

“A Perfect Man of Business”:
The Financier and Broker Charles Butler
and Thomas Carlyle’s American Investments

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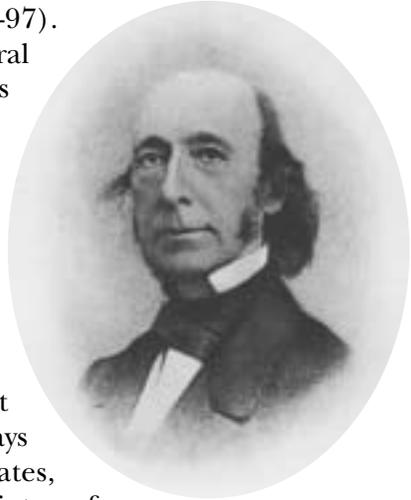
THIS IS THE FIRST offering in a series in which the editors will introduce newly discovered letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle. As epistolary records of the nineteenth century, their letters are extraordinary both for literary excellence and for the sheer number that have survived. TC began collecting JWC’s letters soon after her death, and he nursed his grief in reading, sorting, dating, and appending, while preparing text and notes for a reminiscence of his beloved wife (*Reminiscences* 160; Fielding and Sorensen xi). Soon after TC’s death in 1881, his biographer James Anthony Froude assembled, with questionable care say some, a selection of these letters. With the publication in 1883 of Froude’s *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, a particular industry was launched, which continues to this day.

Over the years, attempts have been made to estimate the number of Carlyle letters assembled in the central file at Duke University Press, publisher of *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*. The latest accounting suggests that there are between 13,500 and 14,000 letters. The generous difference in these figures allows for an undetermined amount of duplication, some small degree of error, and the many letters to TC and JWC that are counted and filed but are not published with the letters from them. The most active period of acquisition occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, a worldwide canvass that had netted 9,500 Carlyle letters at the publication of the first four volumes in 1970 (*CL* 1: xxix). Under “Autograph Letters Signed” in the catalogues of manuscript dealers and large auction houses such as Sotheby’s, Christie’s, and Maggs Brothers, TC and JWC letters are frequently available; more recently, Carlyle letters have been offered on the internet via eBay, ABE, and similar sites. Libraries, particularly those long active in collecting Carlyle letters, track these

catalogues and listings and add to their holdings regularly, and sometimes in significant ways.

One especially notable acquisition occurred in 1987 when Edinburgh University Library (EUL) bought from a private dealer in New York sixteen letters from the correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and the Wall Street broker Charles Butler (1802–97).

Prior to this purchase, the central file held copies of only five letters from TC to Butler, all from published sources and none transcribed directly from original holographs. Butler first met the Carlyles in 1853 through Delia Salter Bacon, an American scholar who had moved to England in order to verify an eccentric theory about the authority of Shakespeare's plays and poems. In the United States, Bacon had enjoyed the society of Emerson, Hawthorne, Charlotte Lynch, and the Peabody sisters. Members of this circle were occasional guests at the Butlers' first home on Manhattan's Bleeker Street, and at their later addresses on Eleventh Street, Fourteenth Street, and Park Avenue. When the Butlers called at 5 Cheyne Row, they were favorably impressed, and the Carlyles—or at least TC—responded warmly to these bright, pious Presbyterians. We will never know the particulars of the table-talk that evening. If TC probed Butler's lineage, he might have been pleased to learn about the American's great-grandfather, a Puritan and the son of a Regicide who had been exiled to New Haven, Connecticut at the time of the Restoration (Stoddard 4–5 and note). Puritan pedigree aside, TC immediately recognized Butler to be an intelligent man who possessed both keen business acumen and obvious personal integrity.



Charles Butler

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We do know that during their first meeting, TC told Butler about an American bond that he had purchased in 1838. Issued by the State of Illinois (*CL* 10: 250), it had lost most of its value by 1853 (Kimball 282). Butler, as a lawyer who had interceded in

cases of state bonds in Michigan and Indiana (Stoddard 190, 272–73), offered to investigate, and it was the fruit of his success that extended the friendship and secured TC a future of profitable American investments. Butler was already a skilful broker who had bought lots in the frontier outpost of Chicago in 1833 (Stoddard 149). From his east coast base, he assigned his brother-in-law, William Butler Ogden, to manage this real-estate. In 1837 Ogden became Chicago's first mayor (Kimball 282), and he directed a succession of railroads from that hub across the prairie. Those roads—Galena and Chicago Union; Chicago, St. Paul, and Fond du Lac; its successor, the Chicago and Northwestern; and others—now form a vital part, through acquisition and merger, of the giant Union Pacific Corporation. Had it not been redeemed, TC's stock might still be paying dividends.

Born at Kinderhook Landing on the Hudson River, Butler clerked and read law in the office of Martin Van Buren in Albany, just as his older brother Benjamin Franklin Butler had done before him (Stoddard 17–19). His politics were Democratic-Republican, the party of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, which stood in opposition to the Federalist policies of Washington, Adams, and Hamilton. In the local politics of New York state, the Butlers directly opposed the DeWitt Clinton wing (Stoddard 41). Butler's experience as a state senator seemed to slake whatever political thirst he had developed in his youth (Stoddard 40–54). With national realignment of parties into Whigs and Democrats, and later into Democrats and Republicans, it is difficult to assign a later, single affiliation for Butler beyond where he placed his immediate support. His activism in railroads, canals, and the infrastructure of transportation might have been more advantageously served by the progressive Whigs than by the conservative Democrats, but a closer look at volatile economic factors might qualify such broad assumptions. Though his later political affiliations are difficult to pinpoint, during the Civil War Years his loyalty was distinctly Unionist (Stoddard 318).

Faithful also to his adopted city, Butler was a founding agent of the New York Life Insurance company, a founding trustee of Union Seminary (Presbyterian) of New York, and a board member of New York University and the Museum of Natural History. The seminary and the university were frequent recipients

of his lifelong charity and received generous bequests from him after his death (see his obituary, *Harpers Weekly*, 25 December 1897: 1284). In the early 1830s, Butler traveled widely in the midwest, the vastness of which deeply impressed him: “If you have never seen a prairie, it is utterly impossible for me to convey to you any idea of the peculiar and interesting aspects which it presents. . . . The works of the Lord are very great, and sought of all them that have pleasure therein” (Stoddard 132–48). From these visits, he conceived interests in property development on sites that would become the cities of Chicago and Toledo. The extent of his business activities is reflected in the Charles Butler Papers at New York University’s Bobst Library, which contain correspondence, contracts and other legal documents, ledgers, pamphlets, and maps pertinent to the American Land Company and to the Wabash and Erie Canal Corporation (see container list, NYU Archives).

