I found Lady and Lucius very comfortably fixed, and the boys are the finest kind
of youngsters. The little girl was sick the two days I was down there and I could
not see much of her. Old Mrs Bell was as handsome and pleasing as ever, and they
were daily expecting Mary and her husband home. Edward's wife I was quite taken
with, pretty much such a quiet body as Mary used to be. I did not see your grandson
frame Miss Lucy Darby, although I heard of her in Washington; she had been
staying a week with Laura just before I arrived. She seems to have been a comical
piece of womankind, and even the sedate Wolcott was forced to drop his gravity
[illegible] with her [illegible] romped on the stair
case. I saw a good deal of the Wolcotts while I was in New York and particularly
of Son Henry who was then recovering and supposed to be permanently conva
lescent. All of them expressed great kindness and affection for you, and if he had
lived I think he would have put you up to the top of the ladder. Mother writes
that the Canton house will be broken up and that you will go to Shanghai, but
that you will have more work to do, and as good if not a better chance. I am
very much pleased to hear that, as I was afraid your prospects might have
been injured, and that you would either have to begin again, or return home after
just setting out. I am particularly pleased Frank with the improvement you
have made within the last year in many respects. Your letters, as letters are
very much improved. There is more manliness in your tone of thought,
and you seem to be thinking more upon yourself for thought and action.
Go on improving at this rate, and your family will have good reason to be
proud of you. You must consider this as quite a compliment, for you know
I am not very sanguine in my praise. As for your music keep it up as much
as you possibly can, so that it does not interfere with your business, or distract
your superiors or associates, the story of Mr Thorvaldsen practising on the key bugle
at 4. in the morning is an illustration of the ill effects attending a heedless follow
er of the musical Goddess. I would give much head I never forgotten or left
off my music. It would have saved many weary hours in garrison.