

‘“I sint evellybody lites my letters” ‘ (xxi.9)

‘Really he is a darling, -- and is his ringlets are longer & he has learnt to read, still his eyes are blue & his simplicities as genuine. We don’t cram him & spoil him, & pull the feathers out of his angel-wings, -- no indeed! – ’ (xxi.26)

‘Penini kissed the helm of my gown yesterday, & said, “I love you so much, that I tiss your *pettitoats*.”’ (xxii.32)

‘We thought the table was going to move, it creaked & palpitated so, & perhaps it would have done it, if Robert had stayed away longer’ (xxi.35)

Crimean war and the misorganisation of the British forces; news of Florence Nightingale xxi.62

‘Robert is frantic about the Crimea’ (xxi.65)

‘When he is mild he wishes to see the ministry to be torn to pieces in the streets .. limb from limb’ (xxi.69)

Barrett: ‘I begin to despair – I begin to hate to write about it – I never could have thought such obduracy possible – such & so long! – no! not even in *him*.’ (xxi.71)

‘I like the infantine way of talking so much that I never correct it. He told me the other morning, “Isa had been showing him how to say *Lobert* ..” (Robert) “though I *said to her that mam did’nt lite me to learn how to speat*.” I could’nt help laughing.’ (xxi.73)

‘I have a trick of falling from six-story windows upon my feet’ (xxi.83)

Ruskin 4 March 1855 : ‘I am going to bind your poems in a golden binding, & give them to my class of working men – as the purest & most exalting poetry in our language’ (xxi.98)

Aurora Leigh: ‘An autobiography of a poetess – (not me) .. opposing the practical & the ideal life, & showing how the practical & real (so called) is but the external evolution of the ideal & spiritual – that it is *from inner to outer*, .. whether in life, morals, or art. A good deal, in this relation, upon the social question, & against the socialists – A good deal, in fact, about everything in the world & beyond’

[fears being anticipated by *Hard Times*, but reassured] (xxi.111)

‘Robert meant no harm by what he said about the “fuss” &c – You know his idiomatic way of talking, &, though it’s harder than Greek sometimes, you will manage to translate it’ (xxi.113)

‘Mr Hume the great medium is to be in London in the summer’ (xxi.126)

Ruskin: ‘every day I find myself more & more dried and & stiff – I hope not – in reality – worse than I was – but very much what a raisin is to a grape – (a raisin with the bloom off) and your poems make me feel fresh again’ (xxi.134)

[Wilson and Ferdinando : xxi.155]

‘Robert gets on excellently with his dictation – has about six thousand lines copied. The poems are magnificent’ (xxi.162: 19 May 1855)

‘The best news I can give you is, that Robert has printed the first half volume of his poems, & that the works looks better than ever in print, as all true work does, brought into the light [...] Has “Maud” penetrated to you? The winding up is magnificent – full of power – and there are beautiful thrilling bits before you get so far [...] People in general appear very unfavorably impressed by this poem .. *very unjustly*, Robert & I think. On some points it is even an advance. The sale is great – *nearly four thousand copies already.*’ (xxi.222)

‘Robert’s poems are in the press, & I expect a great success’ (?13 August 1855: xxi.227)

‘I find my poems are grown so considerably as to fill *two* books, *not* one. The first is before me, in the same type and form as “Maud,” but with 260 pages instead of 154: and two thirds of the second volume are printed – (it will extend to the same number of pages.’ (xxi.252)

‘My poems go under the distinctive title of “Men and Women” – they being really dramatic attempts, and not a collection of miscellanies’ (10 September 1855: xxi.258)

‘ [...] we are getting on prosperously with Robert’s work which will be out in November at farthest, in two volumes, under the name “Men & Women” .. which I think it deserves, from its extraordinary variety of life, in situation & character. I am full of hope about it, & belief in the power displayed in it – and it seems to me that the improved clearness of expression will give it a better chance than any of his former poems, with the exoteric class of readers [...] In fact “spirits” are *tabooed* in this house. I never could understand why, considering different idiosyncrasies, & unequal perceptions of truth, we should not all consent to tolerate the differing opinions of one another: but this is difficult, difficult, in practice [...] So we keep now to the many subjects we agree upon entirely.’ (18 September 1855: xxi.267).

