

1893

Quernstown, July 3

My darling Helen: I was greatly pleased to get your letter and Nettie's a day or two after our arrival here - & know that you are all well and with a fair prospect of comfort for the summer. I myself can have but little news for you having as yet not left the ship. This has been partly because of a great disinclination there, but still more particularly because of some trouble with my leg which was bruised on the passage over. I paid no attention to it and supposed it was all right; but for some days it has been hurting me and I find that one or more of the glands underneath - that is, back of the knee are swollen. This is always tedious and may materially prevent my

enjoyment of Ireland. My intention is, if  
well enough, to start for the Lakes of Killarney  
on Thursday & be absent until Saturday  
night. I think I can make the trip without  
bringing much strain on the knee. Tell  
mamma there is nothing ailing the knee  
cap. Tell her also to let me know as soon  
as she hears from Little & Brown how  
the book has done this year. I see that  
the London agents are still advertising,  
which I think a good sign. I feel so poor  
both for you and myself that I hope some-  
thing helpful may turn up - I cannot  
but regret if I have to lose my last  
chance of seeing something of Europe.

During the passage over I read very dili-  
gently at the Souvenirs of the Century &  
want to caution you against what I  
think a very common fault in readers of

of poetry, viz: to read for melody and sweetness, without the mental effort necessary & realize the meaning. Such a method, robbing poetry of its intellect, soon ends in dullness. Try you and do differently. Take the very first sonnet, and bring before your imagination the two women; the garden, the rock hewn tomb. See them as in a picture. See also, what you have often seen, the faint dawning light of the day - the full moon shining in the sky - the distant hum of a great city which you have often heard - then the coming up of the band of armed men to watch over the sepulchre - the passing of the wood - the slow departure of the women. I myself viewed thus, by the aid of the musical language, & realize that scene as I never had before.

I think too I may safely say to you - Contrast the hopelessness of unbelief, the "Eat and Drink for to-morrow we die" of sonnets like 18 and 19, of 92 and 95, emphasized by their very beauty, with the victorious strain "Oh pain when is thy victory?" of 5 (which try & realize like 1) of <sup>46, 58</sup> 96, of 135. Contrast too the hopelessness of a sinful love, in that otherwise exquisite sonnet 41, with the loftiness of 13, the purity & loveliness of 57, of 137 (the latter one of the very inserted in the book to my mind) of 152, of 190. Among those that struck me also as most sweet or strong are 8, 15, 56 (requires much thought) 59, 70, 76, 84, 97, 117, 130, 136, 247, 248, 261. But indeed, my dear child, each that appeals grows stronger & smites as real & true. The old wine is better, as our Lord said; and I think the educational influence upon not only your mind but your character of frequent reading of these sonnets would be great and good.

Wednesday, July 5 I shall close now, direct Henry, so as to be sure of catching to-morrow's steamer - to-day from Liverpool. I was much disappointed not to get a letter from mamma by the White Star steamer which

passed here yesterday, having left N. Y. on  
 the 27<sup>th</sup>. You see by the enclosed slip that I am spoken  
 of as an Irish American Captain. Also, tell mamma,  
 I have had a letter from my friend O'Connor Morris, who  
 has read my Farragut with "the greatest admiration  
 and wishes I would write a proper biography of Ast-  
 son." Farragut he will review for the Academy.  
 I will send mamma soon a review in the Guardian  
 which I think was done by Major Clarke, & also  
 the second part of Col. Maurice's article. To  
 night a party of us are to dine with an  
 Irish (or English) Regiment about three miles  
 from Cork by water, and to morrow the admiral  
 & myself are to take dinner with the Lord Lieu-  
 tenant, whose yacht is lying in the harbor, on  
 the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of  
 York. You know I am not very fond of  
 this sort of thing - but it is considered  
 de rigueur not to refuse the invite of so  
 high a functionary; both occasions will

also possesses a certain interest of novelty  
for me. I am forced thus to postpone till Friday  
my start for Killarney but upon that I  
mean to put my foot down, if my knee,  
which is much better, will permit. The  
Admiral now expects to get away on Wednesday  
the 14<sup>th</sup> Novs verrous. With dearest  
love for you all

Your most loving father

A. J. Michan

July 3 - 1893

Miss Helen Evans ~~Albany~~

Queque

Long Island

N. Y.

United States of America

