

Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

2 April 1935.

Dearest Lady, Emilie,

First, I have found that the cheap day is Thursday after all (and Saturday) and dear enough at that: 11s. return instead of 16s. Second, you have an appointment with Dr. Crowe for 12.15; or so Miss O'Donovan says. So I suppose 1.15 is the earliest possible, but I shall be at the Escargot a little before that. You need not have called this arranging an appointment for you a "great favour"! and if it had turned out to be Wednesday I should have cut my committee most cheerfully - for as a matter of fact I am cutting another committee (unless they alter the date) on Thursday. And so I have said not a word about being pleased to see you? Well, perhaps I haven't; perhaps I was ungraciously and woefully thinking instead, how little I was likely to see of you. But indeed, I question whether "being pleased" is a very satisfactory description of my feelings: please 'm, don't deliberately misconstrue my words. I feel that it is a very long time since I have seen you, and that last November is years ago, and that it is all very strange, and that I shall as always (now don't be vexed with me, please) feel a little shy again at first.

I was a little afraid that the words of mine to which you allude in your letter of the 28th might have sounded unctious and preachy. They were not meant so; but when I speak so I am apt to feel guilty afterwards of a kind of Olympian hypocrisy - as if I had been pretending to be either above or beyond these troubles myself. Whenever I preach however I am very conscious of falling far short of practising successfully; and I most certainly was not criticising: I was merely taking your words and generalising a little. And I didn't mean "presumption" in the ordinary sense, either. In any case, I was generalising from other observations. I think that my own family have sometimes set themselves high standards, largely because they believed that Eliots somehow were better than other people, and therefore had to behave better. It was not of course overtly inculcated, but it was in the atmosphere, that God took more notice of us than of ordinary people, and we must behave accordingly. People who were richer obviously did not find favour with the Almighty, and were common people: they either were wicked to have made so much, or wicked having made it not to have given it away to public causes. This is all perfectly irrelevant, except in so far as you and I were brought up in the same sort of society and tradition. When I offer counsel - and I don't think I often do so without a kind of invitation - please think of me as a person having some of the same problems (partly because of similarity of

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LONDON

background and temperament) and some different (partly because of different occupations and environment); a person who has not got any bit nearer a solution of them than you have. That "seeking for the unseen sources of life" which is taking you "such a time", it will probably take me the rest of my life! It is as great a help to me to have you share the problem of living, as it comes to you, with me, as it is to me to be able to share mine with you. For myself, I find it difficult to shed the illusion of an imaginary state of composure, equilibrium, coming to terms with life, love of God etc. which, once attained, somehow, shall make all the rest of life easy. It is not like that; one just goes on trying and doing, and at rare moments tranquillity comes and goes again, and I don't believe one can or should ever really know in this life what one has made of oneself. It suggests the paradox that if one were a Saint, and became aware that one was a Saint, one would cease to be a saint: the real saints never have the satisfaction of being satisfied with themselves to the extent of knowing themselves to be saints. On the contrary, they have the lowest opinions of themselves; and get less self-satisfaction out of life than any successful company promoter, or indeed than most quite ordinary people. I also like the reply of Goethe when someone complimented him on his serenity. "Yes, but it is a serenity which I have to struggle to regain, every morning."

Do you know, I have never read a single book by Mrs. Humphrey Ward. But then, there is so much that is more important than that, that I have not read. You have not begun to understand the extent of my ignorance. I am very ill-read indeed, and I cannot make people grasp that.

It must be, I think, wonderful to feel oneself so united to one's father and mother. I have never felt just like what I imagine you feel. It may be partly a difference in circumstance. What I feel about my parents I have told you several years ago. To me my mother's side means one thing to me, and my father's another. (What is perhaps more important is your being an only child, and my being the youngest of seven). The poetry attaches me to my mother: yet I didn't care much for her poetry, and she never cared much for mine (and neither, I suspect, does Ada, or you, and I don't mind in the least, and I am usually made irritated and suspicious by women who say they do like it). Otherwise, I was only one among several children; and you have no conception of the extent to which our world was dominated by Grandfather Eliot. That man must have had the personality of a Napoleon; he died before I was born; but he forces

me to serve on committees and councils and make speeches and be a churchwarden and muddle with politics - but it is my mother, or some shadowy personality behind her, who wants me to make retreats and keep vigils. Sometimes one is just oneself, but for the most part one is being hustled about (as well as such a lazy idle fuddler as myself can be hustled) by one or another of a crowd of shadows. Then again, so far as my mother and father as individuals are concerned, I think of them as very lovely persons, whom I very much admire, but who I know to have been, poor souls, very inefficient parents.

This letter had turned out very egotistical. It might not be if I had time to write three or four more pages. Any of your paragraphs starts me off on a whole letter - to say nothing of all the things I would say of myself - any letter I write is really doing duty for a dozen or more letters. And it is not a letter of greeting and welcome, because I shall write that later in the week - not Sunday, as I shall be at the Tandys. But shall I not be pleased to see you? Dire si je ne suis pas joyeux / Tonnerre et rubis aux moyeux.

ton humble
Tom.

The title is

Murder in the Cathedral

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CORNER VALLEY

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To Await Arrivals. W. 1



Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

CHIPPING CAMPDEN,

Gloucestershire.

Donald is much better,
& is coming home
tomorrow.



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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

LONDON, W.C.1

4 April 1935.

Dearest Lady,

aged 62

Having the evening to myself, and having as you see a new ribbon, I had thought after writing to you to clear off an old debt so I might be able to say before you returned that I had written at last to Miss Galitzi. But I shall have to spend the rest of my evening otherwise. Have you ever heard of Cécile Sorel, otherwise known according to her leading role as "Celimène"? You probably know more about her than I do, but I know she is the eternal leading lady of the Comedie Française. Anyway she has written her memoirs, and I have to read them tonight. A French literary agency offered them to us. We sent a Paris agent of ours to look at them, and now they have been brought to London by a Madame Liliane Lombard, whom I interviewed this afternoon. Madame Lombard says she owns them, having bought them from Madame Sorel; but meanwhile the French Agency has warned us against Madame Lombard, saying that although she has bought the memoirs she hasn't paid for them, and that we are to keep her in suspense until the 15th April, for some reason. All I can tell of Madame Lombard is that she has a somewhat Ottoline face, is apparently under 50, and has very good scent, Guerlain or Chanel I should say. I thought she had the manner of a person who was wondering whether we had heard anything against her or not. So now I am sitting down to read as much of the memoirs of Celimène as I can in the time. Apparently the Sorel knew everybody, and whenever she didn't remember whether she had been the mistress of a celebrity or not she gives herself the benefit of the doubt, so to speak. But I doubt whether her memoirs will seem very important in England: I made Madame Lombard's face fall by explaining that the memoirs of Mistinguett would be worth much more in this country. Such are the thrills of a publisher's life.

I must get a new hat when you come.

It is exciting to think that you are now somewhere in the Bay of Biscay, perhaps very uncomfortable; and that you will be in England on Monday - and for goodness' sake be prepared for winter again, and remember about airing your clothes before the gasfire, I don't want you down with pneumonia immediately - and that I shall see you on to-day week. Exciting but incredible. I look forward to your new costumes but don't wear one unless the weather is suitable. I shall write again on Monday evening to bid you Welcome. It is lovely to writing to an address so near at hand as Gloucestershire.

Tom
Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

8 April 1935.

Dearst Lady Emily

WELCOME and am I a funny man or not, having had such a rushed day that I forgot the man I was lunching with and had to send him a wire of apology, but at no moment forgot that you were arriving during the day, and cursed the drizzle which came upon us during the morning? And I have been worrying lest you might not be prepared for such English weather and a late spring, after the Meditarreanean sun, and may succumb to pneumonia or almost anything in the frigidty of Gloucestershire. Are you I wonder shivering tonight in Southampton or Gloucestershire. And I have been regretting that the two letters which you will find, tonight or tomorrow morning, waiting for you, are so egotistical and about myself, because I have really been thinking more about you than about myself, and please accept this small handsel of sanitary cigarettes with filter tips which have to be made to order. And tomorrow I shall be able to say to myself on arising, that day after tomorrow I shall SEE YOU.

As for what has happened since I last wrote, that does not seem to matter - I can tell you in five or ten minutes for what it is worth; and another ten minutes will dispose of the play; because I shall want to be asking heaps of questions - but am able and willing to answer any question asked.

May I repeat that you are to see Dr.Crowe at 12.15 on Thursday, and please wear you best dress SUITABLE TO THE WEATHER and warm enough, and I will wear my best but havent anything new yet but will be correct in bowler hat at 1.15 at Escargot,

Your Humble & Obedient

Tom

I want to say, before I see you, that I think you have been most saintly to write to me so regularly, and at such length, and such good letters.

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LONDON, W.C.1

Wednesday evening (4.ix.35).

Adored Lady,

It was dear of you to write me a letter before leaving, and I thank the G.W.R. for putting their train on so that you had the time. Perhaps it was more than dear - I mean intuitive - it would seem that you must have known how silly I have been feeling - and I suppose that I was responsible for your feeling silly too. And I rejoice that you see it in that way. But O dear me, dont please call me courteous! (e.g.: "patrons of the Biltmore Hotel may be assured of the courteous attention of the Staff at all hours") - it would be as bad if I called you gracious - you were not that - though it never crossed my mind to think of you as "ungracious, cross, abrupt" - good heavens, to have you really cross and abrupt would be delightful I assure you, you merely seemed grand and rather distant - I am NOT being sarcastic but unhumorously literal - and nobody seemed silly to me but myself. In the taxi I felt like a wax model in a shop window, and a bad model too. Yet I had a dim feeling that this occasion would be like that. After the last - and its being as much as five weeks ago - I knew that I should be overcome by such a sea of emotion that an absurd stiffness was the only behaviour possible. I wondered if you realised it at the time. Incidentally, I think that the spectre of Willard, which loomed over me even at lunch, had a rather paralysing effect. I think I could find some terms on which to get on with Margaret - I had a little talk with her at dinner which was very pleasant - but I am afraid that Willard would always be a skeleton at my feast. I dont know why. Perhaps he gives me the impression of being always disappointed in not finding me a really Superior Person - and taking no notice of what I thought a very smooth and pleasant Romanée 1919: and the conversation in that very bare flat which must belong to a very dull person (I cannot stand people who have sectional bookcases with glass windows) seemed to me that of four people avoiding any point - it seemed to me a failure for which I was probably to blame, because I know how one can spread an atmosphere while thinking that one is perfectly passive. I had the unhappy feeling that the evening did not advance relationships in any way - even between you and Margaret, whom I could hear from the corner of my ear discussing such things as hotels in Brussels on the sofa while I was making small talk with Willard about Flemish painting and the Breughels. At moments I had the feeling that it might have been more spontaneous if I had not been there. I dare say not. I am NOT being complicated etc. I am merely being analytical ex post facto merely showing my skill in a post mortem. I do like Margaret - and

I think I could get on with her - but when two people live together one cant get to know one without the other, and I dont think I could ever get anywhere with Willard, and yet he is very pleasant. All this is incidental in my malaise of the afternoon and evening. No, dont think I am blaming myself unmeasuredly - these are merely contributory factors anyway: the chief thing is that on being with you again I was so torn with emotion that I could only behave as I did. Even eating soup in your presence was an ordeal, until a few movements assured me that I could carry the spoon to my mouth without spilling.

As for politics, it is good to have local concerns to prevent one from thinking too much of general. This evening I have had the Vicar in to relieve his mind about his Curate - nothing that surprised me - I formed my opinion of this Curate long ago - if you knew what a trial Curates could be, you would sympathise with Vicars, and this one has far more sense of responsibility about curates than your Greene has - I am sorry for little Micky Mouse, ~~for~~ not having been trained by a strong vicar before going off to Malvern College to be rough-housed by the boys. People expect too much of the clergy, and not enough of the Church. I am inclined to feel gently towards little weak Greene (who partly knows what to do, but doesnt do it) than I am towards William Temple who ought to have spoken for the Church on Sunday evening, and merely spoke like an eminent public man with an Oxford Greats Oxford Union debating hairsplitting sophistical mind.

