Interview with Robinson

Mrs. Robinson says that the collection contains the correspondence of different authors with their publishers, for instance, that of Scott with Constable, the document in which Scott turns over to Constable the proceeds of his writings to clear up debts. That of Hawthorne with Ticknor; of Mark Twain with Harpers. She speaks of a letter of Washington.

She was forced to leave the Young library work by ill health & was there at the time of Madame Curie's visit. Says that Young left Madame Curie with a friend, Mademoiselle, of the institution and came and seated himself by her. "Won't you be glad," I asked,"when you have Madam back safe in New York?" "Oh," he said, "she is no trouble. It is never any trouble to look after real people - and she is the real thing."

Mrs. R. thinks that Curie enjoyed herself, particularly at Pauline. You probably have the secret in the fact that she realized that Young was the real thing, was not fussy over her, advertising himself by throwing himself off, as I fancy must happen to her sometimes.

Mrs. R. draws a lovely picture of O.D.Y. and his mother here in New York. "About nine o'clock," she says,"Mrs. Young would come down with her knitting, a long grey sock that she was always at. "What she can ever do with them I can't imagine. Mr. Young would be there reading, looking at his books. She would seat herself by the fire. There would be no conversation, particularly no words were passed between them. And at ten o'clock or so she
would get up and say, 'Well, good night Mother.' And she would say, 'Good night.' After he had gone she would knit awhile and then get up and say, 'Owen and I had a nice visit tonight,' and retire. I would say to her, 'Yes, you kept up such a chatter that I could scarcely carry on my work.'"

The sense of one another - their satisfaction of being side by side is genuine and lovely.

Speaking of his luck, though this seems to have been Mrs. Y.'s luck. She tells of her having been one day in Spencer's in London. Spencer has no interest in Carroll but Mr. & Mrs. Young are devoted to "Alice in Wonderland." She discovered a big pile of prints scattered on a table. "Could she look them over." Going through them she found some forty of the original drawings made for Alice in Wonderland by Tenniel these with printer's corrections and the first plates were in this set. Mrs. Robinson is keen on the excitement of book collecting and if I do a chapter on the library and its contents I should certainly talk with her.

She speaks of the restrained character of the Y's. Never show their emotions. Is particularly impressed with this in Josephine. It is evident from Josephine's eyes that she has strong, almost burning feelings, but she keeps it under absolute control. Mrs. R. says that when she was a child and things went wrong she was suffering - would say nothing to anybody but go to her room and throw herself across the bed until she had it out.

Mrs. R. thinks that Dick has a remarkable mind. She thinks it is the finest mind that she has ever come in contact
with. Speaks of his devotion to Margaret, his unwillingness to be away from her as a child.

She says, as others have, that Mrs. Young, herself, is a woman of unusual poise - sense - cultivation - that she was a brilliant student. The tradition of her in St. Lawrence is that she was the most brilliant student they had ever had. This is something like Mrs. McClure's reputation at Knox. Mrs. R. says she is older than Young, who is now fifty-six. I did not quite understand, but I think she said at least five years older. Dick is now eleven, was born after she had ceased to expect children evidently and there are some ten or twelve years between him and next older boy.

She says John, the one that was killed, was one of the handsomest boys she had ever seen, and remarkably intelligent. Mrs. Robinson, who evidently has large familiarity with the oriental province, says that O.D.Y. has unerring tastes, that is he selects a fan it is the most beautiful fan - it he selects a bit of carving it is a perfect carving. She has known one other person, a woman, in all her experiences of objects who were so sure in picking out the right thing.

I find that the Robinson with whom I talked at Schenectady is a son of these people. I tell them how much I like him. Seems that O.D.Y. is interested in seeing that the St. Lawrence people get a look in on what is fine. Mrs. R. has superintended two or three exhibits there - one of his books and manuscripts. That was when the collection was much less full
than now. Another of oriental objects, particularly a selection of snuff bottles, Japanese treasures, gathered by some rich relative of her, I gather - not quite sure on this point. The real matter is, however, his interest in taking the best to St. Lawrence.
Interview with Robertson's

Met Miss Russell and the Robertson's at Arts Club for dinner - indefinite things came. More than that is the satisfaction of seeing those who have been so close to Y. Mr. Robertson was born at Canton or near - lived in Canton when Y. was in College or University. This is a Universalist school and there were only about ninety students there when O.D.Y. came in 1890. There are now some five or six hundred. R. is about twenty years older than Y. "So of course he was only one of the boys to me. I lived near where he lived at that time and used to see him going in and out. Tall, lanky chap." Has no positive recollections at all, though I think if one could talk with him away from his loquacious wife, full of definite recollections of Y. that you might get a good deal. Very modest man.

Mrs. R. is another proposition. She was a librarian - says she used to see going in and out of the library, probably City library, I did not find out. She was Young's librarian in the years when he began the present collection. Says that she made the Kipling collection. She is deeply interested in his books - called my attention to a Whitman letter to his mother in which he describes Lincoln as he goes through the streets of Washington. Think this is in "Leaves of Grass." It is possible - she thinks she can get a copy of it.

She says that she had many excitements as a collector. One particular one is connection with Long's Day Book. They found that he had cut out from a Portuguese book, as I understand it,
not very definite, an item and pasted it on his sheet with a comment. A few months later Young told her he had ordered a copy of this book from which the item in the Day Book had been cut out. Mrs. R. did not say anything to him but she was excited by the fact that it might be the same copy. "I did not say that," Laura said. "I bought the book because it was said to be from Long's own library."

When the book arrived he told her, "You may open it." It seems to have been a great favor because she says he loves to open his own packages - to be the first to handle them. She opened the book and said, "There that is just what I thought it might be." Showed him the place in the new acquisition from which the piece in the Day Book had been cut. I think she considers this his most remarkable piece of luck. She says repeatedly when speaking of the collection, "He is one of the lucky ones. Everybody recognizes that as a buyer. We is lucky."