

Gardner, Nov 11 - 1893.

My dear Smith,

Don't write so damned coarse. Do me the kindness, and humor me. It takes away about half the interest from one of your letters to have it spread over six times the paper it calls for. So I do not mean to give offense, but I am truly in earnest. It is pleasant to know that you are good natured, but can't you make a foot-note of the fact, when you do not feel sure that the letter itself shows the state of your mind?

I sent you the "Ballads" after some delay, and you doubtless have seen before this. I must ask you to be as careful as possible of the book, for I think a great deal of it. It has followed me for these years, and has been one of those things which are just outside price - of no value except to the owner. It cost me hardly five cents, but it would take dollars to buy it. You may think I am a fool, out of so, I shall not attempt to deny it. You have no idea how much associations are to me. Some little thing, almost ridiculous in itself, acquires a value in my eyes that sometimes makes me ashamed of myself. But there, we all have our peculiarities and that is one of mine. I rather think you can appreciate it enough not to write me down an ass.

This would be a fine day for a session at your place, but you do not seem to be at hand. So I live in the expectations of Thanksgiving and our dinner. Throwing out having 'Nov. 11' this time, I will make it, well to the end of this year for us. I am like a child in some respects, and am glad of it. I only wish that I could be more like our sometimes. Victor Cherbuliz, in his remarkable novel of his, "Jean Teter's 'Idra'", says "the first duty of youth is to be young." Crawford says the same thing in "Sant' Ilario", some years after. If you have never read any of Cherbuliz you have a good time before you. He is altogether from any writer I know and yet he is so true to life that he starts one at times. If I ever get able to read again, I shall make up for lost time, but do not think I shall ever do anything more with German. I hate to drop it, but there are other things in the world; and it is better to have those without the German than not to have either, as would probably be the case if I put much time upon it.

Troyer sent me two tracts that work on the foundation of Everett's and "A Journalism of Life". They are a part of his Philosophy I work last year - Prof. Babcock's course in Ethics. He sends them to me for criticism, and places me in a rather delicate position. The matter is just over and he is continually saying good things; but his style smacks of the newspaper, as I know it would. I shall give him my candid opinion of it, and it is a pleasure to know that it will be taken kindly. I fear I can criticize

better than I can write, but I am going to wait and hear
 what the press say. I may end up as a clerk in a dry goods
 store and acquire "ease of manner", that would be more of a trans-
 formation than I ever dreamed of. If I should turn out to be a
 society man, via a dry goods establishment, how the Gardner public
 would congratulate me on my coming out! They might think there was
 some hope for me then, and a prospect of a still better "job". Life
 is my job just at present, but it will be more interesting when a job
 is settled down for the winter. I have done good work in
 forestry this fall and have now arrived at the last stage - "blowing
 up" the trees. When they are sawed and split I shall consider my
 self free from a long but upon the whole rather pleasant piece of
 work. I have no doubt but I have made those trees the work
 of a lot was necessary, but I have done it sympathetically -
 with a pat's eye, just "fuzzy" and all. There is pity in reducing
 a sprawling apple limb but Joe cannot see it. I doubt some
 of you could, though you might.

Gabriel sent me a picture of his wife the other day. She
 is not pretty - I cannot call her handsome; but I wonder but I
 cannot see her mind, and so cannot form much of an opinion.
 (78) There is a case of your "mixing up of souls", I expect, that

that is worth considering. If she is all the better she is, they
will be tremendously happy. But when the kid comes I am
half afraid that Art will feel so hopelessly jubilant that he will
have to get drunk. I hope not, though, as a wife sometimes
fats to appreciate such emphasis. I am pretty sure that it
would go down with me, even if a woman - but is, if it got to
be anything like a juridical affair.

I think I have written enough to bother you for a
good long hour, so will stop. If my letters are hard to read,
try at least afford a change of occupation. Don't mind me any
more of that big, bellying, chirography of yours, but write as you
used to before the devil put his last crooked into your head.
Prize me, it takes all the character out of a letter, no matter what
you say. Mon the kid, it leads you into the prof-decay. Had you
an evening a letter of unpalatable length, when you are not,
find out about your train and get your passage in order for
the 30th.

Sincerely
E.A.R.