

Letter by Natalie Curtis to Ferruccio Busoni (Far Rockaway/N.Y., 16 August 1915)

I have been poring anew over your Bach Inventions, and am waiting impatiently for the appearance of the Well-Tempered Clavichord!

Far Rockaway, N. Y.
August 16.
1915.

Dear Master;

we are still talking about the pleasure of having had you, your dear wife and Rayfeel with us for a few hours, and your visit will be long remembered.

I am sending you today from Harper & Bros. two little volumes of my uncle's lighter writings – one the well-known Prue and I, a picture of old New York, and the other some letters from Brook Farm, – an American experiment in communism which was to exemplify Emerson's teaching: Plain living and high thinking. To this little rural colony belonged the intel lects of the New England of these days, with Emerson nearby in Concord, as guide philosopher and friend. My two uncles, George and James Burrill Curtis, although very young men, were of that brilliant company, and the letters are the youthful descriptions of that period of my Uncle George's life. His main work was, however, devoted to political and social reform and it was as statesman and reformer that he was is perhaps best remembered, as he used his pen largely in that field. I asked Harpers to send you also a list of William Dean Howells' novels.

Mother is sending you at the same time a little description of Western life by my brother, who writes under the pseudonym Gregory Marwood. The book describes life on a cattle-ranch in Arizona; – the juxtaposition of scholar and cowboy being some what novel, the book little volume has a certain charm of its own, I think. It was written a few years ago, before my brother took up his own land-claim in Southern California; therefore it does not describe his present surroundings but those of some years ago when he was in charge of 1000 head of cattle belonging to another man. His utterly primitive mode of existence and the wild expanse of untamed nature seen through the eyes of a highly cultured man, constituting the unique inter est of the book. With affectionate greet ings to you all, – N. C.