I shall have to face up to Temple one day.

There is, my lamb, a Haig Whisky. There is a special Haig Whisky known as Dimple Haig. (By the way, the correct spelling for Scotch whisky is WHISKY; if you spell it WHISKEY you mean Irish whiskey). As a matter of fact, the late Field Marshal Earl Haig of Bemersyde was put through Oxford (and the Bullingdon and polo) on the profits of Haig's whisky, which his father manufactured. You have to be careful, in this country, of speaking of distillers and brewers. The Faber fortunes, such as they are, were made by Beer - Lord Faber and Lord Wittenham.

I hope you liked the Lapsang Soochong: I do not approve of coffee for breakfast. There is something to be said however for India tea for breakfast and China tea for tea. I reserve remarks of the political situation. I have got the firm to accept a pamphlet on Chinese Art by my young Porteus - I did not tell you about my supper with him and his girl - which rejoices my heart, because I got them to agree to an advance of ten pounds, so Porteus and his Russian girl will be able to have one or two good meals, instead of subsisting solely on Chinese food. I look forward to day-after-tomorrow - and I count that man fortunate who even once in his life can look forward to day-after-tomorrow as I do - and I dont know whether I want you to be like Christine Galitzi itself in manners, because I dont know how C.G. would behave to me if she were you and I was I. I should like us both to be like our real selves. And after all, we really know what that is.

Your - Tom

It's like to look to Mrs. Faber's prize about Orlando.

I am silly in various ways. The first
thing I did on returning this evening
was to count the roses - and to be
disappointed to find exactly the same
dozen. I can only tolerate roses when
you have been ^{here} with them: for myself, the
scent is too disturbing, and I prefer
Zinnias or chrysanthemums.

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

12 April 1935.

Dearest Lady

I wanted to write before I came - I mean so that you would get it before I came - and say how happy I was yesterday for three and a half hours - with some exceptions like the Dog - and enjoyed the privilege of going about with you on your errands - and the Young Lady No.4 said that she had already guessed 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ and had given that order - and I love the cigarette case and shall never cease to - and you looking so well and of course VERY beautiful - and I liked your blue costume - and I rang up Christina and she was very nice about it indeed - and I think it is very kind of Mrs. Perkins to be willing to have me so soon - and I am looking forward to coming most cheerfully - and my cold is not bad.

Tom,

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MADE AT CROXLEY

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LONDON, W.C.1

17 April 1935.

Dearest Lady

This is just a short Thursday-morning note written in the hope of catching tonight's boat so that you may get it on Saturday. I hope that the journey was quiet and uneventful and that you had a placid crossing. And that you will have a happy Easter in sunny weather, and that you found Jeanie well.

I have nothing much to record. I shall have a busy weekend with services and accounts. A large number of people have sent Easter Offerings by post; and the ladies get very fidgety if they do not get acknowledgements at once. One particularly, whose name is Miss Meek, has written indignantly and frantically threatening to stop the cheque. Tonight I have to get up at 2.30 to keep the usual watch in the church from 3 to 4.30. And in the moments between I must finish retyping the play and writing in the extra lines so that it may be ready for the printer by Tuesday. On Sunday night John and I will try to cheer each other up over supper. Alida Monro came to tea with me yesterday (at Russell Sq. I mean) to discuss a possible sale of some books to us, as she is contemplating winding up the Poetry Bookshop (confidential).

I only want to say further what a Lovely evening I had. It is very exciting waiting for you at a station, and it is a great honour and privilege to be the only person to see you off - and I was - in the sense in which I mean it - Very Happy all the evening. And I am looking forward with impatience to meeting you at the station on the 1st of May. The Vicar will be delighted to have you stay here as long and as often as you can - I will try to make it tidy, and will give Elizabeth instructions. My only fear is that you may be troubled by the railway: the best thing you can do is to keep the double windows of the bedroom shut tight and open a sitting-room window, leaving the door in between open. The Vicar also suggests that he can often have a spare bedroom upstairs which I could occupy, to save trouble of moving to the club; but on this occasion at least I shall stick to my original design.

Avec mes prières les plus tendres et mes souhaits
pour une boone saison de pâques

Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

20 April 1935.

Dearest Lady,

Your letter of the 20th was very welcome - written, evidently, before you had received mine. I am sorry that you had a rough crossing, and that you were greeted with wet weather; and your sketch of the hotel, or paying-guest-establishment, sounds distinctly cheerless. Bedroom fires? Hot water bottles? Lumpy flock mattresses? The hungry flock looks up, and is not bed. Thin blankets and sheets with holes to put your toes through. But surely I thought, to-day is so balmy in London, for the first time, that Guernsey must be summerlike. London has sprouted rows of cheap tall battleaxes in the main thoroughfares, which are now been decorated with waterproof festoons, the prelude of a dismal jubilee. I had meant to ask you about those bananas; I imagined him offering you one (perhaps the one with the label on it) and you having the discretion to refuse, and him then consuming the whole bunch. But I am sorry he got off at Reading; he would have been a treat on that voyage. The travels of St. Paul, eating bananas.

The arduous Easter is over, or nearly over; it consisted for me largely in counting money, and sending acknowledgements. On Saturday I had in the vicar's secretary, Miss Boiler; but I still have six or eight contributions to acknowledge. Sir Henry is getting too old to count money, and he will insist on helping, so there was a difference of four pounds in the notes.

Either you arrive at Waterloo at 6.55 or at Paddington at 8; but so far as I can make out, it is Waterloo at 6.55. That is a better time; we can leave you bags at Grenville Place and dine before the pictures.

The Holy Week ceremonies were very well done; the Tenebrae service of Wednesday Thursday and Friday evening is especially beautiful, and the "watch" of Friday morning always means a great deal to me. One is left in a state of physical exhaustion and spiritual refreshment.

I hope to be also physically refreshed, by my Highland journey, before I see you. I don't suppose I shall have the opportunity of writing again before you return. I hope I shall have a note to confirm the hour of your arrival, as I shall come to the station. But if I should miss you, remember to go straight to 9, Grenville Place and wait for me there. I do hope the rest of the holiday

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will be sunny and happy, and give you the strength to start the new season at Campden.

Thank you for a very sweet letter.

Your Tom.

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

Wednesday 24 April 1935.

Dear Lady,

I am writing again tonight, simply, I suppose, because I shall not be able to write again before you return on Wednesday, and that is a week ahead. Tomorrow night we leave for Scotland - Morley, Donald Brace and myself meet George Blake at Glasgow and motor to Inverness - then to John o' Groats and back, and return by train from Glasgow on Sunday night. You leave on Wednesday morning, I presume - if I find no letter from you by Monday morning I shall wire to ask when you arrive: and I shall have to spend Tuesday and Wednesday morning trying to tidy up so that the rooms may be acceptable to you. I shall also try to get tickets for Sanders of the River. And O yes, I have kept forgetting to ask whether you have a practical scent spray, which is the only economical way to make the most of one's scent - you won't have time to answer, but my putting the question on paper will remind me to ask it again. I am very stupid, having spent the morning winding up the vestry business of Easter, and signing cheques; and this afternoon Miss Stella Mary 'earree, the designer of costumes, called on me to show me her sketches for Canterbury; and she doesn't know where Martin Browne is, and neither do I, and until I hear from him I can't send my text to press. I went to the Army and Navy Stores this evening to get a rucksack for Scotland, and saw such a lovely Kerry Blue, pedigree, while waiting for Kennerley to enquire about a supply of waterfleas to eat up the weed in Morley's water-garden. I am looking forward so eagerly to seeing you, and hope I shall be able to talk more intelligently than I have been writing.

Tom.

I hope the seas will

be calm.

I enclose a charming note from your uncle; but why should he say that it was good of me to come to see them (and you)? And why should they be grateful for my reading? It makes me embarrassed.

FABER & FABER

London
Business

10, Broad Street

London, W.1

Telephone: 234567
Telex: 234567

London, 10th April 1952

Handwritten signature

I am writing to you in regard to the matter of the
contract for the supply of stationery. The contract
was entered into on 1st January 1952. The terms
of the contract are as follows: -
1. The contractor shall supply the stationery
required for the office of the Ministry of
Agriculture and Fisheries for a period of
twelve months from the date of the contract.
2. The contractor shall deliver the stationery
to the office of the Ministry of Agriculture
and Fisheries, 10, Broad Street, London, W.1.
3. The contractor shall be responsible for the
cost of the stationery.
4. The contractor shall be responsible for the
delivery of the stationery.
5. The contractor shall be responsible for the
quality of the stationery.
6. The contractor shall be responsible for the
quantity of the stationery.
7. The contractor shall be responsible for the
timeliness of the stationery.
8. The contractor shall be responsible for the
accuracy of the stationery.
9. The contractor shall be responsible for the
completeness of the stationery.
10. The contractor shall be responsible for the
legibility of the stationery.
11. The contractor shall be responsible for the
durability of the stationery.
12. The contractor shall be responsible for the
appearance of the stationery.
13. The contractor shall be responsible for the
cost of the stationery.
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completeness of the stationery.
20. The contractor shall be responsible for the
legibility of the stationery.
21. The contractor shall be responsible for the
durability of the stationery.
22. The contractor shall be responsible for the
appearance of the stationery.

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PAPERWORK

The above contract was entered into between
the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and
the contractor. The contractor has failed to
supply the stationery required for the office
of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
for a period of twelve months from the date
of the contract. The contractor has failed to
deliver the stationery to the office of the
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 10,
Broad Street, London, W.1. The contractor
has failed to be responsible for the cost of
the stationery. The contractor has failed to
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

3 May 1935.

My dearest Lady,

I had not expected to have any time to-day. But being at the office already I got to work early, and came home after a late lunch, and changed, made up my washing, and packed. And now I have a half hour before I leave to join Frank on the 6.10 for Lingfield. And I am glad to be able to write at once, before I have a chance to hear from you again, to tell you what a Delight it was to have you use my rooms, (as well as the delight in the last two days), and what a Delight it is and will be to think that you have used them. The roses still smell as if you were here in person. The rooms will always, so long as I remain in them, seem as if blessed.

Even though I had but an evening with you alone, and that in a theatre (I am glad we saw that Henry IV though) I was extremely happy. It is such a pleasure to be able to do anything for anyone to whom you are devoted - I don't mean that I didn't enjoy doing that little for Jean in itself, because I did enjoy it; because I do like her so very much. In fact, I could not separate out the pleasure in doing something for her herself and the pleasure in doing it on your account. Not that I did much!

I was afraid when I first suggested your using my rooms that you would refuse - politely; and I want you to know a little of what it has meant to me. And on the financial ground, I want to repeat clearly that the oftener you will come and use them the happier it will make me - that I was still more comfortable at Russell Square than at my club and that I shall always now choose it for preference; that the inscrutable Lister is a perfect valet; that his wife (also inscrutable or is it inscrutable I haven't time to look it up) gave me an elegant breakfast (having given me Early Tea first - and the bath water was very hot); and that they only charged me eighteen pence. Of course the service and comfort at Russell Square is in a way due to having a man like Faber, the typical Englishman of his class who insists upon his comfort and standard-of-living but I will explain that or theorise about that another time. Anyway, the point to impress upon you is that you can come to London and use my rooms at any time for the trifling sum of eighteen-pence a night to me and your fare to you. So there is no excuse for your not seeing the Ballet several times. But I will say again, in writing, that you do not need in return to devote your time, or any of it, to me when you come: I should be so happy to have you come here even when all your time was to be given to others. Please understand that

FABER & FABER

it would make me happy to have you MAKE USE of me, and of anything belonging to me.