In 1838, soon after he had moved to New York City, Butler took his family on a grand tour of Europe, meeting along the way an aristocracy of cardinals, physicians, and lordlings. A few years later, he made a journey of a very different sort: overland from Toledo to Cincinnati, then by riverboat down the Mississippi River first to Memphis and thence to New Orleans. At first his account of slavery was rather benign, as he passed General Jackson’s plantation and then Wade Hampton’s, “on which there are three thousand negroes employed” (Stoddard 217). But in Holly Springs, Mississippi, he saw a “sight . . . that wrung my very heart and made me wretchedly unhappy. It was a sale of negroes, big and little, husbands and wives, men, women and children, all in the market at auction” (Stoddard 221). We are left to wonder whether he ever read TC’s account in “An Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question” (1849; retitled “The Nigger Question,” 1853) of Quashee and his brethren “[s]unk to the ears in pumpkin, imbibing saccharine juices, and much at his ease in the Creation” (*Works* 29: 352).

These sixteen “new” letters, interleaved with published transcriptions of Butler’s letters to TC and to the Dumfries bankers Robert and Samuel Adamson, deliver a fascinating picture of speculation in American railroads and its rate of return over a period of fifteen years. Beyond immediate business matters, TC and Butler discussed the signal events in their lives:

their families and the deaths of loved ones, the political news of the world, the activities of mutual friends, and even the weather. A chronology and catalogue of their correspondence, with excerpts, follows:

SUMMER 1853 (Kimball 282), though much more likely **NOVEMBER 1853** (*CL* 28: 314 and 317).

first meeting of the Carlyles and the Butlers at Cheyne Row

18 NOVEMBER 1853

TC–Jean Carlyle Aitken [MS: NLS 515.59; published in part in Alexander Carlyle, *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle* 2: 156–57, and in full in *CL* 28: 313–15].

“The other night some Americans were here; one of them, an official man in his own country, certified me that my *dormant* American Bonds would yet be paid, principal and interest to the last penny, and that before long! Very well; it was a loss of £230, to which I had quite reconciled myself; and so the £350 it has now grown to will be like money found, and very useful in these present expenditures,—if we actually had it! The truth is I never bother myself about money at all; having far deeper bothers which quite abolish that. ——”

25 DECEMBER 1853

the death of TC's mother Margaret Aitken Carlyle

17 JANUARY 1854

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 1 in pencil on the holograph; published in part in Kimball 283, and in full in Prentiss 515–16 and *CL* 29: 21–22].

“Your very obliging letter came in due course. . . . I had been called into Scotland; my dear and excellent old Mother was passing away from me by the road we have all to go. . . . It was not till yesterday that I could get a proper copy of the Illinois Bond. . . for 1000 dollars, State of Illinois, No 324; with 35 warrants for Interest, of 30 dollars each, attached to it. . . . Miss Bacon has gone . . . we suppose her to be elaborating the Shakspeare discovery! . . . The painter [Samuel Laurence] . . . will probably be in New York the week before this arrives.”

3 MARCH 1854

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 2 in pencil on the holograph; published in part in Kimball 284–85, and in full in Prentiss 516–18 and *CL* 29: 36–22].

“A week ago I received your kind and pleasant letter, intimating to me, among other welcome things, that you had received the Illinois Bond safe. . . . I have only to add that the 3 coupons . . . are quite gone beyond my reach. . . . We are struck with a glad surprise to hear you have been so supremely hospitable to our voyaging painter. . . . Miss Bacon sends no sign whatever from St. Albans; we suppose her to be . . . strenuously wrestling . . . that monstrous Problem she has got. . . . Your Minister [James Buchanan] . . . has done a notable thing . . . : entertained, or rather been partner while the Consul [George N. Saunders] entertained, the 6 or 5 select pearls of European Revolutionism, Kossuth, Ledru-Rollin, Mazzini, Garibaldi, &c.,— I do believe the most condensed Elixir of modern Anarchy that could have well been got together round any earthly dinner-table. . . . Undoubtedly a Diplomatic mistake . . . on the part of Mr Bn.”

28 MAY 1856

TC–CB [MS: unknown (please note the absence of a holograph numbered 3 among these letters from EUL); published in part in Kimball 285, and in full in Prentiss 518–20 and *CL* 31: 103–06; Kimball and Prentiss date the letter in 1854; *CL* corrects the year to 1856].

“It must be at once admitted, and ought to be always gratefully remembered, you have stood a real father to that poor down-broken bond. . . . Of Miss B[acon], I am sorry to report that I know absolutely nothing for many months past. . . . Lawrence need not write to me till his *demon* fairly bids him.”

6 JUNE 1856

the death of Abraham Ogden Butler, CB's only surviving son, who had graduated with honors from New York University, class of 1853 (Kimball 286).

4 AUGUST 1856

CB–TC [MS: NLS 1767.134–35; quoted at *CL* 31: 103M 3].

“I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 28th. It came to hand in the midst of a grievous affliction as you will see by the brief obituary enclosed, and tho quite two months have elapsed since this heavy loss was inflicted upon us we feel the smart of it perhaps more acutely as every day of the passing summer, and by everything around us at Evergreen Farm, we are more & more reminded of our sad bereavement. . . . Enclosed I hand you 70\$ seventy dollars being the coupons due on the first of August instant (for 6 Months) on two Bonds of 1000\$ each of the Chicago St Paul & Fond du Lac Rail Road Company which I hold as your agent. If you have a little more money to spare I can place it for you more securely so as to give you *about 10%* and will do so with great pleasure.”

19 AUGUST 1856

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 4 in pencil on the holograph; published in part in Kimball 286–87, in Prentiss 518–20, and in *CL* 31: 103–06; to be published in full in the Appendix to *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006].

