

Hardwick Vicarage, 14 March 1873.

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My dearest Arthur

I am so sorry you should have had the trouble of sending for what I ought to have returned long ago. I always intended to do so - and have been thinking of writing from day to day. But in fact I have been very busy - a Confirmation having added to my usual pressure. The letter was very interesting - but I own I am less satisfied, or credulous - or what you may call it - than I used to be, ~~and~~ ^{since} such manifestations as these have come up - they bear so evidently the marks of ingenious deception. But, though I should distrust all the lot of mediums who professed to do such things, I am just as superstitious as ever in other matters - just as a believer in Medicine would remain unshaken by the pretensions of Quackery. -

Another reason for my silence is that I have really had very little to say - nothing worth telling you - though I might have sent you information that, after long suspense as to a substitute in my duty, we hope that we may be permitted to start for the Continent on 5 May for some 7 weeks. But right little (or rather wrong little) I fear we shall be able to see of you, for as our various stand-as presents we should reach London on the