

Monday Sept 20. 1842

My dear Sarah,

I have again to thank you for a very acceptable letter dated July 31. & Aug 7. Your letters are perfect little sunnyside jargones, giving me all the interesting news of the cottage and the neighborhood. I am glad to learn that your summer has passed away quietly and pleasantly. The winters are ~~good~~ quite an acquisition to the neighborhood and the return of the Constant must have had an enhancing effect. I had by my last letter, you were on the point of giving a party at the cottage I shall look to my next letter for an account of it.

I recently received my books and papers, that were forwarded from America, and with them the articles of silver that were put up by you at the cottage. I now only want some plated ware and cutlery, which are on their way from England, to fit me out completely. All my china, glass, linen & purchases at Paris came ~~at~~ here in perfect order. They were all purchased by Mr. Storrow, and do credit to his judgement and good taste. They are simple but elegant.

My house being now tolerably arranged, and my table furniture arrived I yesterday gave my first dinner. My guests were the British Minister & the gentlemen of his legation & Mr. Albuquerque the Brazilian Minister (who married Miss Baker) we sat down ten persons to table: a number I will never exceed if I can help it, as I wish my dinners to be lively and social, not formal and ostentatious. My round table made a very pretty scene

the desert being set out on the centre, and the meats brought in, dish by dish, ready cut up, and handed round to the guests, according to the modern fashion. My man Benjamin proved himself a first rate butler and my cook won laurels. The whole repast was considered a very successful first attempt.

In a recent letter to Charlotte I gave a particular description of my dwelling, accompanied by a map. That you may hereafter understand any ~~family~~ household anecdote better I must tell you that the first saloon is yellow; the second or grand saloon green and the third or interior saloon pink; the walls being painted in fresco on these colours. The two first saloons are my state apartments, furnished with the furniture purchased of Mr Bail; which is very handsome, yet simple; of mahogany, ~~with~~ and satin striped paper: curtains to match and rich carpets. The pink saloon is our favorite family gathering place. It is extremely cheerful with very wide casements to the front opening into the broad, glazed verandah; which would make a first rate conservatory. ~~The pink room has the~~ This will be a capital winter room; enjoying so much sunshine. The verandah will answer like the cloisters of a convent, for exercise within doors. This room is pleasantly furnished for daily use; ~~with~~ and has two or three lounging chairs beside some quaint old-fashioned pieces of furniture that I have picked up in holes and corners. In this room I have my dinner table set out, when I have company; the meats being brought through the corridor which you will observe in the plan, passing between the saloons and bed rooms. I ought to have told you, in ~~the~~ giving the plan of the house, that the kitchen is up stairs; the communication from it opening into the outer ~~into~~

subchamber, or waiting room. I am giving you quite a homely housekeeping letter; but I know there are details in which you will take interest. I will dismiss this subject by saying that ~~the whole length of~~ my suite of apartments is nearly one hundred and eighty feet in length.

I shall soon have my apartment all to myself for a time, as Mr Hamilton and Mr Brewster intend making a tour of four or five weeks in the South of Spain, and I have consented that Hector may accompany them, as it will give him an opportunity of seeing that ~~so~~ interesting part of Spain in good company. They will be off in the course of a week or ten days. I shall feel their absence; but I expect in the course of a few days to become completely occupied with my literary tasks, and then I can get on very well alone. In fact it is only in the evenings that I feel the want of society; having been accustomed at home to have you all around me, when my day's occupations were over. At such times I feel my absence from dear little Sunday.

I am fortunate in having good servants. Benjamin is trusty and careful. He has charge of the china, plate, household stores, wine &c and I have every reason to believe him strictly faithful. Juana, the housemaid of ~~the~~ in a manner the housekeeper, has all the linen under her charge; and attends to keeping it in order, having it washed, delivering it out for household use &c. She also keeps all my own linen in nice order. She is a very respectable and very nice looking girl always well dressed. She has a very pretty room which had been intended, in the construction of the house, for a dining room, and being painted in fresco, with landscapes, &c. It is quite her pride and delight. Severino the valet of portman, is invaluable. He has been with my two predecessors Mr Elton and Mr Bail, and is a complete diplomatic servant; and faithful in all things. Under their jurisdiction my house goes on like clockwork.

Miss Eliza I have received her ~~the~~ letter and will answer it soon.
As I am about to become very much occupied with my pen in literary
labour I shall not be able to keep up so frequent a correspondence as
heretofore, but I am sure you will all excuse me, and will not ~~wait~~
wait for my replies before you repeat those letters which are so interesting
and cheering to me during my absence from you all.

Miss Sarah Irving

care of E. Irving St

New York.

I must work, that I may provide the best and means of coming
home and living amongst you once more; but when I really work
with my pen, my correspondence has to stand still, or ~~at least~~ at least
to be kept up very irregularly.

Give my love to all the household. I hope your aunt has
received my long diplomatic letter.

Oct 1. I have recd. your aunt's first affectionate letter
letter of Aug 20th.

Washington Irving