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My dear Sir

Accept my thanks for your letter, and the enclosed verses, which were read in this house, by us all with pleasure, and I may say that as a composition they do the Author no little credit. I need scarcely add, that it cannot but be gratifying to me to learn that my endeavours have been felt in the way which you allude to, and especially among the Class to which the person who has thus given vent to his feelings belongs.

You will be pleased to learn that I frequently receive testimonies from Individuals who live by the labour of their hands, that what I have written has not been a dead letter to them; and for this reason chiefly, I shall propose to my Publisher to print the *Excursion* in double column, so that it may circulate as cheaply as can be afforded.

The peril which my son and I incurred was even more formidable than the accounts of the newspapers represent. Thro' the mercy of God my Son escaped without injury, and I only slightly hurt.

With the united kind regards of Mrs W[ordsworth] and my Daughter to yourself and Mrs Hook

I remain, my dear Sir

faithfully your obliged

WM WORDSWORTH

Rydal Mount

Dec. 7th, [18]40

I do not know who the Mr. Hook is, to whom the letter was written.



OTHER RECENT ACCESSIONS

ECONOMICALLY speaking, one of the cheapest, but from the point of view of the literary historian one of the most significant, volumes recently to come to the Colby Library is a one-volume edition of Henry Fielding's

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Joseph Andrews, published in London by Routledge, Warne, & Routledge, in 1861. The significance of this volume is suggested by the red book-label that announces it as "from the library of Thomas Hardy, O.M., Max Gate."

The book contains various marginal markings, presumably Hardy's. For example, at the beginning of Book II, Chapter I, a marginal mark calls attention to the passage that refers to "those vacant pages which are placed between our books . . . where . . . the traveller stays . . . to . . . consider . . . what he has seen. . . . A volume, without any such places of rest, resembles the opening of wilds or seas, which tires the eye and fatigues the spirit when entered upon."

On page 166 "Moral Reflections" are marked, and on pages 219-220 "Philosophical Reflections" are similarly penciled: "the passion generally called love exercises most of the talents of the female or fair world." The influence of such passages as these upon the novels which Hardy was to begin writing ten years later is easily enough traced.

Preserved among the papers of Thomas Hearne in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, is his Prayer, which reads: "O most gracious and merciful Lord God, . . . I return all possible thanks to Thee for the care Thou hast always taken of me. I continually meet with most signal instances of . . . Thy providence, and . . . yesterday, . . . I unexpectedly met with three old manuscripts, for which . . . I return my thanks." In addition to the Wordsworth letters described by Mrs. Comporetti on a previous page, the Colby Library has recently acquired "three [not so] old manuscripts" — letters written by EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON — for which the librarian has returned thanks. Since all three deal with Robinson's poetry, they are worth quoting.

Reference was made to the first of these letters by William Rose Benét, in his department in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (26: 16: 54), April 17, 1943. It was written to Professor Carl J. Weber, in answer to an inquiry about Robinson's poem "The Whip." The poet replied:

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28 West 8th Street
New York, January 28, 1923

Dear Mr. Weber

I hardly know what to say about *The Whip*, except that it is supposed to be a literal and not a figurative instrument. In this poem — not to mention a few others — I may have gone a little too far and given the reader too much to carry. If he refuses to carry it, perhaps I have only myself to blame. I am inclined to believe that this particular poem is not altogether satisfactory or very important.

Yours very sincerely

E. A. ROBINSON

The second letter was written to Dr. Louis Dickstein, 1501 Broadway, New York City, who had inquired about a book of *Harvard Lyrics*, selected by Charles L. Stebbins, Boston, Brown & Co., 1899. Robinson's poem "Menoetes" appears on page 111; it was originally published in the *Harvard Advocate* (53: 32), March 15, 1892. Three other poems by Robinson had appeared in the *Advocate* in 1891. Robinson wrote:

Peterborough, N. H.,
August 6, 1928

My dear Dr. Dickstein,

Harvard Lyrics was a collection of verse written by students and published first in the college periodicals. I did not "write" the book, but I believe there were one or two things of mine in it. Whether it is still in print I do not know, but you might get information about it by writing to the Harvard Cooperative Store, Cambridge. I don't imagine that it has much value as an item for collectors.

Yours sincerely

E. A. ROBINSON

The third letter was in response to an inquiry from Professor Herbert C. Libby. The poet wrote:

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257 West Newton Street

Boston, March 21, 1934

Dear Mr. Libby,

In reply to your letter of the fifteenth, which has just now found me, I can't attempt to say which is the best or worst of my short poems. Perhaps the sonnet called "The Sheaves" is as well liked as any.

With many thanks for your courtesy,

Yours very truly

E. A. ROBINSON

The poem named by the poet is certainly among those most frequently reprinted. It appeared originally in the New York Evening Post's *Literary Review*, December 15, 1923, and was reprinted in Strong's *Best Poems of 1924*. Robinson collected it in *Dionysus in Doubt* in 1925; and in the five-volume *Collected Poems* of 1927, it appeared in Vol. IV, p. 36. It is found on page 72 of *Sonnets 1889-1927*, and was reprinted in the one-volume *Collected Poems* of 1929 and in the *Poems* selected by Bliss Perry in 1931. Readers who have the definitive one-volume *Collected Poems* of 1937 will find "The Sheaves" on page 870.



NOTES AND MEMORANDA

AMONG recent gifts to the library, special mention may be made of the following: From the Houghton Library of Harvard University, three additions to our Noah Webster shelf: *The American Spelling Book*, Hartford, Conn., Hudson & Goodwin, the 23rd Connecticut edition; the same book, with preface dated "New Haven, 1803," title-page missing; and *An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking*, Boston, Thomas & Andrews, 11th ed., 1799.

From Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Berry, an imitation of Webster's *Reader*, *The Columbian Reader*, Hallowell, Maine, Ezekiel Goodale, 1815.