“I yesterday received here your Draught of Fourteen Pounds (New York, Augt 4), the Interest of the Bond you are kind enough to manage for me; and I can only again thank you for your friendly and most successful pains in that particular.—My new monies for investment do not yet come in, for about a year. . . . Alas, I can too well understand what a blank of utter sorrow and desolation that sad loss must have left in your Household, and in the heart of everybody there. Your one Son, and such a Son, cut off in the flower of his days. . . . You do well not to slacken in your labour; to keep doing, so long as the day is, the duty of the day. I know no other remedy so sure of ultimately helping in all sorrows whatsoever. Let us work while it is called Today. In a very little while we too shall follow into the silent Kingdoms the Loved Ones that have already gone; and one divine Eternity will hold us all again,—as God may have appointed for them and for us.”

19 FEBRUARY 1857

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 5 in pencil on the holograph; to be published in the Appendix to *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006; otherwise heretofore unpublished].

“Three or four days ago (last Saturday evening) your Letter, with

the due remittance, £14 of interest for that Bond . . . came punctually to hand. A friend who happened to be here undertook to convert the Document for me into current coin, and also to bring me answer to a certain question about Books bound for New York. . . . You ask if I have got done with my ‘tough job’: Alas, we are still very far from that. . . . My wife has suffered, and still suffers, more than usually from our winter weather; we may hope for improvement now that the sun is coming back. Otherwise nothing has specially gone wrong: if one could only work well, all *wd* come *right*.”

13 AUGUST 1857

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 6 in pencil on the holograph; to be published in the Appendix to *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006; otherwise heretofore unpublished].

“Last night I had the pleasure of receiving your letter, with Draught for £14 interest on Bond; which comes punctually as the season of the year itself, — and with which I am just about walking out to put in the Banker’s hand. . . . Some three months hence I shall likely have a £500. . . . Ever since you last heard of me, I have been held like a convict on the tread-wheel; and there is still another *year* of it to come, before I can slip my chain. . . . My poor wife had a bad winter in respect of health: confined to the House, strict prisoner, for 5 or 6 months, till the summer came fairly back to us; and then left us *weak* as one might expect. Several weeks ago, I sent her off to Scotland to be out of this *roasting* Babylon. . . . This is the hottest summer of all the 24 I have had in London: Corn-harvest said to be excellent. . . . India, in the private details as to those poor English *women* especially,—is a horror of horrors: it is no question they will extinguish those *hyaena* mutineers of theirs; but if they cannot learn to *command* better (especially to command *Armies* better), I had rather they came home from India.”

27 AUGUST 1857

the collapse of the New York branch of Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company which set off the Panic of 1857; British investors removed funds as American banks failed; grain prices fell; railroads, poorly managed and overextended, declared bankruptcy, temporarily squelching an attendant land boom on the American frontier; the depression spread to

Europe, South America, and Asia before economic stability was restored

[23 NOVEMBER 1857]

JWC—Agnes Howden [MS: NLS Acc. 9086; published in Alexander Carlyle, *New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle* 2: 168–71 and *CL* 33: 125–26; quoted in Rosemary Ashton, *Thomas & Jane Carlyle: Portrait of a Marriage* 383].

“I should like ill to be the wife of a speculator just now! Mr C has or *had* some money in America— He *doesn't* recollect how much! And doesn't feel even a natural *curiosity* what is become of it!!— I have never heard a word out of his head about it except to say *once*, ‘I suppose *my* money will have gone in the crash, and poor *Buttler* (the gentleman who invested it for him) will be very sorry!’— Being a Philosopher's wife has *some* advantages!— I never think about money myself beyond what serves my daily needs—but if *he* weren't of the same mind I might be made sufficiently uncomfortable about it.”

9 JUNE 1858

TC—CB [MS: EUL where numbered 7 in pencil on the holograph; published in part in Stoddard 327–28; to be published in full in the Appendix to *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006]

“The day before yesterday your letters came to hand, enclosing, all safe and right, the Draught for £14, which could not gain admittance in February last! . . . Two letters now, with such precaution, and a third enclosed (which should have been the *first* and *only*), — all to get me persuaded to take a little money out of your hand! — There is no doubt the mistake occurred at this door; the letter first sent contains our Postman's visible signature with the word “refused”: there is where one hitch was, everybody else has done his part to perfection and with success. One might almost cry and laugh both at once over such a thing. . . . I think I had, once or perhaps twice for a moment, in my head, that some letter used to come from you about that season of the year, and that none had come: but I mainly concluded, as the whole Finance of America had suddenly gone topsy turvey, that my small deposit in it had sunk among the ruin, — *beyond* discovery even of Mr Butler for the moment; and that by and by I *shd* hear good account of it nevertheless from the said Mr B: — so that in fact I did not think about it at all, or any more than if the Bank of

England had stopt payment with it. And now you inform me there is no halt or stoppage; and in spite of the great earthquake, that small packet lies quiet in its place! I can only say that it is very strange; — and that you must be one of the best Financiers ever heard of. . . . Yesterday . . . I got *done* with that First Part of my Book. . . . My Wife, who bids me not forget her regards to you, has again been very weakly thro' the Winter. . . . The one £500 is invested in *Stereotype Plates*; but there is another coming before long, of wh^h you may hear!”

23 SEPTEMBER 1858

TC–JWC [MS: NLS 615.510; published in part in James A. Froude, *Thomas Carlyle: a History of His Life* in London 2: 225–27, and to be published in full in *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006].

“Am busy sorting, with violent speed, the insignificant coil of “correspondence” &c,— chiefly *money* bills, one from Tauchnitz £75, one from Ch Butler £14 (that will pay all my expences and all yours, and is the only significant thing amid the dreary scrawls!)—”

23 SEPTEMBER 1858

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 8 in pencil on the holograph; to be published in *CL* 34, forthcoming in 2006; otherwise heretofore unpublished]

“I have been roving about in Germany, absent in Scotland etc.; and did not till last night get hold of your valuable little Note . . . with the symbol of *Fourteen Pounds Sterling* in it. . . . I have not been here before since the end of june: I fled to Scotland at that date, having got the dreary first instalment of my Book rolled off my hands, and myself not killed by it; . . . then came this sore expedition into Germany (“sight of Friedrich’s Battlefields,” forsooth). . . . My wife is still in Scotland, . . . in poor health again; but profound good soul, to have fortified herself a little against the coming winter, in those quiet native regions. I believe, too, I myself am rather better; in spite of the horrors of German Travelling, the greasy *tepid cooking*, the preternatural *beds* (or torture-beds), and other practical stupidities of that good Country. . . . I have now again about £1,000, wh^h I could wish to invest safely and well. Our banks are safe; but yield only 3 (or perhaps 2²) per cent. . . . Certainly it is very far below what you get me for it in America with “safety” even thro’ such a crash as you

lately had. Pray give this matter a little true consideration for me; greedy of gain I am not; greedy of *security* and absence of bother I am. If you judge America the fit place, pray write and say how I can transmit you the £1,000.”

