Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

By C.W.S. QUEEN MARY.

Recent mapleby Aldenby

Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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THE
CRITERION
A QUARTERLY REVIEW
EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

1 March 1938.

Dearest Eric.

I have missed one mail, but fortunately have the Queen Mary tomorrow. I have had another short period in bed, from Friday to ~~Sunday~~ Monday, and am not allowed to go to Russell Square until tomorrow. Probably I got up too soon after my previous slight laryngitis, but that was not the doctor's fault: I had to keep my engagement to speak at the Mansion House. So he is keeping me quiet a little longer. It was only a cold in the head, with temperature - no trouble with the throat or chest; and again I slept peacefully for most of two days, and feel much refreshed. After Lent I think I may go away for a week. But my general health remains quite sound. With my crooked nose and catarrh I am liable to catch a cold when a bit tired.

Your letter of the 21st (Queen Mary) arrived this morning, and I thank you for such a long one. I am delighted that you should have been re-appointed, and for two years - even with a slight rise after the first year. You will indeed be sorry when Neilson goes: he seems to me to be an admirable Head, with the sympathy and understanding encouragement necessary to get the best out of his staff. But by that time you will be well entrenched, and will be on equal footing with the rest of the staff with the new President, whoever he will be.

I should think that your speech instruction might very well be developed in the direction of drilling the girls in the recitation of poetry, and to some extent in choral work: I say to some extent, because there is so little verse in existence which lends itself properly to choral work. It is ridiculous, of course, that the Speech Training and the Dramatic work should be completely divorced. What I think is that the Dramatic department ought to be merged in the Speech department, and not vice versa. I am rather sceptical anyway of the advisability, in a college course, of attempting to train people to be either actors or playwrights or producers: I think it is specialising too soon. I think that all to some extent, and those who hope to get into theatrical work to a greater extent, should be thoroughly drilled in the use of their voices and in an appreciation of the best spoken English - almost as necessary for those who are

going to write plays as for those who are going to act them; and they ought to be trained in movement and control of their bodies. But I think that the dramatic work ought to be extra-curricular - such as what you did at Scripps. That is excellent for them: but it ought to be partly a diversion, and certainly not a qualification for an A.B. I wondered whether the work of Hallie Flanagan's pupils at Vassar - some of it of course first rate, for she is an admirable producer and trainer - was not taken so seriously as to interfere with their more academic studies. I know nothing of Sam Eliot, except that he is said to be rather cross-grained and opinionated. I imagined that he was not very popular.

I rejoice to hear that competent critics consider that you look so much better than last summer: you must keep that in mind as next summer approaches. Thank you for more information about your schedule. Evidently you have very little time to yourself; but I applaud your getting to bed early (I think I should be rather hungry by 10.30 if I dined at 6, so I hope you have hot milk or something before you go to bed) and it is a great satisfaction to learn that you have been sleeping so well.

No, I don't mind your reading from the two Shakespeare lectures to friends - so long as you make clear to them that they are only drafts, and that I consider that there is much to be amended and to be qualified, as well as much that needs expanding. I only prefer that, in their present provisional form, they should not be quoted from or referred to publicly by anybody.

I hope you will mention me to Sir Herbert and to his daughter also, if she is the one who has a Dutch husband who is a professor in New York - I met them in June. (Incidentally, I enclose some very bad snaps taken in Edinburgh in June by an unknown young lady who sent them to me not long ago together with a book which she asked me to sign for her). Grierson is rather a grand old man, I think, a great scholar and humanist. I hope you will hear him read aloud, from Burns or Milton or Donne. He is an Orcadian by origin, but his accent is Aberdeen.

It is good of you to persist on behalf of Michael Roberts. Did I send you a copy of his book "THE Modern Mind" and if not shall I do so? It might be useful to show people as an indication of the quality of his own mind.

Thank you for the N.Y. cuttings about Murder, which I am very glad to have, because I have still heard nothing at all from any of them since they arrived, and I do not know yet why they changed their plans and went to New York.

Yes, I shall now fight for "The Family Re-union"(or Reunion) as a title. I went last week - I think it was after I last wrote-

again to St.Denis' production of "Three Sisters" and was more impressed and moved than the first time. I did regret that you could not see it: as nearly perfect a production as I ever hope to see. And I admire Tchehov as a dramatist more than any other modern playwright - I flatter myself that I have been influenced by him in "The Family Reunion".

Letter writing - I mean letters like ours - is indeed something that one has to learn to develop. I said "something" so as to avoid using the term "an art" because that sounds too deliberate, and what one has to cultivate is the letter as a particular form of conversation. Many "good" letters often read as if they were written with an eye to a larger public - and that kills them. The only "literary" letters that are worth reading are those which carry the conviction that the author intended them only for the eye of one person - or rather, that he or she had only that one person in mind in writing them. I am so often quite dissatisfied with my letters to you - though not on the ground of artificiality! It sometimes seems as if the things that are worth saying were the things that occur to one at moments when one cannot write them down; and that when I sit down to write only the daily trifles come to the top of my mind. What one has to do is to make letters (I mean to a particular person!) an integral part of one's week, the most important of all one's conversations.

I shall hope to hear more of the fur coat. If you are going to get one, don't wait until Spring! But how much DOES mink cost?

Your loving

Pom

Private & Unexpurgated Edition

BUSTOPHER JONES: THE ST.JAMES'S STREET CAT.

Bustopher Jones is not skin and bones -
In fact, he's remarkably fat.
He doesn't haunt pubs - he has eight or nine clubs,
For he's the St.James's Street Cat!
He's the Cat we all greet as he walks down the street
In his coat of a fashionable black;
No commonplace mousers have such well-cut trousers
Or such an impeccable back.
In the whole of St.James's the smartest of names is
The name of this Brummel of Cats;
And we're all of us proud to be nodded or bowed to
By Bustopher Jones in white spats!

One club he has fixed on's the Wormwood and Brixton
(For it is against the rules
For any smart Cat to belong both to that
And the Joint Correctional Schools).
For a similar reason, when game is in season
He goes, not to Fox's, but Blimp's;
And he's frequently seen at the gay Stage and Screen,
Which has excellent winkles and shrimps.
In the season of venison he gives his benison
To the Pothunter's succulent bones;
And just before noon's not a moment too soon
~~For a drink with the lads~~ To drop in for a drink at the Drones.
When he's seen in a hurry there's probably curry
At the Siamese, or at the Glutton;
If he looks full of gloom then he's been to the Tomb
With bishops and cabbage and mutton.

