while I curled up on a pile of sail, take it in. Got a cold in my head, the first for a year — got it sitting on deck with my overcoat on, in my slippers — don't know which is to blame, overcoat or slippers, but the combination of the two, I guess did it. One was too cold the other too hot — unequal circulation, etc., etc. Anyway I'm topsy turvy today and I don't love you a bit. I don't love anything except vittles and shall stop writing. Have got an appetite that will not be satisfied, hardly. I'm in no mood for anything today except eating, so bye & good bye, me sweetheart.

Good bye.

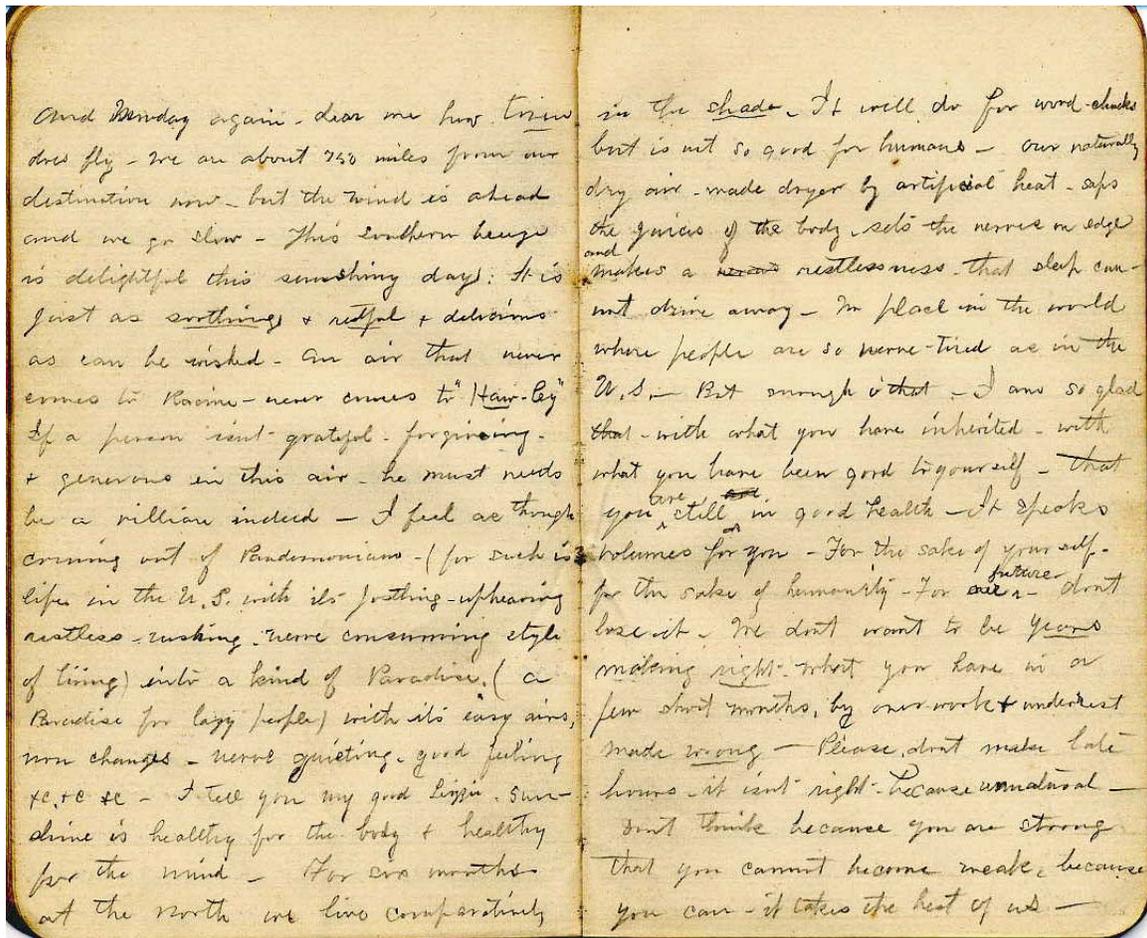


I relent. Now just before sundown I wish to write you more. A dead calm most of the day. John & I amused ourselves by dipping floating seaweed. In the bunches we found shells, and some minute crabs. Also on the glassy water little jelly fish float, with their tiny sails unfurled. We dipped them up and placed them on cards, their sails still up. Then a large jelly fish called the "Portuguese man-o-war" sailed by. We got out the small boat and I netted it. It was a wonderful creation I can assure ye. I can't describe it. You look and you will find it in Webster's. Then the last of all, came a big shark swimming slowly along beside us. I saw him first, just as plain, he was a greedy looking

with me. But here she comes with kind neighbors, kinder a thousand times than her own son. And here she has been waiting, waiting, & working, hiding her pain, uncomplaining in the long years back. And now the burden so heavy, she seeks in vain to be relieved. It is indelibly stamped in her face. This gaiety [?] — cannot — does not throw it off.

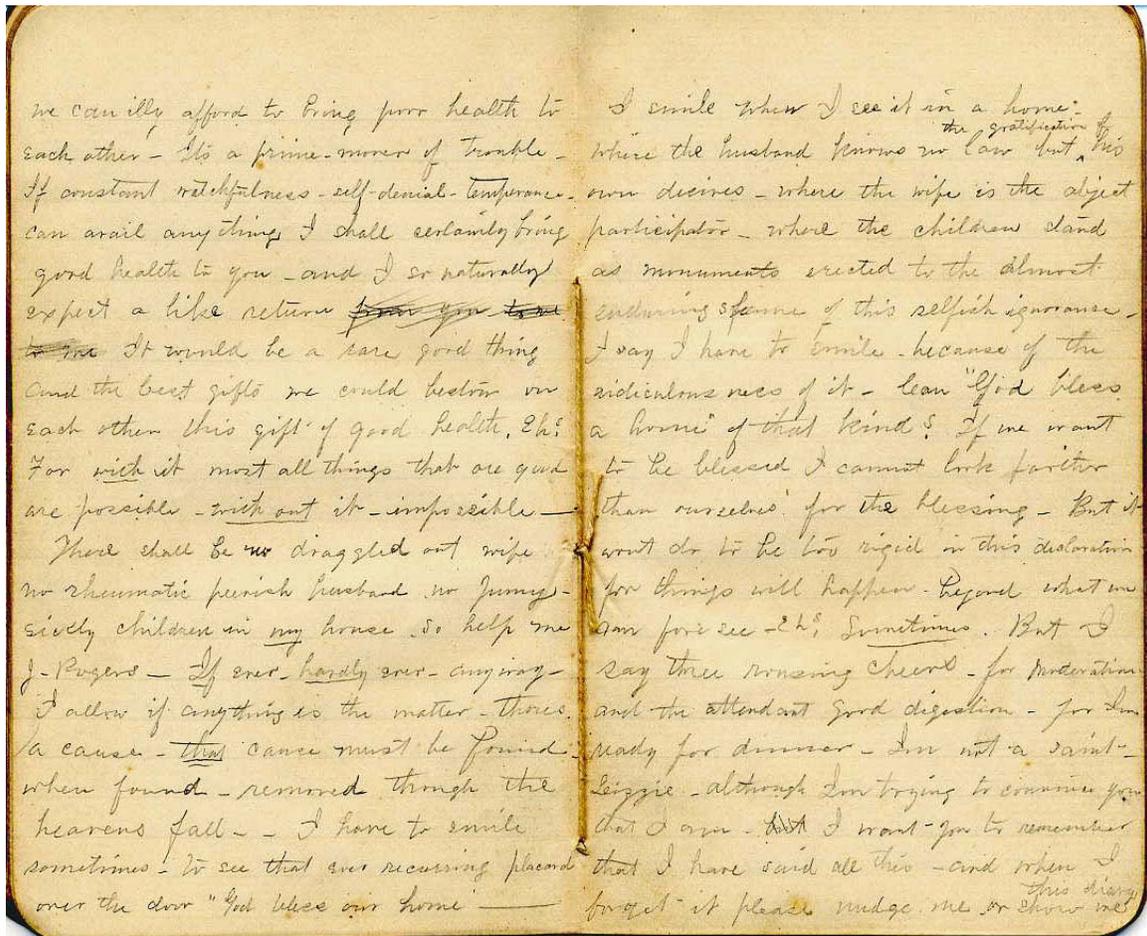
As these thoughts rushed through me, or dreams as you may call them, the conflict awoke me I was glad it was not quite so bad, but then the impression is still with me: it is too true in a way. God knows I could have been kinder to her. I know that I really ought to be at home now, watching her every want, although she is comfortable in the old home she is alone in one respect, because none of hers live in the same house.

There is the only regret I have in leaving home. Yet I have to know that my brother lives within a few steps, and that she could live with them if she chose, but then she lives with very kind people, and I can take some comfort in that thought. But her face haunts me and this has been an unhappy day. I have turned to you for some crumbs of comfort again & again, and have not been denied. I turn to you know Lizzie — come close, close, close to me. I want your love & sympathy.



