10-1-1892

To Harry de Forest Smith - October 1, 1892

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO HARRY DE FOREST SMITH

176

#1716 Cambridge St.,
Cambridge, Oct 1, '92.

My dear Smith,

I suppose you are begin-

ning to think that it is about time to
hear from me, and I must confess
that it is. But if you half have
not already condemned me for a jay
I will now^a try to make up for my
negligence and hope that you will
pardon me.--I am in new quart-
ers now and am immeasurably better
satisfied with them. Nature never in-
tended Mrs. Fox and I to live in
the same house for more than a year.

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My present room comes very near
to my ideal. There is a first rate
desk, a most seductive couch, window-
seat, easy chair, open coal-grate, etc.
The people are first-class but there is
a quiet understanding that there will
not be a great deal of celebrating and
the like in the house. That does not
interfere with my plans, however, as I
am here this year to work and for
no other reason, that is, primarily.
And work enough there is for me to
do: here is my program:--^b

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^a WA reads "not".
^b WA omits the graphic.
^c WA reads "French".
^d WA reads "French".
Friday | German | Phil | Eng. Lit
--- | --- | --- | ---
Saturday | F.A. | Frch | 

-3-

I have mixed the hours a little
but you can see the courses. Fine Arts
III (Ancient Art) is under Prof. Norton &
promises to be a great thing. At the
opening the Professor waxed humorous.
"Gentleman," he said, "this is a sad sight."
You [see?] the course is immensely popular as a
"snap" and Saturday morning over 500
men walked in to take it. A good many
will be thrown out; I may be one of
them, though I hope not. In Philc I,
we begin with Logic underf Prof. Palmer.
I think you heard him read some of his
Odyssey at Bowdoin. As a lecturer he
is fine. The worst course I have is
French 1a. It is nearly all composition
and we have to commit one of La Fontaine's

-4-

fables every month and deliver it
before the class. That is bitter work
for me, but we have to take things
as they come. No man is obliged to
take the course, so he cannot kick.

I have been ransacking the periodical
shelves in the Library and have come
to the conclusion that we do not want
the Athenaeum. It is rather entertaining
to look over a pile of them, but I am
afraid we would be sorry if we subscribed
for it. The Spectator, Observer, & Academy
are much the same. Of course the c Critic
is all right & by the way I will send
you one with this containing a review of
Prof. Hyde's book1 which may interest you.

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* WA has a period here.
† WA has "with"—probably an error rather than a misreading, since the holograph is relatively clear here.
I cannot suggest anything better to take the place of the Athenaeum than the Atlantic. It makes no difference to me which I keep at the end of the year, if you have any preference. Of course I only suggest this—shall expect to hear your views in your next letter.

I have "blown" myself on a fancy edition of Jules Verne's "L'Ile Mysterieuse". I shall have it bound in half Levant with gilt top.

I am feeling rather better than when I left home and trust I shall continue so. To tell the truth I was not in very good condition this summer. I am not smoking much now. Tomorrow I begin on the non-diurnal plan. Shall only smoke evenings. If I carry out my plans this year I shall read about thirty French books of various sizes and about twelve in German. In truth I am starting in on a kind of short-haired grind; but the long hair will come. Have been here a week and have drunk but one beer. Not very bad, that. But then it is not much to my credit as I care but little for the stuff.

Give me your opinion about the magazines as soon as possible and we will start the thing going. I can probably get quite a reduction—or you either, for that matter. Trusting that you have written to me to-day, I remain

---

8 WA reads this as the beginning of a new paragraph.
9 WA adds a period here.
1 WA reads "as".
2 WA reads a colon here.
Yours sincerely
Robinson

HCL  US, 68-70.

NOTES

1. *Practical Ethics* (1892), by William de Witt Hyde (1858-1917), was given a mostly favorable review in *The Critic* XXVIII, No. 553 (Sept. 28, 1892), 163. Hyde was a Congregationalist minister, professor of moral philosophy, president of Bowdoin college from 1885-1917. (SL)