

TO HARRY DE FOREST SMITH

Harvard University,  
Cambridge.

March 13 '93

My dear Smith,

To quote from you, it is now the witching hour of eleven P. M. and I will try to write you a little something before going to bed. I have been hammering away at French and loafing all the evening, by turns. (Another one of my lose sentences, but please excuse it).

I sent you a Nation and some Crimsons this morning. I must confess that I am sorry that I ever subscribed for that paper. It is a kind of feeble imitation of the English reviews, and the pedantry of its book-reviews is amusing rather than entertaining. The Athenaeum would have been far better, and the Specker or<sup>r</sup> Spectator better still. Of course the political part of the Nation is all well enough, but the party spirit runs too high--if possible, worse than the Boston Journal. The J. is getting to be a creditable rival to the Globe, and is rather a sad spectacle upon the whole. The Boston daily papers are decidedly second-class. I wonder why it is? --Irishmen?

I am reading About's La Mère de la Marquise and find it rather dull. I am coming home on the 5th or 6th of April and during my stay shall read Balzac's Eugenie Grandet,

which I suppose is one of the world's great novels. I am totally ignorant of Balzac, which is hardly a good thing for a man to say in these days. This summer I intend to fill up some gaps in my reading. By the way, it may interest you to know that I have bought a full set of Lowell's writings--prose and poetry, including the Later Literary Essays and the Old English Dramatists. If you have any leisure through the summer months we can have several symposii (?) and good ones too. Have you seen Thomas Hardy's "Pursuit of the Well-Beloved?" I am told it is quite a thing--rather fatalistic and decidedly human--perhaps too much so, for the Harpers, to publish.<sup>1</sup> Blackmore's "Perlycross"<sup>2</sup> and Black's "Wolfenberg"<sup>3</sup> are also interesting to anticipate.

Well, you must excuse me this time. I am about ready to turn in, so will close. I hope you will come to-morrow.

Sincerely,

E. A. R.