

Ms. A. 1. 1. v. 9, p. 56B

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Roxbury, Dec. 11, 1877.

My Dear Fanny:

Your descriptive letter, received this morning, gives the particulars of your going to Chester with a large and gay party to see the launching of the Oregon, which, unluckily, failed to come off. The disappointment all round must have been very great, especially to Harry and the builders of the steamship, but it seems to have been met philosophically, and the excursion was not without its enjoyment. "Better luck next time."

Yesterday Mrs. Pitman, of Somerville, sent me a large and most artistically arranged bouquet, with a very affectionate and appreciative note, with reference to the anniversary of my birth, and recalling "the days of auld lang syne." You know I always supposed, up

to a late period, that I was born on the 10th of December, but the town records at Newburyport make the date Dec. 12th; so I have the choice of two days, but, on the whole, am inclined to abide by the latter as to the day, though not as to the year, which is still problematical between 1804 and 1805.

I sent you, a few days since, a copy of the Literary World, containing some well-deserved tributes to Whittier by Longfellow and others, in anticipation of the completion of his 70th birthday on the 17th inst.; but it may have miscarried, as you make no reference to it. If so, by apprising me of the fact I will send you another copy.

I have sent a letter, declining to attend the celebration of Forefathers' Day at New York by the New England Society, though acknowledging the compliment of the invitation. They not

only invited me to be present, but also to speak on the occasion. It seems that President Hayes and Secretary Evans have promised to be there. It is an easy and a cheap thing to commemorate the deeds and virtues of other generations.

Should everything seem favorable, I shall probably be with you on the evening of December 22d, to remain until about New Year's Day. I shall be glad to inspect your new apartments, which no doubt will be found to be very pleasant.

We may soon expect more or less severe wintery weather, and it is of the first importance that Harry should guard himself against any needless exposure. This he understands, no doubt, as I am sure you do.

Our city election is going on to-day. The excitement is great as to whether Pierce or Prince shall be Mayor, and the result quite uncertain.

We were much amused with your account of the condition of your reception room when Gov. Chamberlain and his handsome wife called upon you. No marvel that he looks worn and stricken, in view of the terrible strain put upon him while in office in South Carolina.

I am going this evening, with William, Ellie and Frank, to hear Mr. Herman Linde, a German who has perfectly mastered our language in an incredibly short period, recite and declaim from memory alone the entire play of Julius Cæsar. He is a phenomenon, has a magnificent voice and a fine presence, and can repeat by heart no less than fifty-six different plays. I heard him in Macbeth, and was greatly impressed.

Tell my darling Helen I am longing to embrace her, and the dear little boys also. My regards to Harry.

Your loving Father.