And Monday again, dear me how time does fly. We are about 750 miles from our destination now, but he wind is ahead and we go slow. This southern breeze is delightful this sunny day: it is just as soothing & restful & delicious as can be wished. An air

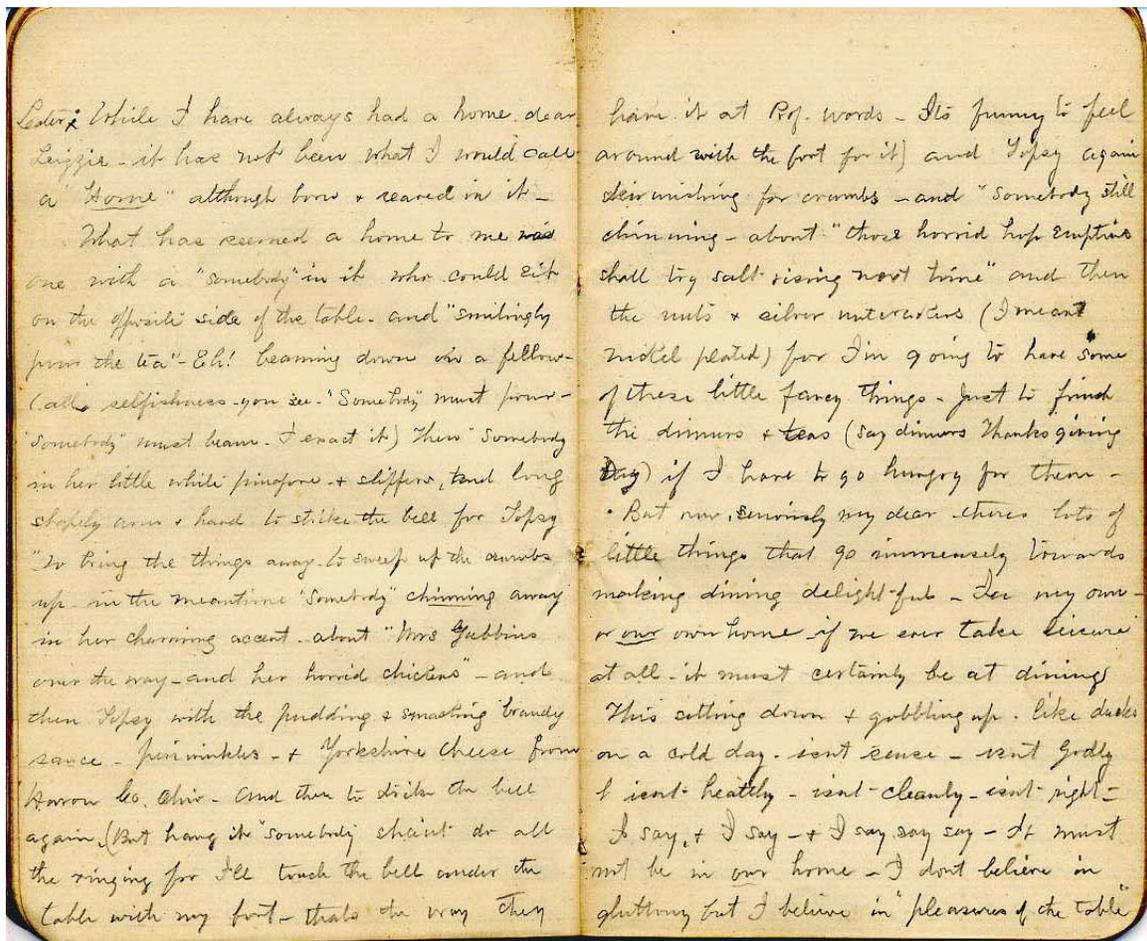
that never comes in Racine — never comes to “Hair-ley.” If a person isn’t grateful, forgiving & generous in this air, he must needs be a villain indeed. I feel as though coming out of Pandemonium (for such is life in the U.S. with its frothing-upheaving-restless-rushing, nerve-consuming style of living) into a kind of Paradise (a Paradise for lazy people), with its easy airs, non-changes, nerve quieting, good feeling, etc., etc. I tell you my good Lizzie, sunshine is healthy for the body & healthy for the mind. For six months at the north we live comparatively in the shade. It will do for wood-chucks but is not so good for humans. Our naturally dry air, made dryer by artificial heat, saps the juices of the body, sets the nerves on edge, and makes a restlessness that sleep cannot drive away — no place in the world where people are so nerve-tired as in the U.S. But enough in that. I am so glad that, with what you have inherited, with what you have been good to yourself, that you are still in good health. It speaks volumes for you. For the sake of yourself, for the sake of humanity, for our future, don’t lose it. We don’t want to be years making right: what you have in a few short months, by overwork & under-rest made wrong. Please don’t make late hours, it isn’t right: because unnatural. Don’t think because you are strong that you cannot become weak, because you can — it takes the best of us.



We can ill afford to bring poor health to each other. It’s a prime mover of trouble. If constant watchfulness, self-denial, temperance, can avail anything I shall certainly bring

good health to you, and I so naturally expect a like return. It would be a rare good thing and the best gifts we could bestow on each other this gift of good health. Eh? For with it most all things that are good are possible — without it, impossible.

There shall be no draggled-out wife, no rheumatic peevish husband, no [??] children in my house, so help me J. Rogers. If ever — hardly ever — anyway. I allow if anything is the matter, there's a cause. That cause must be found, when found, removed though the heavens fall. I have to smile sometimes, to see that ever-recurring placards over the door, "God bless our home." I smile when I see it in a home, where the husband knows no law but the gratification of his own desires, where the wife is the abject participator, where the children stand as monuments erected to the almost enduring shame of this selfish ignorance. I say I have to smile, because of the ridiculousness of it. Can "God bless a home" of that kind? If we want to be blessed I cannot look farther than ourselves for the blessing. But it won't do to be too rigid in this declaration for things will happen, beyond what you can foresee. Eh? Sometimes. But I say three rousing cheers, for moderation and the attendant good digestion, for I'm ready for dinner. I'm not a saint, Lizzie, although I'm trying to convince you that I am. I want you to remember that I have said all this, and when I forget it please nudge me or show me this diary.



Letter: While I have always had a home dear Lizzie - it has not been what I would call a "Home" although born & reared in it -

What has reared a home to me was one with a "somebody" in it who could sit on the opposite side of the table - and "smilingly from the tea" - Oh! leaning down as a fellow - (calls selfishness - you see - "Somebody" must pour - "Somebody" must beam - I enact it) then "Somebody" in her little white pinafore & shippers, taud long shoddy apron & hand to strike the bell for Topsy "to bring the things away to sweep up the crumbs up in the meantime "Somebody" chiming away in her charming accent - about "Mrs Gubbins over the way - and her horrid children" - and then Topsy with the pudding & smothering brandy sauce - Jam minkles - & Yorkshire Cheese from Harrow Ho. Ohio - and then to strike the bell again (But hang it "Somebody" chaint do all the ringing for I'll touch the bell under the table with my foot - that's the way they

have it at Rof. words - Its funny to feel around with the foot for it) and Topsy again skin wishing for crumbs - and "Somebody" still chiming - about "those horrid hip empties shall try salt rising root trim" and then the nuts & silver nutcrackers (I meant nickel plated) for I'm going to have some of these little fancy things - just to find the dinners & teas (say dinners thanks giving Day) if I have to go hungry for them -

• But our, serving my dear three lots of little things that go immensely towards making dining delightful - for my own - or our own home if we ever take leisure at all - it must certainly be at dining this sitting down & gobbling up - like ducks on a cold day - isn't sense - isn't Godly & isn't healthy - isn't cleanly - isn't right - I say, + I say - + I say say say - It must not be in our home - I don't believe in gluttony but I believe in "pleasures of the table"

Later: While I have always had a home dear Lizzie, it has not been what I would call a "Home," although born & reared in it.

