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January 3.

Dear Gordon:

You are right to be annoyed. I know I'm not a satisfactory love-letter writer. I have only to glance at the published correspondence of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning to realize that the warmth of my style is not up to standard. But you know already — you have known a long time — that I am not a very emotional person. I suppose I might write a lot of such things as: "Every waking moment you are in my thoughts." "My dear boy, I can only live when you are near." But it wouldn't be absolutely true. You don't fill all my thoughts; 107 orphans do that. And I really am quite comfortably alive whether you are here or not. I have to be natural. You surely don't want me to pretend more desolation than I feel. But I do love to see you,—you know that perfectly,—and I am disappointed when you can't come. I fully appreciate all your charming qualities, but, my dear boy, I *can't* be sentimental on paper. I am always thinking about the hotel chambermaid who reads the letters you casually leave on your bureau. You need n't expostulate that you carry them next your heart, for I know perfectly well that you don't.

Forgive me for that last letter if it hurt your feel-