NOVEMBER 1858

the death, in Paris, of Benjamin Franklin Butler; like TC, born in 1795; Secretary of War in the Andrew Jackson administration, Attorney General under presidents Jackson and Martin Van Buren; founder of the School of Law at New York University; older brother and mentor who once wrote to CB: “Pray read Blair’s Lectures morning, noon, and night, and study Murray’s Grammar until you ascertain that such sentences as ‘I premise to make an answer,’ ‘the conflux of the moment,’ ‘inflict a goad upon my feelings,’ are neither sublime, elegant, nor grammatical.” (Stoddard 28)

8 FEBRUARY 1859

CB–TC [MS: unknown, perhaps lost, this letter would have covered the semi-annual interest payment acknowledged in the following letter].

24 FEBRUARY 1859

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 10 in pencil on the holograph (the following letter is numbered 9); to be published in full in *CL* 35, forthcoming in 2007; otherwise heretofore unpublished].

“You are Punctuality itself, and always reappear when the Almanack demands you! I received your Note of the 8th last, with the inclosed cash, which the Banker has now got hold of: that is all right; and I have only to return you many thanks as usual. . . . On the other hand I perceive you have never got my last letter, written 5 or 6 months ago. . . . The lost letter treated of some money I meant for the American Funds under your guidance. . . £1,000 I had, and then another £1,000:—not hearing from you. . . I therefore proceeded to invest these two sums in English stock: ‘Brighton-Railway Debentures’ they call one of them; some other similar thing the other: and there my *peculia* lie. . . but yielding only 4 *per cent.* . . . There remains another £1,000, wh^h you may yet advise about. . . . Exorbitant interest is not at all what I seek or wish; but the absence of risk. . . . Perhaps you *cd* put it and the

already existing thing together in some way,—so that a London Banker (or even a Scotch one in correspondence with *Ln*, whom I *shd* prefer) cd take possessn of the Papers, and *manage* the whole matter, witht ever speaking to me again abt it, except by the sending of his Half-Yearly *receipts*. . . . I am still anchored down in the ugliest endless labour, in fact quite “killed” and broken hearted.”

19 MARCH 1859

CB–TC [MS: unknown, perhaps lost, but remarked upon in the following two letters].

5 APRIL 1859

TC–John A. Carlyle (JAC) [MS: NLS 525.49; to be published in full in *CL* 35, otherwise heretofore unpublished].

“I must tell you about Butler’s Letter, wh^h is here inclosed. He is my American who did the lost Yankee Bond in the way you know; an excellt old gentn, to judge by physiognomy, and by other tests that have come in my way: had I got this Letter at the time I expected one and got none, I had probably sent all my cash for him to invest. As it is, I will now make no change in the Debentures and Preference Shares (4 per cent each); but I mean to send Butler another £1,000 wh^h I still have: except that the *interest* is so extremely *good*, I have not the least reason to question his judgement. He works in that business as his trade, is thoroughly well affected to *me*, and I found him a prudent considerate kind of character & much the gentleman in appearance, manner & conduct. So the £1,000, I suppose, must go, *tho’* at £70 annually. You perceive he has still room for 2 other *Thousands*: but I confess I am almost rather glad the others (of mine) are quietly settled, on different bottoms; so that it will take *three* thunderbolts to sink them *all*.— For the rest, I design to try if *Adamson* cannot manage both to send the money for me, and to gather up from Butler all the *legal* threads (both of this sum and of the former one), so as to hold good *vouchers* in case of any accident to me or to *Br*,—and on the whole to *trouble* me no farther with the thing at all, except by receiving the half-yearly dividends. For the rest, I will do nothing, not even write to *Adamson*, *till I hear from you*. Pray *read* Butler then; and return him to me; so soon as you have come to clear understanding about it.”

8 APRIL 1859

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 9 in pencil on the holograph (see above); to be published in full in *CL* 35, forthcoming in 2007; otherwise heretofore unpublished].

“I am much obliged by your last kind message (*Nw Yk* 19 March). . . . I perceive that you have got safely the 16 voll (stereotype “Collected Works”). . . . With regard to the Money-Investment *whh* you are so kind as undertake for me,—we must submit to the accident of 2 Thousands being *already* planted . . . and as to the 3*d*, I have this day given orders to my Banker at Dumfries (British Linen Company, *Branch-Bank* there) to send off straight way, to your address, £1,000 on my behalf,— . . . his address, “Robert Adamson Esq., *Brith Ln Cy Bank*, Dumfries N. B.”; and he has all my *bits of factorage* &c in hand: his Bank (headquarters of *whh* is in *Edinh*) is of old standing & respectability, and I believe has *direct* communicatn with New York. Were the matter once in Adamson’s hand, I *shd* consider myself as having done with it; and the *next* £1,000 that falls to me I could, by his channel, send the same road, &c &c.”

13 APRIL 1859

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 11 in pencil on the holograph; published in part in Stoddard 328–29; to be published in full in *CL* 35, forthcoming in 2007].

“On reading your letter *again* before sending off the *Adamson* message I spoke of, other lights began to glimmer out on me from the bottom of the business . . . and I decided *not* to send off that message to Adamson, but simply to bid him forward *me* the £1,000, and be ready if you *shd* have anything to say to him. He sent the money yesterday; yesterday I left it with my London Banker to pay thro’ the Union Bank in the way you direct (*whh* I made him copy); and today there is to come the “Certificate” or Receipt presentable by you to the “Messrs Duncan Sherman and Co New York,”—*whh* I will inclose in this Note and instantly dispatch: I shall then have done with the matter. . . . I am in these months particularly held down, and indeed more laden than you can conceive with that intolerable load of Prussian rubbish (*whh* has many times seemed as if it would really choke the life out of me before I got done with it): let this be my excuse for all short comings; if I do live to get honestly out of this whirling Abyss of

Brandenburg dust and ashes, I promise to be an idler and better boy for the remaining days appointed me.”