And I hope I am writing in time to stop you from writing to THANK me - as you already have done rather tiresomely by word of mouth. I should be far more flattered to have you take everything as a matter of course, and to feel that you felt quite naturally and simply that anything I did was simply what you were entitled to. Please ponder this remark and try to take it, not as an emotive utterance of the moment, but as a straightforward statement of permanent validity!

Can't seal this; left my seal in my case at the office. Will write again on Tuesday: must be off now.

I was happy to see you looking very much better in health - though just as lovely.

Tom -

WORLD'S BEST
BUSHNELL
CORNE LENSES

W. DEAN CROLEY

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

9 May 1935.

Scars & Emile

I was very much relieved to find the sweet note you left for me - together with a faint odour of sanctity - in my rooms - or your rooms, if you please. I HAD rather worried when you did not telephone, and although reason told me that you probably had been too rushed (and I hope you were buying something nice for yourself in Bond Street) yet emotion suggested that you had, as I feared, been crushed to death in the crowd, and I should probably have wired to ask if you were dead, and then I should have been of no use to anybody for the rest of my life, just thinking that I might have come with you and saved the situation. I suppose you read Orlo's postcard. I am so glad you had a good view. Yes I wish indeed I were in the country with you. I did enjoy last night so much: particularly sitting on the back of the taxi with you peeping over the roof. There is a peculiar delightful intimacy in doing something rather childish like that together. My Memory took several Snap Shots which I shall preserve always. I think that for two people meetings may have a seriousness and value not measurable by surface values - I mean that a heart-to-heart talk, an impersonal discussion of politics or philosophy, or a larking ride in an open taxi in a crowd, may all have an equal value in one's inner history. I shan't forget last night, ever; yet there was nothing particular about it, superficially: just a taxi ride and a walk through Whitehall and the Parks. I have just written to Jean and to Jacques Maritain about her, and I hope they will ask her to come to see them. No, not to Christine Galitzi tonight: to Ada and to Stephen Spender; but I shall be at home tomorrow and Saturday night for letter writing. Lunched with Ian Parsons who wants something from me - a preface to a book - but he won't get it - however highly I think of Isaac Rosenberg's poetry - and then had an interview with Father Gabriel Hebert about his book that we are publishing - his mother has just died - which reminds me that for the same reason I must next write a letter to Alida Monro. Elizabeth again says what a nice lady you are, and again marvels that you get up so early in the morning. Geoffrey has returned from Wales and was really very amiable about Frank and me having got into his cupboard and drunk his whisky and filled up the bottle with water - the only cloud on the business horizon is Lady Haig - but that is a close secret - we are publishing Duff Cooper's life of Lord Haig - and Lady Haig dislikes Duff Cooper, or perhaps his wife Diana Manners - this is all very secret. I am to lunch on Sunday with the Vicar! and with the late

visar, the Revd. Lord Victor Seymour, a testy old fellow who looks like an irritated Santa Claus. And supper with John.

I have another letter to write to you soon, meditating your plans for next winter. But at the moment I prefer to think of our taxi ride round St. Paul's! Take care of YOUR self, my dearest.

I will write to Ottoline as you bade me do.

Yours

Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

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LONDON, W.C.1

Dear Lady

15 May 1935.

Thank you very much for your letter of the 13th, which gave much pleasure. I shall go tomorrow morning to Woolworth's and/or Marx & Spencer to see what junk can be found. The sort of necklaces that are given away with bath salts. It will be, praise God, extremely inconvenient. Which suggests however the possibility, which you might brood over, that you might like something in real coral for your birthday. I have also to try to remember to bring some vinegar with me, and if possible a pepper mill. You never answered my question about a scent spray, so that must wait until you come again.

Well, however that may be, I had tea alone with Ottoline yesterday - of course the conversation largely on the subject of India - Ottoline in a flowing white woolly sort of dress, like a Hindu prophetess or something, and plenty of Woolworth pearls; and we got on very well, so that I received a letter from her this morning to say how much she enjoyed seeing me. I appreciate that, very few people will ever take that trouble. Did I really rar up though? Well well if so didnt I always say that one can only stand patronage from one's inferiors? I am wondering should I bring some Limburger cheese with me? I tried some on the Book Committee at lunch with great success: it cured Geoffrey's cold and restored his sense of smell.

I am always delighted to appear to You in a comic aspect.

Looking forward to seeing you before lunch on Saturday, I am

Yours Tom

~~I hope Alstair Miller is still away.~~

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

20 May 1935.

Dearest Lady Emilie

Various things in mind. Enclosed a letter from Maritain, which may amuse you if decipherable, and referring to Jean: all but a post-script about a musical composer he admires and wants me to promote ~~xxxxxx~~ in London. I don't know why he refers to her as "Miss Jeanneth McPherrin"!

The usual mixture of feelings, which I am ~~xxxxxxxx~~ en train de démêler and put in separate boxes; and the usual intensification of feeling in that the more I see you and the better - I think - I know you, and admire you - and the more gratitude I feel - no, not directly to you, but to God - for having something fixed, some person to admire. Also, as time goes on, you should realise that you have less and less excuse for supposing that what I admire is some imaginary picture of you in my own mind; and I get extreme pleasure from finding more and more confirmation that the image in my mind corresponds exactly to the reality.

If you have realised that I do consider humility the highest of the virtues (charity next, and purity third), you must think that I am not talking about nothing when I grumble a little about your being too humble: I mean humility misapplied. You should know that you have not only far more dramatic experience than I (for instance) but a surer dramatic instinct; and what I was waiting for from you was the benefit of these: you needn't have prefaced your quite important criticisms of my "play" with éloges (though these seemed to me to be acute) when what I wanted was for you to tell me clearly in what ways it fell short of being a real play. And all that nonsense about it being an impertinence on your part etc etc. Don't you realise that it made me ecstatically happy to be told that I was noisy in eating my soup!! But this is only an instance, and the easiest to adduce. My sister Marion (mentioned before) hasnt a fraction of your brain, but even more humility: but she is so humble that she simply hasnt made the most of the mind she has. What is about average, after all. If one is too humble about one's abilities one STOPS THINKING, always deferring to somebody else. In the book about the French police which I was reading in the train (most interesting about Chiappe) there is an allusion to a sentence of Pascal which I had forgotten. Tyranny, Pascal says, consists in the desire for domination, universal and hors de son ordre. I think that humility should be kept within its order, just as the desire for domination should, and that there is an abuse of humility

FABER FABER

comparable to "tyranny". What I want you to do is to realise what a rare exceptional and superior person you are, and THEN be humble about it. Say: "I know I am a most beautiful, charming, intelligent and spiritual person, but I deserve no praise for it, this is merely as God has arranged things."

The newspapers are full of éloges of Shaw (Lawrence). Deserved, no doubt, but perhaps not quite for those reasons. I should not call him humble. His whole history seems to me that of a morbid person. He was not the simple, plain, matter of fact administrator like our Sanders of the River - that is a very different type of Englishman. I think it was a diseased mind. (Of course they said he was inverted, but I am not bothering about that). ~~thought~~ ^{said} I have read things that ordinary British army men in the East ~~thought~~ about him - that he messed up the whole thing through his desire for power and glory, that his entry into Damascus was something to satisfy his own self-dramatisation, not really advantageous to the campaign, that again and again he sacrificed the campaign to his love of the dramatic gesture. However this may be, he was not apparently loved by the British army: partly the jealousy of mediocrity for genius, no doubt, yet I suspect his egotism. Certainly, a man who shunned notoriety would not have sought the kind of privacy that he did. An ordinary man would have retired in a ordinary way; Lawrence retired in a spectacular way; the moment he changed his name and became a private all the newspapers proclaimed the fact. I don't want to diminish any glory that may be due him: only to assert that he was not the normal simple English public servant, but a highly complex, morbid, self-conscious, Oxford scholar who sought some kind of refuge from thought in action. Possibly he was what is nowadays called an escapist. And I am prejudiced by my feeling that these damned Protestant Englishmen, who love the Arabs so, are the same people who have allowed the Arabs to massacre our fellow-Christians of Assyria - a permanent disgrace - one of many - to England. At the moment I am most incensed against Lionel Curtis - one of the most disintegrative powers we have - because of his advocacy of handing over the Negro Protectorates of Basutoland etc. to South Africa. Lionel Curtis has already done the Empire as much harm as anybody. The moment the South African negroes are put in the power of South Africa (which means ultimately the ignorant, fanatical, grasping and brutal Dutch) they will be exploited and demoralised. (By the way, there is an excellent letter on the supersession of ambassadors, by Lord Hardinge, in this morning's Times, with which I agree).

I returned to a committee this morning, which adjourned at lunch time and met again and spent the whole afternoon, so I have had no time to see about the Gondoliers. But meanwhile I heard (in committee, and relative to Adrian Stokes's book) that the Russian Ballet opens on June 11th. So you must consider that date too. So could you come again that week for the Ballet; or alternatively could you come ahead, in Canterbury week, and spend Wednesday or Tuesday night in London and see a ballet? Then go on the next

morning to Canterbury. Please keep an ^e open mind until I can find out something about programmes. I want you to see the Ballet AT LEAST twice: one evening of classical ballet, and one of modern. I shall expect in any case to cede my rooms to you (and the foul bathroom) on the King's Birthday (June 3d).

I enjoyed having tea with you at the Claytons'. In exactly those circumstances, I am not sure how to behave. I behaved naturally. But would it have given more pleasure if I had harangued (as I might have done) all the time, instead of conversing? I liked little Clayton too much just to make a speech to him. In which way can I give most pleasure to a man like that (who is very intelligent): by talking all the time, or by responding to questions?

I have one slight criticism to make of your charming black dress: but that will keep.

Be l'embasse les mains.

Tom

Préparez pour moi, mon cher ami, et croyez à mon admiration et à ma fièvre affective
en votre lieu

Jacques Mathieu

Après-moi, le livre de Daniel Sargent sur Thomas More? si mes recueils la Nouvelle Revue Française, j'aurais tant que mes recueils, j'espère, dans un mois. C'est une étude à paraître la 3e édition, et à l'étranger, que mes recueils, j'espère, dans un mois.

Vous avez écrit dans le dernier chapitre et dans la conclusion de The use ... sur l'inspiration poétique et la "communication d'expérience" dont on veut faire l'essentiel de la poésie, sur Bremond, Montgomery, Belgium, et sur le diable aussi dans la littérature contemporaine. J'attends avec impatience le livre que vous promettez là dessus. Merci de la façon dont vous avez cité mon livre dans ce chapitre.

Certainement nous serons très heureux, ma femme et moi, de voir Miss Beannette Mc Pherrin. Je viens de lui écrire et j'espère qu'elle pourra venir à Meulan dimanche prochain. Peut-être la rencontrerai-je demain, à une causerie que je dois faire à quelques élèves de l'École Normale de Liège.

4
Mendon, 10 rue du Parc

15 mai 39

Cher ami,

je vous remercie de tout coeur de
votre lettre, qui me touche profondément.
C'est moi qui depuis longtemps ai à
vous dire ma gratitude des livres que
vous m'avez envoyés. J'ai lu avec beaucoup
de profit The use of Poetry and the use
of Criticism, et je suis en train de lire
After strange Gods, car maintenant je suis
un peu moins ignorant en anglais. J'ai
été spécialement intéressé par ce que

LONDON S.W.1
3 45 PM
21 MAY
1935



Miss Emily Hale,
Stanford House,
Chipping Campden
Glos.



Ms. A. 1. 1. 1. 1.

TELEGRAMS:
"GOWNSMEN, PICCOY, LONDON."
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 6942.

Tuesday

OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE CLUB,

PALL MALL, S.W. 1.


Dearest Emily

Merely to thank
you for your sweet
note received this morn-
ing. I have not yet been
to the office, as I had to
go to my dentist in
Sloane Street this morning;
I will get Miss O'S. to
enquire about the for-
whers this afternoon.

Then I will try to ar-
range the other two night's
entertainment, according
to your suggestions.

