

Letter 7.

Post Office Dept.
Ottawa
Dec. 28 '85

Dear May,

Many thanks for the beautiful present. It was something I had not and needed. Annie and Mother gave me a copy of Dante¹ – and a young man a friend of mine here² a copy of Goethe's short novels and Tales.³ So you see, my library is increasing, which is well in as much as I have no means of increasing it myself.

I have written some but not very much since the last batch of poem[s] which I sent you to New York. I am dull and have so many things to do. My work gets better however in some respects.

They are all well at home and altogether now – a good deal of hard work going on, but also a good deal of cheerfulness.

I hope you will have all the best things of the season both mental & physical.

Your friend,
A Lampman

¹ Several translations of Dante Alighieri's *Commedia (Divine Comedy)* and *Vita Nuova (New Life)* were available in 1885.

² Almost certainly Scott, whose knowledge of German literature was extensive; see "The Character and Work of Heinrich Heine" (c. 1891) in his *Addresses, Essays and Reviews* 1: 1-29.

³ Probably the Bohn Standard Library edition of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Novels and Tales*, which was first published in 1854 and several times reprinted prior to 1885. It contains "Elective Affinities," "The Sorrows of Werther," "The Recreations of the German Emigrants," "A Fairy Tale," "The Good Women," and "A Tale."