

**ГЕНРИ  
ДЖЕЙМС**

THE POINT OF  
VIEW

Генри Джеймс  
**The Point of View**

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*The Point of View:*

# Содержание

I. FROM MISS AURORA CHURCH, AT SEA, TO MISS WHITESIDE, IN PARIS	4
II. MRS. CHURCH, IN NEW YORK, TO MADAME GALOPIN, AT GENEVA	17
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	26

# Henry James

## The Point of View

### I. FROM MISS AURORA CHURCH, AT SEA, TO MISS WHITESIDE, IN PARIS

My dear child, the bromide of sodium (if that's what you call it) proved perfectly useless. I don't mean that it did me no good, but that I never had occasion to take the bottle out of my bag. It might have done wonders for me if I had needed it; but I didn't, simply because I have been a wonder myself. Will you believe that I have spent the whole voyage on deck, in the most animated conversation and exercise? Twelve times round the deck make a mile, I believe; and by this measurement I have been walking twenty miles a day. And down to every meal, if you please, where I have displayed the appetite of a fish-wife. Of course the weather has been lovely; so there's no great merit. The wicked old Atlantic has been as blue as the sapphire in my only ring (a rather good one), and as smooth as the slippery floor of Madame Galopin's dining-room. We have been for the last three hours in sight of land, and we are soon to enter the Bay of New York, which is said to be exquisitely beautiful.

But of course you recall it, though they say that everything changes so fast over here. I find I don't remember anything, for my recollections of our voyage to Europe, so many years ago, are exceedingly dim; I only have a painful impression that mamma shut me up for an hour every day in the state-room, and made me learn by heart some religious poem. I was only five years old, and I believe that as a child I was extremely timid; on the other hand, mamma, as you know, was dreadfully severe. She is severe to this day; only I have become indifferent; I have been so pinched and pushed—morally speaking, bien entendu. It is true, however, that there are children of five on the vessel today who have been extremely conspicuous—ranging all over the ship, and always under one's feet. Of course they are little compatriots, which means that they are little barbarians. I don't mean that all our compatriots are barbarous; they seem to improve, somehow, after their first communion. I don't know whether it's that ceremony that improves them, especially as so few of them go in for it; but the women are certainly nicer than the little girls; I mean, of course, in proportion, you know. You warned me not to generalise, and you see I have already begun, before we have arrived. But I suppose there is no harm in it so long as it is favourable. Isn't it favourable when I say that I have had the most lovely time? I have never had so much liberty in my life, and I have been out alone, as you may say, every day of the voyage. If it is a foretaste of what is to come, I shall take to that very kindly. When I say that I have been out alone, I mean that

we have always been two. But we two were alone, so to speak, and it was not like always having mamma, or Madame Galopin, or some lady in the pension, or the temporary cook. Mamma has been very poorly; she is so very well on land, it's a wonder to see her at all taken down. She says, however, that it isn't the being at sea; it's, on the contrary, approaching the land. She is not in a hurry to arrive; she says that great disillusionments await us. I didn't know that she had any illusions—she's so stern, so philosophic. She is very serious; she sits for hours in perfect silence, with her eyes fixed on the horizon. I heard her say yesterday to an English gentleman—a very odd Mr. Antrobus, the only person with whom she converses—that she was afraid she shouldn't like her native land, and that she shouldn't like not liking it. But this is a mistake—she will like that immensely (I mean not liking it). If it should prove at all agreeable, mamma will be furious, for that will go against her system. You know all about mamma's system; I have explained that so often. It goes against her system that we should come back at all; that was MY system—I have had at last to invent one! She consented to come only because she saw that, having no dot, I should never marry in Europe; and I pretended to be immensely pre-occupied with this idea, in order to make her start. In reality cela m'est parfaitement egal. I am only afraid I shall like it too much (I don't mean marriage, of course, but one's native land). Say what you will, it's a charming thing to go out alone, and I have given notice to mamma that I mean to be always en course. When I tell her

