

Author's Alterations

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*From Ralph Waldo Emerson**October 25, 1843*

Concord, Oct 25, 1843-

Dear Henry,

I have your letter this evening by the advent of Mrs Fuller to Ellery C.s¹ and am heartily glad of the robust greeting. Ellery brought it me & as it was opened wondered whether he had not some right to expect a letter. So I read him what belonged to him. He is usually in good spirits & always in good wit, forms stricter ties with George Minott, and is always merry with the dulness of a world which will not support him.² I am sorry you will dodge my hunters T. & W.³ W. T. is a very satisfactory^e person, only I could be very willing he should read a little more. he speaks seldom but easily & strongly, & moves like a deer. H James⁴ too has gone to England- I am the more sorry because you liked him so well. In Concord no events. We have had the new Hazlitt's Montaigne which contained the "Journey into Italy"-new to me, & the narrative of the death of the renowned friend Etienne de la Boétie. Then I have had Saadi's *Gulistan* Ross's translation; and Marot; & Roman de la Rose; and Robert of Gloucester's rhymed Chronicle.⁵ Where are my translations of Pindar for the Dial?⁶ Fail not to send me something good & strong. They send us the "Rivista Ligure," a respectable magazine from Genoa; "la Democratie Pacifique," a bright daily paper from Paris; the Deutsche Schnellpost,-German New York paper; and Phalanx from London;⁷ the New Englander^e from New Haven, which angrily affirms that the Dial is not as good as the Bible.⁸ By all these signs we infer that we make some figure in the literary world, though we are

not yet encouraged by a swollen subscription list. Lidian says she will write you a note herself. If, as we have heard, you will come home to Thanksgiving, you must bring something that will serve for Lyceum lecture⁹—the craving thankless town!

Yours affectionately
Waldo Emerson—

Henry Thoreau

Correspondent: See p. 53.

¹ Margaret Crane Fuller (1789-1859) was Ellery Channing's mother-in-law.

² Emerson habitually recorded Ellery Channing's witticisms in his journal; entries from this period contain these two comments by Channing: "Wordsworth writes like a man who takes snuff" and "Writers never do any thing: they are passive observers. Some of them seem to do, but they do not; H[enry] will never be a writer he is as active as a shoemaker" (*JMN*, 9:41; 9:45).

³ William Tappan and Giles Waldo had been deer hunting in Hamilton County, New York; each shot a deer.

⁴ Henry James Sr.

⁵ Emerson had borrowed these books from the Harvard library on October 4. William Hazlitt (1811-1893), son of the famous essayist, produced editions of a number of French authors, including *The Complete Works of Michael de Montaigne* (1842). "A Diary of the Journey of Michael de Montaigne into Italy," translated by Hazlitt, appears in this edition (pp. 523-629); the account of Étienne de la Boétie's life appears in a letter from Montaigne to his father (pp. 630-635). *The Gulistan, or Flower-Garden, of Shaikh Sadī of Shiraz*, translated from Persian by James Ross, was published in London in 1823 (Emerson wrote an introduction for a later edition of the work, published by Ticknor and Fields in 1865). The volume by the poet Clément Marot (1496-1544) that Emerson borrowed is possibly the first volume of either *Œuvres complètes de Clément Marot* (1824) or *Œuvres de Clément Marot* (1731). Emerson also borrowed volume 1 of Dominique Martin Méon's edition of *Le Roman de la Rose* (1814) and both volumes of *Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle* (1724).

⁶ T's translations, "Pindar" and "Fragments of Pindar," appeared in the January 1844 (pp. 379-390) and April 1844 (pp. 513-514) numbers of the *Dial* respectively (see *Translations* 1986, pp. 111-127, 129-131).

⁷ Emerson had received issues of these foreign journals in exchange for issues of the *Dial*. *Rivista Ligure* was published in Genoa from 1843 to 1846 by the Società di Letture e Conversazioni Scientifiche. *La Démocratie Pacifique*, Victor Considérant's Fourierist paper, ran from 1843 to 1851. The semiweekly *Deutsche Schnellpost*, then edited by Wilhelm von Eichthal, was published in New York City from 1843 to 1851. The *London Phalanx* was published from April 3, 1841, to May 1843.

⁸ *The New Englander* was founded in January 1843 by Edward Royall Tyler (1800-1848), an 1825 Yale graduate and a Congregational minister, and continued until 1892; its supporters, mostly Yale graduates, included Horace Bushnell. The October 1843 issue published "A Plain Discussion with a Transcendentalist" (pp. 502-516), in which "Mr. A.," a Transcendentalist, and "Mr. B.," an opponent, debate. After Mr. A. avers that "The Dial is a clear indication that there is still faith, genius and inspiration among us," Mr. B. retorts: "To place the Dial and the Bible, as it respects their inspiration, on the same footing, is certainly intelligible, and in all other respects is truly transcendental. Pardon me, Mr A., but I must ask you if you are serious in this?" (pp. 513-514).

⁹ T went home for Thanksgiving and lectured at the Concord Lyceum on November 29; his lecture was on "Ancient Poets." He included portions of the lecture in the January 1844 *Dial* essay "Homer. Ossian. Chaucer." (pp. 290-305; see *Early Essays* 1975, pp. 154-173) and later included passages from the essay in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

Copy-text: ALS (NN-BGC, Henry David Thoreau Collection, 1837-1917, Series IV)

Published: "Emerson-Thoreau Correspondence," *AM* 69 (May 1892): 595-596; *Cor* 1958, 148-149; *Letters of RWE* 1990-1995, 7:572-574

Editor's Notes

This letter is addressed "Henry D. Thoreau. / Castleton. / Staten Island. / N.Y."

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