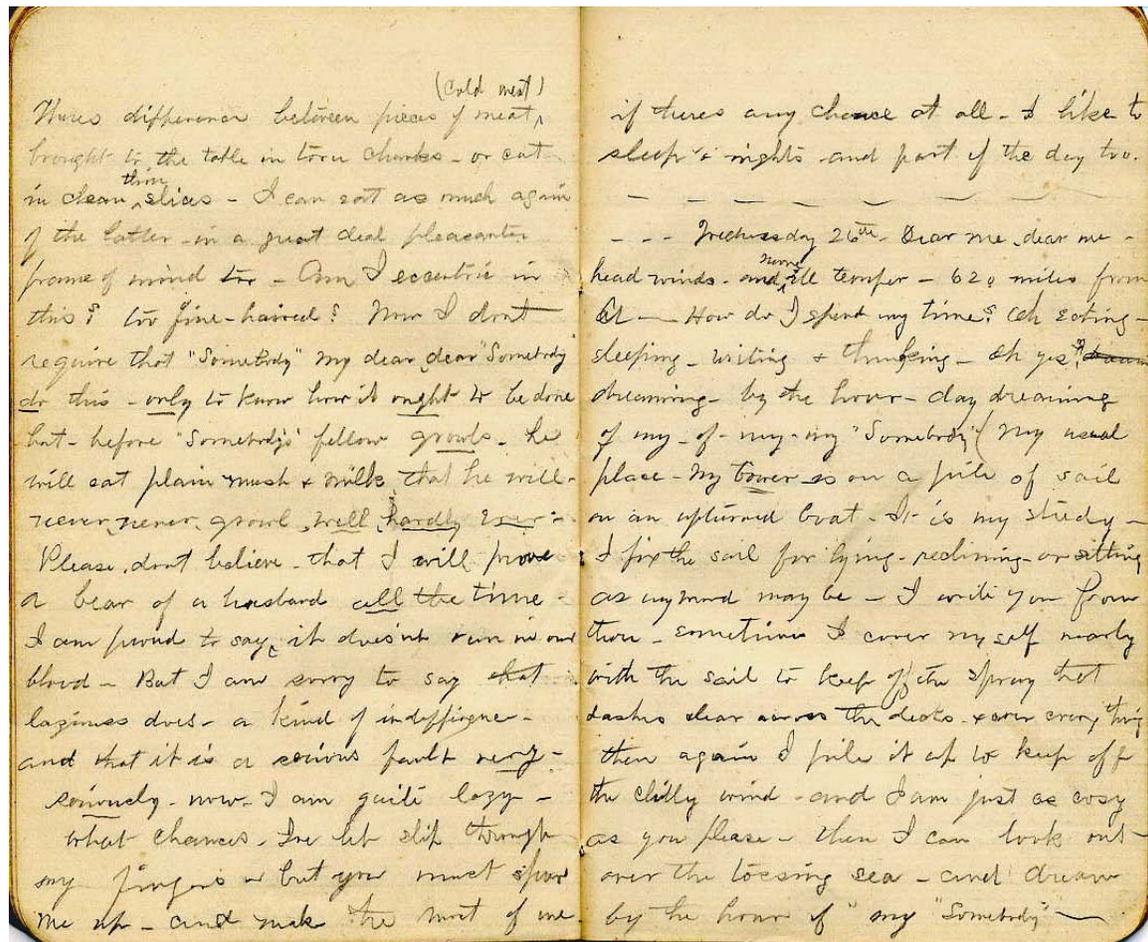
What has seemed a home to me was one with a "somebody" in it who could sit on the opposite side of the table, and "smilingly from the tea" — Eh! Beaming down on a fellow (all selfishness — you see — "Somebody" must pour [?], "somebody" must beam & exact it) then "somebody" in her little white pinafore & slippers and long shapely arm & hand to strike the bell for Topsy to bring the things away to sweep up the crumbs up, in the meantime "somebody" chiming away in her charming accent, about "Mrs Gubbins over the way, and her horrid chickens," and then Topsy with the pudding & smashing brandy sauce, periwinkles & Yorkshire cheese from Huron, No. Ohio, and then to strike the bell again. (But hang it "somebody" shan't do all the ringing for I'll touch the bell under the table with my foot — that's the way they have it at Prof. Ward's. It's funny to feel around with the foot for it.) And Topsy again skirmishing for crumbs, and "somebody" still chinning [?], about "those horrid hop emptives [?] shall try salt-rising next time," and then the nuts & silver nutcrackers (I meant nickel-plated) for I'm going to have some of those little fancy things. Just to find the dinners & teas (say dinners Thanksgiving Day) if I have to go hungry for them.

But now, seriously my dear, there's lots of little things that go immensely towards making dining delightful. In my own — or our own home — if we ever take leisure at all, it must certainly be at dining. This sitting down & gobbling up, like ducks on a cold day, isn't sense, isn't Godly & isn't healthy, isn't cleanly, isn't right. I say & I say & I say say — it must not be in our home. I don't believe in gluttony but I believe in "pleasures of the table."

I tell you it's lots in the way "things are got up," not so much at great expense "but the little and nice" (now I don't mean you a lesson on economy this soon). Oh! But don't the French understand it. The little sauces & dressings & salads. They can verily make codfish divine, and it's easy, too. It's queer but the Yankees are so great on cakes & pies and know next to nothing of soups, salads, or the art of dressing dishes to make them nice to the eye: Then what's nicer than a nice bouquet of flowers on the table. In all this going & coming I am observing if I do say it, and am "getting notions in my head" as mother calls it. We as a nation are not perfect by ^{any} means. Order in the house has to begin at the table, has to leave off at the table as it were: everything else is subservient to it. I'm most particular on this point, because denied when young — any levity or conversation with us children, or boys, or young men, was stopped by my father — something he brought down from the Quakers. Now, I didn't relish it, and vowed that I would have things different. Now levity is order if orderly, and that's what we will have, Eh? I don't believe in a woman slaving herself in cookery, where they literally load tables down. There is a place to stop. I don't know whether your views agree with mine; if they don't just tell a feller, ^{but I believe they do} — I don't propose to lay low till after marriage then to spring up like a Jack-in-the-box to dictate, etc., etc. I want to tell you that I've been the "man of the house" for a good while — and I will tell you so there —

I tell you it's lots in the way "things are got up," not so much at great expense, "but the little and nice" (now I don't mean you a lesson on economy this soon). Oh! But don't the French understand it. The little sauces & dressings & salads. They can verily make codfish divine, and it's easy, too. It's queer but the Yankees are so great on cakes & pies and know next to nothing of soups, salads, or the art of dressing dishes to make them nice to the eye: Then what's nicer than a nice bouquet of flowers on the table. In all this going & coming I am observing if I do say it, and am "getting notions in my head," as mother calls it. We as a nation are not perfect by any means. Order in the house has to begin at the table, has to leave off at the table as it were: everything else is subservient, is it. I'm most particular on this point, because denied when young — any levity or conversation with us children, or boys, or young men, was stopped by my father — something he brought down from the Quakers. Now, I didn't relish it, and vowed that I would have things different. Now levity is order if orderly, and that's what we will have, Eh? I don't believe in a woman slaving herself in cookery, where they literally load tables down. There is a place to stop. I don't know whether your views agree with mine; if they don't just tell a feller, but I believe they do. I don't propose to lay low till after marriage then to spring up like a Jack-in-the-box to dictate, etc., etc. I want to tell you that I've been the "man of the house" for a good while — and I will tell you so there —

that I have taken pride in not meddling in household affairs, although I have felt a great many times like growling when we have had a very slouchy girl.

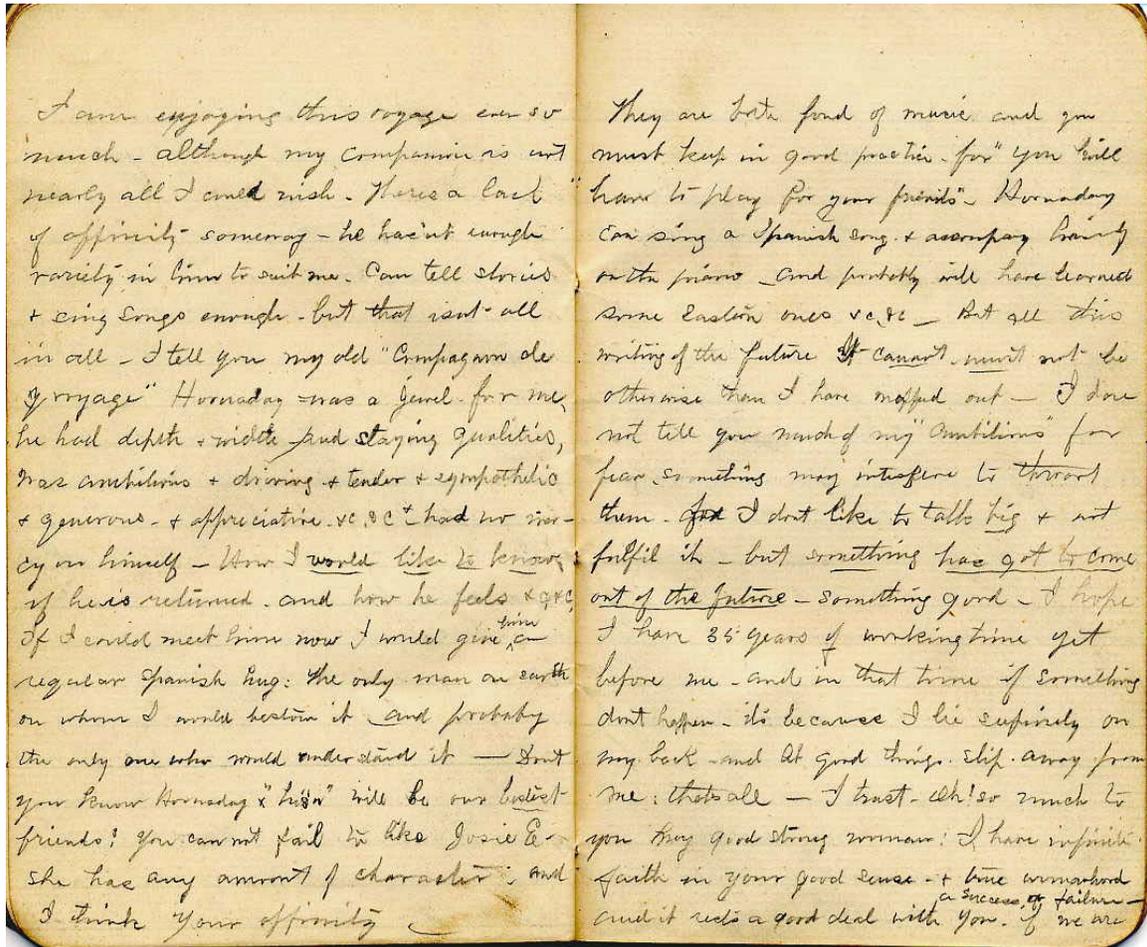


There's differences between pieces of meat (cold meat) brought to the table in torn chunks, or cut in clean thin slices. I can eat as much again of the latter, in a great deal pleasanter frame of mind too. Am I eccentric in this? Too fine-haired? Now I don't require that "somebody" my dear, dear "somebody" do this, only to know how it ought to be done. But, before "somebody's" fellow growls, he will eat plain mush & milk that he will never, never, growl, well, hardly ever.

Please don't believe that I will prove a bear of a husband all the time. I am proud to say it doesn't run in our blood. But I am sorry to say that laziness does, a kind of indifference, and that it is a serious fault, very seriously, now I am quite lazy. What chances I've let slip through my fingers — but you must spur me up, and make the most of me, if there's any chance at all — I like to sleep nights and part of the day, too.

