

The next night she dreamt she was again conducted into the presence of Jesus, who then accepted her, & as a pledge of their union, put a ring on her finger. When she awoke in the morning she found the ring was still on ~~his~~ her finger & knew that the ~~vis~~ seeming vision was a reality. The cruel Maximin tried to make Mrs. C. her renounce her faith, but so far from doing it she ~~con~~ went converted the forty doctors ~~he~~, sent to convince her! This system was not profitable. It was Another was substituted. She was ordered to be placed between two sharp-pointed wheels (hence the "Catherine-wheel" so popular in ~~fir~~ modern fire-works,) revolving with great velocity in different directions. But the moment she was put there the wheels flew asunder & killed her executioners & three thousand people, thus creating great, considerable, diversion, & angels descended & carried her body over the Red Sea to Mount Sinai, where they buried it. One sees often in America the beautiful engraving of the angels bearing the body of St. Catherine away through the clouds. I shall always look upon it with interest hereafter, & think of the scatterment that ~~the~~, wheel made when it collapsed its ~~flue~~, burst. (SLC 1868hhh, 1324-28†)

<sup>7</sup>See 31 Jan 68 to Beach

To Anson Burlingame  
19 February 1868 • (1st of 2) • Washington, D. C.

(Cyril Clemens, 18-19)

224 F street,  
Washington, Feb. 18.<sup>1</sup>

Your Excellency—

*Don't* neglect or refuse to keep a gorgeous secretaryship or a high interpretership for me in your great embassy—for pilgrim as I am, I have not entirely exhausted Europe yet, & may want to get converse with some of those Kings again, by & bye.<sup>2</sup>

I am writing a prodigious 600-page *book*, now—a seductive book with pictures on every page—for the great subscription Publishing Co., of Hartford, who publish for Greeley & I exclusively<sup>3</sup>—but I shall have this book done before autumn, & then I think I shall want to be an interpreter. I always *did* want to be an interpreter. It is the only ambition I have.

Please remember me most kindly & respectfully to Mrs. Burlingame, & tell that boy of yours to drop me a line, for I doubt not you are too busy to write to people yourself.<sup>4</sup>

Yours Very Truly,  
Samuel L. Clemens.

<sup>1</sup>The manuscript of the next letter, a "duplicate" of this one, shows that the date was probably 19 February. It is not known whether this letter ever reached Burlingame; its provenance and current location are likewise unknown.

<sup>2</sup>In June 1866 in Honolulu, Burlingame (1820-70), who had been "envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from the United States to China" since 1861, met and befriended Clemens, inviting him to come and stay with him in Peking. Burlingame resigned as minister in November 1867, and thereupon accepted a post offered him by the emperor of China as "envoy on behalf of the Chinese government to all the treaty powers," charged with visiting these nations in order to express China's "sincere desire to be friendly and progressive" and to discuss its position on renewal or revision of treaties in effect since 1858 (SLC to JLC and PAM, 27 June 66, *L1*, 347-48; Burlingame to William H. Seward, 21 Nov 67 and 14 Dec 67, Congress, 1:493-94; S. Wells Williams to Seward, 23 Dec 67, Congress, 1:495-96). At the time of this letter, which Clemens probably directed to San Francisco, Burlingame was about to leave Hong Kong on his way to Washington (via San Francisco), the first stop on his tour of the capitals of western nations, which was to include (among others) London, Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg ("Arrival of the 'China' from China and Japan," San Francisco *Alta California*, 1 Apr 68, 1). Clemens did not accompany or later join Burlingame; he did, however, publish an article in the New York *Tribune* about the Chinese mission (SLC 1868nn). Burlingame died of pneumonia in Russia in 1870, on the verge of completing his diplomatic assignment.

<sup>3</sup>See 24 Jan 68 to JLC and PAM, n. 4

<sup>4</sup>Burlingame married Jane Cornelia Livermore in June 1847. Their son, Edward Livermore Burlingame (1848-1922), left Harvard College in his first year and accompanied his father as a secretary upon the latter's return to China in the summer of 1866, when Clemens met both of them in Honolulu. Clemens later recalled Edward as "a handsome boy of nineteen, and overflowing with animation, activity, energy, and the pure joy of being alive" (AD, 20 Feb 1906, CU-MARK, in *MTA*, 2:125).

