

Hardwick Vicarage, April Fool's Day, 1873.

(60)

My dearest Arthur,

Have you not been thinking me a very queer fish - perhaps a "poisson d'Avril", as our neighbours say? - I have certainly been using you very "Cavalierly" - but that you know is my prepossession (and by the way what wonderful specimens of Cromwellian and Protectorian falsehood & hypocrisy I have lately met with - on the side of our Royalist, but one who commanded against the King!) Well - at last - the true story of my silence had been that I have been squeezed even harder than usual for some days past - and, the grip being a little relaxed this morning, I gladly take the first chance of thanking you very particularly ~~for~~ for all your kindness about Drummie - whose offence as mentioned by you I was entirely ignorant of - and for all the trouble you have taken about the presentation copies - and for signing Mr. Lambert's proposal - (I should like you to see his truly amusing as well as earnest letter) - You are the same dear old friend as ever. -