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6-21-1893

## To Harry de Forest Smith - June 21, 1893

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO HARRY DE FOREST SMITH

Cambridge, June 21 - '93

Dear Smith,

Well, I have about come to the "end of things" as the old man says in the Children of the Zodiac (which is the best thing I have ever seen by Kipling.)<sup>a</sup> It is in his "Many Inventions."<sup>1</sup> I have read most of the stories but have a few left. You have doubtless read them all, provided you have the book. It has been floating

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around here for two or three weeks, I think, but I have hardly heard it mentioned, and have never read a review of it. It is a little more mature perhaps, than Life's Handicap but does not show up as well upon the whole. "The Record of Badalia Herods-foot" seems to me the best thing in it next to the "Children"<sup>b</sup>

I went into Schoenfhofs<sup>2c</sup> yesterday<sup>d</sup> and bought some more books<sup>e</sup> The list may interest you:

"Der verlorene Handschrift—"<sup>f</sup>  
2 vols. (a gift) Freytag

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Im Paradiese – Heyse  
(2 vols<sup>g</sup>)

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Contes Choisis – Daudet— bound.  
" " Mendés "

<sup>a</sup> WA places the period outside the parenthesis.

<sup>b</sup> WA adds a period here.

<sup>c</sup> WA adds an apostrophe between the "f" and the "s".

<sup>d</sup> The "t" is written directly over the "a" in the holograph. WA omits the mistake.

<sup>e</sup> WA adds a period here.

<sup>f</sup> WA places the quotation mark before the dash.

<sup>g</sup> WA adds a period here.

<sup>h</sup> WA omits this line.

Madame Bovary – Flaubert paper  
Manon Lescaut – Prévost "  
Le Capitaine Fracasse – Gautier (2 vol<sup>i</sup>) "

During the past three weeks I have spent over twenty five dollars for foreign books and have about come to the conclusion that it is time to stop. The books themselves are bad enough, but when I go in for fancy bindings or at least respectable ones (not the kind

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you saw last summer) it makes culture too much of a good thing. A man is pardonable however for almost any thing<sup>j</sup> he does while in Schoenhof's. It is the most fascinating place I ever struck and you are used so well that you wonder [where] the difference comes in between foreign and American shop keepers. There is a difference, though I cannot tell just what it is.

I shall probably come home next Monday. It is do [=so] devilish hot up here now that I doubt

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if you would care much to come. You see I am very honest. Of course I should be marvelously glad to see you, but cannot speak with the surety of your enjoying yourself that I could before the hot weather set in in dead earnest. It simply "knocks me out" and I do not go out of my room unless compelled to. With the blinds closed and the windows open, one

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<sup>i</sup> WA adds a period here.

<sup>j</sup> WA has "anything".

can live, & that is about all.

If you can come up and

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stay over Sunday and go back with me, then do so if you are willing to run the risk of a cool day. It [=If] it proves hot, all we can do is keep still and talk or swear. I shall be a good deal stirred up in packing but that will not take all the time.

for

I want to [=you] to enjoy yourself if you come, but am not quite sure that you will if you come now.

This accounts for any apparent coolness in this invitation. I have not enough confidence in my abilities as

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a host, to feel sure of conquering hot weather. That's all.

I suppose this is the last letter I shall ever write you from Harvard. The thought seems a little queer, but it cannot be otherwise. Sometimes I try to imagine the state my mind would be in had I never come here, but I cannot. I feel that I have got comparatively little from my two years, but still, more than I could get in Gardiner if I lived a century. I am looking forward to some Sundays like

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those of last summer. If you are not at home through the hot weather I do not know what I ~~w~~ [?] I shall do with myself. When a man sets himself down to it he can generally count the friends of his native

town upon the fingers of one hand, and  
then have digits to spare. At least,  
I can.

Sincerely  
Robinson

HCL *US*, 101-103.

#### NOTES

1. Published in 1893. (SL)
2. See letter to Smith from May 20, 1893, along with note 1 of that letter. (SL)