

To Ralph Waldo Emerson

March 1, 1843

Wednesday Evening

Dear Friend

I have time to write a few words about the Dial^a. I have just received the first 3 signatures—which do not yet complete Lane's piece¹. He will place five hundred copies for sale at Monroe's bookstore—² Wheeler has sent you two full sheets—more about the German universities—and proper names which will have to be printed^a in alphabetical order for convenience,—what this one has done that one is doing—and the other intends to do—Hammer Purgstall (von Hammer)³ may be one for ought I know. However there are two or three things in it as well as names— One of the books of Herodotus⁴ is discovered to be out of place. He says something about having sent to Lowell by the last steamer a budget of Literary news which he will have communicated to you ere this.⁵

Mr Alcott has a letter from Heraud and a book written by him—The Life of Savonarola—which he wishes to have republished here— Mr Lane will write a notice of it.⁶ The latter says that what is in the N.Y. post office *may* be directed to Mr. Alcott.

Miss Peabody has sent a "Notice^a to the readers of the Dial"⁷—which is not good.

Mr Chapin lectured this evening—but so rhetorically—that I forgot my duty and heard very little.⁸

I find myself better than I have been—and am meditating some other method of paying debts than by lectures and writing which will only do to talk about— If any thing of that "other" sort should come to your ears in N.Y. will you remember it for me?⁹

Excuse this scrawl which I am writing over the embers in the dining room. I hope that you live on good terms with yourself and the gods—

Yrs in haste
Henry.

Correspondent: See p. 53.

¹ Charles Lane, "A. Bronson Alcott's Works," *Dial* 3 (April 1843): 417-454.

² James Munroe (1808-1861) founded his Boston and Cambridge firm in the early 1830s. In 1843 he and his partner, William H. Dennett, were located at 134 Washington Street in Boston and in the Lyceum Building, Harvard Square, Cambridge.

³ Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856) was an Austrian orientalist. Emerson owned a copy of his *Geschichte der Schönen Redekünste Persiens* (Wien: Heubner und Volke, 1818). Wheeler did not mention him in his "Literary Intelligence" column for the April number.

⁴ T apparently omitted the information about Herodotus, for it does not appear among the discussions of German writers and books in "Literary Intelligence" in the April 1843 *Dial* (pp. 541-544).

⁵ Both Emerson and James Russell Lowell had asked Wheeler for literary news from Germany, Emerson for the *Dial* and Lowell for his new magazine the *Pioneer*. Despite an understanding that Emerson had the right to Wheeler's letters, Robert Carter, acting as Lowell's editor, published in the March 1843 *Pioneer* some material ("Letters from Germany," pp. 143-144) from Wheeler's correspondence that had appeared in "Literary Intelligence" in the January 1843 *Dial* (pp. 387-397).

⁶ John Abraham Heraud (1799-1887), whom Alcott met in England, was a poet, dramatist, and editor. He was a friend of the Carlyles' and had recently edited the *Monthly Magazine*. In his review for the April 1843 *Dial*, Charles Lane wrote of Heraud's *The Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola* (London: Whittaker, 1843): "The present volume, though in its pains-taking erudition it grows occasionally discursive, and in needless efforts to prove that the Roman Catholic Church is really the protestant establishment, becomes somewhat controversial, is yet a valuable addition to our standard literature" (p. 540).

⁷ Peabody's notice did not appear in the April *Dial*.

⁸ Edwin Hubbell Chapin (1814-1880), a Universalist minister, lectured before the Concord Lyceum on March 1. Chapin held pulpits in Virginia and Massachusetts before moving to New York City. He was known as an accomplished speaker.

⁹ Emerson arranged for T to move to Staten Island to live with William Emerson and work as a tutor for his son William.

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

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Editor's Note

PE supplies the date "March 1, 1843" based on T's reference to Chapin's lecture.

Author's Alterations

Dial] dial

printed] followed by cancelled for

Notice] notice

To Richard Frederick Fuller

April 2, 1843

Concord April 2nd 1843

Dear Richard,

I was glad to receive a letter from you, so bright and cheery. You speak of not having made any conquests with your own spear or quill as yet, but if you are tempering your spear-head^e during these days, and fitting a straight and tough shaft thereto, will not that suffice? We are more pleased to consider the hero in the forest cutting cornel or ash for his spear, than marching in triumph with his trophies. The present hour is always wealthiest when it is poorer than the future ones, as that is the pleasantest site which affords the pleasantest prospects.

What you say about your studies furnishing you with a "mimic idiom" only, reminds me that we shall all do well if we learn so much as to talk-to speak truth. The only fruit which even much living yields seems to be often only some trivial success—the ability to do some slight thing better. We make conquest only of husks and shells for the most part—at least apparently—but sometimes these are cinnamon and spice, you know. Even the grown hunter you speak of slays a thousand buffaloes and brings off only their hides and tongues. What immense sacrifices—what hecatombs and holocausts the gods exact for very