

Wellesley Hills, Mass.

April 19, 1929

Dear Mrs. Simpson:-

I very greatly appreciated the kindness of your writing and the frank cordiality of your letter. It is rare that the relatives of a great man relish the treatment that he gets at the hands of a biographer and the charity you show is by no means what I have always experienced. I certainly have no disposition to seek for anything but the truth, but truth has sometimes a very <sup>different</sup> aspect to the outside searcher and to the members of <sup>a</sup> man's family who share intimate recollections of him. Also, I always feel very keenly the limitation which, as you suggest, comes from working entirely with books. Being a confirmed invalid, obliged to do my work almost exclusively in my own study, I miss the vivifying influence which would come from the contact with other critics and especially from the local atmosphere in places so fresh and redolent with personal association as Ashland and Lexington must necessarily be.

I shall take pains to have "Lavinia" altered to "Lucretia" in any later printings of the book. I stupidly followed Rogers in His "Rxeal Henry Clay", instead of the much more careful and authoritative Schurz. I should have investigated more widely. You note that I do not say the punch-bowl was a fact, but merely intimate it as an imaginative conjecture, which is perhaps permissible under the circumstances.

I envy you the pleasure of working with so much original material in regard to Mrs. Clay. I could easily divine that she was a woman of character and charm and her letters must be full of fascinating revelations, most of all perhaps in regard to her husband. I am sure you