

to do our little utmost to make life a burden to him. Addresses of all sorts—a public dinner—a ball—a converzione (as I see they spell it) and the usual driving first piles & laying first stones for daylight amusements. When to these are added levees & private interviews with Natives & Europeans it seems clear that Sir George will have little leisure.

Our last English mail has not come & we are at a loss for the reason of its not coming. Whether war with America has thrown it into the hands of the gentlemanly skipper of some Yankee pirate or whether it be only delayed by one of the usual breakdowns of steamers, we cannot guess. Wanting the stimulus of recent news we shall find letter-writing hard this month—for me, I give in before this additional difficulty and shall probably not achieve a line beyond these few. Writing by every mail to every body is silly dreariness after all. When I watch my flowers day by day they seem provokingly unprogressive but if I am away for a week their growth amazes me. Now my friends insist on watching me monthly and are of course disgusted at my apparent inertness & I catching the infection come to regard myself as one of the most useless of God's creatures. I have half a mind to hide myself for a year or so from this too constant surveillance.

Tell Mr Carlyle that I have indeed been 'patient with fools' but am getting impatient with the only one I now see much of—myself. But our Mudfog meets here in June & I may then find other food for my patience.

Wishing you well through the plagues of the 'Exhibition'.

Yours very truly,  
Walter Mantell

P.S. Ellen asks me to send her best love to Margaret from whom she hopes to hear very soon. She is very well & seems moderately happy.