So, much in this way, passes Bustopher's day -
At one club or another he's found.
It can be no surprise that under our eyes
He has grown unmistakeably round.
He's a twenty-five pounder, or I am a bounder,
And he's putting on weight every day;
But he's so well preserved because he's observed
All his life a routine - so he'll say.
Or to put it in rhyme: "I shall last out my time"
Is the word of this ~~sagest~~ stoutest of Cats:
It must and it shall be Spring in Pall Mall
While Bustopher Jones wears white spats!

By German packet BREMEN

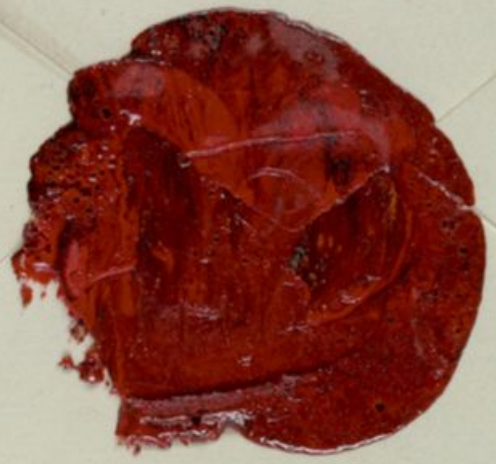
Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

4 March 1938.

My Dear,

I must post a short note to catch the Bremen and to thank you for your letter of the 24th by the Europa. I have nothing much to report, except that I am recovering strength, had a sitting last night, and tomorrow (Saturday) afternoon go for a walk with John in Brompton Cemetary which is not far away. I am interested to hear of your experiment with Sweeney Agonistes: but I still think that the verse was conceived at an impossibly fast tempo for recitation or acting, and this will prevent it from being anything but a curiosity. I hope both that you will come here and that I shall come to America. I have a cable from Browne announcing receipt of my draft of the Family Reunion. Nothing about the success of Murder, but Mrs.Dukes to whom I spoke on the telephone thinks that the move to New York was forced by Gilbert Miller, and that it may have been imprudent. She seems very anxious. I dont know whom Martin had in mind for the new play except Beatrix Lehmann. And I'm delighted about the leopard cat (I know of tiger cats, but never hears of a leopard cat before) except that you wont get much use out of it now - I only hope that it will still be stylish next year.

Your devoted Tom

I sometimes wonder why you suddenly address a letter to Russell Square! I get it just the same - but about five hours later than when you send it to Emperor's Gate!

AMENDES HONORABLES. Mr. T. S. Eliot has kindly written to us drawing attention to a grave misunderstanding which may arise from our all too brief reference to his important observations in the current CRITERION:

In your admirable "Extracts and Comments," which I invariably read with profit, I am a little nettled to find, in the current number, a brief reference to my having commented "charitably" on Lord Nuffield's benefactions to Oxford. While I hope that my comments always show Christian charity . . . I take a mild exception—not to the brevity of the reference—but to the use of the word "charitably" in such a brief reference. Are you sure that all your readers will take it simply that I have shown Christian charity towards this appalling blunder?—and that they will not interpret your remark as meaning what in journalistic language is called "qualified approval"? I wished to express unqualified disapproval . . .

We would deeply regret any such deplorable misunderstanding; and can plead only that the justice and urgency of Mr. Eliot's comment seemed to us so self-evident that we were the more impressed with his charity and moderation. We can find less excuse for having referred with such casual brevity to Mr. Eliot's important and almost solitary protest against a situation fraught with a threat of sheer disaster to the University of Oxford. For, as Mr. Eliot goes on to complain, "So far as I know, mine was a solitary voice of warning against the subjection of the Oxford 'Dominus Illuminatio Mea' to the purposes of materialism." Still more deplorable is that fact that, so far as we are aware, no effort has yet been made by the responsible authorities to meet Mr. Eliot's protest, let alone to avert the irremediable degradation to which their action has exposed the University.

Brother George Every, S.S.M., has kindly sent us an advance copy of a letter which is to be published in full in the next number of CHRISTENDOM:

A paragraph in *Penguin's* admirable review of periodicals in the January *Blackfriars,* contrasting Fr. Casserley with Fr. Micklewright, and Barthian tendencies with what he calls the "monistic and immanentist 'Christian Platonist Nominalism' " of F. D. Maurice demands a protest. Fr. Micklewright's is not the only possible view of Maurice, and is at certain points highly controversial . . .

But though I have no doubt that *Penguin* is right and Anglicans in general and the Christendom group in particular have a lot of thinking to do about Nature and Grace, in the process of thought Maurice does not seem to stand for theological liberalism, but for the supremacy of the Bible and the creed over the scholasticism of St. Thomas and over the classical Protestantism of Luther and Barth.

We hasten to explain that it was in no wise our intention presume to pass judgment on the authentic interpretation of the mind of Maurice, and are indeed relieved that Mr. Micklewright's exposition of his views is not to pass unchallenged. We would also assure Brother Every that we too, with St. Thomas himself, stand emphatically for the supremacy of the Bible and the creed over the scholasticism of St. Thomas!

CONTEMPORANEA. ANALECTA O.P. (Nov.-Dec.): A Letter from the Master-General of the Order of Preachers recalls the part played by Dominicans in the reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches at the Council of Florence, the fifth centenary of which is to be marked by renewed efforts for reunion.

ART NOTES (Jan.-Feb.): *The Undeveloped Resources of Catholic Art* by E. I. Watkin. Some account, with illustrations, of the new churches and schools of F. X. Velarde.

CITE CHRETIENNE (Jan. 20): *La place de la morale dans les affaires* by Georges Tellerman: ethics *versus* business integrity?

EASTERN CHURCHES QUARTERLY (Jan.): *The Orthodox and Edinburgh, 1937* by Dom Bede Winslow. Dr. Arendzen examines Sophiology.

HOCHLAND (Feb.): *Von Spengler zu Dawson* by Dr. Ludwig Arnold is a valuable comparative study and appreciation of Christopher Dawson's philosophy of history. *Das ökumenische Gespräch*: an estimate of the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences by Dr. Otto Iserland.