To Anson Burlingame  
19 February 1868 • (2nd of 2) • Washington, D. C.

(MS: DLC)

224 F street,  
Washington, Feb. 18 19. }

Your Excellency

This is to duplicate a letter I wrote you today by the unreliable Overland Mail<sup>1</sup>,—wherein was set forth that I shall have completed my book in the course of a couple of months or so, & then I would like to go

with your Embassy as a dignitary of some kind or other, & privately on my own hook as Herald & Tribune correspondent. I want to be a mild sort of dignitary, though, particularly Pray save me a place. Correspondents will hover about the Expedition anyhow, & so it will be best for the interests of China & the world, that one of them, at least, should be *reliable*.

With kindest regards to you my § Sandwich Islands acquaintances among your now exceedingly large family,<sup>2</sup> I remain,

Yours Very Truly

Mark Twain



[letter docketed:] M. Twain, etc.

<sup>1</sup> See the previous letter. Presumably this duplicate was sent by the slower but more reliable Pacific Mail Steamship line; it did, in fact, reach Burlingame, in whose papers it has survived.

<sup>2</sup> Clemens makes a playful reference to the large size of Burlingame's household staff, some of whom he apparently met in Honolulu. Burlingame's current entourage numbered nearly thirty officials, servants, and translators ("Arrival of the Chinese Embassy," San Francisco *Alta California*, 1 Apr 68, 1)

To Mary Mason Fairbanks  
20 February 1868 • Washington, D. C.

(MS: CSmH)

76 Indiana avenue, }  
Wash = Feb. 20 }

My Dear Mother =

Your most welcome letter is by me, & I must hurry & write while your barometer is at "fair," but *for*, it isn't within the range of possibility that I can refrain long from doing something that will fetch it down to "stormy," again.

I acknowledge—I acknowledge—that I *can* be most laceratingly "funny without being vulgar." In proof whereof, I responded again to the regular toast to Woman at a grand banquet night before last, & was frigidly proper in language & sentiment. Read the enclosed notice & see

if they accuse me once.<sup>1</sup> Now haven't I nobly vindicated myself & shed honor upon my teacher & done credit to ~~my lessons~~ her teachings? With head uncovered, & in attitude *unostentatious*, suppliant, but yet expressive of conscious merit, I stand before you in spirit & await my earned "Well done," & augmented emolument of bread & butter—to the end that I may go & slide on the cellar door & be happy.

You just smother me with compliments about that book!<sup>2</sup> There is nothing that makes me prouder than to be regarded by intelligent people as "authentic." A name I have coveted so long—& secured at last! I don't care anything about being humorous, or poetical, or eloquent, or anything of that kind—the end & aim of my ambition is to be authentic—is to be considered authentic. But don't italicise it—don't do that—*such* a there isn't any need of it—*such* a compliment as that, wouldn't have escaped my notice, even without the underscore.

So far, I believe I haven't indulged in any "flings" that people will mind much. Only one occurs to me just now that I revel in with peculiar ecstasy. It is in the first chapter & just touches Dr Gibson on a raw place. If he were a man of any appreciation, it would be a royal pleasure to see him waltz around when he reads that. But bless you it will all be lost. That complacent imbecile will take it for a compliment. I do not mention his name, but I *think* all the passengers will know who is meant. Now I know that you will begin to worry about this, & so I will just put in a part of it here so that you may see that it really amounts to nothing. You will not find any fault with it:

„[I am supposed to be reading the passenger list at 117 Wall st. ]„

"I was proud to observe that among our excursionists were three ministers of the gospel, eight doctors, sixteen or eighteen ladies, several military & naval chef chieftains with sounding titles, an ample crop of Professors of various kinds, & a gentleman who had "COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO EUROPE, ASIA & AFRICA" thundering after his name in one awful blast! I had carefully prepared myself to take rather a back seat in that ship, because of the uncommonly select material that would only be permitted to pass through the camel's eye<sup>3</sup> of that committee on credentials; I had schooled myself to expect an imposing array of military & naval heroes, & to have to set that back seat still further back in consequence of it, maybe; but I state frankly that I was all unprepared for *this* crusher! § I fell under that titular avalanche a torn & blighted thing. I said that if that potentate *must* go over in our