14 APRIL 1859

TC–JAC [MS: NLS 516.67; heretofore unpublished].

“I have despatched the Butler £1,000, in the way you recommended, or at least have it all sealed and ready for despatching; the “trouble” at last amounted to nothing, for the Bankers here did it all for me & sent the final Document by Post:—yet you have no conception what a *hole* in my own poor feckless peculiar operation such a slight business made. Alas the fabric of my efforts is of weak description at present; and needs only little to make a big hole in it!— *More* power to me!”

3 MAY 1859

CB–TC [MS: New York University Archives (NYU); published in Kimball 287–88].

“Your letters of the 8th and 13th of April have been received. The letter enclosing Certificate of Deposit for one thousand pounds sterling of your money to me for investment and management of your account and for your benefit. This remittance is all safely administered as after results may testify to you. The sober second and proper business thought of your letter of the 13th quite relieved me as I am sure you would have found the machinery proposed in your letter of 8th cumbrous & possibly expensive. The methods of remittance between the two countries are now so simple and the facilities of intercourse so constant and rapid that you may consider New York but at the other end of a steam ferry. . . . I have also to acknowledge with many thanks to you the receipt since I last wrote to you of the copy of your life of Frederick the Great in two volumes, with your own autograph sign manual on the fly leaf which book I am now reading to my daughters with interest & gratification. I trust that you will be able to accomplish the residue of this task to your own great relief and satisfaction.”

17 AUGUST 1859

CB–TC [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 288–89].

“Enclosed I hand you draft on Union Bank for 14£ or \$70 dividends due on your bonds on 1 August which would have been

sent forward a few days earlier but for absence from the city in these dog days. Your remittance of one thousand pounds sterling I cashed at Duncan Sherman & Co. on the 3 May and received the avails in our currency at par viz \$4,883.83 four thousand eight hundred and eighty three dollars and eighty three cents—the interest on this sum computed up to 1 August inst. was \$84.30 making \$4,968.13 which I have invested in \$5,000 of the First Mortgage Sinking Fund Bonds of the Chicago and North Western Railway Company bearing 7 per cent interest payable semi-annually on the 1 August and 1 February in each year in this city. These bonds are secure beyond a reasonable doubt being at the rate only of eleven hundred pounds sterling per mile upon the road which is the great north western road out of Chicago & on the first day of October will be about two hundred miles in length and the cost of which exceeds eight thousand pounds sterling per mile. Hereafter your interest will accrue on 1 February & 1 Aug 7% on \$7,000 at 7% [sic] or \$490 per annum and \$245 each semi annual remittance. . . . I am just on the point of leaving the city again for a few days on a visit to the sea shore & confine this letter strictly to the business transaction.

Memo. For Mr. Carlyle

3 May 1859 Recd proceeds of draft on Duncan Sherman & Co	
for 1000 Sterling par	\$4883.83
1 Augt / 59 add int from 3 May to it—7%	84.30
	<hr/>
	\$4968.13
1 Augt / 59 To invested 5000\$ in purchase of	
5 Sinking Fund 1 Mortgage Bonds of	
Chicago & North Western Railway Company	5000.00
	<hr/>
Balance due C. B.	\$31.87
This balance will be deducted from the dividend 1 February 1860	

C. Butler”

6 SEPTEMBER 1859

TC-CB [MS: EUL where numbered 12 in pencil on the holograph; heretofore unpublished].

“The day before yesterday, I received your letter, with its

Inclosure, — £14 half-yearly Dividend, — date New York 17 Augt; punctual as that always is, like the movements of the Zodiac: — and can only again thank you for all the kind skill & trouble you expend on my behalf. The Investment of the £1,000 appears to be complete in all its parts; and could not be surpassed in any of the qualities required in such a transaction. So soon as the Document you talk of (“Certificate” or whatever the name is) comes to hand, I will lock it well away; and have the pleasure of thinking that human art could do nothing more for me in regard to that particular bit of business, — for *whh* I simply was so little qualified, and *whh* nevertheless was required at my hands under penalty. The investt seems to be as safe as any in this mutable world can be; and clearly enough the rate of interest is as % to 4, compared to any I could find, on what was judged sure terms, in this country. You have very much obliged me; and if the consciousness of that can be any recompense, most surely *it* is yours, with the wish on my part that I had a better to offer! — We have been here, in the Scotch maritime regions, across the Frith from Edinburgh, for above two months past; endeavoring to gather a little strength out of the blessed Summer, instead of being stewed to despair by it in the heats of London. We were both of us, especially my Wife, at a very low ebb before removing hither; and both of us, especially she, have derived some visible profit; and hope to front the winter on rather better terms. I alas, have *still* my Task mainly ahead of me; and it is horrible to me to think of! But I must do my best & wisest; and hope to struggle thro’ by some kind of miracle! In 2 weeks more we are to be in Chelsea; and must try.”

10 FEBRUARY 1860

CB–TC [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 289–90].

“I have collected for you two hundred & forty five Dollars interest (\$245.) due on the first day of this month of February on 7000\$ of securities—From this I have deducted a small balance of thirty one dollars & eighty seven cents due to me in August last as per my letter to you in that month leaving \$213.13 your due which amount I now send you in a sight bill on London for £42.12.6 and which I hope will find its owner safely. I also enclose certificate of Secretary of Chicago & North Western Rail Way Company that these bonds are registered in my name in trust for you which

document should be in your possession as showing the fact in the event of anything happening to me. . . . Since writing you last the two volumes of Frederick have been read in my family circle with absorbing interest and gratification and we shall look for the forthcoming third volume with quickened desire. . . . We are looking from this side of the water with gratified interest to the progress of events on the Continent in France and Italy and it seems to me as if the Emperor had really entered into the spirit of the thing and would give freedom to Italy and at the same time a mighty impulse to commercial and industrial activities throughout Europe.”

28 FEBRUARY 1860

TC-CB [MS: EUL where numbered 13 in pencil on the holograph; heretofore unpublished].