IRELAND TO-DAY (Feb.): *Man and the Machine* by S. J. Murray. *Democracy at Bay* by Cecil ffrench Salkeld ("Denial of democracy is an admission that Christianity has failed."). *Eire or Ireland* by H. R. Chillingworth ("God may save Ireland; Eire is past praying for.")

IRENIKON (Nov.-Dec.): L. Zander gives an admirable critical appraisal of the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences as seen by an Orthodox.

REVUE THOMISTE (Jan.): *La nature de la Théologie spéculative* by R. Gagnebet, O.P.: Theology—affective piety or rigorous science? *La paix selon la conception chrétienne* by P. de Languen-Wendels, O.P. *De la connaissance poétique* by J.

By French packet ILE DE FRANCE.

SOUTH KENSINGTON
S.W.7.
6 MCH
1938

Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

8 March 1938.

Dearest Pie

I must send you a short note by the mid-week Ile de France, and will write more fully by the fast packet at the end of the week. (I shall have more time then too, for this week the first three evenings are those taken - I am still doing my best to limit my outgoings to three evenings a week, but as you see I can't space them as I would. Last night to fill in a gap at a dinner party at the Fabers', as Barrington-Ward had to take Dawson's place at The Times, so I was paired off with his wife - there were also the Keith Feilings - Mrs.F. quite a lively lady in her fifties - and E.V.Knox of Punch, whom I knew, and his wife; and in the evening we played a curious card game which they insisted on calling Pea-BODY, though I protested. Tonight to dine with dreary Hugh Macdonald (a charity event) and tomorrow is Christina Morley's birthday).

I was distressed by your influenza; indeed I wish that I could have nursed you! I do hope you will be careful for some time to come, for that kind of upset, very pleasant, may return. And I do hope that you have had your fur coat for the last of the cold spells. I suppose it will soon be soft and slushy and relaxing.

Thank you for your news about the play. As I think I told you, according to Madame Rambert, the decision to go to New York was forced by Miller. I hope they will be able to recoup somewhat in the sticks. I expect that the actors will get paid, I am only afraid that Ashley will be very badly hit; and I want him to be able to start on The Family Re-union with enthusiasm. And I am all the more anxious that he should make a little money out of that.

I am interested in your seeing the "documentaries". Paul Rotha, whose real name is said to be Tommy Tompkins, only that is not so good in the film business, wrote a book on the subject which we published - would you like to see it? And I have been having a good deal to do, in the way of business, with John Grierson, who may have produced some of those you saw.

This is abrupt - but I will write again on Friday!

Your loving Tom.

By German packet EUROPA.

Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
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My Love,

11 March 1938.

I hope that you are now fully recovered from your intestinal flu, and that the weather is springlike, or alternatively that you have your fur coat. I am rather impatiently waiting for news from Dukes or Browne, to know how much longer they are likely to stay in the States, because I want to be able to make plans about the new play, and until I can make plans about the play I cannot make any plans about coming to America.

I do not find yet that I have as much time for reading and reflexion as I had hoped. For one thing, this sitting for a portrait is rather tiring, as it means that I am out nearly every evening - even if I have only two engagements in a week, with three evenings of sittings that is five evenings out - so I am apt to be rather tired in the mornings. That cannot last last more than another ten days or so, as the painting has to be sent to the Academy on the 25th. I think it may be rather good. And then there are always surprises. Lunching on Sunday with the Vicar and Fr.Sizinger of Mirfield, who preaches here on Sundays during Lent, I lost a backing from a front tooth, which has meant two mornings this week, and probably another two next week, at the dentist's. I had hoped to do some steady Lenten reading, and still hope to get some done. Tomorrow (Saturday) I hope to have all to myself. Well, I hope you are doing better than I in this respect! Have you any particular courses of preaching in Northampton during this time?

I have wished especially that I could have been with you, while you have been ill - more so even than when I am ill myself, for then I am torpid and sleepy. Do the Perkins's know whether they will be in Campden again this summer or not?-

Pensions ton Stone

Tom

I thought that youranalysis of the reasons against the success of Murder in New York was very convincing.

By C.W.S. QUEEN MARY.

Miss Emily Hale,

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

15 March 1938.

My Dear Pike,

Your letter of the 8th by the Queen Mary arrived yesterday, and this is to go by the Queen Mary tomorrow. It is difficult to thinkoof personal affairs with all that is going on - which was not unexpected, but, I think, not expected so soon. I do not think that we shall have war this summer. So far as we are concerned, I think that this marks a new phase of the tendency to authoritarianism. The government may alter in personnel - at a pinch, it will mean the inclusion of Churchill (who has been speaking rather well) and probably Lloyd George into a government of national emergency - it might even mean the return of Eden to some cabinet position - but I do not see a general election - unless the government should force it in order to strengthen their position further: as the Labour party is being as futile as ever. But we shall gradually get more regulations and restrictions. I think Hitler will want a period of some duration to consolidate his conquest of Austria - probably not so simple as his announcements would give one to believe: before he proceeds to try to swallow Czechoslovakia. At the moment, it would seem that the policy of German conciliation of The Times and Lord Halifax had been thoroughly rebuffed: it will be intersting to see how long Halifax remains in office. I do not see how Hitler's programme can accept indefinitely the existence of the hostile and highly armed spot of Czechoslovakia in the middle of his empire.

I have a letter from Dukes, at last, saying that he and a part of the company will be back on Monday, and Martin and the rest a little later. I am only anxious to know how badly crippled financially Dukes will have been by this gamble. He speaks hopefully of producing The Family Reunion "as soon as possible". (No, what he says is, that it "must go on the stage soon".

Yes, I have thought, when reading of the Californian floods, how glad I was you were not there. I can understand your preference for Scripps. It seems to me the difference between a small college which happened to have several congenial people in it, and a large college. In a large one, I suppose it is always very difficult to get to know the most intersting people of other departments - though meeting people in other lines than one's own is one of the most important stimuli.

Private & Confidential

I applaud your design of going to Charleston for your Easter holiday - I dont think you could do better. After Easter, I expect to go to Lisbon for about a week to take part in a jury to decide the award of the " Camoens prize". This sounds rather silly, I am sure. My invitation to spend a week in Portugal at the expense of the government doubtless comes at the instance of Antonio Ferro, the head of the Portuguese Propaganda Department, whom I know. We happen to be, more or less, Salazar's publishers in this country - which happened through my knowing somebody who knew somebody who knew Ferro. But I consulted, through a friend, the Chief Adviser on Foreign Relations (Vansittart) and he urged me to accept. I will give you details when I know them: I should be away after Easter until early in May.