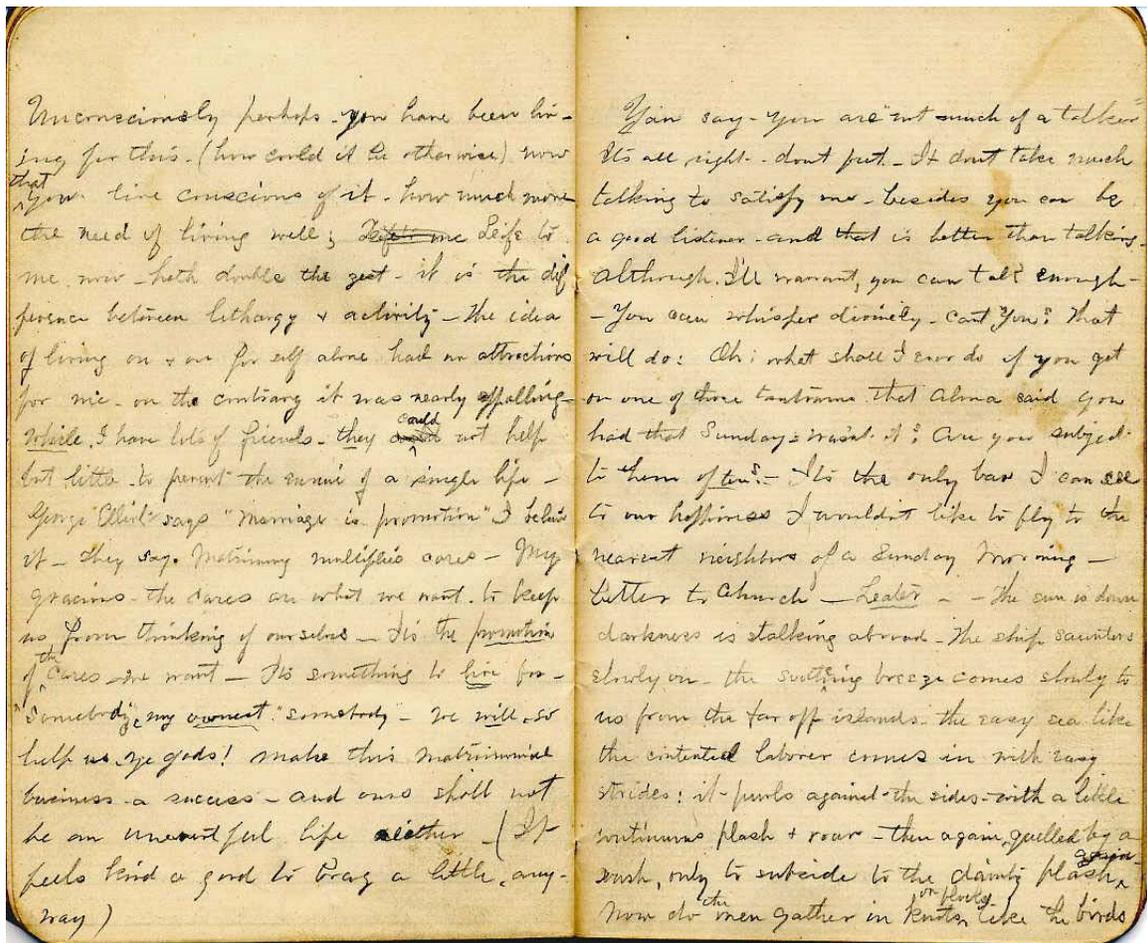
Wednesday 26th. Dear me, dear me, head winds — and more ill temper — 620 miles from Antigua. How do I spend my time? Oh, eating, sleeping, writing & thinking. Oh yes, dreaming, by the hour, day-dreaming of my-of-my-my "Somebody." (My usual place,

my bower, is on a pile of sail on an upturned boat. It is my study. I fix the sail for lying, reclining or sitting as my wont may be. I write you from there. Sometimes I cover myself nearly with the sail to keep off the spray that lashes clear across the decks & over everything. Then again I pile it up to keep off the chilly wind, and I am just as cozy as you please. Then I can look out over the tossing sea, and dream by the hour of my "Somebody."



I am enjoying this voyage ever so much, although my companion is not nearly all I could wish. There's a lack of affinity someway. He hasn't enough variety in him to suit me. Can tell stories & sing songs enough, but that isn't — all in all — I tell you my old "Compagnon de la voyage" Hornaday was a jewel for me. He had depth & width and staying qualities, was ambitious & driving & tender & sympathetic & generous & appreciative etc., etc. & had no mercy on himself. How I would like to know if he is returned, and how he feels, etc., etc. If I could meet him now I would give him a regular Spanish hug: the only man on earth on whom I would bestow it and probably the only who would understand it. Don't you know Hornaday + "his'n" will be our bestest friends! You cannot fail to like Josie E. She has any amount of character, and I think your affinity.

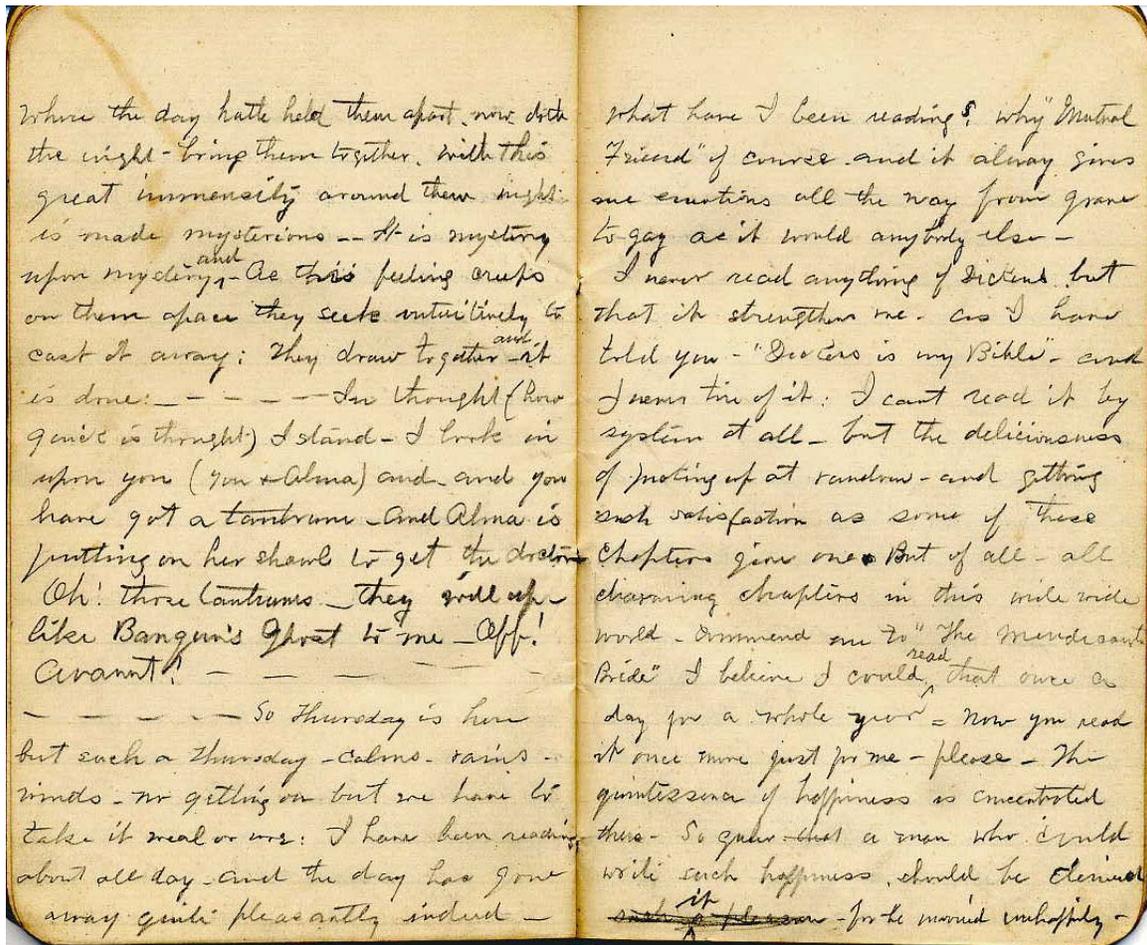
They are both fond of music and you must keep in good practice for "you will have to play for your friends." Hornaday can sing a Spanish song & accompany himself on the piano, and probably will have learned some Eastern ones, etc., etc. But all this writing of the future, it cannot, must not be otherwise than I have mapped out. I dare not tell you much of my "ambitions" for fear something may interfere to thwart them, for I don't like to talk big & not fulfill it, but something has got to come out of the future, something good. I hope I have 35 years of working time yet before me, and in that time if something don't happen, it's because I lie supinely on my back, and if good things slip away from me, that's all. I trust, Oh! So much to you my good strong woman: I have infinite faith in your good sense & true womanhood and it rests a good deal with you, if we are a success or failure.



Unconsciously perhaps, you have been living for this (how could it be otherwise) now that you live conscious of it. How much more the need of living well? Life to me now hath double the zest, it is the difference between lethargy & activity. The idea of living on & on for self alone had no attractions for me. On the contrary it was nearly appalling. While I have lots of friends, they could not help but little to prevent the ennui of a single life. George Elliot says, "marriage is promotion." I believe it. They say matrimony multiplies cares. My gracious, the cares are what we want to keep us from thinking of

ourselves. It's the promotion of the cares we want. It's something to live for, "Somebody," my ownest "somebody." We will, so help us, ye gods! Make this matrimonial business a success, and ours shall not be an uneventful life either. (It feels kind a good to brag a little, anyway.)