“Last night the postman duly delivered me your letter of the 10th ult., with its valuable inclosures; all perfectly exact and as they should be. You are a model of punctuality, and certainly have been and are the kindest and wisest of managers in these matters for me. It is also, to my imagination if not otherwise, a considerable solace that you now send a visible and tangible Paper Document with a red star on it: this I can lock henceforth in a safe drawer; and leave the matter to sleep, with entire composure upon it, in a thing fixed like the old rocks. Again permit me to thank you very much; — and to say that when I get more money, you shall again be asked to lay it by for me. We probably got some benefit out of our Scotch rustication last year: at least my wife has been perceptibly better all thro’ Winter; and has never (till just now, I hope only slightly) had one fit of cold, which used to be so unkind to her. I myself can not above par, indeed, rather below; but that has its special causes, — or rather one great cause: my baleful Prussian Enterprise; *whh*, as it approaches completion, presses harder and harder; and declares itself, sometimes quite aloud, to be altogether an *impossible* problem! — there is no use in complaining about it; one remedy there is, and only one, stand to it, and either die or compel it to be doable! I dare not set any time; but it seems to me always, if I could hold out about another twelvemonth, I might see myself free from the most intolerable millstone that was ever hung round a poor creature’s neck, — and *shd* thenceforth swim with a great deal more buoyancy and levity

till I got to port. “*Hope* springs eternal in the human heart,” — this is indeed the “Place of Hope.” All people are greatly agog about Gladstone’s Budget: — interested too, as I frequently notice, that *you* have at last got “a Speaker” (may *he* speak to the purpose!) after so long waiting.”

4 NOVEMBER 1860

TC–CB [MS: EUL where numbered 14 in pencil on the holograph; heretofore unpublished].

“The day before yesterday, your letter of October 16, with the Forty-nine Pounds in it, and nothing but good news, came to hand; and was right welcome, as a *finis* to considerable anxieties (but something had befallen *you*, for the rest of the matter was evidently safe sooner or later) which were annoying me from day to day. What has become of the former letter I cannot guess; nor is it now of the least moment. / By way of avoiding similar accidents, and ridding my poor mind of money-concerns, *whh* are eminently unfit for me at the present juncture of affairs, I have instructed Sir Robert Adamson of Dumfries N.B. (a very practical good man, Banker and Lawyer, who manages all other such things for me) to put himself into communication with you; and to receive (thro’ safe and ever-flowing channels *whh* he and his British Linen Company Bank people no doubt have) these half-yearly interests for me, and lock them in their places direct, with *t* interference of mine. *Whh* will be a notable relief to me, and will save you from a small trouble *whh* you have never grudged. I have sent Mr Adamson the Original Document (big yellow star of a thing) *whh* you not long since conveyed to me: this he now holds in keeping, “master of the situation”; and a letter and Answer between you two, I calculate, will be all that is now needed to wash my inexperienced hands of it for the time coming. / From you personally I shall expect, as heretofore, a little Bulletin once in the six months or so, while we continue both in this world; but our Letters henceforth will need to contain nothing except friendly greetings and the little stock of news we may have amassed from time to time. This (considering what your correspondent is, in the Ledger depart*t*) will be a real improv*e*t to both of us. / I have also instructed Mr Adamson to send you (on hearing that will receive it and *how*) another thousand Pounds for investment either in that same stock or in any other *whh* you may

think good, on my behalf; — and, I need not doubt, you better, so far as we are yet gone this winter; let us hope, let us hope, in this ‘Place of Hope’!”

5 NOVEMBER 1860

TC—Robert Adamson [MS: Hornel Collection, Broughton House, Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway; heretofore unpublished].

“Inclosed farther, are Three other Documents, Two of *whh* (those on the *English* railway) will require no explanation, but will merely need to be laid by in safe keeping for me, & managed by you as you have been wont;— and the Third of *whh* (that on the American Railway) will need only these few words? Namely, That I wish *you* henceforth to draw and reposit for me the interests on that American Bond as you do on the two English and that I have written to Mr Butler (‘Charles Butler Esq, 12. Wall Street New York’) stating that *you* are my Representative in the matter, and that you will straightway write to him, and settle how the monies are to be remitted. The Three Documents will them be all on one footing, safe in *your* hand; and I shall need no farther trouble with *them*, I hope, except merely the Bank-Clerk’s Announcement from time to time that the interests come duly in. Please write to New York accordingly, and settle all that for me,— as well as something more *whh* I am now to tell you of. By the same Letter I have written to Mr Butler, requesting that he will invest *another* Thousand Pounds (transmitting you the Documents, the management, &c &c); and bidding him expect the money from *you* whenever he writes for it. Please therefore to write to him upon this point also; and to take from my Account with you the Thousand Pounds (£1,000.0.0) and send it to Mr Butler for investment as above. If this is not sufficient Authority (*whh* I hope it is) for sending off said money, I will sign and return anything you send to me to that effect.—

— But, if I have made my meaning perfectly intelligible to you, I could like very much to have no (or next to no) writing farther to do on the subject, —being, as you perhaps know, so overwhelmingly occupied with other very different things. I register this Letter; request you to acknowledge it, and with your old punctuality and kindness to perform the same. If I could hear at last, ‘*They are* all duly done,’ and next to nothing at all in the interim, it *wd* be the agreeablest way.”

21 JANUARY 1861

TC—CB [MS: EUL where numbered 15 in pencil on the holograph; heretofore unpublished].

“I was in hopes Adamson had finished his affair with you, and delivered us all from those small annoyances. Poor man, I receive, just along with your letter, the announcement from Dumfries that his good wife is dead; — probably her illness may have been concerned in these delays of his. I have written to him (enclosing *yr* letter to myself) that either thro’ “the Union Bank,” or thro some other Bank here, there can be no difficulty in having the communication regulated, and that I expect he will *immediately* settle with you on that head. / I have also written that whenever you bid (or send him Order) he is to transmit you on my behalf One Thousand Pounds, to be invested by you in such mode as you judge fittest for me, the “Interests” &c to be forwarded hither by the Course you settle for those already existing, — namely that Adamson, as my representative, takes care of the whole; and that we *avoid* altogether “refusals” of hard money, and other surprising accidents of that nature, — liable to occur at *this* door in Cheyne Row; owing to Rowland Hill’s great endeavours to promote Human Correspondence, 99/100 of *whh* (at this particular door) are *not* of the eminently useful kind! If Mr Adamson (faithful British-Linen-Compy Official) had once got the matter in hand, I shall not need to consider it farther, except as I may do the risings of the moon, always coming in their due course *with* help of mine. / We are all much interested in your American excitements, — intensely sympathetic, nearly all, with *yr* Northern Half of the Business. Wise men seem to be of the opinion that you will not go to cutting of throats, but will settle pacifically (being a prudent People) — and also that the Severance, now or soon, must and even should *accomplish* itself. To my own poor private *thot* the Controversy is pretty insane on both sides (“Big-indian *versus* little-Indian” when I look at it well); and only the *issue* is momentous.”