Oh dear, it is hard to be personal, even when one is alone with oneself, and to onself, at a time like this: and a searchlight playing about outside, from somewhere in North Kensington, is an addition of restlessness. There is the danger, too, of letting one's mind prepare itself exclusively for the possible external dangers and horrors, and neglecting the inner discipline which must be just the same whether the outside world is peaceful and easy, or disturbed. And (for one thing) I feel that it is only in so far as we put our minds and hearts on the perpetual things and problems, that we can continue to grow nearer together in absence: because space and local circumstance and current events do not matter to those - they are always the same wherever we are or whatever goes on: and I struggle to put my mind on them at this season.

Toujours ton dévoué

Tom

By French packet NORMANDIE.

SOUTH KENSINGTON
22 MCH
1938
S.W.7.

NORTHAMPTON
MAR 31
1230PM
1938

Miss Emily Hale,

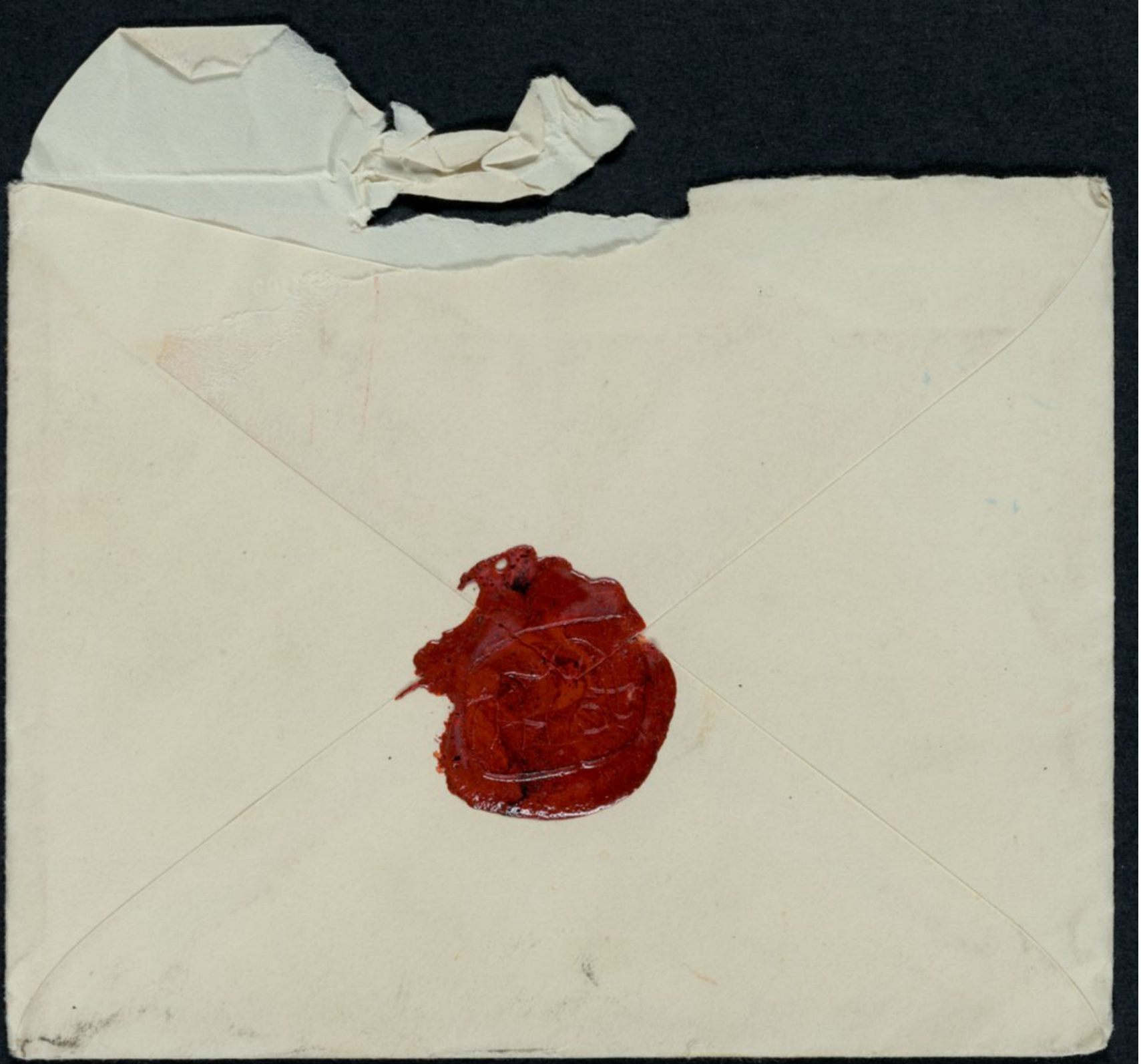
~~22 Paradise Road,~~

~~NORTHAMPTON,~~ 51 Church St -

~~Massachusetts,~~ Charleston

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

c/o Mrs James Adger - S.C.



THE TOWN

By AUTOLYCUS

Sunday Times 20.3.38

ONE of the most fantastic of the political rumours of the past week has been the inclusion in some quarters of the name of Lord Baldwin among those who have been said to be pressing Cabinet reconstruction on Mr. Chamberlain.

When Lord Baldwin retired a friend of mine asked him what he intended to do with his leisure. He replied with a typically robust remark. "You can be sure of two things," he said. "I shan't shout at the man at the wheel; and I shan't spit on the deck."

If Lord Baldwin speaks in the House of Lords in any of this summer's big debates his only aim will be to help his successor.

* *

The Only Unopened Frontier

ONE curious point about the Polish-Lithuanian dispute, now happily solved, is that the frontier is the only one which has never been opened since the war. But, in spite of barbed wire entanglements, it is not as undisturbed as one might imagine. I am told that bold patriots on either side of the line crawl out on dark nights and move the frontier a few yards nearer the "enemy."