Meanwhile ponder on
the Ballet for the week
after. I shall try to get
the Morlys for one
evening, but C. is taking
Donald away soon.

Always yours
Tom.



TELEGRAMS:
"GOWNSMEN, PICCY, LONDON"
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 6942.

OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE CLUB,

PALL MALL, S.W. 1.

My long babbling
letter is some evidence
that I had a happy
weekend.

ORANGE & DANBURY

PAID

Savile Club,

69, Brook St

21st May 1935

Dear Mr Eliot:

This is just to say how
pleased I am to
commendable
acting in your play at Cambridge
no words can describe my admiration
for your work - It seems to me one
of the most important departures of
play-writing in recent years, and
the most successful attempt I have
had to restore poetry to the
Theatre. I am sure that
Bromie will handle it with
great insight - It should make
a very profound impression. My
wife who admires it as much as
I do joins me in looking forward
to meeting you in the near
future, & forming our part of
am preparing to enjoy what I
know will be a rare and
rewarding experience.

With best wishes.

Yours very sincerely,

Robert Speer

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

24 May 1935.

Seavert Lady,

I have got two tickets for "The Gondoliers" for Monday the 3d June. They are not very good seats, but owing to the astuteness of Miss O'Donovan, who remembered that six months ago the manager had offered me seats at Sadlers' Wells whenever I wanted them (I think in consequence of my having given his staff copies of "The Rock" rather than of my being a member of the Sadlers' Wells Society Executive Committee) I have got them free, so that we shall have that much more to spend on something else. I have not yet settled on entertainments for the 4th and 5th; and I wish you would look at your Sunday paper, and make up your mind what you want to see or hear, and let me know by Monday.

I am at the moment rather sorry for myself, because in addition to my slowly healing heel I have had a sudden attack of haemorrhoids, and the wisdom tooth which had quietened down a few days ago when I went to my dentist this week, has started into activity again, and I expect I shall have it out early next week. But I shall be as fit as a fiddle by the time you see me.

On Monday I go to my first chorus rehearsal at the Albert Hall, and on Thursday the 6th I go down to Canterbury for a night to see how they are getting on. Yesterday I had lunch with Martin Browne and Bobby Speaight, and ran through his part with them afterwards, explaining a few passages which the syntax makes ambiguous. I enclose a letter from Speaight - it is pleasant and a good omen to have a leading man who is so keen on his part.

The English actress who took Eleanor's play is named Constance Cummings. Do you know anything about her?

It seems a very long time since I saw you, but I am looking forward excitedly to the 3d. The Morleys are outside of the picture for three weeks, as Christina has just taken Doland^r to Devon for three weeks. They will be back in time for Canterbury, and I hope to get them and you for the Ballet after that. For a preliminary ballet I might get the Fabers - or not, just as you prefer. But it is time I entertained them, and the Ballet is a very safe thing to take people too - a new play one is never sure of, and one is never sure of people's likes, but anyone who has been to the ballet before knows what he is going to get.

FABER & FABER
LONDON

I have been wondering how you find life in Campden after a little more time with three relatives instead of two. I hope that it is not more exhausting all the time, and that you do spare yourself and can form an ascetic determination not to be uselessly unselfish. But I am doubtful.

Tomorrow I am to take John for a "walk" in his wheel chair, if fine, as his young lady friend who does that for him ~~is~~ away for the weekend. Then I have to sup with Jan Culpin, who is leaving for Germany very soon; and on Sunday night I have to dine with the Pivot Club - an organisation of Miss Fogerty's graduates.

Bonne nuit, Mrs Gerin.

Pom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

27 May 1935.

My dear Lady,

I have not had a moment all day - my Portuguese diplomat turned up at 5.30 at last, and HOW Portuguese! but that will keep - to thank you for your letter of the 26th - I would write at length this evening but have to go to talk to Mairet about the N.E.W. - so must dash off a short note during the half hour before dinner. This morning largely spent in Miss Fogerty's chorus rehearsal - she is a wonderful drillmaster - but that will keep. You have mistaken my mention of the ballet, I did not mean the Sadlers' Ballet, but the Ballet, the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, which begins its season on the 11th - the week after - and I meant that you should spend a night in town again before going to Canterbury - please read letter again unless destroyed. So having got tickets for the Gondoliers for Monday the 3d. I will try to get tickets for the 1066 or something for the Tuesday and leave the Wednesday night to be settled later. Your remarks on actual plays noted. Will you come by the morning train on Monday? I shall be ready for you, but try not to evince consternation if you do find me in my rooms - I am going to Tandy's for the weekend, and shall come in to put things straight on Monday morning before going to my committee, and please meet me for lunch unless otherwise engaged. Other points in your letter must be dealt with tomorrow. There is a good sermon on false modesty to be preached from a text of Sherlock Holmes. I am very sorry you are to have a weekend alone, so your stay in London must be made all the pleasanter.

*Your devoted
Tom.*

A very charming letter has come from Jean about her visit to the Mantains.

FABER & FABER

MEMPHIS

1111 BELL ST. NASHVILLE

LONDON, ENGLAND

MEMPHIS, TENN. 38102

ST. LOUIS, MO.

Handwritten signature

COLNE VALLEY

PARC HAMBERT

MADRID, SPAIN

ST. LOUIS, MO.

Handwritten signature

ST. LOUIS, MO.

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

28 May 1935.

Dear Lady,

Did I tell you that I found the tickets for the Marie Tempest matinee had been sold out weeks ago.

I hope you will write tomorrow in response to my wire, as I can't find any evidence that Tantivy Towers is to be performed. If that is not on, I will get tickets for 1066.

Now for you kind p.c. of this morning. I could come to Campden on the 6th if it would give pleasure - but I should have to return the next day, because I have to lunch with Joe Oldham and go to a meeting of the 1937 Council that afternoon, and go to Canterbury for that evening. Friday turns out to be the only evening that week that Bobby Speaight can rehearse (for the first time) in Canterbury; the 5th is of no use. In any case, I have already refused an invitation for that weekend from the Richmonds because I feel that I ought to be here at St. Stephen's for the four major festivals of the year, of which Whitsun is one. It is a nuisance being churchwarden, because I should like to spend the long Whitsun holiday, including Bank Monday, with you in Campden; but there it is.

If you care to have me for one night for Dr. Perkins's birthday - I should feel rewarded if we might journey down together on the Thursday.

I keep forgetting to raise the question of the scent spray.

I am rather fatigued after taking Hope Mirrlees and her mother to the Tower this afternoon, and I thought the old lady's heart would give out on the stairs of the White Tower, but she struggled on manfully - and then another interview with my Portuguese diplomats afterwards - but I have had my hair cut. And I had a nice letter from a perfect stranger in Cambridge quoting a letter he had had from T.E. Lawrence in 1925, when he was writing his book, saying that I was the most important poet living, and that my style belonged to the future and his own to the past!

*There is much in your letter to reply to,
after deliberation.*

Tom

Tom

FABER & FABER

GOLDFARBEN

25 BIRNELL SQUARE

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

29 May.

Dearest Lady,

I have traced Tantivy Towers to the Lyric Hammersmith,
but the date of its opening is not settled. So I think
I had better get tickets for 1066 for Tuesday. Please
keep Tuesday lunch free if you can, as I am asking some
two persons to meet you, but I don't know that they can
come. Now I must be off to see Yeats.

In haste Tom

Owe you a shilling.

FABER & FABER

BRISTOL

AT WINDLE ROAD

BRISTOL

BRISTOL

TO

Handwritten signature

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the order for 100 copies of the book "The History of the County of Gloucester" and I have the honor to inform you that the same has been forwarded to you by the post of the 16th inst. and will reach you in due season.

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LONDON, W.C.1

Dearest Lady.

7 June 1935.

Your flowers are fragrant and bright in a large bowl which Elizabeth has provided, as my own vase is still occupied by the last of the roses, and so is the DOG, and was too small anyway. It is a lovely bow-pot, and I only regret that there are too many for me to keep and press them all, and I shall have to choose a representative. It was sweet of you to think of it and take all that trouble, I had no idea you were out in the garden. Elizabeth full of giggles and said Miss Hale she says those photographs are her but I couldn't believe it, I says she turned them round because she was jealous, now is it her or not? So I says, yes it is her. Well she said, I'd never believe it, they make her look much older than what she is, and Miss Hale (Hyle) is ever so much answerer than the photographs no they don't do her justice really they don't I'd never have dreamt it was her. So that's what Elizabeth thinks. Well I thinks true enough but I wouldn't have those photographs if I could have better ones but they are much better than nothing.

Vicar improving only very slowly, won't be out for days. I must write to him. After coming back with flowers I went to the vestry to see Prewett the vergier (a character you ought to meet) and to deal with a lot of letters containing Whitsun cheques and notes, which I must acknowledge. Lunch with Joe Oldham pleasant, he's not so deaf as he was. Time at office partly taken up by Ellis Roberts who wants me to join a dining club for Anglo-Catholics and Non-conformists, and then to Church House for a boring meeting. My notion of a boring meeting, of course, is one at which I don't find anything I want to say. But the whole project so in process of change that I felt like waiting till the smoke settled. It may end in vapouring or it may be more important than it seemed at first. If it is to be a general campaign against totalitarianism - communist or nazi - then it has got to be for something pretty definite as well. Moberley, Oldham, Lord Lothian, Principal Garvie, the Bishops of Chichester and Southwark, and the terrifying Miss Iredale, as well as a few others. I must write to Oldham when I have thought about it. I find he was the spirit behind the recent letters to the Times, of the Bishops of Durham and Chichester, about German paganism, and has been informing the Archbishops too. Oldham has been in Germany recently, and finds things worse than ever. He says that the moderate elements among the Nazi leaders have been privately urging the Lutheran pastors to stand firm, because they are afraid of the extremists in their own party; also, what is interesting, that the Catholic

bishops have received private instructions from Rome, as to the attitude to adopt, which are framed in such a way as to make them insist on universally Christian, rather than peculiarly Roman, principles

• That is all to the good. I shall send Dr. Perkins a copy of Oldham's pamphlet "Church Community and State" which I think is very good.

I have written to Mrs. Hale (on club notepaper) and shall post it in the morning, so that she will not be able to reply, and have said that I will ring up on Sunday afternoon, and if she is out or doesn't feel like coming to the telephone - I suggested that one did hate the telephone - would she leave a message. So I hope she will let me come on Monday afternoon, and that it will be fine.

I will see about tickets for "Tovarisch". We shall at least learn how to pronounce it. Wednesday.

I have written to Major Dobree to ~~engage~~ engage him and Valentine (her real name is Gladys, but she prefers to call herself that, and indeed anything is better than Gladys) for ~~Monday~~ Tuesday the 18th, which night please note, for the ballet. I think you will like him immediately. He has charm which is not only on the surface but underneath. He comes of a Guernsey family, and was in the regular army for three years (Gunnery) before the war. Served under Allenby. Then after the war he retired, and, being already married, went to Cambridge, took a degree, lived three years in the Pyrenees, and then adopted the literary life. It is a great pity that his private means are not what they were, because he makes an ideal country squire - public-spirited and responsible. Valentine is not so easy to like at once. Her peculiar darkness of complexion, and queer husky voice, and rather portentous manner, put people off, but in spite of her foreign-seeming formality she is very intelligently friendly after a little. She is a freak in a commonplace family. Her father is a retired Colonel in the R.A.M.C., who is now slightly feeble-minded, and lives with them (he won't be there on the 18th) and talks irrelevantly about tiger-shooting, drives a baby Austin at five miles an hour, explaining all the time how dangerous the road is, goes to church regularly, is highly respected by the villagers, and who had the misfortune to be the heir to an old baronetcy, which he came into late in life, only to find that the fortune that went with it had been left direct to his son. So he is Sir Alexander Brooke-Pechell with a small pension, and another drain on Bonamy's resources.

