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11  
C. K. Shaker

24, Shakspeare Terrace,  
Upper Holloway, N.

Decr 31. 1880.

Dear Sir,

Pardon the presumption, may  
the coarseness and delicacy which leads  
me to address you. If all the  
thousands in this country and America  
whose Christmas has been saddened by  
the news of George Eliot's death were  
to send you words of condolence you  
would indeed be inundated with letters.  
But I have long been an enthusiastic  
as I have also tried to be a discriminating

admirer of the splendid series of  
 works from her pen, and the inspiration  
 she has given me has been far  
 more ennobling than that of any  
 other writer, greater than Wordsworth  
 or Carlyle's. It would be an impertinence  
 for me to say more on this subject.  
 The greatest, as I think, of living  
 critics Edmund Scherer has ably  
 expressed the judgment of posterity.  
 But although I never saw Mrs Cross  
 my feelings towards her were far  
 higher than a mere admiration of

her marvellous genius and intellect  
 "That adoration", she has said "which  
 a young man gives to a woman whom  
 he feels to be greater and better  
 than himself is hardly distinguish-  
 able from religious feeling" and this  
 adoration and worship I have long  
 given and still give to George Eliot.  
 I was one of the few uninvited ones who  
 obtained admission to the mortuary chapel  
 on Wednesday last and I was one of  
 the last to leave the grave. Before  
 that grave I resolved, so far as  
 my feeble powers enabled me, to have  
 a mind made better by the presence  
 of one of the immortal dead. Living in  
 the neighbourhood, I trust it will often

be my melancholy pleasure to place  
flowers upon that grave, to stand  
by it with sad yearnings for glimpses  
into the unseen. That I could but  
have a firm belief in an Elsewhere  
or Elsewhen. If a stranger feels  
this how much more must ~~a stranger~~  
one so intimately connected with the  
greatest and grandest of women!

The real purpose of this letter is  
respectfully to suggest that you  
have her poem "O May I join the  
Choir invisible" placed upon the  
Monument.

It is very foolish for a young man  
of no particular gifts to write all

this to a perfect stranger whom he has only seen once and may never see again. but if he succeeds in that he reads that poem in one of his visits to the neighbouring cemetery he will not mind being deemed foolish.

But will you not accept the expression of my sorrow, the statement of how deeply I grieve with you, as representing that of thousands who are less presumptuous?

I am, Dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

Clement Shorter

J. W. Cross Esq<sup>r</sup>.