A friend who flew from Riga to Warsaw the other day was reminded of the inconvenience of this disputed frontier even to air traffic. After about an hour's flight the plane in which he was travelling suddenly banked steeply for no very obvious reason and set off on a new course. They had rounded the corner of Lithuania—but they had been obliged to fly almost into Russia to do so.

* *

"Single-Speech" Marsh

AT the Lilian Baylis Memorial Dinner at the Mansion House last week there were excellent and persuasive speeches by the Duke of Kent and Mr. A. P. Herbert. But I was particularly interested to hear Sir Edward Marsh break a resolution by merely rising to his feet and opening his mouth.

At the dinner given in his honour some time ago Sir Edward, while carrying off the oratorical honours of the evening, declared that he wished to be known as "Single-speech" Marsh. I thought then that it was an unhappy ambition and I am glad that there has been some weakening of it. Sir Edward's voice is not what Mr. Churchill once called it—a "resonant organ." But microphone and amplifier remove that difficulty and present him as potentially one of the best after-dinner speakers we have.

The Lord Mayor, who presided, is always brief, clear-cut and concise. He is vigorously maintaining the traditions of the Mansion House as a platform from which great causes are broadcast to the world, which reminds me that his plea for the relief of distress in China, given on the wireless last week, was not only convincing, but most effectively delivered.

Charles James Fox's House

ON Wednesday the premises of the New University Club in St. James's Street go into the auction-room to be offered for letting on building lease. Thus it is not unlikely that in the near future the building will be pulled down to make room for a modern block.

If this proves to be the case, London may lose another of her historic houses.

No. 9, Arlington Street

[From a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher

I refer to No. 9, Arlington Street, at the back of St. James's Street, which, with No. 10, is included in the site of 9,000 square feet to be let.

An L.C.C. plaque on No. 9 records its association with Charles James Fox, who lived there from 1804 to 1806.

All who have fallen under the spell of the man whom Creevey called the "incomparable Charley" will recall that Fox made the house the seat of the operations against the Addington Ministry. And it was while he was living there that the illness which was to kill him first made its appearance.

* *

San Sofia Discoveries

LARGE audiences were attracted last week to University College, Gower Street, to hear Professor Whittemore lecture on the latest results of his labours in Istanbul's San Sofia. For many years past he has been patiently picking off the thick layers of matting and plaster under which the mosaics that cover so much of the wall space of this famous church have been hidden from public view for nearly one hundred years.

Professor Whittemore has succeeded in revealing these marvellous specimens of Byzantine art, dating from the fifth to the twelfth century, without disturbing a single fragment of the mosaic work, and he was able to show on the screen photographs in colour which made the pictures—mainly portraits—stand out in all their original brilliance.

San Sofia has quite recently been declared a museum after being a mosque for nearly 500 years: and it is thanks to the tact of Professor Whittemore and the enlightened régime of Atatürk that this important work of restoration has been possible.

* *

Non-Stop Litigation

LORD HEWART must find it a refreshing novelty to be trying some case other than that of Keith Williams versus Brady. This suit, in which the jury gave their verdict on Thursday, began as long ago as February 22, and truly deserves to rank among the select band of notably long-lived trials.

The Old Bailey's longest case was the fire-raising trial, in which Leopold Harris figured. It ended in August, 1933, after thirty-three days' hearing. But that pales into insignificance compared with that doyen of English trials—the Tichborne case.

This lasted from April 23, 1873, to February 28, 1874. Incidentally our new-made Lord Chancellor wrote a book about the Tichborne case last year. He attributed its length largely to the prolixity of counsel, saying "most judges are agreed that those counsel who have learnt the art of compression are the most successful."

To those barristers who hope to plead before Lord Maugham—*verb. sap!*

* *

To-day's Spelling Bee

IN to-day's B.B.C. Spelling Bee between teams of "under-twenties" and "over-forties" a handicap which hindered the organisers of the two recent Transatlantic Bees will be removed. Since Spelling Bees were first broadcast in America two years ago they have become so popular that most of the eligible words have been used up.

I should explain that, according to the Spelling Bee code of ethics, it is hitting below the belt to use obscure technical words. Ideal words are those which are used in speech but few know how to spell—such as "ipecacuanha" and "catarrh." But the B.B.C. found that these had been used so often that the American team might be expected to be well primed with them.

Consequently it seemed to many that the words chosen in the last Transatlantic Bee were too simple. Britain is practically virgin soil for the Spelling Bee, and I expect that to-day's victims will writhe in the toils as the American pioneers did two years ago.

On the other hand to-day's contest will be robbed of some terrors because the rival teams will confront each other in the same studio with only one Spelling Master, Mr. Frederick Grisewood, whose soothing bedside manner should be a great help. For the Transatlantic Bees the players had to sit in a semi-circle round the microphone, each one equipped with headphones.

* *

Portugal's £2,000 Prize

MR. T. S. ELIOT has been invited by the Portuguese Government to visit Lisbon next month as its guest and as the British representative on the international jury which is to make the first award of the Camoens Prize. Mr. Eliot has accepted the invitation and will spend about a week in Portugal.

Visits of this kind are regarded in official circles as particularly welcome at the present time. According to Sir Robert Vansittart, the visit to a foreign capital of a poet of Mr. Eliot's distinction and repute can contribute much, in these embittered days, to a better international understanding.

The Camoens Prize takes its name from Portugal's great sixteenth-century poet, and is awarded every other year for the best literary or scientific work on Portugal by a foreign author writing in English, French, Spanish, German, or Italian. Its value is nearly £2,000.

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Oratory on the Air

THE fact that radio is primarily a medium for entertainment tends, by contrast, to emphasize the impressiveness of those occasions when Clio herself seems to be speaking through her spokesmen at the microphone. I listened to three of them last week. To Hitler, speaking in Vienna, to John L. Lewis, of the Committee of Industrial Organisation, speaking in Washington on American labour, and to Mr. Cordell Hull, whose speech on America's foreign policy was relayed from Washington.

Hitler, his voice harsh and broken by emotion, was speaking to his people. Every sentence was acknowledged by deafening cheers from his gigantic audience. Lewis was speaking for his people—the four million American workers he represents—in the seclusion of a studio. Heard as I heard it, Lewis's voice was the voice not only of a leader but of an orator. His American accent could not disguise the Welshman's instinctive sense of verbal music and rhythm.

