

(Copy of letter addressed to
William F. Bridges, Esq.,
14th Street,
Union Square,
New York

from
Charlotte Cushman)

The Granby Hotel,
Harrogate,
Yorkshire

Dear Willie:-

I have been too much ashamed of myself that I have not sooner replied to your kind and welcome favours, some of which reached me in Rome and now this last from Newport, July 23rd, which I received in due time - forwarded, and which makes me blush even more deeply at my many shortcomings. But I have only the apology of occupation to offer - occupations and cares, and I have been much out of health this spring and summer, which has made me unable to do so much in the way of letterwriting as I have done before.

Just before the news reached us of the surrender of Lee, I began to feel ill and depressed and a fit of which I shall call "gout" if that were not too gentlemanly an ailment for me to indulge in, forced me to take certain medicines which prostrated me - then came the good news from home, which lifted me into a seventh heaven of excitement and then, immediately upon it, the dreadful telegram of the assassination of the President and the dreadful attack upon my friends, the Swards. For a whole week, we, in Rome, knew nothing more than the telegram announcing the fact, with no particulars. It almost killed me, and I have never quite gotten over the shock, then came to me much heartbreak with regard to my poor sister's little girls, who were being treated badly and I, utterly prevented from seeing them and giving them any love or comfort, this remains a sorrow to me and then I dare say the climate of Rome has had something to do with gradually undermining my constitution so that I have been very good for nothing all the spring and summer and even "The grasshopper has become a bother" so that letter writing beyond the actual daily correspondence, which are made necessary and unavoidable in England by the cheap postage system, has become almost hard work for me. Then again too, I fully proposed coming home this summer and had even secured my passage by the "Scotia" on the 26th August. I wanted to attend to some business there, to make my will there, to become a communicant there, and see some dear friends there, but this was overturned by Mr. Crow, my man of business, and Mr. Hitchcock, my legal adviser, suddenly determining to come on here, thus depriving me of two excuses for going and my Philadelphia matters not having yet assumed a form under which I could act, I was deprived of another, the fourth remained but was not important enough to make me take such a long voyage. But God willing, I shall come next summer, if I live so long, and shall see you face to face and you and I will talk on the matter of my "partaking the communion" which I have never yet done, for I have felt as though I was too mortal and did not give my thoughts sufficiently to serious matters. I have led a good moral life. I have done no wilful wrong. I have done some good, but I do not think this is enough to admit me a communicant, thus I have hesitated.

1860
Aug 22

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

However, it will come. When Bishop Whipple of Minnesota was in Rome he talked much to me about it, but I don't believe in impulsive feeling in such matters and hesitated.

Arrived in England and found my children Ned and Emma and their lovely baby here and I have been with them and attending to the business of my will, paying one or two short visits in the neighborhood of London, seeing physicians about my case and at last my children departing for Versailles for a short time to attend matters of his outfit for Rome, where Mr. Seward has appointed him Consul. I have taken my mother who has been seriously ill all winter and brought her up here. Mrs. Stebbins is with her and well, and sends you best regards.

The wish has gone home-draft received, prepay? Your draft for water colours received in due time. Many thanks for this and all your kindness.

The statue of "Horace Mann" is up in Boston and (she) says that old man of the sea being off her shoulders and not much torn to pieces by the Boston "know-nothings" she shall have the courage to go home next summer, so expect to see us. I shall be so glad to see you again, dear Willie, and give you and dear Fannie a good hard squeeze, for I can't give two hard squeezes, man and wife being one flesh, so, a squeeze.

I hope you will have found Newport of benefit to Fannie and that she is as well as she is good. Give my best love to her and say she must make room for me to come and pay her a little visit somewhere next summer, though I had rather it should be at Newport than the Lake. Newport is to me the most charming climate on our side of the water, the sea fogs soften the skin, take out all the wrinkles and lets you grow. I don't mean the social life of Newport, which is frittering in the extreme, but the climate, outdoor life, which is delightful. When I come home to live, as I hope to do one of these days, I shall hope to have my home in Newport and then when you tire of the Lake, you will come and see me there, will you not?

Give my love to your Mother. I shall be so glad to see her face again. Kindest love to Pauline, Emily and Josephine and her beautiful children, whose photos grace my Roman table, making a picture worthy of Van Dyke. Kindest remembrances to you and your Aunt Emily, how can she live away from her little grand children so long. I wish you could see mine, have just the very loveliest child, white and pink, with the largest loveliest blue eyes you ever saw. He does everything and tries to talk and has a head which would please you.

For our country, what can I say to show how proud I am of being an American, how grandly we have behaved, how terrible has been our struggle and now wonderfully unscathed we are coming out of it. Trust the Lord. He is great and greatly to be praised. He has brought us out of captivity and as ours is the arena for human progress he will shelter and protect us.

Let me know something of Del. & Hudson and Penn Coal Co. property.
How is Reading and if anything very capitally good comes in your way
as an investment, think of this "old maid" over the water and put
in for her as well as yourself.

God bless you, dear Willie, kiss Fannie for me and

believe me ever

Your affectionately attached

Martha Cushman

On inside of envelope - Let me have your exact address. I want to
give a letter of introduction to you, but
could not not knowing where to send

COOPY