94 Arnold St.
Providence R.I.
March 31/91

Dear Mr. Bates:

Can you send me the Commonwealth copy of your Lucile Thursday or by Saturday? And also have you an extra copy of the Life of Mr. Fields? I never saw that at all. Has there been any comment made upon your little silken scathe of Longfellow's Burns?

I wish you could change "sting" - Swinburne & his followers turn just it & such use. Use it his speed thin thoughts in words only. Thy are dominated by his desire & his strong & original, & not by his thoughts personality itself, & thus are left bare & reserve in manner which is so balanced between Nature & artifice & Art!

I could take Yarrow, or Water parties Poems, which I am sorry I did not & you for sweetly suggesting. The Drowsy little poem, & your talk of your doves, etc. has been a real inspiration to me. Do finish your Book! Especially the opening chapter of Wordsworth's Poems which is more than praise for its gratitude.

Cordially Yours
Thos Bailey Aldrich

I remember noticing the line specially in that poem, that was simply an absurdity of common-place prose. But after all when you say that Longfellow has got through with his inspiration etc. - did not he always write in the common place like this? Witness Hiawatha! That stuff, am I unfair? His "White Swan" I mean is good - as good as anything he ever wrote.

The little poem you repeated to me the other day haunts me with its spirit & its melody. I have had plenty of waits of regret & remorse & repentance, but this my first & last conclusion was now in its reserve & expression right all concentrated in a few words. What is true nature, & how rare it is to see the expression of nature in verse or universe. It is something of this which Wordsworth means when he says "Of the rich - how much more it has for its base the sympathy of the majority - commonly enough, he strives both these together & both their own." which is only another way of saying in that expression American can shd always stop over". By the way - did he tell - Watts or Osgood comment on Col. Higginson "He stops over"? I hope you'll send me the little poem. I have one word of it however