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To Harry de Forest Smith - May 15, 1892

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO HARRY DE FOREST SMITH

1691 Camb.

**Harvard University,
Cambridge^a**

May 15 - '92

My esteemed Smith,

It is Sunday evening again and this time I will try to be on time in my correspondence. I have nothing to say in particular except that I went to town last night and kept Barnard company until morning. We went to the Museum and saw the Colleen Bawn.^{1b} After that we went to the "Museum Exchange" and Vercellis.^{2c} I have more or less of a liking for Dublin Stout and last night I surrounded four bottles of that beverage. It was too much for my personal comfort and peace of mind. There was no jag but something very like "that tired

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feeling" so liable to overtake one in the spring. In short it made me sick. I ate beans this morning, however, and am all right now. It is the next thing to impossible for me to drink beer nowadays. I let Barnard & Whitney drink it for me and watch[ed] the effects upon them. They are both tanks—fearfully and wonderfully made. Sometimes I am frightened in watching them. Then I suck a creme de menthe and feel like a Charley³ for doing it. These fancy drinks are rather effeminate affairs—if you don't drink too many of them. Since I have been here I have drank most everything—excepting the standard "hard stuff"—from a pousse-café to bottled cider, and have come to the conclusion that I do not care a tinkers dam for any of it except Guinness's stout—and that does not amount to much.

^a WA omits "Harvard University, Cambridge."

^b WA reads "Baun."

^c WA reads "Vercelli's."

There is no fear of my ever becoming a

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drunkard unless by circumstances of a most untoward nature. I like the Bohemian atmosphere and the smoke. One glass of beer will last me an hour: two, if I had my own way. If you come ~~de~~ up this spring we will go down to the Old Elm and I will show you what I mean. You cannot get anything really like it in Maine. If you wish to make an "inspection tour" I shall not kick, although I have not seen the inside of a den since my return and do not expect to unless you & George come up. I hope you will both be able to come—think you would enjoy it.

Last Friday I had a surprise in the form of my thesis^d returned with an A- on the cover. I do not quite comprehend how I got it, but will not worry. If I can do as well at finals my career in English 9 will be a success^d--as far as marks are concerned. You know about how much they signify. The day before I received my mark in the hour-exam. in English A held some four weeks ago. It was C- and I am afraid it made me smile rather than weep. That was wrong, but I couldn't help it.

The Yale freshmen played with our children yesterday in more senses than one.^e--13 to 2. The Varsity team beat Dartmouth 5 to 0 the same day. That gives Hanover 2 out of 3 with the N.H. men.--I am afraid that this letter is one of my characteristic spews and the sooner I stop the better. Letter writing seems to grow harder & harder for me every week. Trusting you have written by this time, I will close.

Sincerely

Robinson^f

^d WA reads a comma here before the dash.

^e WA reads a comma instead of a period here.

^f WA omits the underline.

NOTES

HCL Omitted from *US*.

1. *The Colleen Bawn, or The Brides of Garryowen*, a melodrama by the Irish playwright Dion Boucicault (1820/22-1890). (SL^g)
2. Boston's "first Italian restaurant, opened by Joseph Vercelli opposite the public garden on Boylston Street in 1868. Vercelli's was a high-style destination for several decades" (O'Connell, 114). (SL)
3. Alternative form of "Charlie," i.e., a fool. (SL)
- 4.^h On *Pendennis*.

^g WA had indicated in pencil that he wanted to write a note here, writing "1. Colleen Baun" in the left margin in the notes section. He never completed it, however.

^h This is WA's note 2. He did not indicate it in the text with a superscript numeral, so my placement of one there is based on context.