You say you are "not much of a talker." It's all right, don't fret. It don't take much talking to satisfy me — besides you can be a good listener — and that is better than talking. Although, I'll warrant, you can talk enough. You can whisper divinely, can't you? That will do: Oh! What shall I ever do if you get on one of those tantrums that Alma said you had that Sunday, wasn't it? Are you subject to them often? It's the only bar I can see to our happiness. I wouldn't like to fly to the nearest neighbors of a Sunday morning — better to church. Later ... the sun is down, darkness is stalking abroad. The ship saunters slowly on — the soothing breeze comes slowly to us from the far off islands. The easy sea, like the contented laborer, comes in with easy strides! It hurls against the sides, with a little continuous flash & roar. Then again, quelled by a rush, only to subside to the dainty flash again. Now do the men gather in knots or flocks like the birds.

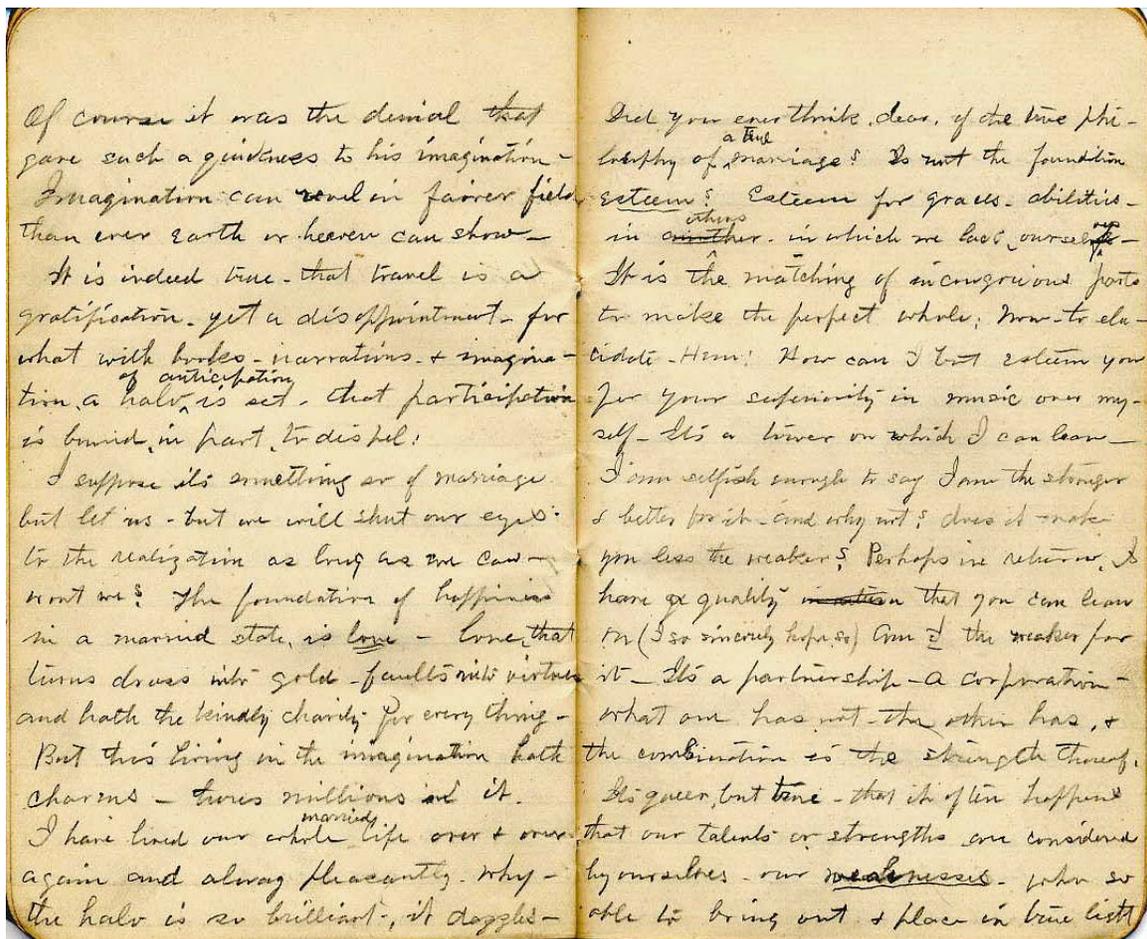


Where the day hath held them apart, now doth the night bring them together. With this great immensity around them night is made mysterious It is mystery upon mystery

and as this feeling creeps on them apace they seek intuitively to cast it away. They draw together and it is done. In thought (how quick is thought) I stand. I look in upon you (you & Alma) and, and you have got a tantrum, and Alma is putting on her shawl to get the doctor. Oh! Those tantrums. They swell up, like Banquo's Ghost to me. Off! Avannt!

So Thursday is here, but such a Thursday. Calms — rains — winds — no getting on but we have to take it weal or woe [?]: I have been reading about all day, and the day has gone away quite pleasantly indeed. What have I been reading? Why "Mutual Friend" of course, and it always gives me emotions all the way from grave to gay as it would anybody else.

I never read anything of Dickens, but that it strengthens me. As I have told you, "Dickens is my Bible," and I never tire of it. I can't read it by system at all, but the deliciousness of picking up at random, and getting such satisfaction as some of these chapters give one. But of all, all charming chapters in this wide wide world, commend me to "The Mendicant's Bride." I believe I could read that once a day for a while year. Now you read it once more just for me — please — the quintessence of happiness is concentrated there. So queer that a man who could write such happiness should be denied it — for he married unhappily.



Of course it was the devil that gave such a quickness to his imagination - Imagination can ~~read~~ ^{see} in fairer fields than ever earth or heaven can show - It is indeed true - that travel is a gratification - yet a disappointment - for what with books - narrations - & imagination a half ^{of anticipation} is set - that participation is bound in part to disappoint!

I suppose it's something or of marriage but let us - but we will shut our eyes to the realization as long as we can - & wait it: The foundation of happiness in a married state is love - Love that turns dross into gold - faults into virtues and hath the kindly charity for every thing - But this living in the imagination hath sharers - tens millions and it. I have lived our whole ^{married} life over & over again and always pleasantly - why - the halo is so brilliant - it dazzles -

And you ever think, dear, of the true philosophy of marriage? Is not the foundation esteem? Esteem for graces - abilities - in ~~another~~ ^{others} in which we lose ourselves - It is the matching of incongruous parts to make the perfect whole. Now to elucidate - Hem! How can I but esteem you for your superiority in music over myself - It's a tower on which I can lean - I am selfish enough to say I am the stronger & better for it - and why not? Does it make you less the weaker? Perhaps in return, I have ex ~~quality~~ ^{quality} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~that~~ ^{that} you can lean on (I so sincerely hope) Am I the weaker for it - It's a partnership - a cooperation - what one has not - the other has, & the combination is the strength thereof. It's queer, but true - that it often happens that our talents or strengths are considered by ourselves - our ~~weaknesses~~ ^{weaknesses} - when so able to bring out & place in true light

Of course it was the denial that gave such a quickness to his imagination. Imagination can revel in fairer fields than ever earth or heaven can show.

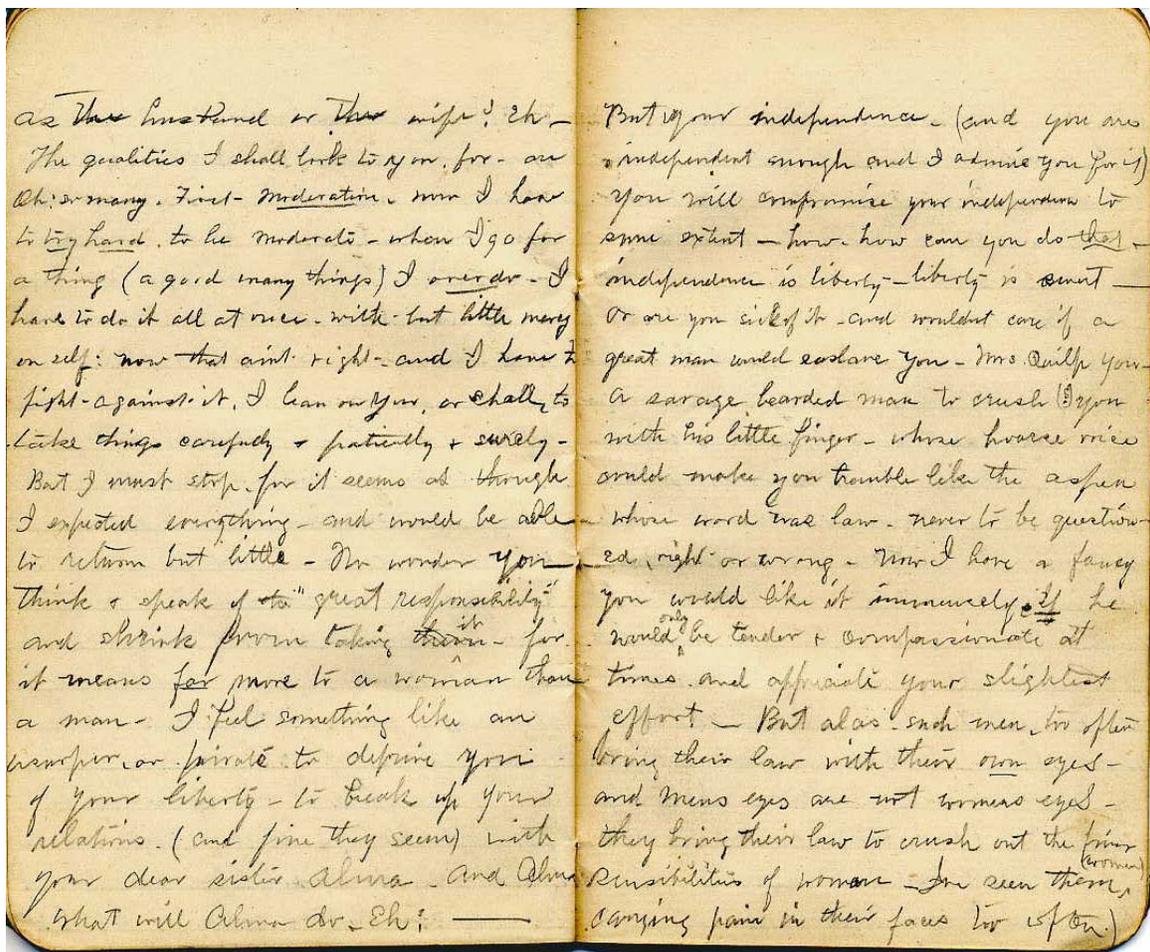
It is indeed true, that travel is a gratification, yet a disappointment, for what with books, narrations & imagination a halo [?] of anticipation is set — that participation is bound, in part, to dispel.

