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Call Number: 2011-050/001

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| (1) | John Bright in Rochdale to Thomas Bates in Kirk Leavington, Yorkshire. -- 4 p. of textual records. -- Purchased from John Drury Rare Books, England, in August 2011. -- File consists of a handwritten letter by Bright (1811-1889), orator and statesmen, on the social effects of the Corn Laws written to the stock-breeder and agricultural politician Thomas Bates (1775-1849). "The people here," Bright declares, "are starving not figuratively but literally, & American ships are bringing ballast, gravel to Liverpool, whilst the quays of the American ports are covered with barrels of flour without a market for them -- Is this just?" Bright condemns the pro-Corn Law lobby as being unjust to the poor and harmful to the farmer. It was, he suggests, a "Landlord made Law" whereby increased rents bear down on wages to the point where the ordinary labourer can no longer afford to eat. The letter is enhanced by the attachment by Bright of adhesive Anti-Corn-Law League labels on the address panel with the slogan: "Paid. -- All letters must be prepaid. Thanks for cheap postage! -- May we soon get cheap bread! -- Free communication with all parts of the empire is good : free trade with all parts of the world is still better." | 26 March 1840 | |
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