I thought the Birthday Party went off very nicely, but should like to know. It was very pleasant; and I was quite honest when I said that I considered it an honour to be asked - all the more substantial, somehow, because it could only be for one night, instead of a

long weekend. But I need not tell you that what gave me the great and unique thrill was simply taking a railway journey alone with you. *It was lovely.*

Pom

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LONDON, W.C.1

Whit Monday 1935.

Dear Dad

I am grieved to say that Mrs. Hale has failed me at the end. I wrote a letter by the first post on Saturday, so that she should not have time to write; saying that I would ring up in the afternoon, and she could leave a message for me. She left word to say that she would like to come to tea to-day, and I left word to say when I would fetch her. I was quite elated; but my mistake was in making the appointment for to-day, which gave her two days to think the matter over. If I had made the appointment for the Saturday I believe I might have got her to come: the best way with neurotic people is not to give them time to change their minds. I wrote, of course, on club notepaper, as I had no other address to give.

However, I have got three tickets for "Tovarisch" - perhaps we shall learn how to pronounce it - on the floor, not very well forward, but on an aisle; and I will call for you for dinner first at 6.45. On Wednesday next.

The vicar is much better - I saw him yesterday - but not yet up and about. He said to inform you that he would be delighted to make your acquaintance, if possible, on one of your visits. Elizabeth told him that I had given you the impression that he was a much older man, and he wanted to know what I had said - had I perhaps called him an "amiable old thing" or something of the sort? I denied having spoken flippantly, or having deliberately misled you.

I look forward to Wednesday, and to the following Monday.

Tom

Tom

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LONDON, W.C.1

Dearest Lady,

Trinity Sunday 1935.

I arrived in London about half past four in the company of Robert Speaight, took him to my club to tea, after which he left me to go to do his job at the B.B.C. and I came back to pass the plate at the evening service. Then after dinner I felt called to visit John Hayward and tell him about it, then came back and wrote to Ivor Richards in reply to the enclosed telegram which Miss O'D. forwarded to me in Canterbury. This will catch the first morning post and may reach you Monday evening; if not, by the first post on Tuesday before you start for London. I should have written to you to-night - even if you had not suggested that I should write - in order to thank you for your precious letter which arrived yesterday morning, and was delivered with my morning tea, at 11B The Precincts, and which was far more of a surprise to me than mine could have been to you - but let me postpone that until I have delivered the required report.

The play went off beautifully. Martin Browne has never risen to such great heights. He was handicapped in several ways; everything was late; he was in bed for ten days and ought not to have been up and about, yet he produced the play magnificently and acted himself the part of the Fourth Tempter, looking as consummately diabolical as anyone could look. Elsie Fogerty's chorus rose to the occasion, and they and Robert Speaight were the making of the thing; as for the others, it amazed me how Browne was able to make them understand and enjoy their parts, so that they all played with gusto and conviction. I was extremely happy: the production is so good that I doubt whether I shall ever let anybody else do it. The finale of Act I goes especially well; the choreography brings out what I meant to be brought out: the utter isolation of Thomas at that moment. But I think that what got the audience was the Sermon, which Speaight did beautifully and enjoyed doing. He tells me he has never enjoyed a part so much; and indeed it suits him to perfection. I am more conscious of dramatic flaws in the play, because of being aware of all that Browne did to conceal the flaws: I cannot be too grateful to him. The play ends with a bit of pageantry devised by Browne, which is wholly successful: the bearing out of the corpse to the incantation of the Litany of the Saints, which is extraordinarily moving; and you will hear them chanting round the cloister after the procession has departed. There was no applause; and as it is done there should not be. Browne made one feel that a Saint was being carried out for burial, and applause would have been inappropriate; and the congregation sat in silence and then dispersed. As a very pleasant Canon Crum, whom I met afterwards, and who pressed upon me

a book and a pamphlet in order to engage my attention upon Aramaic versification, said, the people were knocked flat. One weakness was noticeable, but I don't think that it is remediable: those who had not read the play beforehand were uncertain and thought it was going to end before it did; hence an undesirable shuffling of feet and reaching for hats and coats at the wrong moments.

I am not boasting about "the play", you already know all about that, for better and worse; I am simply telling you that it is ever so much better in this production than it is to read - in spite of, or perhaps partly because of, the excisions. I should like you to meet Martin Browne. Perhaps we can arrange it: his (Jewish) wife is a very intelligent and agreeable woman too. (She is a Christian convert, however, and my objection to Jews is religious and not racial).

This audience was mostly the local audience; the London audience will come down later. I feel all the more pleased, that it was an audience not prepared for anything in the least out of the way.

I suppose you have seen the "Observer"; I enclose the "Church Times": Ellis Roberts, whom I have always thought of as Chadband, and who has an extremely boring wife from Tennessee, and who has asked me to join a dining club called All Souls, and I don't think.

Now I don't know when you leave Canterbury. Would it be possible for you to have tea with me privately with Speaight and Mrs. Speaight after the Friday performance? Mrs. Speaight (whom I have never met) is the head of the Welsh Drama League (I told you her parents have the house of the Ladies of Llangollen). Please answer this point IMMEDIATELY or tell me on Tuesday night.

I have various small talk about Lady Raleigh and her household and Canon Crumb and about the Precincts talk about the Dean O Dear he is a Bolshevik and it is said he actually ENCOURAGES young ladies to enter the Cathedral at least looking out of the window of 11B The Precincts we saw two young women in Shorts and fat legs and no hats looking as if they had just got off of a bicycle made for two a tandem extremely ugly walk into the Cathedral and Lady Raleigh said its the Dean he ENCOURAGES young women to walk into the Cathedral WITHOUT HATS, so I said O dear I don't so much mind the shorts but no Hats Has the Dean any faculty to fly in the face of St. Paul and Lady Raleigh's daughter-in-law said I don't so much mind their wearing no hats But I OBJECT to their entering the Cathedral in shorts and we waited and they were not ejected so we sat down to lunch. But that, will keep.

Well now, your letter. So precious that I cannot bear to consign it to my steel box. In spite of the innuendo about my Nose, which perhaps you did not intend; but I assure you however unpleasant

a Norman nose it is. You must know that my evening attending to your headache was the great event of my life - it would have been even without your letter - but with it, and with the feeling of something shared - it is an ecstatic memory. I knew I wasn't really doing anything for you, and yet it symbolised everything that I wanted to do for you. O my sweet I want you to be always perfectly well except when you are ill and I can make you well again. That was what it meant. But you mustn't be ill on Tuesday because we are going to dine and go to the Ballet, in ~~xxxxxx~~ state. I am unhappy about Tuesday lunch: but I shall call ~~for~~ you, at Grenville Place, at a quarter to seven, that evening. Your best evening dress: perhaps the one hanging up behind the screen. Every meeting with you becomes more exciting, as it seems to me that we come nearer together.

Tom

Tom

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My Dearest Dove,

Thursday Night 13th June 1935.

This is for to sprise you. I am sorry that I have not put in the new ribbon. The last time Miss O'Donovan put in a ribbon to my typewriter the results were like this.

So now as the red part is so much better I shall keep on with it. What I began to say is this: that I dont know whats hapened to the ribbon. I mean, when I arrived there were three things I wanted to mention (1) that I really meant what I said about your account of what happened at the church at Beaulieu, it did seem to me very well written, so that I was not only interested, pleased but - if you will take my meaning - proud of what you did (2) - In your letter you said something important in admitting that you had discovered that in most of one's relations there is a limit to what one can do for people: e.g. that Emily Hale had discovered that she could not make over Irene Hale. That so far as one can help other people to be something more than they are, one must give oneself completely; but the moment you find that ~~you find that~~ you are merely a drug to keep them going or are exhausting yourself to no permanent spiritual good to them, then you are committing a sin in expending yourself. I should like you to realise this more fully still, and to see that beyond a point you are doing a wrong - unselfishness may become a vice - it becomes easier to be unselfish than to do what is right. (3) an impersonal and quite different matter - you are quite right in saying that my test as a dramatist will come when I do something entirely according to my own notions and not sur commande. I do understand and agrée. We shall see, next winter and perhaps it will take two winters.

I only want to say now, that I have had one of the most wonderful evenings of my life. You are not to stick out your tongue and say that I was pleased to find you ill: I was as sorry as sorry could be. BUT I have always had the notion, how lovely it would be to nurse you IF you were ill - I have no illusion that I really was nursing you, and I quite realise that in allowing me to stroke your forehead - which gave me the opportunity to study more carefully the contours of the most beautiful of all noses - you were only being kind to me in allowing me to believe that I was doing something for you. All the more kind, therefore, to kiss me when I left, as if I had done

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something for you. It was a great relief to run out and get the medicine for you - I hope it will have proved efficacious. I can't imagine you ever in such pain or fatigue that you would not be able to think of doing something for somebody else.

Jusqu' à mardi, alors. Puis-je dire que j'ai passé une soirée vertigineuse et inoubliable? Puisque tu le veux, je n'écrirai pas avant notre prochain rendez-vous.

Tom

Ἐπειρ ἀκροβαίμων; I have looked at my tablets & find I have to lunch on Tues. 18th with Canon George Bell of Providence R.I. This is unprovidential *Deu Deu*, and I can only wait impatiently to see you at 6⁴⁵ on Tuesday 18th June. οἶ οἶ ὄτοτοτοί.

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COBNE VALLEY

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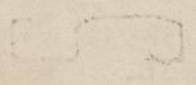
Chorus to open Act II instead
of the liturgical business.

Does the bird sing in the South?
Only the sea-bird cries, driven inland by the storm.
What sign of the spring of the year?
Only the death of the old: not a stir, not a shoot, not a breath.
Do the days begin to lengthen?
Longer and darker the day, shorter and colder the night.
Still and stifling the air: but a wind is stored up in the East.
The starved crow sits in the field, attentive; and in the wood
The owl rehearses the hollow note of death.
What signs of a bitter Spring?
The wind stored up in the East.
What, at the time of the birth of Our Lord, at Christmastide,
Is there not peace upon earth, goodwill among men?
The peace of this world is always uncertain, unless men keep
the peace of God.
And war among men defiles this world, but death in the Lord
renews it,
And the world must be cleaned in the winter, or shall we have only
A sour spring, a parched summer, and empty harvest.

Between Christmas and Easter what work shall be done?
The ploughman shall go out in March and turn the same earth
He has turned before, the bird shall sing the same song,
When the leaf is out on the tree, when the elder and ~~the~~ may
Burst over the stream, and the air is clear and high,
And voices trill at windows, and children tumble in front of
the door,
What work shall have been done, what wrong
Shall the bird's song cover, the green tree cover, what wrong
Shall the fresh earth cover? We wait, and the time is short
But waiting is long.