I suppose it's something so of marriage but let us, but we will shut our eyes to the realization as long as we can, won't we? The foundation of happiness in a married state is love, love that turns dross into gold, faults into virtues, and hath the kindly charity for everything.

But this living in the imagination hath charms — there's millions in it. I have lived our whole married life over & over again and always pleasantly. Why — the halo is so brilliant, it dazzled.

Did you ever think, dear, of the true philosophy of a true marriage? Is not the foundation esteem? Esteem for graces, abilities, in others, in which we lack ourselves. It is the matching of incongruous parts to make the perfect whole. Now, to elucidate them. How can I but esteem you for your superiority in music over myself. It's a tower on which I can lean. I am selfish enough to say I am the stronger & better for it, and why not? Does it make you less the weaker? Perhaps in return, I have a quality that you can lean on (I so sincerely hope so). Am I the weaker for it? It's a partnership, a corporation, what one has not the other has, & the combination is the strength thereof.

It's queer, but true, that it often happens that our talents or strengths are considered by ourselves our weaknesses. When so able to bring out & place in true lists ...



... as husband or wife? Eh.

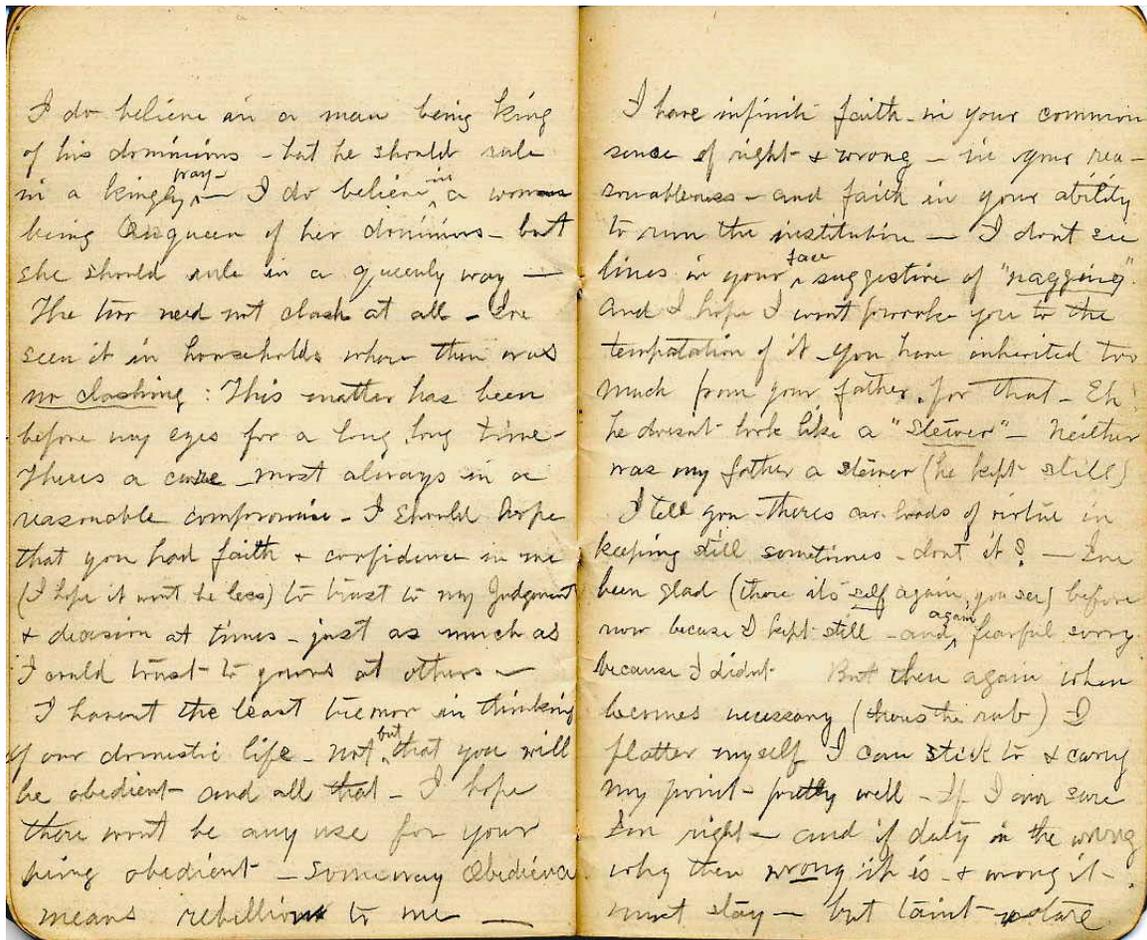
The qualities I shall look to you for are Oh! so many. First, moderation — now I have to try hard to be moderate. When I go for a thing (a good many things) I overdo. I have to do it all at once, with but little mercy on self: now that ain't right, and I have to fight against it. I lean on you, or shall, to take things carefully & patiently & surely.

But I must stop, for it seems as though I expected everything, and would be able to return but little. No wonder you think & speak of the "great responsibility" and shrink from taking it — for it means far more to a woman than a man. I feel something like an [sic] usurper or pirate to deprive you of your liberty, to break up your relations (and fine they seem) with your dear sister Alma, and Alma, what will Alma do, Eh?

But your independence (and you are independent enough and I admire you for it), you will compromise your independence to some extent. How, how can you do that? Independence is liberty, liberty is sweet [?] — or are you sick of it and wouldn't care if a great man would enslave you, Mrs. Quilp* you, a savage bearded man to crush (?) you

* - From Dickens' *Old Curiosity Shop*: "Daniel Quilp, a malicious, grotesquely deformed, hunchbacked dwarf moneylender. In the end, [Nell's grandfather] gambles away what little money they have, and Quilp

with his little finger, whose hoarse voice could make you tremble like the aspen, whose word was law, never to be questioned, right or wrong. Now I have a fancy you would like it immensely if he would only be tender & compassionate at times and appreciate your slightest effort. But, alas, such men too often bring their law with their own eyes, and men's eyes are not women's eyes — they bring their law to crush out the finer sensibilities of women. I've seen them (women) carrying pain in their faces too often.



I do believe in a man being king of his dominions, but he should rule in a kingly way. I do believe in a woman being queen of her dominions, but she should rule in a queenly way. The two need not clash at all. I've seen it in households where there was no clashing: this matter has been before my eyes for a long, long time. Thus a cure: most always in a reasonable compromise. I should hope that you had faith & confidence in me (I hope it won't be less) to trust to my judgment & decision at times — just as much as I could trust to yours at others.

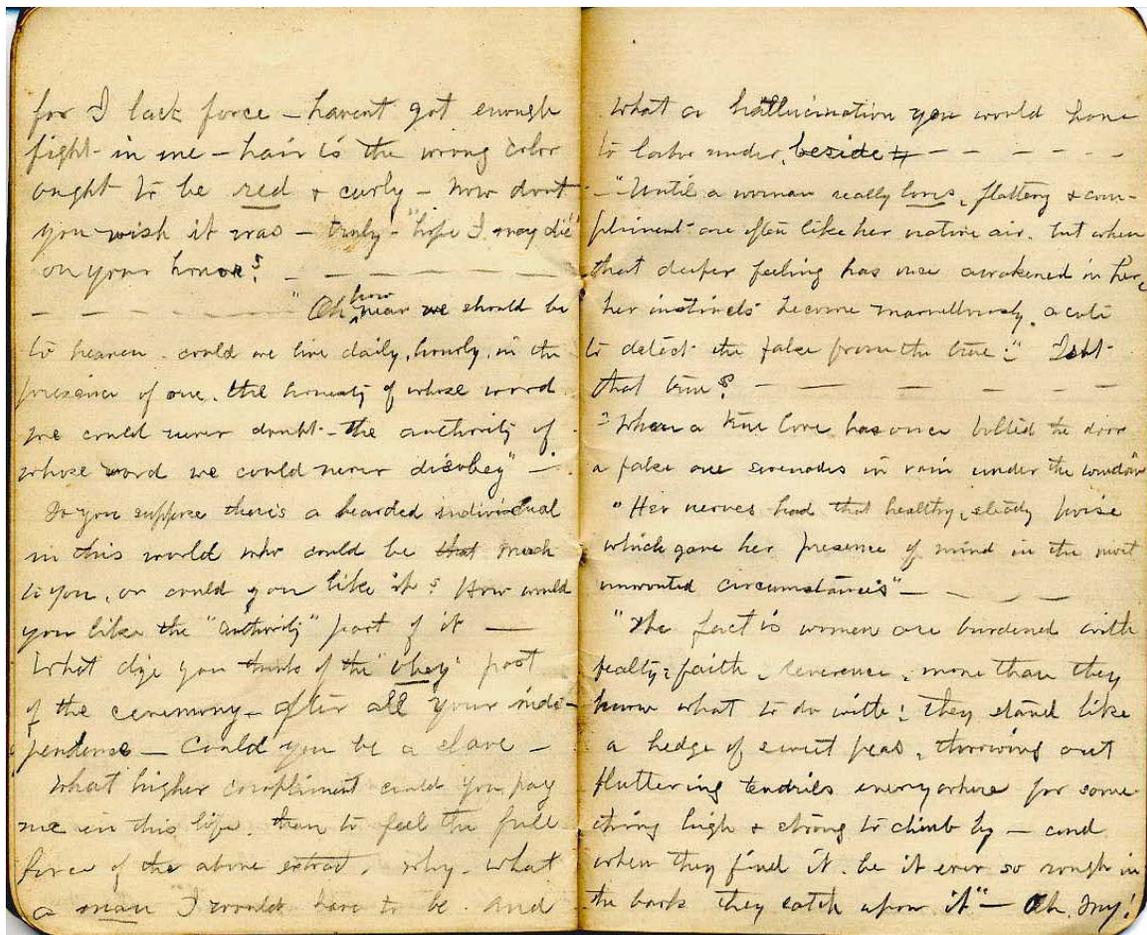
seizes the opportunity to take possession of the shop and evict Nell and her grandfather.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Old_Curiosity_Shop.