that, she looks at me in the same silence; her eye dilates, and then she slowly closes it. It's as if the sea were affecting her a little, though it's so beautifully calm. I ask her if she will try my bromide, which is there in my bag; but she motions me off, and I begin to walk again, tapping my little boot-soles upon the smooth clean deck. This allusion to my boot-soles, by the way, is not prompted by vanity; but it's a fact that at sea one's feet and one's shoes assume the most extraordinary importance, so that we should take the precaution to have nice ones. They are all you seem to see as the people walk about the deck; you get to know them intimately, and to dislike some of them so much. I am afraid you will think that I have already broken loose; and for aught I know, I am writing as a demoiselle bien-elevee should not write. I don't know whether it's the American air; if it is, all I can say is that the American air is very charming. It makes me impatient and restless, and I sit scribbling here because I am so eager to arrive, and the time passes better if I occupy myself. I am in the saloon, where we have our meals, and opposite to me is a big round porthole, wide open, to let in the smell of the land. Every now and then I rise a little and look through it, to see whether we are arriving. I mean in the Bay, you know, for we shall not come up to the city till dark. I don't want to lose the Bay; it appears that it's so wonderful. I don't exactly understand what it contains, except some beautiful islands; but I suppose you will know all about that. It is easy to see that these are the last hours, for all the people about me are writing letters

to put into the post as soon as we come up to the dock. I believe they are dreadful at the custom-house, and you will remember how many new things you persuaded mamma that (with my pre-occupation of marriage) I should take to this country, where even the prettiest girls are expected not to go unadorned. We ruined ourselves in Paris (that is part of mamma's solemnity); mais au moins je serai belle! Moreover, I believe that mamma is prepared to say or to do anything that may be necessary for escaping from their odious duties; as she very justly remarks, she can't afford to be ruined twice. I don't know how one approaches these terrible douaniers, but I mean to invent something very charming. I mean to say, "Voyons, Messieurs, a young girl like me, brought up in the strictest foreign traditions, kept always in the background by a very superior mother—la voila; you can see for yourself!—what is it possible that she should attempt to smuggle in? Nothing but a few simple relics of her convent!" I won't tell them that my convent was called the Magasin du Bon Marche. Mamma began to scold me three days ago for insisting on so many trunks, and the truth is that, between us, we have not fewer than seven. For relics, that's a good many! We are all writing very long letters—or at least we are writing a great number. There is no news of the Bay as yet. Mr. Antrobus, mamma's friend, opposite to me, is beginning on his ninth. He is an Honourable, and a Member of Parliament; he has written, during the voyage, about a hundred letters, and he seems greatly alarmed at the number of stamps he will have to buy when he arrives. He is full of

information; but he has not enough, for he asks as many questions as mamma when she goes to hire apartments. He is going to "look into" various things; he speaks as if they had a little hole for the purpose. He walks almost as much as I, and he has very big shoes. He asks questions even of me, and I tell him again and again that I know nothing about America. But it makes no difference; he always begins again, and, indeed, it is not strange that he should find my ignorance incredible. "Now, how would it be in one of your South-Western States?"—that's his favourite way of opening conversation. Fancy me giving an account of the South-Western States! I tell him he had better ask mamma—a little to tease that lady, who knows no more about such places than I. Mr. Antrobus is very big and black; he speaks with a sort of brogue; he has a wife and ten children; he is not very romantic. But he has lots of letters to people la-bas (I forget that we are just arriving), and mamma, who takes an interest in him in spite of his views (which are dreadfully advanced, and not at all like mamma's own), has promised to give him the entree to the best society. I don't know what she knows about the best society over here today, for we have not kept up our connections at all, and no one will know (or, I am afraid, care) anything about us. She has an idea that we shall be immensely recognised; but really, except the poor little Rucks, who are bankrupt, and, I am told, in no society at all, I don't know on whom we can count. C'est egal. Mamma has an idea that, whether or not we appreciate America ourselves, we shall at least be universally appreciated. It's true

that we have begun to be, a little; you would see that by the way that Mr. Cockerel and Mr. Louis Leverett are always inviting me to walk. Both of these gentlemen, who are Americans, have asked leave to call upon me in New York, and I have said, Mon Dieu, oui, if it's the custom of the country. Of course I have not dared to tell this to mamma, who flatters herself that we have brought with us in our trunks a complete set of customs of our own, and that we shall only have to shake them out a little and put them on when we arrive. If only the two gentlemen I just spoke of don't call at the same time, I don't think I shall be too much frightened. If they do, on the other hand, I won't answer for it. They have a particular aversion to each other, and they are ready to fight about poor little me. I am only the pretext, however; for, as Mr. Leverett says, it's really the opposition of temperaments. I hope they won't cut each other's throats, for I am not crazy about either of them. They are very well for the deck of a ship, but I shouldn't care about them in a salon; they are not at all distinguished. They think they are, but they are not; at least Mr. Louis Leverett does; Mr. Cockerel doesn't appear to care so much. They are extremely different (with their opposed temperaments), and each very amusing for a while; but I should get dreadfully tired of passing my life with either. Neither has proposed that, as yet; but it is evidently what they are coming to. It will be in a great measure to spite each other, for I think that au fond they don't quite believe in me. If they don't, it's the only point on which they agree. They hate each other awfully;

