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A Letter from Oxford.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ATHENÆUM :

|| WONDER if anyone could write a very appreciative article about Oxford on his return from a long, bracing walk through the winter woods of a little New England village? I doubt it. You see, I tried it myself, and failed dismally. One doesn't want to be feeling too much alive when he enters upon an undertaking such as that. The nearer asleep one is, the more he appreciates this Medieval town. Perhaps before you reach the last page of this article you will be in an absolutely appreciative condition. I hope not. What I mean to say is, however, that Oxford treated as something up-to-date and strenuous does not appeal. Nor does it, as such, exist. One needs to be in a "state of mind" to enjoy either writing about, talking about, or reading about, Oxford. When I was at home I hated to have everyone asking me "how I liked Oxford." I told such abominable lies, sometimes. It just depended on how I happened to be feeling. Tuesday I would answer, "I like it fully as well as any other graveyard I have seen." Thursday I would say, "It is just the dearest old place in the world." Both of which opinions I still hold, and beg leave here to endorse—if anyone at Acadia is curious about the matter. In this paper I shall emphasize the latter view; not only because it is more appropriate for me to do so, but also because the balance in my own mind really sets oftenest in that direction. Accordingly, I shall not at this time say anything to lead you to think of Oxford as the great English emporium, where, at a very substantial profit, the words and thoughts of those wholly dead are retailed by those only partly so. I shall rather consider it in a far more romantic light—in fact as a haven of dreams—the dreams alike of young Etonians, old Oxonians, and (unarrived) Rhodes Scholars.