

Henry Kerr McGoodwin to Florence Ragland, 18 March 1894

16 Durham St., Boston

Sunday, March 18, 1894.

Fair Miss:

Your letter written
the last day of '93 is before
me. For a good while
you have been on – in – my
mind, so to speak, and
now I'm going to knock
you highern a kite.

Far be it from
me that I should hold or
believe that woman is
Gods best gift to man.
Au contraire. Far be it
from me that I should
hold or believe anything.
I don't even believe that.
And if so, what fur.

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Speaking of best gifts be-
 ing wimmen, that reminds
 me of one I see occasion-
 ally out on Copley Square.
 I ain't goin' to waste
 this good paper trying to
 show you how she looks.
 Tennyson himself couldn't
 do it. Suffice it tew say,
 that if I wuz worth millions,
 I wouldn't buy a thing but
 just her.

Revered Miss, it was
 mighty considerate of you
 to fire the first gun. There
 are but two other young wo-
 men living who care enough
 for my worship to do such a
 thing. Revered Miss, I thank
 thee right much.

Foh! Revered Miss,
 your generally sound taste
 does not extend to sound
 ideas on the matter of
 First Love Letters. However I
 shall not treasure this
 up against you, as I have

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yet to meet the woman with
 good discrimination on
 matters literary. By
 Mabel's eye-lashes
 they all like "First
 Violin." Now by the Great
 Horn Spoon First Violin &
 Co are the onions of lit-
 erary cuisine. Ba - oh!
 By all the crocodile tears
 anybody who can stomach
 the "First Violin" would
 like "New South" architecture
 or even pour cream on
 strawberries!

Woman's taste is
 good on most things. And
 they can appreciate a
 good thing. But hate a
 bad one, never! Witness
 their indiscriminate ugliness
 in dress. I mean their
 indiscriminate ugliness of
 dressing. Woman likes a
 beautiful thing, but she
 much prefers a hideous one.

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Revered Miss, I tell you
it is to your honor that
you are at home in Mother
Goose before Browning.
Old Voltaire said once –
“All the reasoning of men
are not worth one sentiment
of woman.” You catch my
idea. Of course you should
and do know some Browning
too. But architecturally
speaking, Mother Goose is a
mass; Browning is a detail.

Heaven be praised
that you didn't follow the
advice of Mr Downer and
make your letter “on the
order of a literary production.
We will not do this to each other,
hein? We'll leave this to the
Wellesley girls “et aliter”
who are a little stupider
than we, hein?

Respected Miss,

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Tempus fugit. This will bring
my Easter wishes to you. And
you will remember
me to my sweet hearts
and the fellers.

Tell Henry Ragland
that if I ever come to
town again, we'll go out
to triflin Watt's.

H. McGoodwin

Miss Florence Ragland
Bowling Green
Kentucky.