5 FEBRUARY 1861

CB—Robert Adamson [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 290]

“My friend T. Carlyle in London in a letter written in November last requested me to remit to you the semi annual interest on certain securities which I hold in trust for him to be placed by you

to his credit in your Bank. I have the pleasure to hand you enclosed first sight bill of Exchange for 49£ Stg (the proceeds of 245\$ interest coupons accrued on the first instant) to your order on Union Bank of London which please place to the credit of Mr. Carlyle. In same letter Mr. Carlyle advises that he had requested you to make a further remittance to me of 1000£ Stg for his benefit. I allude to it to say that I have not received any such remittance and if any has been made it has not reached me but has miscarried. I should have written sooner but absence from this city for some time in the west has delayed it. You can not fail to look at events transpiring in this country with profound interest. We yet hope for a solution of this slavery question short of dissolution and in any event without civil war. The great industrial interests of the northern states will not be seriously damaged. Public sentiment is sound and there is no trouble any where save in the unhappy south where they have a festering sore for which it is indeed difficult to find a remedy—Property & securities in the northern states must be strengthened and established while those of the south must in the nature of things be weakened. The present appearances are favorable to an adjustment which will save the border slave states at least from the impending ruin.”

Memo.

Bill Duncan Sherman & Co. on Union Bank of London for £49 Stg to order of Robert Adamson Dumfries. Dated Feby 5th 1861—sight exchange—enclosed—for T. Carlyle.

15 FEBRUARY 1861

CB—Robert Adamson [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 291]

“Enclosed I hand you *second* bill of exchange Messrs. Duncan Sherman & Co on Union bank of London for £49 Stg 245\$ interest coupons on account of & for Thomas Carlyle of Chelsea London. On the 5th inst I had the pleasure to enclose to you the first of this exchange on same account. Since then I have received a letter from Mr. Carlyle under date of 21st Jany in which he says that the 1000£ Stg awaits in your hands my order. You will remit it by exchange in usual form of credit of Duncan Sherman & Co for my use. They keep an account with the Union Bank London & a deposit of the amount in *that* Bank to their credit for my use is a

simple mode of remittance. Our political affairs look better and all that is required is time for the working out of the difficulties which I confidently anticipate will be without serious conflict, tho not without shock to industrial interests in the southern states particularly.”

1861

the death of Robert Adamson, whose duties at the Dumfries branch of the British Linen Bank were afterwards managed by Samuel Adamson

MAY 1861

CB—Samuel Adamson of Dumfries, Scotland [MS: New York University Archives; published in Kimball 291–92].

“I have received through Messrs. Duncan Sherman & Co. one thousand pounds sterling deposited by you in the Union Bank of London to credit of above house for my use on account of Thomas Carlyle and the proceeds (\$4,822.22) are in my hands to credit of & to be invested for Mr. Carlyle. Since I had the pleasure of writing to you in February events of the most thrilling character have taken place in this country as you see by the public papers involving us in civil strife. But I think you cannot fail to be impressed with the position of our government and the extraordinary unanimity which prevails in all of the free states in favor of maintaining the integrity of the Government, and the union at any and every cost. The intensity of this union feeling with the people is wonderful, & any amount of men & money will be furnished by the free states to sustain the government. So far all movements on the part of the Government have been judiciously taken, and tho we have reason to deplore this states of things & the spectacle exhibited to the civilized world, still we have hope that the issue of it will be to strengthen & establish the credit & character of our Government & to settle a question that has been festering in our Southern states for more than a quarter of a century & which has now come to a head in this insurrection to overthrow our government. Our railways in the northwestern states are doing a good business and the prospect of another good crop is at this time promising.”

13 AUGUST 1861

CB—Samuel Adamson [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 292].

“Enclosed I hand you draft of the Union Bank London for 49£ (245\$) for account of Thomas Carlyle of London being semi-annual interest. A further remittance to his credit will be made about first of November next. I wish it were in power to say that the political troubles of our country were approaching a satisfactory solution. At present we cannot predict when we shall have peace but there is a universal conviction at the North that we shall effectually put down the rebellion and maintain the union and Government intact: indeed no one in the north entertains any thought of a different result.”

28 FEBRUARY 1862

CB—Samuel Adamson [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 292–93].

“Enclosed I hand you sight exchange on London for 80£ Stg for Thomas Carlyle. I have delayed this remittance for quite 28 days (it should have been on 1 Feby) on account of the state of exchanges. The rate being very high at present (15% for sight exchange) but I dared not delay longer. I have no doubt that exchange will fall here shortly below our present rates. Please place the enclosed to credit of Mr. Carlyle to whom I shall shortly write. I am happy to assure you that the terrible conflict that has been preceding in this country between the Government and the slave holders of the south is rapidly drawing to a close. The rebellion will be effectually crushed and the government and union will be maintained and preserved intact. No intelligent man who understands the real state of the case can for a moment doubt the result.”

23 OCTOBER 1862

TC—JAC [MS: NLS 525.98; heretofore unpublished; the enclosed letter, CB—TC, is untraced and perhaps lost].

“I am going to *walk* today;—otherwise there had been no *time* for this: and there is still an importt thing wh^h I must not forget; read the inclose Letter from Butler, and you will see what. And return it to me, with *yr* opinion on the point raised: “Shall I have the cash” (27 percent loss upon it), “or shall I let him *reinvest* it, as it falls due?” Botta who was here yesternight, a very honest Turin Italian, gave us plenty of news abt America: Nothing but

“prosperity” visible in N. York, *trade so brisk* &c; —going to whip Creation after all, especially to swallow the South out of hand (big *fleet* ready for bombarding Charleston &c &c): war, if the South looms positive, “may last for thirty years”, thinks Ba! Did you ever hear of a prettier quarrel *abt* nothing at all?”