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WIDE CLOXIA



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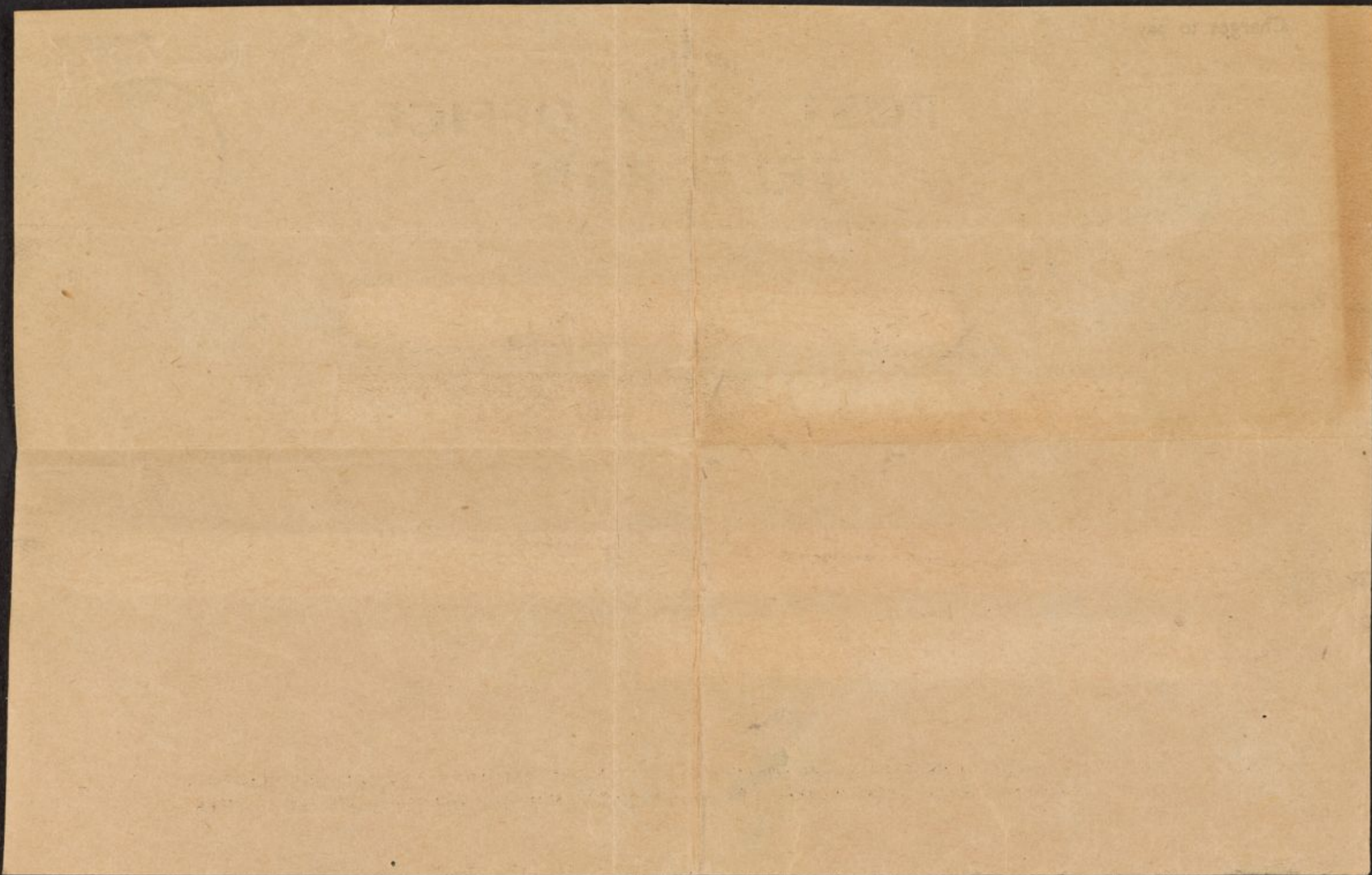
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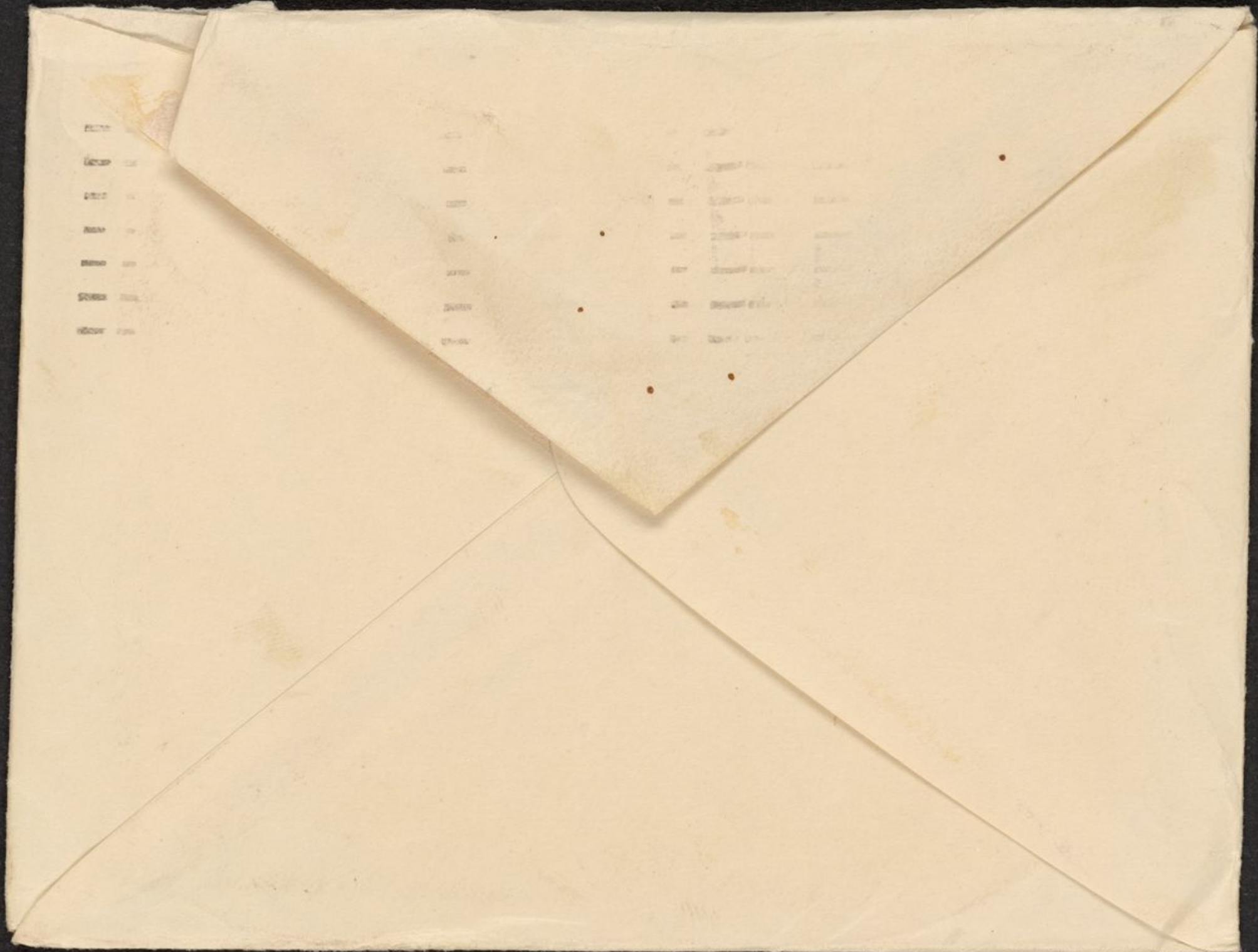


Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

Chipping CAMPDEN,

Gloucestershire.



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T. S. ELIOT'S DRAMA OF FAITH.

"Death In The Cathedral."

A Great Act of Worship.

By R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

ALL the world over there is a religious revival. The extent and the force of it are ignored by many observers, because of the strange forms the revival has taken, the strange gods men are called on to worship. In England especially, we still live in that comfortable cheat of the Victorian that, though men may through ignorance or prejudice or pride reject the Faith, they will not defiantly reject what the Faith has secured for them. Only the blind can think that now. It is plain that, in Europe and Asia, and in the Americas, the old, savage, cruel, fate-ridden and doom-dealing gods are again worshipped. Moloch and Baal, Ares and Ashtaroth, the gods of destruction, even the goddess in whose train Attis danced, are back again in more continents than ours; and, if they are to be thrust back into their unclean darkness, Christian men must see to it that Banners of the King advance against them, carried with no less pomp, followed by no less zeal, than those called in aid by the servants of the powers of darkness.

In the service of religion, few arts can be more effective than the drama, itself by origin a liturgical act. Recently, in many countries, there have been plays about religion, either professedly Christian or, if not Christian, proclaiming the power of the supernatural as shown by wisdom, by beauty, or by that sense of the mystical brotherhood of mankind which has no sanction save Christianity. Paul Claudel, John Maschfield, Laurence Housman, W. B. Yeats, Eugene O'Neill, have all written plays with a religious purpose. One poet and dramatist, however, has done more—T. S. Eliot. His new play, *Death in the Cathedral*,* to be produced this week at Canterbury, is more than a religious play; it is an act of faith, as truly that as were the plays of the great Spanish dramatists. Here drama returns to its origins; here is liturgical drama, and it must be criticized as that, as a play for which the only analogues are some of the Greek dramas, or the *autos* of Calderon.

It is a play of the martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury, commonly called Becket. Could there be any more suitable subject for our present distress? Harry Tudor's brutal sense and supremely un-Christian temper were never shown more clearly than when he blotted December 29 from the calendars of the Missal and the Office Books. He knew of what spirit he was, and whom he served; and that, in a world where kings could go in praise or penitence to the shrine of St. Thomas, there was no room for that other shrine in which the Tudor idol was to be set up, and worshipped.

To-day, we are once more asked to worship the State, the spectre of the Broken which is but the shadow of a man after he has climbed to a high place. In three speeches, written in eloquent and familiar prose, T. S. Eliot puts in the mouths of three of the knights who killed Thomas arguments which are now common form in the mouths of those who would restore Moloch to his old dignity.

The bulk of the play is in verse; and there are some speeches, especially of the chorus and of Becket himself, where Mr. Eliot attains a direct simplicity, a dignity and an intellectual force which he has not excelled in any of his previous writings. The colloquialisms of his style, the deliberate "lowness" of certain phrases seem to me more appropriate than in poems of which the dramatic texture is not so certain. Mr. Eliot has always possessed the humility which is a part of the make-up of all poets; but in some of his works it has been expressed self-consciously. His avoidance of obvious beauty has occasionally had in it a smack

of the Puritan temper. His poetry has been, not too intellectual—no art can be that—but too aware of the use of the intellect. *Death in the Cathedral* is free from that. The speeches have natural ease, the style is subtly differentiated, and Mr. Eliot has never been so successful in rising from satire to irony, from irony to an intense imaginative beauty.

And the play is exciting. Once more is disproved the vulgar error that, since suspense is an essential part of drama, no well-known story, with a well-known climax, can be as successful dramatically as a new, invented legend. Critics who uphold that not only have to put in the second place all Greek tragedy, much of French, and a great deal of Shakespeare, they are really asking that all drama should be subdued to the level of the detective story. The excitement proper to drama lies in the unfolding of spiritual and intellectual motives, not in the surprise of something unexpected. Mr. Eliot has undertaken the discovery of what, in men's hearts and minds, led to that murder in Canterbury, and of the character of those involved, and of the nature of the forces which compelled or inspired them.

His chorus is of the women of Canterbury, waiting for Thomas's return from his seven years' exile. They are full of apprehension. They are afraid for the Archbishop, yet

Destiny waits in the hand of God, shaping the still unshapen;
I have seen these things in a shaft of sunlight.
Destiny waits in the hand of God, not in the hands of statesmen,
Who do, some well, some ill, planning and guessing,
Having their aims which turn in their hands in the pattern of time.

To them come the priests of the Cathedral, and they rebuke the women's fears, and then comes Thomas, and his first word is Peace. To him come four Tempters, to present different arguments to Thomas, and persuade him to forgo his opposition to the King. After an interlude, in which Thomas preaches the Christmas sermon, we come to December 29.

This second part is in two scenes—one in the hall of the palace, the other in the Cathedral. The play now assumes definitely the character of an act of worship. The note is struck from the first, and intensified when three priests come in, carrying the banners of St. Stephen, St. John and the Holy Innocents, chanting of martyrdom. On them the four Knights intrude, demanding Thomas, whom they insult, working themselves by violent language into the recklessness needed to carry out their intent. The chorus, in one of the most splendid passages of the play, foretells Thomas's fate, which he does not seek to escape; but the priests compel him into the Cathedral. Then, after they have barred the doors, Thomas bids them open to the Knights battering without:

Unbar the door!
You think me reckless, desperate and mad.
You argue by results, as this world does,
You defer to the fact. For every life and every act,
Consequence of good and evil can be shown.
And as in time results of many deeds are blended,
So good and evil in the end become confounded.
It is not in time that my death shall be known;
It is out of time that my decision is taken,
If you call that decision,
To which my whole being gives entire consent:
I give my life
To the Law of God above the Law of Man.
Then the murder, the excuses of the murderers, final speeches by two priests, and the last chorus.