they take such different views. That is, Mr. Cockerel hates Mr. Leverett—he calls him a sickly little ass; he says that his opinions are half affectation, and the other half dyspepsia. Mr. Leverett speaks of Mr. Cockerel as a "strident savage," but he declares he finds him most diverting. He says there is nothing in which we can't find a certain entertainment, if we only look at it in the right way, and that we have no business with either hating or loving; we ought only to strive to understand. To understand is to forgive, he says. That is very pretty, but I don't like the suppression of our affections, though I have no desire to fix mine upon Mr. Leverett. He is very artistic, and talks like an article in some review, he has lived a great deal in Paris, and Mr. Cockerel says that is what has made him such an idiot. That is not complimentary to you, dear Louisa, and still less to your brilliant brother; for Mr. Cockerel explains that he means it (the bad effect of Paris) chiefly of the men. In fact, he means the bad effect of Europe altogether. This, however, is compromising to mamma; and I am afraid there is no doubt that (from what I have told him) he thinks mamma also an idiot. (I am not responsible, you know—I have always wanted to go home.) If mamma knew him, which she doesn't, for she always closes her eyes when I pass on his arm, she would think him disgusting. Mr. Leverett, however, tells me he is nothing to what we shall see yet. He is from Philadelphia (Mr. Cockerel); he insists that we shall go and see Philadelphia, but mamma says she saw it in 1855, and it was then affreux. Mr. Cockerel says that mamma is evidently not familiar with the march of

improvement in this country; he speaks of 1855 as if it were a hundred years ago. Mamma says she knows it goes only too fast—it goes so fast that it has time to do nothing well; and then Mr. Cockerel, who, to do him justice, is perfectly good-natured, remarks that she had better wait till she has been ashore and seen the improvements. Mamma rejoins that she sees them from here, the improvements, and that they give her a sinking of the heart. (This little exchange of ideas is carried on through me; they have never spoken to each other.) Mr. Cockerel, as I say, is extremely good-natured, and he carries out what I have heard said about the men in America being very considerate of the women. They evidently listen to them a great deal; they don't contradict them, but it seems to me that this is rather negative. There is very little gallantry in not contradicting one; and it strikes me that there are some things the men don't express. There are others on the ship whom I've noticed. It's as if they were all one's brothers or one's cousins. But I promised you not to generalise, and perhaps there will be more expression when we arrive. Mr. Cockerel returns to America, after a general tour, with a renewed conviction that this is the only country. I left him on deck an hour ago looking at the coast-line with an opera-glass, and saying it was the prettiest thing he had seen in all his tour. When I remarked that the coast seemed rather low, he said it would be all the easier to get ashore; Mr. Leverett doesn't seem in a hurry to get ashore; he is sitting within sight of me in a corner of the saloon—writing letters, I suppose, but looking, from the way he bites his pen and rolls his

eyes about, as if he were composing a sonnet and waiting for a rhyme. Perhaps the sonnet is addressed to me; but I forget that he suppresses the affections! The only person in whom mamma takes much interest is the great French critic, M. Lejaune, whom we have the honour to carry with us. We have read a few of his works, though mamma disapproves of his tendencies and thinks him a dreadful materialist. We have read them for the style; you know he is one of the new Academicians. He is a Frenchman like any other, except that he is rather more quiet; and he has a gray mustache and the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. He is the first French writer of distinction who has been to America since De Tocqueville; the French, in such matters, are not very enterprising. Also, he has the air of wondering what he is doing dans cette galere. He has come with his beau-frere, who is an engineer, and is looking after some mines, and he talks with scarcely any one else, as he speaks no English, and appears to take for granted that no one speaks French. Mamma would be delighted to assure him of the contrary; she has never conversed with an Academician. She always makes a little vague inclination, with a smile, when he passes her, and he answers with a most respectful bow; but it goes no farther, to mamma's disappointment. He is always with the beau-frere, a rather untidy, fat, bearded man, decorated, too, always smoking and looking at the feet of the ladies, whom mamma (though she has very good feet) has not the courage to aborder. I believe M. Lejaune is going to write a book about America, and Mr. Leverett says it will be