[To Kenyon:] ‘ lyrics may be dramatic also in the highest sense [...] lyric is the oldest, most natural, most *poetical* of poetry, and I would always get it if I could: but I find in these latter days that one has a

great deal to say, and try and get attended to, which is out of the lyrical element and capability – and I am forced to take the nearest way to it’ (xxi.278)

[Errata: xxi.319-21.]

[Mrs Jameson:] ‘all judges – good judges, are agreed as to the wondrous wisdom & subtlety of thought – and *all* agree as to the obscurity in the expression of the thought – *do*, dear Browning, think of this – at the same time the style is in itself so characteristic that I know not what to say –’ (xxii.128).

[Paris, 25 June 1855 [xxi.182]; London, 13 July [xxi.203]. Paris, 17 October 1855 [xxi.315]; back to London, 28 June 1856 [xxii.254.]

Robert Bulwer Lytton to EBB : Mr Hume’s ‘“manifestations” ’ (xxi.209)

RB : ‘I should like to go and *propose* to try a simple experiment or two, but fear it is already out of my power; my wife having told one of the party that I was “unconvinced” [...] I daresay my wife will give you her own notion, which differs from mine in all respects; so are we constituted ’ (xxi.214; 215)

‘ [...] it’s a *tabooed* subject in this house, -- Robert & I taking completely different views, & he being a good deal irritated by any discussion of it’ (xxi.230).

‘the medium talked a great deal of much such twaddle as may be heard in any fifth rate conventicle. But according to my theory (well thought-out & digested) this does not militate at all against the general facts. It’s undeniable & has been from first to last, that if these are spirits, many among them talk prodigious nonsense, or rather most ordinary common-place.’ (xxi.231)

[RB confronts Home: xxi.238.]

‘I am very sorry that Hume should have failed as a man to such an extent—That he was commonplace, weak, & affected, was from the beginning sufficiently obvious to me, -- but I did suppose him to be very amiable & capable of affection...’ (28 February 1856: xxii.137)

‘Hume is morally worthless, *and* a true medium’ (29 February 1856: xxii.139)

[Alfred married:] ‘Of course he makes the third exile from Wimpole Street – the course of true love running remarkably rough in our house [...] Not that my poem is an epic [...] I flatter myself it’s a *novel* rather, -- a sort of novel in verse’ (xxi.225; 226).

'I have'nt written a line of my poem since leaving Florence – It's impossible to write or think. And yet, we have lost at last the eternal visitors, -- London being fairly emptied.' (10 September 1855: xxi.255)

'I am setting to work again – but the wheels are stiff, & require a little use after disuse, in order to move prosperously—' (xxii.55).

[fifth book finished : 'Robert praises it magnificently -- thinks it "out & out" the best thing I ever did: 27-28 February 1856: xxii.131.]

'I am hard at work & write from thirty to fifty lines a day' (1-2 April 1856: xxii.169).

'As to Robert, you must learn that he sees snakes & crocodiles in Thames water *without* the microscope – he sees in every drop of good every possibility of evil – and as to money-matters, the idea of being in a difficulty is absolutely horrible to him.' (xxi.257)

[27 September 1855: 13 Dorset Street, Marylebone Road: T reads Maud, B reads Fra Lippo Lippi: xxi.277. -- 'Think of his stopping in "Maud" every now & then – "There's a wonderful touch! That's very tender. How beautiful that is!": xxi.311.]

RUSKIN to RB 2 December 1855 : xxii.12-16; and RB to Ruskin 10 December 1855: xxii.29-31.

Ruskin sends *Modern Painters* iii (xxii. 86). On RB's understanding of painting and medievalism (xxii.90).

EBB: 'magnificent' George Sand (xxii. 34)

Dickens nearly opposite them in Paris (xxii. 39).

EBB to sister: 'Take care, Arabel, that you don't shut yourself up in churches, schools, & the rest, from the sunshine of life too much.' (xxii.221)