I haven't the least tremor in thinking of our domestic life, not but that you will be obedient, and all that. I hope there won't be any use for your being obedient — some way obedience means rebellion to me.

I have infinite faith, in your common sense of right & wrong, in your reasonableness, and faith in your ability to run the institution. I don't see lines in your face suggestive of "nagging" and I hope I won't provoke you to the temptation of it — you have inherited too much from your father for that, Eh! he doesn't look like a "stewer" — neither was my father a stewer (he kept still).

I tell you, there's car-loads of virtue in keeping still sometimes, don't it? I've been glad (there it's self again, you see) before now because I kept still, and again fearful sorry because I didn't. But then again when becomes necessary (there's the rub) I flatter myself I can stick to & carry my point, pretty well. If I am sure I'm right, and if duty in the wrong why then wrong it is & wrong it must stay, but 'tain't [??] ...



... for I lack force — haven't got enough fight in me — hair is the wrong color, ought to be red & curly — now don't you wish it was, truly, "hope I may die" on your honor?

“Oh, how near we should be to heaven, could we live daily, hourly, in the presence of one the honesty of whose word we could never doubt, the authority of whose word we could never disobey.”*

Do you suppose there’s a bearded individual in this world who could be much to you, or could you like it? How would you like the “authority” part of it? What do you think of the “obey” part of the ceremony — after all your independence — could you be a slave?

What higher compliment could you pay me in this life than to feel the full force of the above extract? Why? What a man I would have to be and what a hallucination you would have to labor under, beside ... “Until a woman really loves, flattery & compliment are often like her native air. But when that deeper feeling has once awakened in her, her instincts become marvelously acute to detect, the fake from the true.” Isn’t that true?

“When a true love has once bolted the door a fake one serenades in rain under the window.”

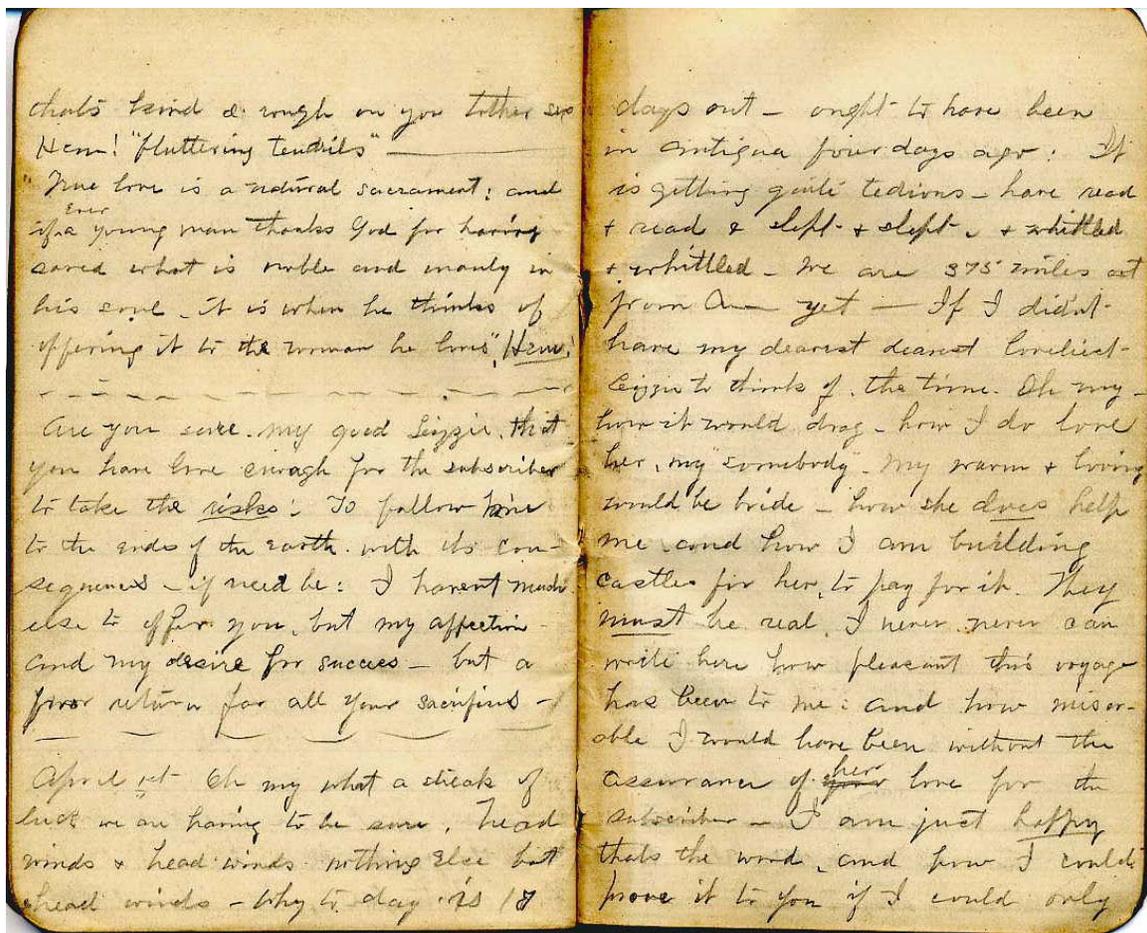
“Her nerves had that healthy, steady poise which gave her presence of mind in the most unwonted circumstances.”†

“The fact is women are burdened with fealty, faith, reverence, more than they know what to do with! They stand like a hedge of sweet peas, throwing out fluttering tendrils everywhere for something high & strong to climb by — and when they find it, be it ever so rough in the bark they catch upon it.”‡ Oh, My!

* - “The Parisians,” by Lord Lytton, from *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, January-June 1873, p. 5. One wonders how CEJ came across this, unless he had a copy with him, and if he didn’t have a copy how and why in the world he chose to memorize it?

† - “The Minister’s Wooing,” by Philip Gengembre Hubert, from *The Atlantic Monthly*, No. 3, 1859, p. 739.

‡ - Ibid.



That's kind of rough on you [??]. Hem! "fluttering tendrils"