terrible. Mr. Leverett has made his acquaintance, and says M. Lejaune will put him into his book; he says the movement of the French intellect is superb. As a general thing, he doesn't care for Academicians, but he thinks M. Lejaune is an exception, he is so living, so personal. I asked Mr. Cockerel what he thought of M. Lejaune's plan of writing a book, and he answered that he didn't see what it mattered to him that a Frenchman the more should make a monkey of himself. I asked him why he hadn't written a book about Europe, and he said that, in the first place, Europe isn't worth writing about, and, in the second, if he said what he thought, people would think it was a joke. He said they are very superstitious about Europe over here; he wants people in America to behave as if Europe didn't exist. I told this to Mr. Leverett, and he answered that if Europe didn't exist America wouldn't, for Europe keeps us alive by buying our corn. He said, also, that the trouble with America in the future will be that she will produce things in such enormous quantities that there won't be enough people in the rest of the world to buy them, and that we shall be left with our productions—most of them very hideous—on our hands. I asked him if he thought corn a hideous production, and he replied that there is nothing more unbeautiful than too much food. I think that to feed the world too well, however, that will be, after all, a beau role. Of course I don't understand these things, and I don't believe Mr. Leverett does; but Mr. Cockerel seems to know what he is talking about, and he says that America is complete in herself. I don't know exactly

what he means, but he speaks as if human affairs had somehow moved over to this side of the world. It may be a very good place for them, and Heaven knows I am extremely tired of Europe, which mamma has always insisted so on my appreciating; but I don't think I like the idea of our being so completely cut off. Mr. Cockerel says it is not we that are cut off, but Europe, and he seems to think that Europe has deserved it somehow. That may be; our life over there was sometimes extremely tiresome, though mamma says it is now that our real fatigues will begin. I like to abuse those dreadful old countries myself, but I am not sure that I am pleased when others do the same. We had some rather pretty moments there, after all; and at Piacenza we certainly lived on four francs a day. Mamma is already in a terrible state of mind about the expenses here; she is frightened by what people on the ship (the few that she has spoken to) have told her. There is one comfort, at any rate—we have spent so much money in coming here that we shall have none left to get away. I am scribbling along, as you see, to occupy me till we get news of the islands. Here comes Mr. Cockerel to bring it. Yes, they are in sight; he tells me that they are lovelier than ever, and that I must come right up right away. I suppose you will think that I am already beginning to use the language of the country. It is certain that at the end of a month I shall speak nothing else. I have picked up every dialect, wherever we have travelled; you have heard my Platt-Deutsch and my Neapolitan. But, voyons un peu the Bay! I have just called to Mr. Leverett to remind him of the

islands. "The islands—the islands? Ah, my dear young lady, I have seen Capri, I have seen Ischia!" Well, so have I, but that doesn't prevent . . . (A little later.)—I have seen the islands; they are rather queer.

## II. MRS. CHURCH, IN NEW YORK, TO MADAME GALOPIN, AT GENEVA

October 17, 1880.

If I felt far away from you in the middle of that deplorable Atlantic, chere Madame, how do I feel now, in the heart of this extraordinary city? We have arrived,—we have arrived, dear friend; but I don't know whether to tell you that I consider that an advantage. If we had been given our choice of coming safely to land or going down to the bottom of the sea, I should doubtless have chosen the former course; for I hold, with your noble husband, and in opposition to the general tendency of modern thought, that our lives are not our own to dispose of, but a sacred trust from a higher power, by whom we shall be held responsible. Nevertheless, if I had foreseen more vividly some of the impressions that awaited me here, I am not sure that, for my daughter at least, I should not have preferred on the spot to hand in our account. Should I not have been less (rather than more) guilty in presuming to dispose of HER destiny, than of my own? There is a nice point for dear M. Galopin to settle—one of those points which I have heard him discuss in the pulpit with such elevation. We are safe, however, as I say; by which I mean that we are physically safe. We have taken up the thread of our

