



21 and I think Will is disappointed— He would have liked to pitch in to a couple of months of  
22 works— The more I see of him the better I understand, why he came home as he did.  
23 Having gone back from the top of the waves which he says he reached in Jan. and having  
24 made up his mind that he had secured all the good he was likely to from relaxation; he felt  
25 it incumbent upon him to waste no more time or money—and so turned his face at once  
26 towards home. I think he did wisely, and he will have a better chance here working freely,  
27 according to his strength preparing himself for next winter, than in staying on without  
28 purpose, or belief in its results.

29 Father has had another bad cold, which he finds it hard to rid of. He has had a very lively  
30 discussion lately with M<sup>r</sup> Elliot Cabot on philosophical points which has interested him  
31 very much. Will seems very much impressed with Alice's general condition. Her good  
32 health, her good spirits, her wit, her intelligence, and personal charm. He is very sweet  
33 upon her, in his own original way, and I think she enjoys very much his charming  
34 badinage—

35 We dined (Father & I) yesterday with the Bootts to meet ~~the~~ M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Charles Perkins.  
36 She has a charming expressive face, and a frank, free, friendly way with her, but she talks  
37 incessantly so much gossip, and pronounces her dictum upon every thing and every body in  
38 such an irrevocable way, that all the charm of face and manner seems to fade away— Her  
39 handsome, feeble minded husband, seemed so sweet, and unworldly beside her that one  
40 wondered how they could dwell together in the same spheres.

41 Wilky's fortunes seem to be brightening; that is if he is prudent and all things work well—  
42 He is about to leave the Rail-road altogether, and to enter a business for the making of iron  
43 chains & bolts. He tolds us of his plan when he was at home— It seems that more than a

44 year ago he borrowed \$5.000 and put it into this firm. The business was started by a young  
45 man, son of the Whaling who is one of the Kings of the Mil. & St Paul Rail road.  
46 According to Wilky this Jim Whaling, is a man of unusual business capacity, and bound to  
47 succeed. He has great advantages in making contracts for work with rail-roads through his  
48 father. They have had a remarkably good start, in spite of the panic, which crippled them  
49 for a few months. Wilky is so sanguine that one can place no reliance upon his judgment,  
50 and little upon his prudence; but he is to do the routine work which will make things much  
51 safer—and Bob who I feared would be very much opposed to the move, says in a letter this  
52 morning, that he thinks with prudence he thinks Wilk's prospects are fair—  
53 I had a letter yesterday from Aunt Mary—inclosing a photo. of M<sup>r</sup> Tweedy, with his hair  
54 parted in the middle, trying to look very young, but looking very grey and strangely older.  
55 She says she hopes to meet you in England before you come home— Alice got this  
56 morning a few lines from Bessie Ward enclosing a photograph of herself, and speaking of  
57 the illness of her lover, who she says is “almost out of danger” Poor child, she says expect  
58 to live half the year on one of the Baron's Estates in the neighbourhood of Dresden, and  
59 spend her winters in Rome— She seems to cling to her old friends, her early ones. À  
60 propos of photographs you were visited in getting Will's letter by quite a family party— I  
61 hope you felt at home among them— They were none of them good, but Alice's; and I  
62 think we have a large one of her which is still better. Remember how hard a subject I am,  
63 and be think even for this one of  
64 Your loving Mother

## Notes

1-2 20 Quincy St | Cambridge • Letterhead stationery

5 Your letter of March 7<sup>th</sup> • Henry James to Henry James, Sr., and Mary Walsh James, 9 March 1874

9 Will wrote to you at once about the success of your application to Howells • Henry James had been negotiating with *Scribner's Monthly* to publish a serial novel, but in his 10 March [1874] letter to William Dean Howells, James had offered the novel (which would appear as *Roderick Hudson*) to *Atlantic Monthly*, and Howells had accepted it; William James's letter, apparently communicating Howells's acceptance to Henry James, is lost (see also Henry James to his parents, 9 March 1874; Henry James to William James, 22 March [1874]; and Henry James to William Dean Howells, 3 May [1874])

13 The daily Advertiser this morning • "Current Literature," *Boston Daily Advertiser* 3 April 1874 (p. 1, col. 3), discusses among other subjects Henry James's April 1874 *North American Review* essay (326-56) on Turgenev, "Frühlingsfluthen. Ein König Lear des Dorfes. Zwei Novellen. Von Iwan Turgéniew"

13 N. A. R. • *North American Review*

15 Md. de Mauves • "Mme. de Mauves," *Galaxy* February, March 1874: 216-33, 354-74

35 M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Charles Perkins • Charles Elliot Perkins (1843-1925) was president of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad; his wife, Edith Forbes Perkins was a niece of railroad magnate John Murray Forbes (1813-1898)

53 Aunt Mary • Mary Temple Tweedy

56 Bessie Ward • Daughter of Anna Hazard Barker Ward and Samuel Gray Ward (1817-1907), old friends of Henry James, Sr.

57 her lover • Monsieur de Schönberg, Bessie Ward's fiancé

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