

[Faint, mostly illegible handwriting on the left page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]

[Vertical handwritten note:]
Dear Mr. [illegible]
New York

— I have just returned from the impatience
of Rome Christmas 1859.
My Dear Sir — I have this moment returned from the impatient
ceremony of high mass performed by the Pope himself at St. Peter's
surrounded by the venerable body of cardinals in their magnificent robes
and attended with the splendor and pomp usual to Roman Church
ceremonies. Of course my brain is in some confusion and you must
not look for a very coherent letter. I found on the table a note from
the Sedgwick family saying that Miss Maria was to leave Rome
London on Friday morning to take the steamer for America and
writing me to send dispatches by her and though I was principally against
sending letters by private hand yet have such confidence in the capability
of the character to think it no risk in this case. I was very much
gladified to find that you had not forgotten or rather thought enough
to take the trouble of writing a letter which you will pardon
me for not answering by the last steamer inasmuch as there was
hardly time for a hasty scrawl. We have as yet hardly
been long enough in Rome to become quietly settled to study its many
objects of interest to attract. Though we have spent considerable time
visiting the galleries of different palaces the museums of the Vatican
and Capitol ancient remains and churches rich in glorious works
of painting & sculpture much yet is left for us. But for myself
I become tired of such endless sight-seeing and with the exception
of the galleries shall abstain mostly for the future. Mr. Cheney
and myself who have one large room in common have made some
drawings from a model a beautiful boy with an unusually expressive
face but no painting yet. I find that there is nothing that
comes within a student's desire models draperies costumes
lay-figures &c. but are readily to be found. So that there is no
excuse for idleness. To one who has had a little experience
of the bore of manufacturing "pot-boiler" to order and by the railroad
it is delightful to have perfect nature to study in the manner and
that subject the most pleasing. I am continuing a composition

for which I hope presently to set up a canvas, and employ models. —
With respect to the great works ~~now~~ in painting — the renowned
frescoes of Raphael in the Vatican — and of Michel Angelo in the Sistine
Chapel — though I was not overwhelmed with admiration, ~~and was not~~
~~so much disappointed as I expected~~ and as we read, ~~the most artists~~
~~who visit them with expectations raised to the highest pitch.~~
Perhaps having been accustomed at Florence to see works of a
similar kind of excellence by Del Sarto, others prepared me to
enjoy these more readily. — They certainly would woefully
disappoint one who was looking for the grace & luxuriance of
painting such as brilliancy of effect — variety — delicacy & harmony
of colors — transparency — powerful relief & naturalness &c. qualities
which constitute a great part of what is admirable in modern
productions. — The Last Judgment of Michel Angelo I cannot
claim to admire — it seems confused in the extreme — the crowd
of figures are without doubt drawn & foreshortened with mastery skill
— but there is an evident exaggeration — an overstrained exertion to
produce effect by violent action of muscles — and limbs twisted almost
to contortion for the sake of foreshortening, which to me, is very
disagreeable. — The figure of Christ appears clumsy & wanting in
majesty. — Perhaps this is not very modest — and is doubtless owing
to want of feeling for the mightiest heroic style of the greatest
masters. — One of the greatest treats I have had in Rome was
a visit to the studio of Thorvaldsen — the renowned Dane
and I believe without dispute, the preeminent sculptor of
modern times. — a very extensive range of studios are
filled with the casts of his works, and in some instances the
originals — a large portion bassi relievi — and all full of
naturalness — fine expression — simplicity — or heroic dignity
as the subject seemed to require. — He must be a man of a
very noble mind, and of unceasing industry to have produced
such a great number of works. — I dare say you would
like to hear something of Crawford, — as a friend of Page

and of Philip — (with whom you are acquainted before now I do not
doubt. —) He has been confined by a severe fit of sickness — and was
for a time thought to be in great danger — but is recovering rapidly.
— Owing to this sickness I have not seen him — as Mr Green the American
Consul — his particular friend, would not allow him to be visited. —
I took an early opportunity of looking into his studio, to see the
statue of Orpheus descending to the shades — which he has modeled
during the last few months (the first statue) — and I can assure
you it is a very noble figure. — He is represented advancing; the
motion admirably expressed — leaning forward with a piercing
expression, assented by the hand raised and shadowing the brow.
— the action of one who would penetrate obscurity. — the other rests
carelessly upon or rather supports the lyre slightly. It is a fine — young
active figure — full of springiness — and the face has the true expression
of anxiety and ardent pursuit. — It is very simple — a slight drapery
flows from the shoulder, swayed by the motion. — I have formed
from this statue a high opinion of Crawford's talents — and all his friends.
Speak of him as having studied with incessant industry and ardor. —
There are now, studying in Rome, 8 American Artists — I suspect the
greatest number that were ever here at once — almost enough to form a little
academy by ourselves — two drawn in the English Academy from life — the rest of us
will be obliged to scatter to private schools for this purpose. — I am glad
to hear of the success of the Apollo, — and thank you sincerely for your efforts
in my favor. — I should be glad to send out pictures for the next exhibition
and if an opportunity offers, shall attempt it. — Meantime I hope, the
two heads that I sent from Florence — and which I suppose are now on the
Mediterranean — will not be shipwrecked — as I would not like to be without
something in the Exhibition of the Academy. — what a motive for dreading a
shipwreck! — Mr Grey, who is writing to some friends, sends his respects
to you. — I am obliged to Mrs Pidner for remembrance — and beg
to send her my best regards. — Do not delay to write
me — excuse the minuteness of this letter & believe me
very truly Yours
Dan. Huntington.