

Amesbury  
14 October 1865

I am grateful to the  
kind friend who writes  
me this frank & enga-  
ging letter, whose good  
sense & perfect tone  
gives it the best author-  
ity & claim. I have  
chanced to be much  
occupied since I received  
it, or it should have  
an immediate reply.

The narrative itself  
of the letter, & the verses  
it encloses, make <sup>strong</sup> ~~strong~~  
a showing on the affirma-  
tive side, that to any one  
but the author of the  
letter I should confidently  
give them as the answer  
of the oracle to the  
formal query that is put.  
In other words, happy the  
soul which is thus dis-  
satisfied, hard to please,  
& which wishes its friends  
to be as good as its thought.  
Of course, though you know  
better, you are pleased to

persist in the conceit that  
there is some magic in the  
"Atlantic" or the "Blackwood"  
Magazine, & the surface  
finish that gives papers  
currency therein. But  
this will, as it ought, look  
even comic to you, on another  
day. And I will rather  
say to you, that, being as  
you are, with so much  
sensitivity & power, you  
should seem to shine, & if  
you <sup>have</sup> had the protection &  
leisure of solitude, should clear  
to them as the rivers of what  
is best. Cities & literary  
societies are only to be

tasted as contrasts &  
indicators of the good  
we have left at home  
This is my short first  
answer to your letter,  
which I make thus  
abrupt only because  
I see that there is no  
end to the fulness of the  
truth. Meantime, I  
ask leave to retain  
for a time the verses  
you inclosed, with  
the promise that they  
shall be faithfully restored.  
If I shall find presently a  
little leisure, I shall perhaps  
add a few words to these.  
With great regard,  
Mrs Dorr. R.W. Emerson