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To Arthur R. Gledhill - November 14, 1891

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO ARTHUR R. GLEDHILL

Harvard University.

Cambridge, Mass., Nov 14 1891^a

My Dear Art,

Apologies are due I suppose, on my part, but I shall not make any. It is too much work.

I would have answered your letter long before this, but I have been so stirred up that I have not thought of anything but my chance of being "fired". But the sky looks a little clearer now, and I trust that it will stay so. Have had exams, in Eng. Comp.--Eng. Lit.-19th cent--&^b Shakspeare. French will come later on.

I feel as if I had always been here, and a {=as} if I should always like to stay here. If there is any class of people in the world that I envy, they are the Freshmen, who have four years of Harvard life before them instead of eight months. However,

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I am not growling, but consider myself fortunate as it is. I "sprung" a ballade {illegible letters; on?}^c the Advocate a while ago. Much to my surprise it was accepted. The Ad. prints some of the best amateur fiction that I have ever seen. Will send you a copy if I can think of it; ~~Perp~~ Perhaps you see it, though, in the office of your own paper. That is the great difference between a small college and a large one. You can get acquainted, if you wish to, with about every fellow

^a Everything in red here is part of the printed Harvard stationary. The month, date and "1" for the year were written in black. WA omits "Harvard University".

^b WA omits this symbol.

^c WA has "on".

at the place, while I am doing well to be on familiar terms with two or three. That is enough for me, though; I never cared for a "host of friends". I don't believe in them. Everything is as quiet here as in the country. I do not think any Freshman has had his hair disarranged by a Soph. this Fall. Hazing seems to be a dead issue in the larger Universities.

This afternoon (Saturday) I am going

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into town to see Whitney¹ and take a turn into the theater in the evening. Wish you were here to go with us. Went last Sat. evening to see Modjeska in Macbeth and was completely disappointed.² She was well enough, but what little voice her trembling husband had was lost in his moustache. Taken all around it was a big fizzle. But the house was crowded, myself a gallery-god. Whitney suffered through the whole thing and I felt rather guilty in persuading him to go with me.

I have just bought a set of Jane Austens novels, five volumes, half morocco. We take her up in Eng. 9. next week & I shall have a chance to see what kind of a creature she was. Mrs Edgworth I rather liked, though her characters

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speak mostly in precepts. Have you ever read Godwins "Caleb Williams?" It was first published in 1794, to represent the evils of old ideas. I have also been reading Jeffrey's essays and Sydney Smith. I rather like these old fellows, though there is a certain tediousness which seems to be characteristic of them all.

If you are carrying twenty four recitations a week successfully, you are

either a being "fearfully and wonderfully made", or else there is a great difference in the courses at St Lawrence and Harvard. Four and five courses, say sixteen hours a week, will give an ordinary man all he cares to do in Cambridge.

or German

If the Freshman takes French ^ only nine hours are absolutely required,--that is excluding English composition and the prescribed work. Twelve hours a week is about the average and in most cases is quite enough.

Write as soon as you can.

Yours

Robinson.

HCL SL in part.

NOTES

1. William Dexter-Whitney from Gardiner was studying law at Boston University.
2. Helene Modjeska (1844-1909), famous Polish actress reknowned for her Shakespearean roles.