

1-26-1876

Letter from Sarah Whitney, to Anne Whitney, Florence, Italy, 1876 January 26

Sarah Whitney

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Wed. P. M. July 26. '76

Carnie & Mrs. B. are in the city - Mother
in Dream-land, & there seems my dearest
no good reason why I sh'd not essay to
reply to yr. letter of the 9th that was rec'd
last evng. - To my fingers' ends do I feel
the force of yr. arguments for a longer
stay in Paris, & I have no word to say against
it, whatever my desire may be. I cannot but
grieve for Mother's disappointment - but since
she surprised me so much a year ago, I have
less fear than formerly that her sorrow will have
an unfavorable effect upon her health. Now,
as then, I shall delay as long as possible
the painful information, trusting that we
may gradually bring her mind to see that yr.
action is for the best. She is as I all
along have told you remarkably well - It is
true she has her "downs" as well as her "ups,"
but they former are soon recovered from, & form
no excuse for calling you home. I sh'd have
supposed the relation from time to time of my
out door achievements wd' they dear sister have

set yr. mind at rest respecting the state
of my health. Though I cannot believe that
all the Rheumatism that is in me can ever
run out at my eye or any other point, I
can, & do indeed in constant thanksgiving at
my general well-being. I do not indeed think
that this last attack ought so much to be laid
to the Rheumatic Acid that has possessed me
for so many years, as to the vascular strain
upon the eye caused by the nightly heats wh.
the Mosquitoes let me last fall. But this
is only in answer to yr. inquiries about my
health & not a subject to be pursued in
farther correspondence! No! there is nothing
in the health or pursuits of any member of
the family that I can see, that calls for the
^{self} sacrifice your return wld necessitate. We
are apparently a very comfortable - not to
say happy household & I don't think any
one ^{in it} wishes to put us back into the 2 family
condition. If they did, I shd cry my eyes out
for yr. return, & think perhaps that yr.
good was purchased at too dear a rate.

There is no use in attempting to say how much
yr. presence wld add to the general pleasure
& the particular happiness of Mother & me, for
a more than commensurate pain wld be the con-
science or suspicion that one gain was yr. loss.
I am not likely to say just what I want ^{on this subject} to, if I
write all day, so I will proceed to another point.
In calling Paris "wicked", I have no more fear of
being hung for my originality than when I speak
of Boston as "the Hub" or Brooklyn as "the City of
Churches". That all these epithets may be equally
false I will not take upon myself to deny. I only
know that my reading during the last year has
unfortunately strengthened the belief that the
public voice respecting Paris did not all
proceed from the prejudiced Puritanic heart.
Monsieur Taine is the most damaging critic
I have met with. If France (wh. I believe is
said to mean Paris) is ^{now} free from the dreadful
mis that have grown out of Freedom into the
License happy is she. Her equator has not been
so clear that we cannot afford to give her all
the credit that is her due. The sins of our own

Country are awful, but a good many of the
sinners are one adopted citizens whose edu-
cation we are not responsible for. Le Page
the first man convicted of the most atrocious
of murders bears a french name though born
in Canada & is I believe a french Canadian. The
men however who are going to prison for forgery
defalcation &c. I fear are too often the bad
fruit of Yankee enterprise & the ambition to
make a show. The ^{expt} Methodist minister whose
disappearance this week has revealed him a forger
to the extent of a quarter of a million or more, I
am glad to know has been ~~detected~~ ^{by his wife} a ~~tricked~~ man
for years - And now that it is said that the man
Dane of Worcester who was sentenced yesterday to
the State Prison for 15 years for like crime was
an intimate friend of Winslow, I am happier
in my old faith that truth & honesty are capable
of compromise do exist on this side of the water.
These men & Abraham Jackson & all of that ilk
I have no doubt had a rotten spot somewhere that
was discovered by somebody years before their
public downfall - Dreadful enough though it
is anyhow - but I wd like to have you remember
my dear Anne that there are some good things
& people in this country - & that virtue will
not die tho' France be again overthrown
in the year '76 or '77. I am sorry to say
that I have not the confidence you have
in the stability of its republican institutions

17 Feb. 1876

(48)

Espe et Matteini
Florence

Italy
Miss Anne



~~Hotel Jean Baud~~

~~Rue Jean Baud~~

~~Paris France~~



Wm. M. Mather
St. Louis, Mo.

