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In this uncertainty, however, I shall have every thing in readiness so as to be able to start on the 1st May, & should leave Edinr this day week by steamer & be in London on the Monday.¹ I shall add a few words to Christina to announce an arrangement which, without lodging us in Albemarle St, will trouble Mrs. Murray quite sufficiently. Of course I am exceedingly anxious to know whether the Captain be married but till the chief question be ascertained I will forebear troubling you about that.² Your answer therefore will decide us as to what to do, & meanwhile let me thank you for the trouble you have taken in communicating this matter to me. Indeed I should be proud to enter Russia under Her Majesty's flag. All Calotype questions shall be answered with a Navy List exactitude! The prices I am assured are written very small on a corner of the card back so you must look very close. I believe I can say that the paper is of no peculiar make. Believe me dear Mr Murray your's very truly

Eliz: Rigby

Pray present my best compliments to Mr. Portland

1. Steam packet ships between Leith and London took 60 hours. The rail link was not completed until 1846.
2. It was customary for unmarried women to travel with a chaperone, usually an older married or widowed woman or a married man.

Letter to John Murray¹ *NLS Ms.42174*

Wardes² July 14/26 1844

My dear Mr. Murray

I received your kind letter yesterday & am glad that a letter in hand to Hester enables me immediately to acknowledge it. I am only too glad to have such letters as I receive from Albemarle St. to pay for. Also for yr satisfaction I must inform you that the foreign postage is here lisscensed [sic], probably as a slight compensation for the enormous tax imposed on all subjects leaving the country wh: is one among too many sources of his I.M.'s great unpopularity. We have much entertained some of the natives here by extracts from the English papers concerning the Emperor wh: have been quoted in our letter from home. I learn from a General Aide de Camp who received him that his Majesty returned in the worst possible humour, owing it is concluded to the future of those plans for wh: this visit was undertaken. The Grand Duchess Alexandra is in a state wh: forfeits all hope. Nevertheless she is expected to reach

her confinement though no to survive it. The Imperial daughters have been brought up in a manner wh: must entail early death, or, like their mother premature old age.

You will hear from Hester that we have been in some delightful society lately. I learnt from Prince Volkonsky³ a circumstance wh: interested me deeply, namely that he knew a Russian who had been in some way witness to the murder of Col: Stothard & Capt'n Conolly.⁴ The Prince promised me to obtain precise information on his return to Petersburg where he now is. I find Custine's⁵ work most tremendously forbidden here, also a long list of books the various nature of which wd in chief give a characteristic picture of Russian precautions. Nevertheless all defense is evaded, & all save Custine be openly on tables in St Petersburg. I certainly have had no inconvenience to suffer from [*illegible*], unless a great stimulation of a very burdensome popularity among a set of good people whom the love of royalty only attracted to me, be so called. Here also I pay much more for what I did not say than for what I did. I can least hope for forgiveness for having asserted that the Estonian homes smell of onions! & that the Estonian ladies were given to drinking! I am glad the article on Childn's Books gives satisfaction. Wd you kindly pay over the money you mention for wh: accept my thanks, to Sir Wm Forbes Bank (now called I think the Union Bank) in Edinr to my account, deducting always the £5 for which I owe my debtor. I trust the No. of the Q: R: may reach me, but as it is often the forbidden list I fear it may not. I will therefore beg you to send one for a gentleman here, who wishes regularly to take the Quarterly, in the following way. Addressed to "Christopher Grammann & Sohn – "Lubeck" – within that cover to "Herr Eggers Buchhandler Reval". & within that to Count de la Gardie, Hapsal,⁶ also you may enclose the smallest & cheapest edition of Scott's Life, & direct Eyre's book. I am responsible for the amount wh: is easily settled as [*illegible*] delay the [*illegible*] in question, is my chargé d'affaires for some money placed here of which we receive the annual interest. This is giving you much trouble but this is a side door for the admittance of English books wh: we have already found to answer. We are much tried with the worst summer wh: has been encountered for years – cold & rainy – so that everything is put back, & the hearts of the wholesale farmers are very low. Also some late crown regulations are depriving Estonia of much [*illegible*] of profit. Our frequent journeys & interruptions do not give much time for regular occupation & now our short month will find us thinking of our departure. We intend coming home by Stockholm at all events, but whether we shall see more of Sweden circumstances must determine. I

am promised letters of introduction & hope to see a little with Swedish life. Most of all do I hope that it may please God to bring us safe through our various autumnal voyages home again. You shall hear fully of our plans beforehand. I have only space to say how I rejoice in the good account of yr dear mother & to remain with love around you yr's very truly