Mr. Cordell Hull, on the other hand, was as brisk and direct as a chairman addressing a board meeting. Indeed, at times he might have been a business man dictating to a secretary, for when he drew upon the speeches of others he painstakingly indicated that the words were not his own by saying "quote" and "end quote."

dor between [illegible] Hungary, both of whom would probably be hostile.

* * * *

CORRIDORS

Is the steam roller, then, to go by the northern corridor by way of the Baltic coastline across Latvia and Lithuania? And is that the real reason why Poland has quarrelled with Lithuania, because she suspects her to be arranging with Russia to open the side door? It excites suspicion to remember that Litvinoff, when he was asked the other day how Russia proposed to fight Germany or succour Prague when they were not in contact, should have replied that where there's a will there's a way, and have talked about corridors and rights of way in execution of the will of the League of Nations?

And while this steam roller is lumbering up from the East in face of certain resistance from the States who wish to remain neutral, what is happening away at the Prague territory, already presumably in a state of siege?

* * * *

THE "WAY OVER"

There is, of course, the "way over" by air-raiders. Russia and France could play skittles with German towns, and Germany would, no doubt, try to return the compliment. But when that game is started the war begins to shed all pretence of being holy or a means of moral regeneration. Germany would certainly be hurt, but that any definite result could be reached that way the air-raid precautions in Germany and in France and the character of both peoples forbid us to expect.

Are we, if we accepted Mr. Churchill's prescription for another world war, to join in these air raids? If our people could be brought to such a war, and even if they could be guaranteed immunity in their own homes—a huge assumption—they would be ashamed of it in a week. The notion of a German compromise with Czechoslovakian liberties may not sound plausible, but compared with such a war as is being imagined, it is a contrast between half-way to heaven and deepest hell. You could not reconcile our people to it by again calling it a war to end war.

* * * *

THE ALTERNATIVE

Though politicians tie themselves up in knots from which they cannot escape, our forty million people, said to be mostly fools, are wiser in their folly. They know from experience in the last war that war settles nothing, and unsettles everything. After all, is it not part of the democratic philosophy that force is no cure? Why, when the most crushing defeat of history failed to carry conviction to the defeated, should you expect another war, more packed with incalculables, to have any better success?

Is the alternative, then, meek submission as Mr. Churchill says? By no means. We did not submit to her as a neutral than as a combatant ally.

The best service that we can render to the cause of moderation and to a peace of statesmanship is by our sea power in the Mediterranean; the best service that Italy can render to her own security is by removing the occasions of conflict there. People ask what Germany has promised her in return for her refusal to intervene on behalf of Austria. She can have offered her nothing but the shadow for which she would have to drop the bone.

* * * *

THE NEAR EAST

As to our policy of non-intervention in Spain, we may well believe that whichever side wins the power which intervened most will be most unpopular in the new Spain. But if, contrary to the Spanish character, a victorious Franco proceeded to show his gratitude by alienating Spanish territory, we should make it clear from the outset that no agreement can recognise any change that would menace France's communications with North Africa and ours through the Mediterranean with Egypt and India.

We should also make it clear that we must be assured of a free passage through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus into the Black Sea, and to that end our friendly relations with the new Turkey should be drawn even closer than they are. But subject to these conditions there is room for arrangements between us that would relieve Italy of all cause for anxiety with regard to her communications with Libya and Abyssinia. It was Abyssinia and sanctions that drew Italy to Germany. Abyssinia and a naval agreement on the Mediterranean might keep Italy neutral and deprive the Berlin-Rome axis of any point of offence against us.

* * * *

OUR BEST HELP

We should make a great mistake by precipitately declaring our intention to defend Czechoslovakia against attack which is still only contingent. Our general policy is to lay down a line at which we must inevitably intervene, in defence of British interests. That line is reached the moment German expansion reaches the sea and threatens to cross over into Asia or to threaten our communications through the Mediterranean.

Whether we should intervene before we cannot yet say; much would depend on the methods that Germany pursued, much more on the temper of the British people. But the mere doubt would do as much to incline Germany to moderate counsels as a formal ranging ourselves against her. And an agreement with Italy, if one is to be had, would reinforce the argument in Germany for gentler methods. It is the best help that we can give to whatever statesmanship there may be in Central Europe.

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ably during that interval.

I first taught pre-clinical subjects in Cambridge, and later on taught medicine for thirty years in London, after which I returned to my old University and encountered medical students at each stage of their careers there, so that I have had rather unusual opportunities for comparison. I am still convinced that the main body of medical students are in no way inferior to their predecessors of thirty years ago. Any increase in the "misfits and duds" was due to merely temporary causes which are already declining.

The last paragraph of Mr. Borland's letter defeats me. He admits that the standard of medical education in this country is high, and then implies that some unspecified persons are prepared to let it down. That is an entirely new charge. I have been a member of three bodies, each concerned with the revision of the curriculum, and no such suggestion emanated at any stage of our deliberations. Personally I worked for an entrance examination requiring a higher standard of general education in order to keep out unsuitable entrants without troubling Mr. Hentschel and his colleagues to reject them a year or so later.

W. LANGDON-BROWN.

Cavendish Square, W.1.

SLOVENLY ENGLISH

Sir,—The B.B.C. announcers make occasional mistakes, but if armchair critics tried to read the news, I suggest that their efforts would make excellent alternatives to "variety," and would make the substitutes aware of the fact that consistent and easy audibility is not as easy as the high standard of the announcers suggests.

Mr. Montagu-Nathan hunts that weary and ancient fox, the "r" used to modify a vowel. We all know that the Scottish insist on rolling every such "r"; we all know that most of the country dialects include the "burred r"; we all know that the elocutionists teach their pupils to "trill" every "r," but the fact remains that the vast majority of users of Southern educated English do not pronounce the final letter in "for" unless it is followed by a word beginning with a vowel.

Mr. Montagu-Nathan alludes to the omission of the rightly silent "r" as a "major offence manifested in a devastating fashion"! What of the hundreds of mumbling lecturers? What of jabbering speakers? What of gabbling actors? The present standard of spoken English is undeniably very low, but we shall not raise it by losing all sense of proportion or by attacking the few whose efforts are worthy of imitation. H. ST. JOHN RUMSEY

(Speech Therapist at Guy's Hospital).
Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W.1.

