

Sardines, March 11 - 1891

Dear Friend Art, -

Coincidences are very common things in fiction but in real life they are comparative rarities. And yet a rather curious one seems to have taken place. In your letter you tell me that you had the offer of a High School for a few weeks at Birmingham, Ala. About two weeks I had the same offer. You, Art, your humble friend down each way of forced the position as principal of the China (Ala) High School for a week or two during the absence of the present incumbent wife; but considering my limited knowledge of the mathematics I felt forced to decline: I could not perform an example in quadratics or cube root if it were to be in the commonwealth. I might possibly have staggered through the rest of the studies (no Greek or modern languages taught) but it would have been a dry scald for me: I declined, and smoked a pipe. I did not curse myself for my ignorance but rather felt thankful but I know no less than I do. I am a philosopher withal and shall doubtless some day be rich - in something or other.

In looking over the rank list you send I can only say that you ought to be more than satisfied. As I read the figures, dead phantoms of 6,000's + 7,000's stand before me in grim array and need the days that I spend (and waste, I suppose) at the storied

G.H.S. How it would have made Preceptor Giles chuckle to hear  
of my teaching algebra & geometry & "Si's-se-ro!" I do not know  
whether they teach Cicero there or not but presumably they do. If I  
remember rightly, my experience as interpreter of that old gentleman was  
a somewhat doleful one: I only <sup>read (?)</sup> three orations and part of another,  
while I believe you and the rest of the class read three or four more.

Blackmon says, "The less we have in hand to count, the more remains  
to hope for;" so let us be cheerful. By the way I made a triquet  
yesterday; here it is:

Silent they stand against the wall,

The mouldering boots of other days.

No more they answer Dutys call -

Silent they stand against the wall, -

Over their tops the cold bugs crawl,

Like distant herds on darkened ways.

Silent they stand against the wall,

The mouldering boots of other days.

Observe the bucolic factor and fine feeling. The form of verse is  
of French retraction and if you ever study old French literature you  
will probably come across hosts of them. They give a man a chance  
to pour out his whole soul (as I have done) in eight lines.

I shall expect you to preach in Wren next summer and I  
trust you may make a success of it. Write and let me know what  
you are doing.

Yours  
Edw. Robinson