Eliz: Rigby

1. This letter is particularly difficult to transcribe, being written in tiny close handwriting on onion-skin paper.
2. Probably Alt- or Neu-Wartz in Estonia.
3. Perhaps Prince Pyotr Mikhailovich Volkonsky (1776–1852).
4. Captain Arthur Conolly was captured on a mission to rescue Lieutenant Colonel Charles Stoddart in Bukhara. The two were executed in 1842 on the charge of spying. See Joseph Wolff's *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara, in the years 1843–1845, to Ascertain the Fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly* (London: J. W. Parker, 1845).
5. Astolphe-Louis-Léonor, Marquis de Custine wrote *Empire of the Czar: A Journey Through Eternal Russia* (1839).
6. Now Haapsalu in Estonia.

Letter to John Murray NLS Ms.42174

9 St Bernard's Crescent

Novr 18. 1844

My Dear Mr. Murray

Mr Lockhart has sent me a suggestion respecting some future article upon Lady Travellers, to wh: I have agreed with pleasure, & in wh: he tells me you concur. He also tells me to ask you for books, as if I had no modesty at all, wh: I assure you I have. Will you therefore think a little which English works are necessary for such a project & most of them I may be able to procure from libraries here. But the foreigners I must request you to procure. At present I think of none but the Gräfein Hahn Hahn.¹ Her "Jenseits der Berge", Reise Versuch in Schweden u Norwegen" & the recent work on Egypt. But there must be others of importance & I will set seriously to enquire through some foreign correspondents.

I look forward with impatience to more leisure, at present the kindness of our friends is so hot that I have none, unless I give myself

airs which I myself shd condemn much more than the incessant interruption.

I owe Hester two kind notes. Will you tell her that she and your cousin shall hear fully as soon as some canvass arrives which you understand nothing about. Mr. Gruner's plates reached us on Saturday to our great satisfaction, & now we are expecting the letter press.

I heard from Russia the other day that Ct de la Gardie had recd his importation of English books, & also that the June Quarterly you sent of first had reached my sisters. They were greatly delighted. Their long absence from English scenes and topics prevents them from relishing many of the light modern books, & Gertrude writes me that she turned from "Ten thousand a year" to bury herself in the Quarterly.

I can give no great change in the accounts of Mrs Smith. Upon comparing week with week & telling us little minutia about the hours of keeping up & amount of nourishment taken, her daughters & ourselves came to the conclusion that improvement was going on though very slowly. Hester's account of your mother greatly disappointed me the other day. I hear a rather better one from a letter to the Smith's this mg. My mother is a terrible absentee but seems to be getting used to it. She is now staying with her venerable step-daughter of nearly four score years. Meanwhile Matilda and myself are not left to spend many days together wh: I should rather prefer.

With our kindest love to your family I remain
Your's very truly
Eliz: Rigby

1. Ida Gräfin von Hahn Hahn (1805–80), authoress and travel writer, whose *Orientalische Briefe* was reviewed in 'Lady Travellers'.

Letter to John Murray NLS Ms.42174

9 St Bernard's Crescent

Janry 11 1845

My dear Mr. Murray

The accompanying M:S: is not at all what you might expect – not at all in your way, & I owe you an apology for troubling you to run your eye over it. They are two little nondescripts, done at times lately which have been too much interrupted to attempt anything more serious. But before sending them to take their chance in some magazine I have thought it better to submit them to your inspection, in case, wh: I don't