30 OCTOBER 1862

TC–CB [MS untraced, perhaps lost; the letter is cited in the following, written on the same date].

30 OCTOBER 1862

TC–JAC [MS: NLS 517.40; heretofore unpublished].

“I had decided to take *yr* advice (*whh* was also my own *notn*) *abt* the American Money-Affair; and this day, just after *yr* new tidings, I have written to Mr Butler in that sense anyway; namely that he is to “reinvest &c as he likes, and send Mr Adamson ‘notice from time to time’ (I did not say expressly, at the old term days, but hinted it) and ‘the Vouchers, so often as they rise to be worth sending’ (these latter are my words). I mentioned to him the arrival of Adamson’s Letter, and your sending notice of it to me— — In short, I had better enclose the Letter altogether (now that I bethink me): *you* can then write to Adamson what is proper. I *shd* say, To *formalize* into a *busss* from the roughly expressed *wish* I have signified: ‘Do send (and be punctual), instead of money precise notice,—shall we say, —‘once in the Half-Year, and vouchers’—in fact do you settle it, and take order with Adamson. Do, —that it fall on *yr* poor head, not on mine *whh* is still more pitiable at *prest!*”

28 JULY 1864

JAC–TC [MS: NLS 1775B.292; though dated 1 August, it was likely written on 28 July as it was postmarked in Dumfries on that day and in London on the following day; heretofore unpublished].

“I have a baddish headache myself today & writing is not good for it. I did send off a letter to Mr Butler at New York on Saturday, asking him to report what investments have been made for you up to the date, & telling him that you hold only *one* certificate for 7000 Dollars of Chicago Railway Stock. Adamson’s letter of last year on the subject was too stiff & technical, with Scotch law

terms &c. as I saw by the copy of it. Let us hope that an answer may come to mine this year.”

1 AUGUST 1864

TC-JAC [MS: NLS 526.17; heretofore unpublished]

“Thank you very much, too, for writing to Mr Butler: I hope you said nothing the least *impatt* to him; he is an honest, beneficial and obliging man (I do firmly believe); —and he works *gratis* for me; *whh* is a clause I do not like, tho’ in my *prest* embroilments I cannot get it mended.”

17 AUGUST 1865

CB-JAC [MS: NYU; published in Kimball 293].

“Inclosed I hand you statement brought up to the 1st August, 1865, showing the state of your brother’s affairs in my hands at that date. Since the previous statement the exchange has declined very much, and I think we may count on its continuing to do so. I concluded to invest the balance in hand by the purchase of two bonds of \$1,000 each at 8% which I regard as very favorable. The interest of these two will be now added to the account. Their purchase required a small advance over the amount standing to the credit of the account, which will be reimbursed to me out of the accruing interest in Feby next. I shall write your brother shortly not only on the termination of the war here in this country, whereby commercial relations are left to return to their usual & natural condition, but also on the termination of his great work, the History of Frederick, whereby his peace of mind must be restored & himself freed from a great burden.”

2 SEPTEMBER 1865

TC-JAC [MS: NLS 526.31; heretofore unpublished].

“Butler’s *Acct*, stamped by *yr* verdict upon it, is surely an excellt occurrence! And I will not detain you an hour farther from answering that good obliging *Gentn*, in the most obliging terms you can find. Tell him from me that I am altogether satisfied, and very grateful; —and indeed quite ashamed at the pious trouble he has taken in regard to that small matter. That I shall be delighted to hear from him, then to write to him. That I am verily glad of the huge change from War and madness to Peace & Sanity; —and

shall be well pleased with the sight of gold instead of greenbacks, as one small token of that blessed consummatn! For the rest that in regard to 'transmitting of interest on tolerable terms' or 'reinvesting it,' I leave Mr Butler, as I ought, sole judge; —and in fine that I beg him to accept the inclosed Photograph, that he may *really* 'see how I look' now that *Friedrich* is done. Enough! —

7 APRIL 1866

TC–JWC [MS: NLS 617.738; heretofore unpublished].

"Butler (of New York) sends me £70 actual money: —Courage!"

14 APRIL 1868

"after fifteen years of gratuitous financial assistance," the arrangement with CB ceased, and the securities he held in trust for TC were returned to JAC (Kimball 293); no correspondence regarding the particulars of this termination of business has yet come to light

5 MAY 1868

JAC–CB [MS: EUL; published in Kimball 293–94].

"Last week before leaving Dumfries I wrote to you, acknowledging receipt of your letter of the fourteenth of April, with notarial packages of eighteen bonds for one thousand dollars each which up to that date you had purchased for Thomas Carlyle, my brother. These bonds are now lodged in his name at Dumfries in the British Linen Company's Bank. And since my arrival here I have got your second letter of April twenty-first, with notarial certificate (copy) of statement of account up to that time."

5 MAY 1868

TC–CB (with JAC to CB, postmarked 6 May 1868) [MS: EUL; published in part in Stoddard 292, and Kimball 294–95].

"I cannot let my Brother despatch this final Document, and *altogr* satisfactory Closure of the Affairs that have been betn us without testifying in my own words what a *pleast* and grateful feeling I have now, and all along have had, for the whole of *yr* conduct, from first to last, in regard to all that. I was a stranger, and I felt that you took me up as a friend;—and, sure enough, you have throughout acted conspicuously in that character; caring for my interests with a constant loyalty, sagacity and punctuality, as if they

had been *yr* own; manifesting at all times the qualities of a perfect man of buss, and of an altogether singularly generous faithful and courteous benefactor;—in short, *making good* nobly, in all points, the *reading* we took of you here, that evening, long years ago,—when, alas, it was still ‘we,’ not as now one only, who *cld* recognize men and love them!— Words of thanks are of little use: but it is *certn* I shall all my days remember you with gratitude, with honest satisfact*n*, and even with a kind of pride;— *whh* will or may, whether talked of or not, be a real possess*n* to us both. I do not yet renounce the hope of seeing you ag*n* this side the Sea. Meanwhile, I enclose (by same mail) a little *Bundle* of new *Photographs*; *whh* may gain a few glances from *yr* Lady-Kind on an evg, and occasionally bring me to mind.— May all good be with you and yours, Dear Sir.”

JANUARY 1873

CB–JAC (enclosing a letter to TC) [MS: EUL; heretofore unpublished].

mostly concerning the Chicago Fire

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