

Wayville N. Y.

Aug. 28. 1889.

My dear Sister:

I have just returned after a month in Putnam and find your letter.

I am sorry you feel offended for no offence was intended.

I think you are too sensitive. There was no purpose to reflect on your own free will on your originality. If you had talked with me and obtained the same ideas - or rather put your own thought upon the same tracks you would never have thought of regarding it as an impropriety that you should throw that impression into such form. Now, I write you as I would have spoken only more plainly and fully.

I believe I have a right to a specific place in American literature because of the critical quality of my work, and I meant only to point out in what its merits lay.

This is the sort of prefatory essay — with the specific one — which I think you should append to your work. That is what I meant to say.

Now, a word as to yourself. I never wish any that you are too modest or too scrupulous. No one can be. But there is something you owe yourself. The tendency of our criticism is somewhat too much toward form and you have hardly escaped it. It would be of advantage to you especially to know the <sup>1</sup> known that you went beyond this — or rather avoided something else with it.

A thoughtful, tender, appreciative  
review of my life and work  
would be a fitting introduction  
to your work as well as afford  
a raison d'être for the work.  
In short, it would finish it actual-  
ly.

Why should you not take  
from my thought, what I am saying  
to you as my friend but could  
not say to a stranger? Have I  
not a right to give you a thought  
— a word — a sentence? I do not  
ask you, remember, to say what  
you do not believe or feel or  
to say it in a way you do  
not approve. I only suggest the  
form the character and say "Here

is a lot of material & cannot  
use: if you want any or all  
of it, take it and use it: it  
is yours." -

Suppose we were lapidaries instead  
of authors and you had in hand  
a certain jewel, to which I sug-  
gested a pendant, gave you  
a drawing of it and said:  
"Here is a handful of stones of all  
sorts which I cannot use; take  
them and make this pendant: it  
will improve your jewel: be of  
value to you and a pleasure  
to me." Would that hurt your  
author's pride? Go a step further

suppose the jewel on which you  
were engaged was a medallion  
portrait or setting of a portrait  
of myself? would you still feel  
hurt at my suggestion?

The same is true of the "Admiral"  
matter. You have thought about  
me: I have opened my heart to  
you. You know what I have  
~~tried to do~~ as well as what  
I have done; you are able to  
measure the character of both.  
Are you to be hurt or be  
silent because I have done  
so, simply because I have

often more freely by me  
than I could to others.

Above all are you to miss  
an opportunity to show that you  
can do light, neat, work merely  
for a chance to display our best  
term ~~be~~ <sup>at</sup> ~~of~~ usefulness  
of any implication of incompleteness?  
You can do what you

stubbornly assert that you  
I know how you feel. I have been a pecked  
cannibal, if you will.  
lobster all my life. This is a sort of morbid inheritance  
- a pride which shrinks from the slightest  
Every author like every  
intimation of using what is not staked out,  
business man must be  
marked at the corners and covered  
sometimes a borrower.  
by a recorded description. I doubt if it has  
proprietorship very happiness you can see it has  
sometimes be payo every  
not advanced my needs.

the highest usury - loss of self-direction, independence - and becomes a slave in style manner, thought. But he who takes from a friend what the friend cannot use, and uses his friends' thought not as a sycophant nor as a thief - but as a friend, - that man has no need to disown what his hand does.

Yours truly & humbly  
H. W. Longin