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Letter from Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) to Joseph H. Twichell, March 4, 1900

Samuel L. Clemens

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Wellington Court
Knightsbridge, March 4th.

Dear Joe:

Henry Robinson's death is a sharp wound to me, & it goes very deep. I had a strong affection for him, & I think he had for me. Every Friday, three-fourths of the year for 16 years he was of the billiard party in our house. When we came home, how shall we have billiard nights again — with no Ned Bruce & no Henry Robinson? I believe I could not endure that. We must find another use for that room. Susy is gone, George is gone, Tibby Kamensky, Ned Bruce, Henry Robinson. The friends are passing, one by one, our house where such
except the Clouds away & there are now no uncheerful faces. For three months the private dinner parties (we go to no public ones) have been Lodges of Sorrow, but just a little depressing sometimes—but now they are simply & animates again. Oh, do you know the Irish gentleman & the Irish lady, the Scotch gentleman & the Scotch lady? These are Darlings, every one. Right before last it was all Irish—24. One would have to travel for race & sociability & animation & sparkle & absence of shyness & self-consciousness. It was American in these fine qualities. This was at Mr. Lecky’s. He is Irish, you know. Last night it was Irish again, at Lady Gregory’s. Lord Roberts is Irish; Sir William
worn blood and such dear blood flowered so freely, is become a cemetery. But not in any repel-

lent sense. Our dead we welcome there; their life made it beautiful, their death has hallowed it; we shall have them with us always, and there will be no more parting.

It was a moving address you made over Wm. Cheney,—

that fortunate youth! Like Susy, he got out of life all that was worth the living, got his great reward before he crossed the tropic frontier of dreams and entered the Sahara. In fact, the deep consciousness of Susy's good fortune is a constant com-

fort to me.

London is happy-hearted at last. The British victories have
a disportion of the Butler, & Kitchener, I think; & the other prominent Generals are of Irish & Scotch breed—keeping up the traditions of Wellington & Sir Colin Campbell of the Muntanya. You will have noticed that in S. A., as in the Muntanya, it is usually the Irish & the Scotch that are placed in the fore-front of the battle. An Irish friend of mine says this is because the Kelt is a Scotist, & a Thracian, with age-old heroisms, to emulate & keep bright before the world; but that the low-class Englishman is dull & without ideals, fighting blind-dogishly while he has a leader, but losing his head & going to pieces when his leader falls—not so with the Kelt. Sir Wm. Butler said "The Kelt is the spear-head of the British lance."

Love from all. Mark.