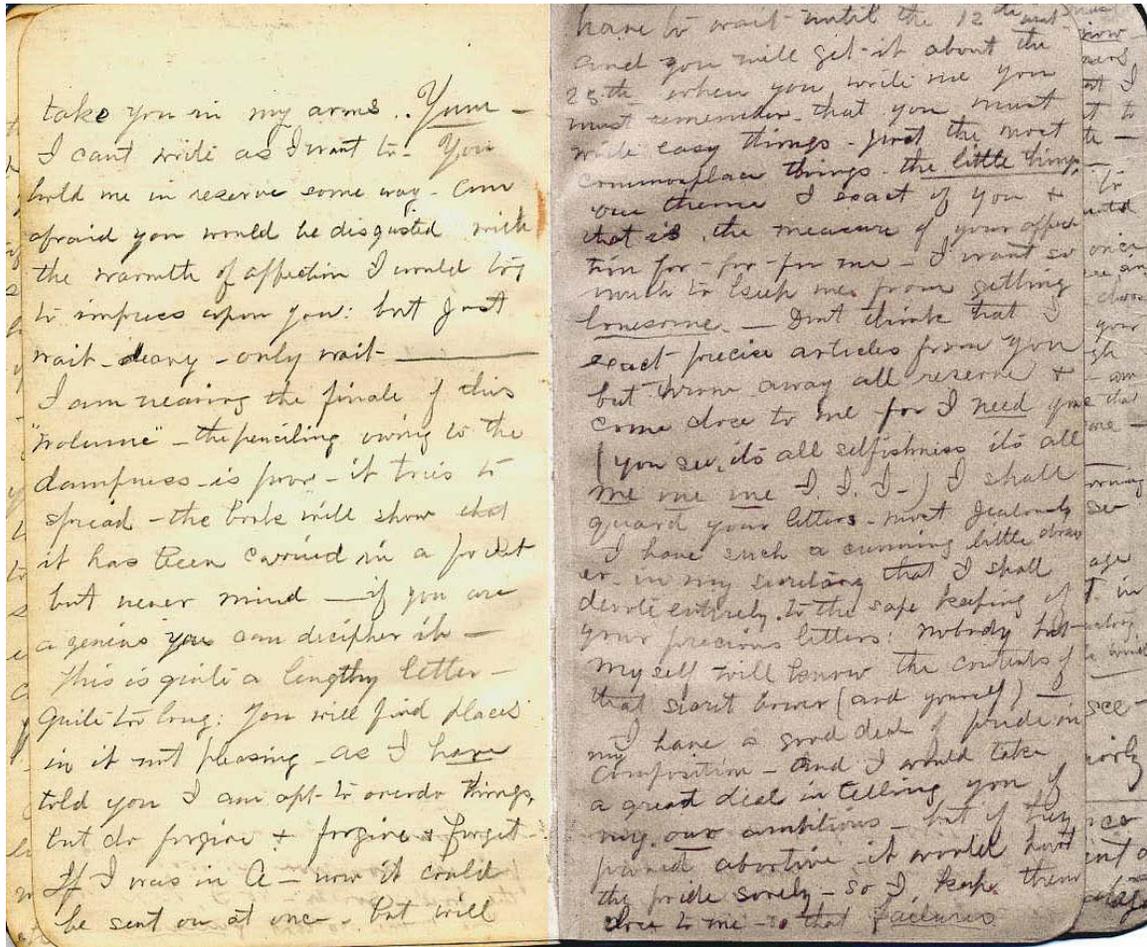
"True love is a natural sacrament, and if ever a young man thanks God for having saved what is noble and manly in his soul, it is when he thinks of offering it to the woman he loves."* Hem!

Are you sure, my good Lizzie, that you have love enough for the subscriber to take the risks, to follow him to the ends of the earth with its consignment if need be? I haven't much else to offer you but my affection and my desire for success, but a poor return for all your sacrifices.

April 1st — Oh my what a streak of luck we are having to be sure. Head winds & head winds, nothing else but head winds. Why today is [??] days out — ought to have been in Antigua four days ago. It is getting quite tedious — have read & read & slept & slept & whittled & whittled. We are 375 miles out from Antigua yet. If I didn't have my dearest

* - Ibid.

dearest loveliest Lizzie to think of, the time, Oh my, how it would drag. How I do love her, my "somebody," my warm & loving would-be bride. How she does help me and how I am building castles for her to pay for it. They must be real. I never never can write her how pleasant this voyage has been to me, and how miserable I would have been without the assurance of her love for the subscriber. I am just happy — that's the word — and how I could prove it to you if I could only ...



... take you in my arms. Yum. I can't write as I want to. You hold me in reserve some way, am afraid you would be disgusted with the warmth of affection I would try to impress upon you, but just wait, deary, only wait

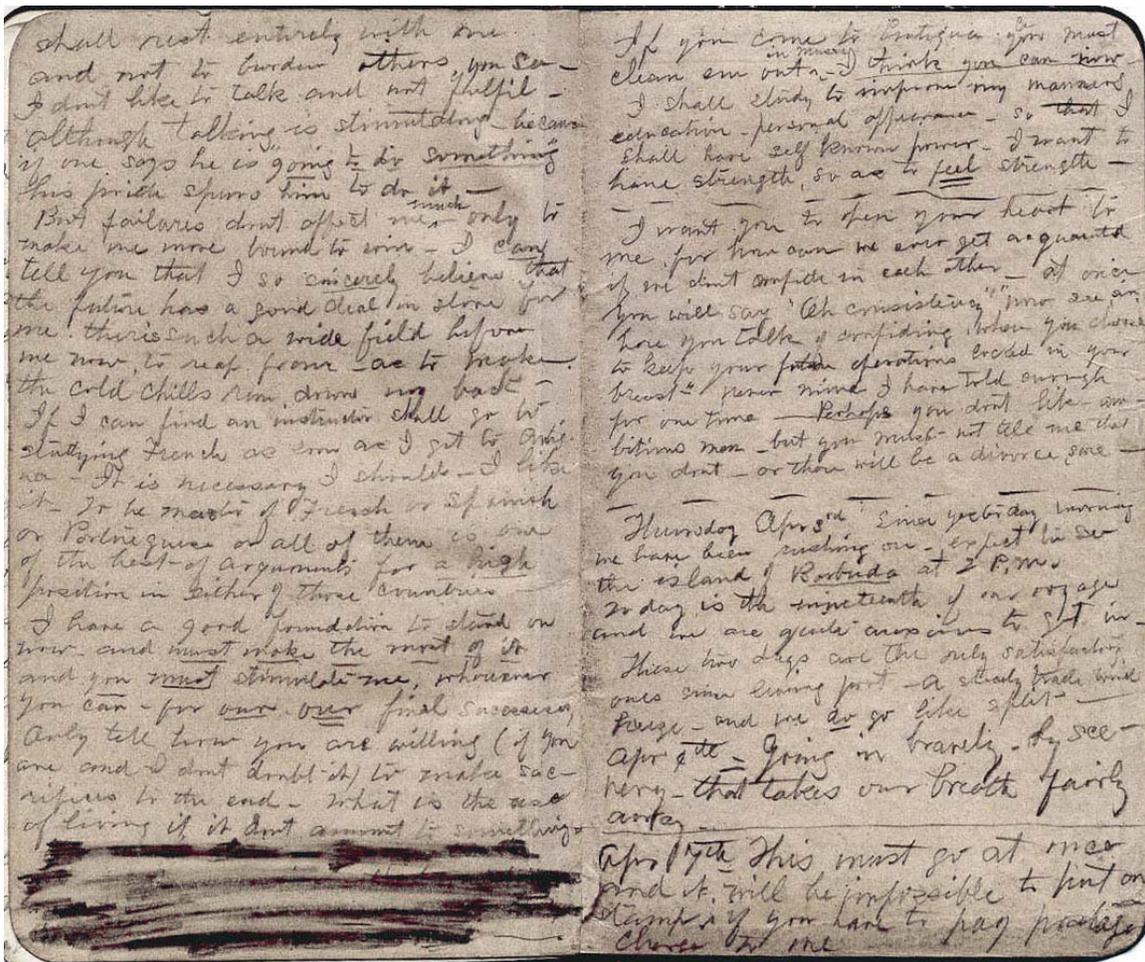
I am nearing the finale of this "volume" — the penciling owing to the dampness is poor — it tries to spread — the book will show that it has been carried in a pocket but never mind. If you are a genius you can decipher it. This is quite a lengthy letter, quite too long. You will find places in it not pleasing, as I have told you I am apt to overdo things, but do forgive & forgive & forget.

If I was in Antigua now it could be sent on at once, but will have to wait until the 12th inst and you will get it about the 25th. When you write me you must remember that you must write easy things — first the most commonplace things, the little things, our theme I exact

of you & that is the measure of your affection for-for-for me. I want so much to keep me from getting lonesome. Don't think that I exact precise articles from you but throw away all reserve & come close to me, for I need you (you see it's all selfishness, it's all me me me — I I I). I shall guard your letters most jealously.

I have such a cunning little drawer in my secretary that I shall devote entirely to the safe keeping of your precious letters. Nobody but myself will know the contents of that secret bower (and yourself).

I have a good deal of pride in my composition, and I would take a great deal in telling you of my own ambitions. But if they proved [?] abortive, it would hurt the pride sorely, so I keep them close to me so that failures ...



... shall rest entirely with me and not to burden others you see. I don't like to talk and not fulfill, although talking is stimulating, because if one says he is going to do something his pride spurs him to do it.

But failures don't affect me much — only to make me more bound to win. I can tell you that I so sincerely believe that the future has a good deal in store for me. There's such a wide field before me now, to reap from, as to make the cold chills run down my back. If I can find an instructor shall go to studying French as soon as I get to Antigua. It is

necessary I should — I like it — to be master of French or Spanish or Portuguese or all of them is in the best of arguments for a high position in either of those countries.

I have a good foundation to stand on now, and must make the most of it and you must stimulate me, whenever you can, for our, our final success. Only tell how you are willing (if you are and I don't doubt it) to make sacrifices to the end. What is the use of living if it don't amount to something.

If you come to Antigua you must clean em out in music [?]. I think can now.

I shall study to improve my manner of education — personal appearance — so that I shall have self-known power. I want to have strength, so as to feel strength.

I want you to open your heart to me, for how can we ever get acquainted if we don't confide with each other. At once you will say, "Ah, consistency," "now see, sir, here you talk of confiding when you choose to keep your future operations locked in your breast." Never mind I have told enough for one time. Perhaps you don't like ambitious men, but you must not tell me that you don't, or there will be a divorce, sure

Thursday, April 3rd. Since yesterday morning we have been rushing on. Expect to see the island of Barbuda at 2 p.m. Today is the nineteenth of our voyage and we are quite anxious to get in.

These two days are the only satisfactory ones since leaving port. A steady trade wind breeze, and we do go like split.

Apr. 4th — going in bravely, by [??], that takes our breath fairly away.

April 7th. This must go at once and it will be impossible to put on stamps. If you have to pay postage charge to me.

Apr 7th Fishing first-rate and glad to
get home will write again this week
So good bye my - my - my —
1897
18
from
Chet —

[On inside front cover:] Apr. 7th. Fishing [?] first rate and glad to get here. Will write again this week. So good bye my - my - my ... Love, Chet