familiar pension-life, but under strikingly different conditions. We have found a refuge in a boarding-house which has been highly recommended to me, and where the arrangements partake of that barbarous magnificence which in this country is the only alternative from primitive rudeness. The terms, per week, are as magnificent as all the rest. The landlady wears diamond earrings; and the drawing-rooms are decorated with marble statues. I should indeed be sorry to let you know how I have allowed myself to be ranconnee; and I—should be still more sorry that it should come to the ears of any of my good friends in Geneva, who know me less well than you and might judge me more harshly. There is no wine given for dinner, and I have vainly requested the person who conducts the establishment to garnish her table more liberally. She says I may have all the wine I want if I will order it at the merchant's, and settle the matter with him. But I have never, as you know, consented to regard our modest allowance of eau rougie as an extra; indeed, I remember that it is largely to your excellent advice that I have owed my habit of being firm on this point. There are, however, greater difficulties than the question of what we shall drink for dinner, chere Madame. Still, I have never lost courage, and I shall not lose courage now. At the worst, we can re-embark again, and seek repose and refreshment on the shores of your beautiful lake. (There is absolutely no scenery here!) We shall not, perhaps, in that case have achieved what we desired, but we shall at least have made an honourable retreat. What we desire—I know it is

just this that puzzles you, dear friend; I don't think you ever really comprehended my motives in taking this formidable step, though you were good enough, and your magnanimous husband was good enough, to press my hand at parting in a way that seemed to say that you would still be with me, even if I was wrong. To be very brief, I wished to put an end to the reclamations of my daughter. Many Americans had assured her that she was wasting her youth in those historic lands which it was her privilege to see so intimately, and this unfortunate conviction had taken possession of her. "Let me at least see for myself," she used to say; "if I should dislike it over there as much as you promise me, so much the better for you. In that case we will come back and make a new arrangement at Stuttgart." The experiment is a terribly expensive one; but you know that my devotion never has shrunk from an ordeal. There is another point, moreover, which, from a mother to a mother, it would be affectation not to touch upon. I remember the just satisfaction with which you announced to me the betrothal of your charming Cecile. You know with what earnest care my Aurora has been educated,—how thoroughly she is acquainted with the principal results of modern research. We have always studied together; we have always enjoyed together. It will perhaps surprise you to hear that she makes these very advantages a reproach to me,—represents them as an injury to herself. "In this country," she says, "the gentlemen have not those accomplishments; they care nothing for the results of modern research; and it will not help a young

person to be sought in marriage that she can give an account of the last German theory of Pessimism." That is possible; and I have never concealed from her that it was not for this country that I had educated her. If she marries in the United States it is, of course, my intention that my son-in-law shall accompany us to Europe. But, when she calls my attention more and more to these facts, I feel that we are moving in a different world. This is more and more the country of the many; the few find less and less place for them; and the individual—well, the individual has quite ceased to be recognised. He is recognised as a voter, but he is not recognised as a gentleman—still less as a lady. My daughter and I, of course, can only pretend to constitute a FEW! You know that I have never for a moment remitted my pretensions as an individual, though, among the agitations of pension-life, I have sometimes needed all my energy to uphold them. "Oh, yes, I may be poor," I have had occasion to say, "I may be unprotected, I may be reserved, I may occupy a small apartment in the quatrieme, and be unable to scatter unscrupulous bribes among the domestics; but at least I am a PERSON, with personal rights." In this country the people have rights, but the person has none. You would have perceived that if you had come with me to make arrangements at this establishment. The very fine lady who condescends to preside over it kept me waiting twenty minutes, and then came sailing in without a word of apology. I had sat very silent, with my eyes on the clock; Aurora amused herself with a false admiration of the room,—a wonderful drawing-room,

with magenta curtains, frescoed walls, and photographs of the landlady's friends—as if one cared anything about her friends! When this exalted personage came in, she simply remarked that she had just been trying on a dress—that it took so long to get a skirt to hang. "It seems to take very long indeed!" I answered. "But I hope the skirt is right at last. You might have sent for us to come up and look at it!" She evidently didn't understand, and when I asked her to show us her rooms, she handed us over to a negro as degingande as herself. While we looked at them I heard her sit down to the piano in the drawing-room; she began to sing an air from a comic opera. I began to fear we had gone quite astray; I didn't know in what house we could be, and was only reassured by seeing a Bible in every room. When we came down our musical hostess expressed no hope that the rooms had pleased us, and seemed quite indifferent to our taking them. She would not consent, moreover, to the least diminution, and was inflexible, as I told you, on the subject of wine. When I pushed this point, she was so good as to observe that she didn't keep a cabaret. One is not in the least considered; there is no respect for one's privacy, for one's preferences, for one's reserves. The familiarity is without limits, and I have already made a dozen acquaintances, of whom I know, and wish to know, nothing. Aurora tells me that she is the "belle of the boarding-house." It appears that this is a great distinction. It brings me back to my poor child and her prospects. She takes a very critical view of them herself: she tells me that I have given her a false education,