Mr. Eliot's St. Thomas is not the hagiographer's; his pride, his ambition

are not glossed over, for Becket was not a natural saint, as was that other king's servant, Thomas More. He was exalted out of common stuff, to be for centuries the saint of common men and women; and when Henry VIII. spoiled his tomb, stole his honour and abolished his memorial, he destroyed something in the spirit of the common people, something which is not yet recovered, and will return only at a sacrifice as heartfelt as that made at Canterbury on that gloomy December afternoon more than seven centuries ago.

* *Death in the Cathedral*. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber and Faber, 6s.)

LIST'S NOTE-BOOK.

Week's Jottings.

Christian Scientists were the second most important religious body in England. I suggest that Mr. J. L. Garvin should have these announcements revised.

book lies in the quite amazing photographs of life under the Soviet.

The Travail of the Jews.

My week-end reading came to an end with *Road of Ages*, by Robert Nathan, a beautiful and moving prose poem concerned with the endless travail of the Jews.

The Return of Sybil Thorndike.

"Grief Goes Over," at the Globe, is a masterpiece of anti-climax. It upsets the usual standards of the theatre. No purple passage ever brings the curtain down; but it falls casually, in a plaintive sort of way, when all the hurly-burly is done. The play about the members of a family, whom morality must call a bad lot. Most playwrights would make haste to point the moral, and perhaps fail to adorn the tale, with the gentle character of Mrs. Oldham, the mother, whose griefs and whose forgetfulness Dame Sybil Thorndike plays with a perfection of understanding.

Two Young Actors.

Rupert Brooke's lament is the theme of the play. "The laugh dies with the lips, love with the lover, and Grief Goes Over." It is worked out to its inexorable end. The main burden of the story is borne by two very young actors, Miss Mary Jones and Mr. Geoffrey Nares, who is the son of Mr. Owen Nares. Both are fresh and vigorous in their acting. I believe that Miss Mary Jones may have a big future.

The Ancient Music of Religion.

For one evening, Anglicanism was forgotten in St. Paul's. The choir of the Russian Orthodox Theological Academy of Paris sang the ancient melodies of Kiev, Valam and the monastery St. Sergius. The singers were at first puzzled by the curious acoustics of the Cathedral. Then all the gravity, the unctious and the sweetness of the ancient music was poured out by the organ notes of the Russians. The Orthodox liturgical chants are without comparison for their beauty of form and their mystical essence. Under the leadership of M. Ivan Denissov, the hymn of Maundy Thursday made the most unemotional heart miss a beat.

Hawatha.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself on Monday night at the Albert Hall. Mr. T. C. Fairbairn's dramatized version of Coleridge-Taylor's *Hawatha* has become an institution, and, from a few performances in its first years, now runs for a fortnight. And I am not surprised. As an entertainment, bright, pretty, and with good music excellently sung, it is unique. The Royal Choral Society, almost unrivalled for choral singing, lets itself go on this occasion. Its members, dressed in Fenimore-Cooper costumes, roam about the arena of the great hall amid wigwags and running brooks and totem poles, while the great body of sound pours forth from nearly a thousand voices. They and the excellent orchestra are under the control of Dr. Malcolm Sargent, whose popularity as their conductor was made even more eloquent than usual by his recovery from a prolonged illness.

A Wage for a Worker.

I was told the other day that a match-seller is never a married man. It is his penalty for refusing to be on the dole. He may make, if he is lucky, two shillings a day profit on his matches. He cannot buy in bulk because he never can afford more than a dozen boxes of matches at a time. He cannot sell anything on Sundays, because nobody will buy. His wage may purchase an eight-penny bed in a lodging-house, and give him daily food. Heaven knows when and how he gets his clothes; and I suspect the gutter on a wet day puts a sorry strain upon boots and trousers.

The Ice-Cream Cyclist.

There are many trades about which I have often been curious. The ice-cream cyclist, for example. I am told that he works a seven-day week of eighty hours or over, and earns no more than £1 wages plus commission. The total is twenty-five to thirty shillings income. The taxi-driver rarely earns more than £3 a week, and works a ten-hour day, with a free Sunday every six months or so.

Clerks and Dustmen.

There are some curious anomalies in wage-earning. The ship's steward may bring back £60 in gratuities from a trip. A bus-driver earns over £4 a week, and deserves it. The persevering carter's rate of pay is poor at the best of times; but a non-union man may get anything as low as twenty-five shillings a week. A carter whom I know earns that

sum for collecting empty butter-boxes from eight in the morning till seven at night. And then he stops to help his employer knock them to pieces. A dreary business. And a dreary wage. Many of the black-coated men of the City earn no more than £2 5s. a week, just about half the wage of a foreman dustman! What does a catsmeat man earn, I wonder?

Improved?

But the women have the worst of it. They are supposed to live at home. The little drapery improver of the suburbs earns ten shillings a week for the first year. She is on the "feed yourself" system, and has to buy a black dress. Factory girls earn about sevenpence an hour. I wonder what I should see in life if I labelled one thousand one hundred and twenty-five tins in a nine-hour day? The penalty of two mistakes is a day off work. After six mistakes you are dismissed.

Charing in a Cinema.

Another curious trade is the charing of cinema houses. Nearly all the charladies who scrub down the cinema floors are widows, or women whose men are out of work. They scrub seven days a week, from seven to twelve-thirty, and they earn nineteen shillings. The only way of getting a holiday on Christmas Day is to scrub the night before, when the cinema closes, till four in the morning.

Wild Roses.

My country correspondent writes: "Wild roses appeared on the first day of June, but remain far between, which may account for the continuance of the nightingale's song, for according to poetic legend, and naturalists' experience, the song dies when the roses bloom. 'Straight go the white petals to the heart,' wrote Richard Jefferies of the first-seen wild rose, 'straight the mind's glance goes back to how many other pageants of summer in old times!' Best-loved are those glowing with the exquisite pink which a rose-grower would describe as 'maiden's-blush,' delicately scented, and usually growing solitary, the ill-named dog-roses. Lovely, too, is the white field-rose, usually in clusters, but scentless. The sweet briar, the 'sweet eglantine' of the poets, is beyond all praise for its delicious fragrance, the very essence of June. It is noteworthy how gardening fashion has set in strongly in favour of forms of the single wild roses, a return to simplicity, and they take an honoured place to-day in mixed borders and in half-tamed woodlands, where they may grow in unrestrained and native grace. Our native burnet or Scotch rose now provides many delightful garden forms, with white, yellow, or pink flowers, often on attractive dwarf bushes. But the little blushing rose-bud of the hedgerows will always keep its sure place in countrymen's hearts."

LAICUS IGNOTUS.

CHURCH HOSTEL FOR CARDIFF.

Those with knowledge of the facts are agreed that one of the greatest handicaps of the newer University colleges is the lack of residential hostels, and especially for men. At Cardiff, the women students are already provided for, and there is now a prospect of a hostel for men in the near future.

For many years the East Grinstead Sisterhood has maintained an Orphanage in the parish of Roath, but their recent withdrawal from work in Cardiff has set free valuable premises, which have been offered to the Bishop of Llandaff. A Church Hostel for the University college is now proposed, and a committee has been appointed to work out the scheme and plan. The Bishop's proposal will receive the warm approval of the University college authorities, and will deserve the cordial support of all Churchmen.

ANOTHER

CHILDREN'S SUPPLEMENT

will be given with
The Church Times
next week.

ATION

concepts. Meanwhile the wonted methods of criticism, historical, psychological and aesthetic, must content us. Or, in English fashion, at the same time this "very European literature, currents of

MR. ELIOT'S NEW PLAY

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL. By T. S. ELIOT.
(Faber and Faber. 5s.)

Mr. Eliot's new work of poetic drama has moved farther from the theatre than his previous attempts and come nearer to the Church. It is written for production in Canterbury Cathedral this week. Its conventions have more in common with ritual than with the stage, as in the earliest English drama; and these conventions which he has adopted, including strong use of a chorus, are well assimilated to the whole texture. In "The Rock" they were often self-conscious, but here they have become subordinate, natural, appropriate. The play might be described as a poem for several voices used liturgically.

The subject covered by a title that echoes detective fiction is Thomas Becket's assassination. It is told without an obvious propagandist intention, which was not the case with "The Rock." We open with Becket returning after seven years abroad, to a scene which has been prepared by a chorus of Canterbury women, who speak in strikingly simple language:—

Here is no continuing city, here no abiding stay.
Ill the wind, ill the time, uncertain the profit, certain the danger.
O late late late is the time, late too late, and rotten the year;
Evil the wind, and bitter the sea, and grey the sky,
O Thomas, return, Archbishop; return, return to France.

But Becket, who is shown throughout as one ready for death, will not accept any warning. Tempters appear. One tempter would have him revive the worldly pleasures of his youth, and when rejected remarks:—"I leave you to the pleasures of your higher vices." Another tempter would have him re-seek the power he once held as Chancellor. To whom Becket replies:—

Those who put their faith in worldly order
Not controlled by the order of God,
In confident ignorance, but arrest disorder,
Make it fast, breed fatal disease,
Degrade what they exalt.

A third tempter would have him lead rebellion against the king; a fourth makes a subtler appeal—to triumph over his enemies by martyrdom:—

Think, Thomas, think of enemies dismayed,
Creeping in penance, frightened by a shade. . .
Think of miracles, by God's grace,
And think of your enemies, in another place.

But Becket is aware of the danger of his last temptation: "to do the right deed for the wrong reason."

As an interlude we see him preaching in the cathedral on Christmas morning, 1170, when he pronounces his view that a Christian martyrdom is not the effect of a man's will to become a saint. He says:—

A martyr, a saint, is always made by the design of God, for His love of men, to warn them and to lead them, to bring them back to His ways. . . the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, not lost it but found it, for he has found freedom in submission to God. The martyr no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of martyrdom.

He concludes his sermon by saying he does not think he will ever preach to them again.

In Part II. the murder takes place. First, the four knights accuse Becket. The priests try to persuade him to take sanctuary, but he is more than ready for death: "I have had a tremor of bliss, a wink of heaven, a whisper, And I would no longer be denied." When the priests carry him by force into the cathedral, he makes them unbar the doors. The knights enter, slightly tipsy, and kill him. They then, in mock-elaborate prose, justify themselves, urging that their act is disinterested, that Becket's crime was his failure to unite temporal and spiritual office (Chancellor and Archbishop), "an almost ideal State," and that by his attitude he more or less killed himself.

All through the play the two main notes are of Becket with his *idée fixe* of fulfilment in death and of the chorus exhibiting a sense of approaching death. Mr. Eliot's talent seems to be most effective in this second note, of imminent desolation:—

The forms take shape in the dark air:
Puss-purr of leopard, footfall of padding bear,
Palm-pat of nodding ape, square hyena waiting
For laughter, laughter, laughter.

Or, again, a recurrence of the undersea imagery of his early work:—

I have lain on the floor of the sea and breathed with the breathing of the sea-anemone, swallowed with ingurgitation of the sponge. I have lain in the soil and criticized the worm.

But those former contradictions which were the special surprise of Mr. Eliot's verse are here fused. This is his most unified writing. He has admirably brought to maturity his long experimenting for a dramatic style, the chief merit of which lies in his writing for a chorus.

HALF MILE DOWN

HALF MILE DOWN. By WILLIAM BEEBE.
(John Lane, 18s.)

Many a scientific worker, entombing a strenuous adventure of the mind in a report to a learned society, must have longed to escape from the formidable jargon of the laboratory and tell the unlearned, in unlearned language, what his work amounts to. And conversely many an impatient layman, eager to get directly at what more and more concerns him in scientific investigation without the interposition of the scientific journalist, must have asked why it is that so few scientists can write. The names of Einstein, Eddington, Jeans, Bragg and Bertrand Russell are witnesses to the fact that this problem of the literary transport of scientific work is not as acute as it used to be; but it is still rare to find in one man the capacity for original work and the power to carry an untrained reader into the heart of his adventure.

