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Goelet Family Papers

11-8-1895

Letter from James H. Bowditch to Ogden Goelet

James H. Bowditch

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Nov. 8. 1895.

Ogden Zoetel.

Dear Sir,

Mrs. Buckenham reports that you were kind enough to authorize me to secure in advance, for use next spring, the *Aclypha* and *Alternanthera nigra*, that I mentioned in my letter. They are special colors, hard to obtain.

Mrs. B. saw Mr. Sinclair, who said he would be very pleased to give you prices on the Wall designs Nos. 1-2 and 3; which I hope you have received by this time, as he promised to send the estimate to your office and the drawings and sample to your private residence, last evening.

Mr. Sinclair did not feel that he could figure any lower on the granite curbing, and I doubt very much if you can do better than the figures as offered by the quarriers themselves, which are of course bed rock prices, so to speak, from first hands.

The Fitzwilliams stone at \$1.45 is finely

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worked and of handsome color, and all things considered the best stone for our purpose. The reason why the man who furnished the Vanderbilt curbing raised his price is because he unquestionably lost money.

It was probably the first job of the kind he had undertaken, and the hand dressing required to meet the specifications was greater than he anticipated. He would like the order, and knows he has competitors, but he simply cannot afford to do it at former prices.

It ~~may~~ well turn out that the Fitzwilliam man has figured too low on his bid.

A rougher and cheaper finish catches the dirt and looks ill when brought into contrast with our other smooth architectural finish. I trust you do not seriously consider the omission of the curbing altogether, as it would detract very materially from the effect we want at that point, especially with the new clover leaf terrace wall in evidence near at hand.

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If you will send us, in a day or two, some expression of opinion as to the kind of color design you think you prefer for the sea terrace we will make up a few others for your final consideration.

Buckenham's sketches are more in keeping with French style; and mine, as you well say, are decidedly on the Japanese order. We will keep more closely to the French school, if you say so, in the final figures. Lastly we will try and have for you, within a fortnight, a full plan in colors showing various changes and improvements for 1896 with special brightening up of side walk leading from proposed new tennis court to porte cochère; and other features.

Very truly,

James H. Bowditch.