OTHER LETTERS ON PAGE 14

THE NAVY, COAL AND OIL.
(Prof. C. J. Hawkes.)

"FRONTIERS OF THE MIND."
(E. F. D. Munro and R. L. Megroz.)

GROUP THEATRE

Times 19.3.38

"TRIAL OF A JUDGE"

By STEPHEN SPENDER

The Judge	Godfrey Kenton
Three Fascist Prisoners	Peter Copley
	Aidan Turner
	Colin Eaton
Petra's Mother	Constance Foljambe
Petra's Brother	Moran Caplat
Prosecuting Counsel	Julian Somers
The Fiancée	Emma Trechman
A Communist	Kenneth Evans
The Judge's Wife	Kathleen Boutall
Hummeldorf	Evan John
Two Fascists	Peter Bennett
	Bill Sykes
A Fascist Troop Leader	Julian Somers
A Jewish Doctor	Peter Bennett
Seven Communist Prisoners	Neil Gibson
	George Windred
	Richard Wordsworth
	H. Dagnall
	J. W. Maule
	F. Spelling
	L. White

In verse that is well born yet lives on easy terms with the rhythms of contemporary speech Mr. Spender sketches the progress of a Fascist revolution. His narrative, highly exciting in itself, is enriched with the genuinely tragic figure of a Judge whose weakness (he feels) has opened the floodgates. At the wish of a Government fearful of an immediate rising he reprieves Fascist prisoners he knows to be guilty of a brutal murder, and orders the execution of a number of Communists charged with the capital offence of carrying firearms and wounding a policeman. But in spite of the Judge's concession to expediency, perhaps because of it, the revolution spreads, and his belated reassertion of the sacredness of the law he has been proud to administer only brings about his own downfall. At his trial for treason and in prison awaiting execution he explores the moral dilemma that impales an upright Judge living on into a world given over to the rule of violence.

Mr. Spender ends his tragedy on a note which hopefully anticipates the Communist counter-revolution, but in the light of the Judge's thought this ending has the air of being a narrative formality. For to many spectators the tragic hero will come to stand for the human spirit vainly protesting the individuality of man against the claims of a mechanical process—or rather the claims of conflicting processes intent on wrecking each other and absorbing him. The Fascist revolution insists that he must behave like a machine, forgoing what was called humane and liberal in the old order of society to which he belonged and learning that it is not in the nature of things to pity or to love or to strive for justice. The Communist prisoners tell him the same thing in different words. In their eyes he has failed to summon up in himself "the necessary killing hatred" that would have made him recognize that he or his enemies must die. Violence is the ultimate reality in the universe and knows nothing of conscience.

The play's distinction, and it has much, resides mostly in the drawing of its central figure, and in this exacting part Mr. Godfrey Kenton gives a clear-cut and moving performance. Those devices which suggest the progress of revolution—groups of speakers speaking with one voice or breaking free from groups to engage in individual argument—are familiar, but more effective than usual, perhaps because Mr. Spender has contrived for more than one or two of the figures in the foreground a saving distinctness.

painting by George Morland, "A Farmer Preparing for Market," which last appeared in the auction room at the S. B. Joel sale in 1935; and a signed and dated work by Gerard Dou, "An Old Woman Tasting Soup."

EMPIRE FLYING-BOAT FOR AUSTRALIA

The Empire flying-boat Coolangatta left Southampton yesterday on the first stage of its delivery flight to Qantas Empire Airways at Sydney. It is the first of six to be delivered to Qantas, an associated company of Imperial Airways, for service on the Singapore-Australia section of the Empire routes. The Coolangatta was commanded by Captain G. U. Allan, an Australian. It will carry passengers and mails as far as Singapore.

THE
CRITERION
A QUARTERLY REVIEW
EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

22 March 1938.

My dearest,

One's first disturbance and depression over events in Austria and Spain has now subsided, and one hopes to get through the summer without more immediate alarms. Any fresh incident of German aggressiveness is likely, I think, to be very unsettling to our Government. A great deal of disapproval and anxiety was felt in consequence of Chamberlain's getting rid of Eden and Vansittart. In so far as he succeeds in arriving at a real or apparent understanding with Germany or with Italy, his position will become very strong; if it appears that he has sacrificed a traditional policy for a new but futile one, opposition will grow. I do not think that the opposition is likely to take the form of a return of a Labour Government, as most people consider that that party's policy and day to day attitude about foreign affairs have been very incompetent and untrustworthy: it would more likely take the form of a different kind of Conservative Government, with Eden back and possibly a few outsiders like Churchill - who has been speaking lately, as he often does at times of crisis and when he is in opposition, with great brilliance.

My only news of importance is that I have had a long letter from Martin Browne about the new play - in which his criticisms go so far that I think he has very largely misunderstood what I am trying to do; and I have written to him to say that if I accepted all his criticisms I might as well write a new play with a new situation and new characters. Some of his criticisms, of course, I recognise as valid and important: I am now trying to separate out of what he says, what I can make use of and what I can't. That will take some days of quiet reflexion. As he says he wants to stop on in New York (I suppose for rest and holiday) for a couple of weeks, I do not expect to see him until I get back from Lisbon - if, as I suppose, I go there shortly after Easter. Meanwhile, I shall wrangle with Ashley. I am consoled by the recollection that when I showed Martin the first part of "Murder in the Cathedral", essentially as it has remained, but before the second part, he thought that that was going to be unactable. The greatest difficulty in playwriting seems to me to be just at this point: where one is trying to find out just how far author and producer are at cross-purposes. I suspect that Martin hopes that this will be the kind of thing that can be a big West-End success; and it can't.

My Lent, so far, has not been as quiet and private as I had hoped. It is not that I have made many evening engagements - I have actually had very few: but that most of my evenings have been given to Wyndham Lewis. But I could hardly have refused an old friend, especially when he wanted to produce something big to offer to the Academy. And that point has its advantages, because it means that the picture must be finished by the end of this week. And so far as I can judge, it promises to be a very fine portrait. There will be some photographs taken when it is finished.

