

28 Aug. 1870

16 Chyne Walk
Chelsea

Dear Shields

I cannot easily thank you enough for so much friendly understanding in such trying & troublesome circumstances. I now regret extremely that I did not write on receipt of your former letter, as I meant to do, to beg you to take no further trouble in a matter which presented such unexpected obstacles. But I delayed doing so through excessive preoccupation at the moment & then thought that it was no use ~~doing so~~ ^{writing} as further steps were probably already being taken. I can now only say that I could never have conceived from Mr. Mitchell's very straightforward conduct on former occasions, that he was capable of so much change.

MS. 230. 4: 35a
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ableness and disregard
of his word. I do not like
to make a cause of quarrel
with him (after very agreeable
relations hitherto) out of
a matter which, in itself,
is of no importance to me;
but am excessively irritated
at having been led on by him
into causing you so much
disturbance, and on that
account write him with
this to express my surprise
at his conduct. As far as
myself am concerned, it
is well the matter is no more
important than it is;
but I feel how much apolo-
gize I owe you for this unplea-
santness which I could
not have foreseen.

I wish I could say some-
thing to any good purpose
on what gives me great

anxiety - The infinitely more
important matter of your
own affairs to which you
make some allusion, & which
I assure you, already often
occurred to my mind. It
is most disappointing to
me that the various con-
versations I have had with
Mr Graham at intervals
about his negotiations with
you should have had no
better result. Here again
is a man, usually most
honorable in my experience
of him, behaving with
unaccountable disregard
of obligations really incurred
by himself. Nothing could
give me greater pleasure
than being able, should
such opportunity occur, &
to be of any service to
yourself who have so often
served me so warmly and
at ^{the cost of} so much personal exertion.
Is there any way suggesting

itself to your own mind by
which I could be of the least
use in forwarding my object
you have in view? Of this
well, the very friendliest
thing you could do would be
to let me know. Of your health
you do not specially speak
nor do I gather clearly whether
what you say of your "suffering"
from this "true atrocious"
and insupportable war relates
simply to what all must
feel or to more direct influence
of a baneful kind on your
own immediate prospects.
Such would doubtless be
a possible result for any of
us, as there is no knowing
the moment at which
retrenchment may be forced
upon the wealthy classes
of this country by the state
of affairs abroad or even
at home, and naturally

art goes first to the wall.
You allude in the kindest
way to my poetry, and say
also that you would like
to write me something
about "Jenny". Pray believe
that anything coming from
you could only be what I
should sincerely desire to hear
~~the~~ whatever its point of
view; only I really think
there must be too many
affairs of your own to
attend to; for it is to be with
you while to dwell on my
verses except by word of
mouth when we meet again
which it would please me
much to hope might be soon.
The book has prospered quite
beyond any expectations
of mine, though just lately
signs of depreciation have
been apparent in the press
("Blackwood" to wit,) I am

only surprised that nothing
of a decided kind in the
way of opposition should have
appeared before. However I
have ^{also} been surprised (and
pleased) to find such
things producing a much
more harmless & momentary
impression of unpleasantness
than I should have expected,
- indeed I might almost
say none at all; particularly
as I cannot help in this
instance putting against the
Blackwood article the fact
that B. & Co. wished to publish
the book & I went elsewhere.
But above all, these things
probably do not touch me
much for the reason that
my mind is now quite occu-
-pied with my painting, and
has been for some time past.
I am making very rapid

progress with my large picture
of "Dante's Dream", about
10 or 11 feet by 7. A big
picture is gladdens work,
really coming to every faculty
one has or ever thought
one might have, and I
hope I am doing better in
this than hitherto. In ~~another~~
fortnight or so I shall have
all the figures painted on
the canvas and only the
glazing of the draperies
left to do. The background
is as yet untouched &
before I resume the picture
after bringing it to the com-
-pletion of the figures as above
~~with~~ I intend to go for a
month or so into the country
to recruit. However, though
I have been working decidedly
hard, I find that it chiefly
seems to have the effect of
consolidating & steadying

The beneficial results which
my spring trip to the country
had already had on my
health. I am not at
present sensible of any
inconvenience with my
eyes, though working good
hours daily, and have
not been for months past.
I have often spoken with ^{him} ~~you~~
about you, and need not tell
you what a constant interest
he takes in all that concerns
you. He himself is, I am
glad to think, doing well at
present, and in just thinking
of an excursion to Newcastle
& perhaps to the Highlands
in company with his wife.
He lately finished his large
oil picture of Romeo & Juliet
but I did not see it, as he
would not show it while in
progress, & most stultically

and surreptitiously pilched
it away at the last moment
by Leathart who is its
proprietor. I believe however
it is one of his best works.
His children are all at
work & making great progress.
You probably know of Burn
Jones; having left the
O.W.C. Society, but probably
will be surprised to hear that
Burton has now done so
also. I believe B. finds
it necessary to take to
larger work, & thinks such
scale better suited to oil;
but his warm feeling on
Jones' behalf in the difference
occurring between him &
the Society has doubtless led
to his ~~taking~~ taking the step at
this particular moment.

I will give you kind remem-
brances to Dunn, whom
I saw yesterday again for

The first time since a
month's stay he has been
making in Cornwall on
the occasion of his father's
sudden death. He has
been doing some really very
good work of his own in
oil lately, and is un-
doubtedly making great
advances. Indeed, if he
goes on like this, he must
make his mark.

Let me again beg of you,
before I conclude, that you
will tell me without the
slightest reserve of any
way that may occur to
you in which I could
serve you at all. To know
that you were happier
would be a real encourag-
ement to me.

Believe me as ever, my
dear Shields,

affectionately yours,

D. S. Repetto

