

16 New King Street,
Bath, England, January 7, 1889.

Dear Sir:

I have very often felt that I should like to write to you and tell you how much pleasure and instruction your books have given me, and now I have determined that I will do so, because I have just read *November Boughs* and am so much pleased with it.

I have been watching for it to be published for some time, ever since I saw in *The Pall Mall Gazette* that you were engaged on it. Some of the poetical pieces in it please me greatly.

I have long cared for *Leaves of Grass* and *Specimen Days*. I love nature so much myself that there is much in *Specimen Days* that appeals to me. I have often experienced the feeling of absorbing into myself, physically and spiritually, the very life and spirit of nature. It is a thing that must be felt to be understood. The other papers in that book are interesting to me too. The broad and deep views you take of the future of democracy in America—everything connected with America—is a most interesting study to me. Your poems touch me very deeply as all true poetry that comes from the heart must do.

Please accept my best wishes that the year we have entered upon may bring to you much calm peacefulness, and that you may experi-

ence much comfort and sympathy in return for that which you have so generously given to others during your life.

I hope you will not think that I shall expect any reply to this, for I know how weak you are, and that you are not able to reply to all the letters that you receive.

I am, my dear sir, yours very truly and gratefully,

Mary Ashley.