

Burley Hill

4322

Ringwood

March 23^d 1916

My dear Roger

It makes me very doleful to see that I did the thing that most I hate the thought of & turned out such a failure. It was great joy to get your telegram on Friday & then next morning your Thursday letter came & it seemed as plain as a pikestaff that the moment of your wanting some one was over & that you'd suggested coming at immense trouble because you'd had a demented letter from me meantime.

I honestly thought you'd be relieved
not to have to come & that if you
weren't relieved you wouldn't take
any notice of my telegram. I see
th^{at} now that if I were a really
good Christian I wouldn't have
telegraphed. I see, in fact, that
about you I am a most admirable
Christian as far as my own part goes.
I like to be so there's nothing in
it; where I break down is when
it comes to your doing things for
me. My Christianity all vanishes
then & everything sticks in my
gullet. That's where I'm horrid
about you & now I've confessed
the outside rim of it. It's rather a
shock to see that it's led to our both being

disappointed. Perhaps it'll make me
able to mend my ways. It's stupid
& odious to have added to your bothers
for nothing & here's too much ink being
expended on my mechanism & its all
abound. As for the other part of my
mechanism, I'm not very ill. I'm
much better & I'm going to begin a
régime of going out every day & getting
perfectly well. I started today. It
snowed in the morning but not snow
that stuck & when it left off in the
afternoon we tramped along the road
to Castletop feeling rather as though
we were in a cold bath. Such lots
of things have come out since ~~that~~
you were - daffodils & primroses of course
in thousands everywhere, & hyacinths in
the garden & lots of charming little things
like cyclamen in the rocks & even leaves
beginning to uncurl on the shrubs. How they

636

can behave so in this icy weather I can't think but I suppose they're just wound up + have to perform at a given moment whether they want to or not like that poor ill-fated Coppélia. Her story was read me out of the Comtesse d'Hoffmann by George Calderon shouting to drown the sound of the sea whilst I sucked an apple + we both clung onto the side of the ship to keep our chairs from sliding down the slippery decks as we tossed. Now George Calderon + the ship's Aquila have both been wiped out by the war + I can feel the heaving + the grinding + see his Spanish face + his hand keeping us wedged in + hear his voice saying - "Automate!" That was what the young man said to his zeal

young lady when she was unable
 to conceal the fact that she was
 bored by his poems, which he
 eternally recited to her by moonlight.
 After that parting insult he left
 her & took up with Coppélia who
 behaved very differently & listened
 by the hour to his poems without
 ever showing the smallest sign
 of being bored. They came to
 dire grief though, all the same,
 & I thought the story had a
 very good ~~suave~~ sort of moral
 but didn't point it out to him
 because the apple diet didn't
 give me enough spirit to embark
 on a quarrel.

I don't know what to say about

plans because I don't see that I

can at present make any engagements.

It seems to me that the best thing I

can do is to get back into ordinary

existence as quickly as possible & write

& tell you the minute the date of leaving

here is fixed. Therefore I think you must make

your arrangements regardless of me. - I'm so

unreliable really though I am determined

not to have any more nonsense. I'll let

you know immediately anything gets crystallized.

Tena comes tomorrow. My temperature has

been ~~down~~ down to under 99 since Sunday without

quinine so that's very good & I feel very

well & am enormously stout & red in

the face. So you needn't imagine

me fading for lack of Craie.

I've just finished the Wordsworth

book. Its very depressing. Biographies

always do leave one in despair with

the waning & the death of everyone

concerned, but this one is quite peculiar

with his premature old age & his

abnormally long & healthy life, & his

intense burning feelings & his egotistical

frigid outside. And then the harrowing

relationships with Coleridge - the ideal

happiness of the three of them at first

& their ideal devotion to each other &

then the honors gradually creeping

up higher & higher till everything got

confused & finally hopeless. At the

worst moment there were living in the

house together Mr. & Mrs. W., Dorothy

in love with Coleridge, Coleridge in love

with Sarah Hutchinson, Sarah H.

dictating, several children of various

families & Mrs. Coleridge ^{more or less} amicably separated

from C.) constantly dropping in for

week-ends. William dictated poems to Mary

in one room + Coleridge corrected
proofs with Sarah in another + Dorothy,
who is the hero of this book, ended by
going gently out of her mind + allowing
her secret to be revealed which
apparently even William hadn't guessed
before. There is no disguise about W's
illegitimate daughter; after he was engaged
to Mary he + Dorothy went to France +
stayed a month with the lady + the child
to fix up things before he was married.
It is very mysterious because she was
evidently so respectable + so far as one can
see not married, but no one seems to know
the story nor why they didn't marry.

Now I must say goodnight + I dare say
you're half asleep too at the end of this
wandering letter. I hope you're getting
some pains of enjoyment out of your new
plan + at any rate enough absence of
pain to let you sleep at night. That
being able to sleep seems to me the
the very worst illnesses + your having it
makes me feel what a fraud my illness is. ^{the}
P. S.

LONDON.W.E

2. 15 AM

MAR 29 1891
Miss Philippa Shackey

Burley Hill

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Hants.

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