Dr. William Beebe is an interesting exception. He is certainly fortunate in that the work of an ichthyologist lies much nearer the rail-head of popular apprehension than, for example, the remote haunts of the atomic physicist; and it may be that his transport system is somewhat over-elaborate for the goods it carries. Nevertheless his glowing studies of marine life have brought the common reader under the enchantment of the lands where corals lie; and his latest book, which describes a remarkable penetration into deep sea life, is a beautiful and satisfying example of his method. His enthusiasm is so great and his pen so willing that his description sometimes swells into over ripeness. But he is an acute observer who, enlisting every artifice of pen, paintbox and camera in the business of communication, succeeds in conveying not merely what was seen, but what was felt by himself and his colleagues in the course of their investigation.

Dr. Beebe approaches the climax to his under-water work by picturing the situation of a helmet diver who, moving along a shallow ledge fifty feet below the surface, comes to a precipice and peers into the darkening abyss. How is he to get at the organisms which move their delicate tissues and carry their own lights in the tremendous pressures and total darkness below? He knows that he can descend a few more fathoms before the pressure beats him: that a complete diving suit may take him with difficulty to 300 feet, and that if he immobilizes himself in an armoured suit he may reach 500 feet. But he knows from the scanty and tantalizing evidence of his deep-sea nets that there is unknown life at much greater depths. He cannot hunt these creatures: but can he at least get down and catch a glimpse of them?

The bathysphere is Dr. Beebe's solution of this problem. It is a spherical steel shell of 4ft. 9in. diameter, with sides over an inch thick, which carries two observers and is lowered by steel cable from a ship to a depth of 3,000 feet, where the pressure is over half a ton per square inch. The observers breathe an oxygen supply carried in the sphere; their atmosphere is purified and dried by chemical agents; they are in telephonic and electric communication with the surface; they look out through two windows of fused quartz three inches thick, at one of which a searchlight can throw a beam obliquely over the field of the other. As they descend at the rate of a foot a second they peer into the growing darkness. The visible spectrum is truncated from the red end, it narrows through green and blue to black. Points and blobs of coloured light dance and flicker in the darkness, evidence of moving forms whose shadowy outlines are sometimes lit up by their own luminescence. When the searchlight throws its beam, patterns of fish vanish across it or move in toward the window; some of these are identified; others, unknown, are gone while the eye struggles to record them:—

Almost at once the sparks we had seen higher up became more abundant and larger. At 1,050 feet I saw a series of luminous, coloured dots moving along slowly, or jerking unsteadily past, similar and yet independent. I turned on the searchlight and found it effective at last. At 600 feet it could not be distinguished; here it cut a swath almost across my field of vision, and for the first time, as far as I know, in the history of scientific inquiry, the life of these depths was visible. The searing beams revealed my coloured lights to be a school of silver hatchet fish, *Argyrolepecus*, from a half to two inches in length and gleaming like tinsel. The marvel of the searchlight was that up to its sharp cut border the blackness revealed nothing but the lights of the fish. In this species there burned steadily—and each showed a colourful swath directed downward—the little iridescent channels of glowing reflections beneath the source of the actual light. These jerked and jogged along until they reached the sharp-edged borderline of the searchlight's beam, and as they entered it, every light was quenched, at least to my vision, and they showed as spots of shining silver, revealing every detail of fin and eye and utterly absurd outline. When I switched off the electricity or the fish moved out of its path, their pyrotechnics again rushed into visibility.

Between 1930 and 1934 over thirty such dives

mined by calculation and test above water. Was the sealing of the door and windows good enough to prevent the entry of air, which would have pulsed the air out of it drowned the air out of it by low...

JAPAN

Whitsun

IN a London railway terminus I find two attitudes towards bank holiday crowds.

ONE — the despairing porter's. Even though I arrive a minute too soon, he tells me sadly I shall never catch my train. The platform is a long way off.

TWO—the attitude of the ticket-collector at the barrier. He has already closed the gate when I arrive. But he gaily opens it again. "You'll get me the sack," he grumbles amiably, as I pass through to my carriage.

The pleasantness of some of these elderly officials is striking.

Mr. T. S. Eliot

PROBABLY the most discussed living writer is Mr. T. S. Eliot. Long ago he started the discussion with a pessimistic poem on modern life which was called "The Waste Land." Many critics became quite angry about it.

They became even angrier when they saw younger writers being influenced by this poem.

Mr. Eliot became an Anglo-Catholic. He wrote a church pageant-play, "The Rock," at the performance of which I saw more bishops than I had ever seen before in one place.

In Canterbury

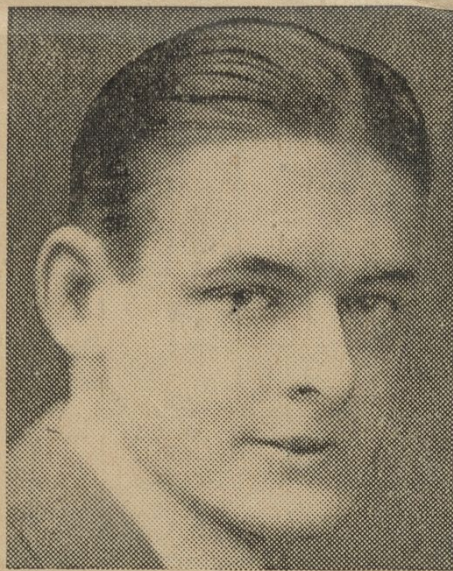
THE critics who, through vague hostility, ignored "The Rock," will find it hard to ignore Mr. Eliot's new play this week, because it is being performed in Canterbury Cathedral.

It is called "Murder in the Cathedral," and deals with the assassination of Thomas à Becket in the twelfth century.

English drama first developed from performances of Bible stories in the churches. Mr. Eliot, in his work, is taking it back there.

Now British

MR. ELIOT was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1888. But he "evolved for himself an aristocratic myth out of English literature and history." In 1927 he became a



Mr. T. S. Elliot: His new play will be performed in Canterbury Cathedral

British citizen. He has announced that he is:

"An Anglo-Catholic in religion, a classicist in literature, and a Royalist in politics."

He has been greatly influenced by French writers, including Rimbaud and Laforgue.

...the old trees being struck by lightning.

No. 1692

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26 June 1935.

Dearest Lady:

I am still half-stupified and half-asleep since Sunday, partly extreme fatigue and partly the sudden heat. On the Thursday before I saw you at Canterbury I had started the day at the dentists, had lunched with George Malcolm Thomson to talk about Scottish Nationalism and try to tell him how his pamphlet on the decline of industry in Scotland ought to have been written and he said he would re-write it; went to tea with a young American poet who on a protracted honeymoon had stopped in Dublin and fallen in with the Gate Theatre - he had Lord and Lady Longford (who wrote a play about Swift) and Denis Johnston there, the former fat but not very interesting, the latter looking interesting but wholly silent; then dined with Oldham at the London School of Economics and found I had to take the chair for a meeting for Berdaiev, the Russian philosopher, afterwards - and had to take it in French - and two men present spoke in German - and some in English which was rapidly translated in Russian by an American posted at Berdayev's ear. Berdaiev did not seem to me very profound, but I am told (to-day by Isaiah Berlin, the only Jew ever elected to All Souls') that the Russian language contains no adequate philosophical vocabulary, so Russians cant think as we mean thinking. The final performance went off well, and we had to step up and receive not a blessing but a few kind words from the Archbishop, who attended in a purple cassock sitting in a sort of throne-chair in the row behind Lady Raleigh and me. His words were well-chosen, that is to say they sounded very flattering at the time, but didnt actually commit him to any opinion whatever. The Elsiefog nearly curtsied with excitement. Then Babington mounted on a chair and presented the leading persons with books of photographs of the play, but they are fake photographs, that is to say posed for the photographer and do not correspond to any actual grouping in the play. It was pleasant being motered over to Crowhurst in the cool of the evening by the Morleys; though I think I would rather have spent two days in bed and a week in a deck chair, I feel so tired. They are endlessly kind and good, and by the way Donald's manners have much improved though he still wants as much of one's time: while working on my report on the dissertation of the lad who wants a Fellowship at Corpus I was occasionally aware of Donald peeping in the window to see if I had finished. I am useful to Donald because he is not allowed to go out on the pond in the punt without an adult, but he is much more amenable about coming in again than he used to be, and thanks one afterwards. On Sunday an American family with three children came to dinner and tea: on Monday Oliver's young music teacher (Oliver now plays Mozart

sonatas quite nicely) came to tea with two friends of his and played cricket with Donald while I slept, young men in shorts and I wish you would allow me to wear shorts sometimes because looking at them I thought my legs are much lovelier than most. I came back Tuesday evening nearly prostrated by the heat, and this morning after a little vestry business (and the vicar has complications and is to see a specialist on Friday, he ought to go away for some weeks) rushed out to Hampstead to the Fabers. Motored to Oxford - weather comfortable and Geoffrey drives very fast, and were in good time for lunch. I had a Miss Starkie, a dumpy little Irishwoman who looked absurd in a master's gown and cap, but was really the best person for me in that company as we had common friends in Paris and Dublin and she has written a huge superfluous work on Baudelaire, but I couldn't talk to Nevil Coghill on my other hand as much as I should have liked, he is a Fellow of Exeter and always producing plays at Oxford, the Tempest in Worcester Gardens and what not, because the man on Miss Starkie's right wouldn't talk to her much. After lunch I fell in with Dorothea (is it Dorothea I mean Mrs.) Merriman and had a chat with her and Roger but Edith Faber was sent to draw me away and introduce me to someone else as somebody important wanted to talk to Merriman. This was out in the quad after lunch where we were supposed to have coffee but some had coffee and some had not and I had not because no one brought me any, and others fared likewise. The usual affair when a number of people are standing in an open space: either you are torn away in the middle of a conversation or else the other person is torn away leaving you stranded and trying to look dignified though lonely. Geoffrey found the Bishop of Gloucester wandering about in purple and scarlet (he is getting very old and a bit feeble) and full of good intentions said would he like to meet Mr. T. S. Eliot. "O yes" said the Bishop heartily, "certainly, by all means, glad to meet anybody". Geoffrey a little dashed but persistent - o no, I don't mean that, but Mr. Eliot, you know, the distinguished poet, just written a play about Thomas a Becket produced at the Canterbury festival last week. "Canterbury? Festival?" said the Bishop, "never heard of it. But delighted to meet him, whoever he is". Geoffrey by this time anxious to retire and forget the whole matter, but the Bishop went on - o yes - by all means - meet him: so the introduction had to be effected. Needless to say that very little came of it. See enclosed diagram.

Canterbury was all so public, and one felt there merely an instrument in the hands of other people: so naturally an unsatisfactory meeting for me, though better than none. Strolling about the precincts as if a telescope trained on us from every window, to say nothing of prowling chorus girls and preying autograph-albumists. I prize the evening when you had a headache above a thousand such, and really like best meeting you in London, where one is unobserved and insignificant. And I like it best when you and I are both detached from our surroundings. There is privacy, a lovely privacy, in a mob, as when we coasted down Ludgate Hill on the back of a taxi, and I felt that no one was taking the slightest notice of us but ourselves. Not that I am not eager to come for a week! I shall write to Mrs. Perkins tomorrow. But a hard day - dentist again, Col. Butler Bow-

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den at 11.30 and lunch for George Scott Moncrieff, a committee all
afternoon and Dodo to the ballet in the evening. Then Kelham and
its earnest students and margarine and terce sext none and compline.
You ARE to come to the ballet with the Morleys, if you will do this
I am willing to be bullied in all sorts of ways. So now no more un-
til Monday, but I pray for a letter from you tomorrow.

Your Tom