Last night I went to see Spender's "Trial of a Judge", of which I will send you a copy. The play is better on the stage than it is to read. It is not wholly successful, but for a first play very commendable, and I think very much more praiseworthy than what Auden and Isherwood have been doing. There is nothing smart or clever about it, no farce or catchpenny devices; he has a large and noble theme and he has gone at it with complete sincerity. It is deficient in suspense, for the most part; and he makes the mistake of spreading his poetry too thick - he tries to be poetic the whole time, so that the ear and mind are fatigued, and there is no reserve force left for high moments: the fault of a beginner, but one not easy to overcome. The little theatre is in an out of the way spot back of St.Pancras' Station, and was rather sparsely filled, I am sorry to say, though he had a good press. And the play was better produced and acted than I should have expected from Rupert Doone.

Well, I hope next week will be more leisurely, and I shall try to do some Lenten reading: so far I have nothing to my credit beyond a few small abstinences and attendance at Mass three mornings a week instead of two - not always easy to get up early when one has got home at midnight tired from a sitting. I should like to know what special services etc. you have had in Northampton during Lent - and to change the subject completely, whether you really are going South, as I hope, with Sylvia Knowles (or with some friend) during the holidays. After Easter, summer will seem very near.

Je t'embrasse de tout
mon cœur, ton dévoué

Tom

By C.W.S. QUEEN MARY.

Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE
CRITERION
A QUARTERLY REVIEW
EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

29 March 1938.

Dearest,

Your letter of the 22nd by the Queen Mary arrived last night, so that I have time to reply by the same boat leaving tomorrow. That is, as a rule, the advantage of a fast British boat, at this end: a longer period elapses between the arrival and departure of the French or German vessels.

I am still rather tired as the result of continual long sittings: a portrait, if carefully done, is no light undertaking even for the sitter. It seems to me a very fine piece of work: of course I am not able to judge altogether of the likeness, or how it will please my friends, but it seems to me to be good. Lewis said he would have it photographed yesterday morning, and when I get some copies I will send you one. It is a modern portrait, sitting informally in an arm chair. I wish portraits were still done in the grand style: seated in a kind of throne, your hand resting on the head of a greyhound or brachet wearing a jewelled collar, the other hand poised in the air holding a scroll from which hangs a seal; in the background an Ionic column, with a couple of Cupids drawing aside some billowy hangings, to disclose a trim sylvan scene with some little equestrian figures galloping across country with hawks and hounds. But that kind may have been still more fatiguing for the sitter. Last night I dined with John and Geoffrey, to meet John Foster - considered one of the most brilliant of the young barristers, and a well known man about town: I thought him completely empty and uninteresting, rather like a young Sir John Simon. So the evening was rather wasted, but was not tiring. Tonight, at last, I have Ashley Dukes to dinner, and hope we shall finally come to some agreement as to what shall and what shall not be done to the play. Tomorrow I drop in before dinner to see Stephen Gaselee, who is the Librarian of the Foreign Office, and professes to know a good deal about Portugal.

I have had another letter from Lisbon, telling me everything except what I want to know. I want to know the date of the meeting, and when I can get a sailing, and whether anybody will meet me at the dock. Trend, the Professor of Spanish at Cambridge, tells me that Lisbon is systematic and efficient, the porters have a fixed tariff and give you a receipt. I have been sent a huge parcel of the books proposed for the Prize, but according to the letter I

only have to give an opinion of the English ones: there seem to be only two, so I have to read these and decide which is the more suitable. The French, Italian, Swiss and German do the same; and the Portuguese members decide between the choices. The book has to be about Portugal and by a foreigner; the prize is rather a valuable one, 20,000 escudos (not quite £2000) and a trip to Portgual for the winner. It has only just been founded.

I was to have gone to the country last weekend, but had to stay so that the portrait could be finished. This weekend I go to a weekend group for a religious discussion, arranged by J.H.Oldham somewhere in Hertfordshire (Broxbourne - perhaps it is in Essex, I think it is on the way to Colchester): John Baillie will be there, and Middleton Murry, whom I have not seen for many years, but who, after all sorts of original and eccentric philosophies and his own varieties of communism, has finally decided to study for Anglican orders and become a country parson. So that will be talk and talk and talk: not a retreat at all.

The political situation has relapsed for the present into the normal dark muddle in which no one knows what is going on or what it means. I should say that the fate of Czechoslovakia was a matter of time only, and could only be averted by Hitler's eventually doing a deal with Stalin - as Mussolini may not have much to offer him now that Austria is occupied. While I am distressed for the fate of the Jews in Vienna, I do hope that all the university professors will not come and settle here: there are enough Jews in the English universities as it is.

I am glad to think of you enjoying balmy summer weather in Carolina (which is nicer, Charleston or Savannah?) and a thorough change.

Of course, while there are moments when public affairs are so insistent that it hardly seems right to think of private affairs, one has to keep a balance, surely, between the personal, the public and the eternal: and the personal can and should touch and be involved with the eternal - as it is not by putting aside private attachments and intimacies, but by taking them up with one in one's reach after the eternal, that one proceeds. And the compelling anxieties of public affairs must, as you suggest, be balanced; and make our personal relations all the more precious and necessary. I cannot conceive <u>preferring</u> things as they are! and indeed I am sure there is something most precious and valuable about unsatisfied desires - if they are taken in the right way. Unsatisfied desires can play a most important part in keeping the soul alive and urging one higher - anything is better than just deadening feeling - and can persist and at the same time be combined with a kind of resignation which makes it possible to extract the full value and significance out of what definitely <u>is</u> in our mental and spiritual intimacy. But of course it must actually be always a struggle -

there isn't any definite state that one just reaches and then stops - not in this life. I have no such thing as any premonition of death - I suppose I am as likely to have a long life as anybody - but I like to keep the thought of Death constantly before me, and be as nearly prepared for it as any time as one can be: to think, if one died tomorrow, how excellent in the sight of God would one's life be up to that point. Full of imperfections, at best.

Will you celebrate Good Friday and Easter in a church in Charleston, I wonder.

Did I say, about the summer, that my last official engagement is on July 2nd, when I go for another Litt.D. to Bristol? After that there will be, probably, at some time a weekend with the Richmonds, and a week in Wales must be spent with the Fabers' - my usual fixtures. As for your coming, I now think the prospect of war this summer unlikely - and my chief anxiety (responsibility!) is that you should get enough country or sea air, and rest; and I should worry if your only holiday were a visit to London - as a preparation for the next winter. (You might get someone to photograph you in that coat, by the way). So I cannot help hoping that there will be some, but not too much, Campden for you.

Now I must stop.

Your loving

Tom