and that no one will marry her today. No American will marry her, because she is too much of a foreigner, and no foreigner will marry her because she is too much of an American. I remind her that scarcely a day passes that a foreigner, usually of distinction, doesn't select an American bride, and she answers me that in these cases the young lady is not married for her fine eyes. Not always, I reply; and then she declares that she would marry no foreigner who should not be one of the first of the first. You will say, doubtless, that she should content herself with advantages that have not been deemed insufficient for Cecile; but I will not repeat to you the remark she made when I once made use of this argument. You will doubtless be surprised to hear that I have ceased to argue; but it is time I should tell you that I have at last agreed to let her act for herself. She is to live for three months a l'Americaine, and I am to be a mere spectator. You will feel with me that this is a cruel position for a coeur de mere. I count the days till our three months are over, and I know that you will join with me in my prayers. Aurora walks the streets alone. She goes out in the tramway; a voiture de place costs five francs for the least little course. (I beseech you not to let it be known that I have sometimes had the weakness . . .) My daughter is sometimes accompanied by a gentleman—by a dozen gentlemen; she remains out for hours, and her conduct excites no surprise in this establishment. I know but too well the emotions it will excite in your quiet home. If you betray us, chere Madame, we are lost; and why, after all, should any one know

of these things in Geneva? Aurora pretends that she has been able to persuade herself that she doesn't care who knows them; but there is a strange expression in her face, which proves that her conscience is not at rest. I watch her, I let her go, but I sit with my hands clasped. There is a peculiar custom in this country — I shouldn't know how to express it in Genevese—it is called "being attentive," and young girls are the object of the attention. It has not necessarily anything to do with projects of marriage —though it is the privilege only of the unmarried, and though, at the same time (fortunately, and this may surprise you) it has no relation to other projects. It is simply an invention by which young persons of the two sexes pass their time together. How shall I muster courage to tell you that Aurora is now engaged in this delassement, in company with several gentlemen? Though it has no relation to marriage, it happily does not exclude it, and marriages have been known to take place in consequence (or in spite) of it. It is true that even in this country a young lady may marry but one husband at a time, whereas she may receive at once the attentions of several gentlemen, who are equally entitled "admirers." My daughter, then, has admirers to an indefinite number. You will think I am joking, perhaps, when I tell you that I am unable to be exact—I who was formerly l'exactitude meme. Two of these gentlemen are, to a certain extent, old friends, having been passengers on the steamer which carried us so far from you. One of them, still young, is typical of the American character, but a respectable person, and a lawyer

in considerable practice. Every one in this country follows a profession; but it must be admitted that the professions are more highly remunerated than chez vous. Mr. Cockerel, even while I write you, is in complete possession of my daughter. He called for her an hour ago in a "boghey,"—a strange, unsafe, rickety vehicle, mounted on enormous wheels, which holds two persons very near together; and I watched her from the window take her place at his side. Then he whirled her away, behind two little horses with terribly thin legs; the whole equipage—and most of all her being in it—was in the most questionable taste. But she will return, and she will return very much as she went. It is the same when she goes down to Mr. Louis Leverett, who has no vehicle, and who merely comes and sits with her in the front salon. He has lived a great deal in Europe, and is very fond of the arts, and though I am not sure I agree with him in his views of the relation of art to life and life to art, and in his interpretation of some of the great works that Aurora and I have studied together, he seems to me a sufficiently serious and intelligent young man. I do not regard him as intrinsically dangerous; but on the other hand, he offers absolutely no guarantees. I have no means whatever of ascertaining his pecuniary situation. There is a vagueness on these points which is extremely embarrassing, and it never occurs to young men to offer you a reference. In Geneva I should not be at a loss; I should come to you, chere Madame, with my little inquiry, and what you should not be able to tell me would not be worth knowing. But no one in New York can give me

the smallest information about the *etat de fortune* of Mr. Louis Leverett. It is true that he is a native of Boston, where most of his friends reside; I cannot, however, go to the expense of a journey to Boston simply to learn, perhaps, that Mr. Leverett (the young Louis) has an income of five thousand francs. As I say, however, he does not strike me as dangerous. When Aurora comes back to me, after having passed an hour with the young Louis, she says that he has described to her his emotions on visiting the home of Shelley, or discussed some of the differences between the Boston Temperament and that of the Italians of the Renaissance. You will not enter into these rapprochements, and I can't blame you. But you won't betray me, *chere Madame*?

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