

der Ireland Esq. / Examiner Office, / Manchester / England / via New York / & Steamer / 'Cambria' / March 25th"; postmarked "BOSTON Mass. MAR 24", "AMERICA LIVERPOOL AP 8 1848", and "MANCHEST{*illegible*} AP 9 1848"; and endorsed "H D Thoreau".

The leaf was folded and secured with sealing wax in six places, probably in order to enclose items Lidian Emerson sent to her husband (see "To Ralph Waldo Emerson, Before March 24, 1848," following p. 406). These may have included her letter of March 15 and 18 or her letter of March 24 (in both of these letters, Lidian refers to sending other material along with the letter). See *Letters of Lidian Jackson Emerson* 1987, pp. 141-146. Although "March 23, 1848" is written in pencil in another hand on page 1 of the manuscript, PE supplies the date "Before March 24, 1848" based on the Boston postmark.

Dear Friend] PE; Dea{MS torn} Fri{MS torn}
 Lidian] PE; Lid{MS torn}
 Eddie] PE; {MS torn}die

From Ralph Waldo Emerson

March 25, 1848

London, 25 March, 1848.

Dear Henry,

Your letter was very welcome and its introduction¹ heartily accepted. In this city & nation of pomps, where pomps too are solid, I fall back on my friends with wonderful refreshment. It is pity, however^a, that you should not see this England, with its indiscribable material superiorities of every kind; the just confidence which immense successes of all sorts have generated in the Englishman that he can do everything, and which his manners, though he is bashful & reserved, betray; the abridgment of all expression, which dense population & the roar of nations enforces; the solidity of science & merit which in any high place you are sure to find (the Church, & some effects of primogeniture excepted)²—but I cannot tell my story now. I admire the English I think never more than when I meet Americans—as, for example, at Mr Bancroft's American soiree,³ which he holds every Sunday night.— Great is the self respect of Mr Bull. He is very shortsighted & without his eye-glass cannot see as far

as your eyes, to know how you like him, so that he quite neglects that point. The Americans see very well, too well, and the travelling portion are very light troops. But I must not vent my ill humour on my poor compatriots—they are welcome to their revenge & I am quite sure have no reason to spare me if they too are at this hour writing letters to their gossips. I have not gone^a to Oxford yet, though I still correspond with my friend there, Mr Clough.⁴ I meet many young men here, who come to me simply as one of their School of thought, but not often in this class any giants. A Mr Morell who has written a History^a of Philosophy,⁵ and Wilkinson⁶ who is a Socialist now & gone to France, I have seen with respect. I^a went last Sunday for the first time to see Lane at Ham & dined with him. He was full of friendliness & hospitality has a school of 16 children, one lady as matron, then Oldham,—that is all the household.⁷ They looked just comfortable. Mr Galpin,⁸ tell the Shakers,⁹ has *married*. I spent the most of that day in visiting Hampton Court & Richmond & went also into Popes Grotto at Twickenham & saw Horace Walpoles Villa of Strawberry Hill.¹⁰

Ever Your friend,
Waldo E.

Correspondent: See p. 53.

¹ Emerson refers to T's uncharacteristically familiar salutation, "Dear Waldo," in his February 23 letter.

² Emerson sharply criticized the Church of England in *English Traits*: "when the hierarchy is afraid of science and education, afraid of piety, afraid of tradition, and afraid of theology, there is nothing left but to quit a church which is no longer one" (*The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, vol. 5, *English Traits*, ed. Philip Nicoloff, Robert E. Burkholder, and Douglas Emory Wilson [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994], p. 130). A few days after this letter to T, Emerson wrote in his journal: "Col Thompson's theory of Primogeniture, is, that it is to make one son strong enough to force the public to support all the rest" (*JMN*, 10:254).

³ George Bancroft (1800-1891), a prominent Democrat, was the American minister to Great Britain from 1846 to 1849. On March 14,

1848, Emerson dined with Thomas Babington Macaulay, Christian Karl Josias von Bunsen (the Prussian ambassador to Great Britain), Richard Monckton Milnes, and others at the Bancrofts' home. Bancroft had served as secretary of the navy; he wrote a ten-volume *History of the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1834-1875).

⁴ Emerson went to Oxford on March 30 for a short visit. Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861), a poet, held a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, from 1842 to 1848. He and Emerson were together in Paris later in the spring. In October 1852 Clough came to the United States, visited Emerson, and settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts, until July 1853.

⁵ John Daniel Morell (1816-1891), a Nonconformist minister, published *An Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*. In his journal, Emerson included Morell in a list of "men of literary & social note" who, "dull & mediocre," owed their fame to "a sort of beaver activity & not by any superiority of talent to the masses among which their names resounded" (*JMN*, 10:300).

⁶ James John Garth Wilkinson (1812-1899), a homeopathic doctor and a Swedenborgian, was close to Henry James Sr. and to Carlyle. In his journal, Emerson called Wilkinson "the scholar, the catholic cosmic intellect, Bacon's own son, the Lord Chief Justice on the muses' Bench" (*JMN*, 10:146).

⁷ In 1838, James Pierrepont Greaves founded an experimental school at Ham Common, Surrey, near London. Named "Alcott House" and founded on the educational principles of Alcott and of the Swiss educational reformer Johann Pestalozzi, the school drew together a band of reformers that included Charles Lane and William Oldham (1790-1879), a failed hat manufacturer. After Greaves died in 1842, Oldham continued as the school's business manager. When Lane returned to England, he taught again at Alcott House until Oldham closed it in 1848 or 1849. Thereafter, Lane resumed his work as editor of the *London Mercantile Price Current*.

⁸ Tilton speculates that this is William Galpin, an associate of Robert Owen (*Letters of RWE* 1990-1995, 8:165n93).

⁹ The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, known as the Shakers, was founded by "Mother" Ann Lee (1736-1784), who settled her group in Watervliet, New York, in 1776. Ann Lee organized a community in Harvard, Massachusetts, as early as 1781; by 1791 she and her followers had built a meeting house and were constructing a Shaker village.

¹⁰ Emerson had visited several sites in the London borough of Richmond upon Thames. Hampton Court, near Richmond in Sur-

rey, dates from the sixteenth century, when Henry VIII appropriated it from Cardinal Wolsey. On his property in Twickenham, Alexander Pope built a tunnel to connect his villa with his extensive garden. In the middle of the tunnel he constructed a grotto, which he decorated elaborately. Horace Walpole had his home at Strawberry Hill, also in Twickenham, transformed into a gothic castle in an elaborate construction project that lasted from 1747 to 1792. The building was the model for his popular novel *The Castle of Otranto: A Story*, trans. William Marshal (Dublin: J. Hoey et al., 1765).

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

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Author's Alterations

however] that
gone] been
History] history
I] preceded by cancelled But

From Harrison Gray Otis Blake

Before March 27, 1848

It' has revived in me a haunting impression of you, which I carried away from some spoken words of yours. . . . When I was last in Concord, you spoke of retiring farther from our civilization. I asked you if you would feel no longings for the society of your friends. Your reply was in substance, "No, I am nothing." That reply was memorable to me. It indicated a depth of resources, a completeness of renunciation, a poise and repose in the universe, which to me is almost inconceivable; which in you seemed domesticated, and to which I look up with veneration. I would know of that soul which can say "I am nothing." I would be roused by its words to a truer and purer life. Upon me seems to be dawning with new significance the idea that God is here; that we have but to bow before Him